



CAMBRIDGE DAY

THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 8 – OCTOBER 15, 2026 FREE

MIT professors ‘bedazzle’ cameras to protest surveillance



Nathan Metcalf

An MIT surveillance camera decorated with rhinestones, googly eyes and gold tinsel as part of a faculty protest against the university’s expanding camera network.

By NATHAN METCALF

Armed with a stepladder, sheets of adhesive rhinestones and googly eyes, a group of MIT professors made their way through campus Tuesday evening hunting for surveillance cameras. The eye-catching decorations do not block the cameras or interfere with their operation. That’s the point. The professors want people to notice the cameras watching them.

The professors are members of the “Initiative to Beautify the AI-capable Surveillance Benevolently Installed by our Administrator Overseers and the MIT Corporation In Collaboration with Big Brother Tech Companies,” or IBAISBIAOMITCORPICBBTC.

The deliberately unwieldy name accompanies an equally unconventional form of protest against MIT’s more than \$3 million expansion of its surveillance network, under which more

than 500 new cameras have been installed across academic buildings, residence halls and outdoor areas since November 2025. The additions bring MIT’s campus network to about 4,600 cameras. The installation finished in September, according to contracts previously reported in April by The Tech, MIT’s student newspaper.

The new cameras come equipped with artificial intelligence capabilities that, if enabled, can identify and classify people and objects in real time, assessing things like loitering, crowds, people wearing face masks, clothing color, gender and age. MIT is also considering adding a layer of artificial intelligence to automatically analyze footage from its sprawling camera network, prompting concerns about tracking and profiling among some faculty and students.

See CAMERAS, page 3

Councillors send zoning report to ordinance committee

By JANE PETERSEN

During Monday night’s city council meeting, councillors signalled that they planned to act quickly on policy proposals from the Community Development Department (CDD) to spur residential development along major corridors.

At issue is whether the city’s inclusionary zoning requirement is too large and has dampened construction. The zoning specifies that 20 percent of gross floor area in residential buildings of a certain size be used for affordable units. The CDD memo along with a report commissioned by Boston-based consultancy RKG Associates indicated that the current rate isn’t feasible for many projects due to high interest rates and construction costs.

“The report is very clear that the city does not have the ability to make every project feasible,” Councillor Patty Nolan said, but she noted the city could prevent development from slowing further. “Let’s very quickly discuss the various options in front of us in order to make some difference.”

It’s the first time members of the city government have openly discussed reducing the rate this term. The current rate is the subject of two lawsuits from local developers – one in Superior Court, the other in Land Court – leaving many discussions about the policy behind closed doors.

Current CDD proposals only target projects six stories or higher, leaving areas most affected by the Multifamily Housing Ordinance



The developers of 1740 Mass. Ave. have sued the city over its inclusionary zoning requirements.

(MFHO) the same. According to the RKG report, these taller buildings require steel frame construction materials, which are more expensive to build, dampening investor interest.

Lowering the affordable housing percentage could allow developers of new residential properties to make higher revenues by charging market-rate rent on more units. Other options proposed by CDD cut costs by reducing the cost of borrowing through a revolving loan fund or shielding projects from property tax increases. Another idea on the table is allowing developers to buy their way out of the up to half of the affordable housing requirement by contributing to the city’s affordable housing trust.

Councillors kept their remarks relatively brief in favor of discussing the options at length in the Ordinance Committee. But some

councillors hinted at where they stood.

Councillor Ayah Al-Zubi was skeptical that lowering the rate would have much of an impact. “The biggest problems lie in the interest rates and the construction costs, which we don’t really have control over,” Al-Zubi said. “I will be focusing my time on helping our constituents directly [rather] than helping larger corporate-style developers.”

Councillor Cathie Zusy said multiple ideas were interesting, and that she had long favored creating a revolving housing production fund. “If we can help developers ... pay less to borrow money, that would be a great thing,” she said.

Councillors unanimously voted to send the memo and report to the Ordinance Committee for further discussion. According to the city’s website, a meeting has yet to be scheduled.

Cat tour draws hundreds of ‘CATabrigians’ to Cambridgeport



Ethan Pott

Organizer Rayna Jhaveri sits on her porch with her cat.

By ISABEL RODRIGUEZ

Hundreds of people and their cats filled the streets of Cambridgeport Saturday afternoon for the first annual Cambridge Cat Tour, a city-backed event that drew far more attendees than organizers expected.

In honor of Meet Your Neighbor Month in (see related story page 10), Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui collaborated with a local artist to bring together cat enthusiasts from Cambridge and beyond. The tour was originally scheduled for September 26 but was moved to October 3 because of the nor’easter last weekend.

The tour — a parade-style walk through Cambridgeport, with more than a dozen stops — invited people to gather and see local cats. Each cat owner could submit their cat’s name, details, address and a short message to be featured in the walk. All gatherers got a virtual map detailing each stop.

Siddiqui led a crowd of hundreds through the streets – which police had blocked off for safety – stopping at each house on the route to peek at the cats inside as owners lifted their cats up to the window, held them on the porch or had them outside for visitors to pet. Some houses had

signs announcing the cats’ names. Others had fun facts and drawings. People clapped and cheered when each cat was introduced.

“It’s good to get out to see folks and get some festivity going on in the town,” said John Haynor, cat parent to Blake and Pepper. “I’m a little overwhelmed. I did not realize it was going to be this many people. But it’s good.”

Attendees were welcome to dress up in cat-themed attire and hold signs like “CATabridgian” and “show us your cats” for the cat owners to see.

See MEOWFEST, page 10

EDUCATION PAGE 4

Disparities in MCAS English scores raise concerns at School Committee



BUSINESS PAGE 5

CRLS senior finds his path in entrepreneur workshop

FILM PAGE 8

Like fall foliage, Independent Film Festival Boston a seasonal treat

LOCAL

Huron Avenue bike lanes avoid proposed pause

By JANE PETERSEN

An attempt to delay plans that will add a bike lane to the upper portion of Huron Avenue failed during Monday night’s city council meeting, as a 6-3 majority of councillors opted to keep the project moving toward completion.

The issue first made council’s agenda last week, when Councillor Cathie Zusy submitted a policy order to delay construction for five years, citing a high desire for parking in the area to accommodate a 250-unit residence and recreational opportunities like the Fresh Pond Golf Course and Glacken Field. But instead of voting on the measure, Councillor Marc McGovern introduced a substitute policy order — aimed at keeping the construction timeline intact while the city works to find parking alternatives in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood — prompting Zusy to use her charter right to delay the vote a week.

While Zusy attempted a compromise by offering to reduce the delay in her version of the order to one year instead of five, McGovern’s version of the order prevailed. During debate, he noted that while some of the work to improve the street in preparation for installing the bike lanes will begin this fall, the parking spots will not be displaced until spring of next year, giving the city time to



Tom Meek

Some of the parking spaces that will be lost to bicycle lanes on Huron Avenue.

find alternatives for the 44 parking spots the order said will be lost.

McGovern said the plan for the lanes, which continues the implementation of the city’s Cycling Safety Ordinance, already reflected community compromise. He noted that originally around 81 spaces would have been lost, but the city’s Department of Transportation decided to cut “the amount of removed parking spaces in half based on public input. That seems to me to be listening to the public.” He also cited keeping loading zones and adding new accessible spots for disabled residents as examples of community suggestions from drivers that made their way into the design.

But Zusy said people who use the Fresh Pond Golf Course, Glacken Field and the Veterans of Foreign Wars center would be affected in ways that will be hard to address. She said she’s been brainstorming ways to make up for the lost parking since December and “just haven’t seen solutions.”

Golfers in particular are worried that the loss of street parking will lead to even more use of the course’s lot.

Cambridge Transportation Commissioner Brooke McKenna offered suggestions to help, such as providing the golf course with placards for its users to put on their cars to help identify people parked there illegally. The city could also

work with the golf course to provide off-hours parking for places like the VFW. In addition, it could transition the remaining unrestricted parking on the stretch to residential permit holders only at night in order to prioritize parking for residents. What the department can’t do, she said, is grow new spaces out of thin air.

“We have been trying to find off-street spaces,” she said. “We have not been successful in doing that.” Deputy City Manager Kathy Watkins confirmed that attempts to lease new parking spaces from large residences like Parkside Place at 700 Huron Ave. have not been successful.

In the end, only Zusy, Councillor Timothy Flaherty and Councillor E. Denise Simmons opposed the substitute policy order.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, who co-sponsored McGovern’s substitute, said there was value in holding the city accountable for reporting back to the public about ways to soothe the loss in total number of spaces.

“I think the proposed substitute strikes a balance around moving forward but continuing to work with residents and stakeholders on access,” she said. “I think coming back with a response to say ‘this is exactly what we did, here’s other things that we’ve tried,’ before this goes into construction in spring summer would be really ideal.”

Inquest finds Cambridge officers justified in fatal shooting

By NATHAN METCALF and RUTH TAM

Two Cambridge police officers were legally justified in fatally shooting a 64-year-old man during an August encounter in Central Square, a judge concluded in a judicial inquest report released Friday.

District Court Judge Holly Broadbent found that Officers Donald Conrad and James Nestor acted reasonably when they opened fire on William Woodworth on Aug. 21 after he retrieved a loaded revolver from beneath his driver’s seat and pointed it at trainee Officer David Kerns. “Any reasonable police officer in their position would reasonably believe that both the officers and civilians were in imminent danger of being seriously injured or killed,” Broadbent wrote in her report.

The report provides new details about the confrontation, which unfolded in less than 60 seconds after Conrad approached Woodworth’s vehicle in a private parking lot behind 675 Massachusetts Ave. It also reveals that Conrad recognized Woodworth from two previous encounters, including a traffic stop that resulted in a firearm charge later dismissed because the stop was unconstitutional.

Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan accepted the judge’s



Middlesex County District Attorney

William Woodworth, captured on a body-worn camera, in his car a few seconds before his encounter with police became confrontational.

findings and filed a certificate closing the criminal investigation into the shooting. Her office also released the inquest findings and body camera footage Friday.

Cambridge police welcomed the findings Friday, praising in a statement the “professionalism, courage, and training demonstrated by the officers involved” in response to what the department described as a rapidly escalating and dangerous confrontation. The statement said their response kept the situation from “resulting in further serious injury or loss of life.”

The department also expressed condolences to Woodworth’s family and said the release of the inquest findings and body-camera footage was consistent with its commitment to transparency and accountability. The department urged the public to exer-

cise discretion when viewing the body-camera footage, warning that it contains graphic and potentially distressing material.

Less than a minute of conflict

Shortly before 8 p.m. on Aug. 21, a security guard at 675 Massachusetts Ave. called 911 to report people who had been loitering in the building’s private parking lot for an extended period. Nestor and his partner, Officer Saimon Teclezghi, arrived first and spoke with the security guard before entering the parking lot.

Conrad, who was serving as a field training officer, arrived with trainee Officer David Kerns. Police encountered two people standing outside a Jeep Compass occupied by Woodworth. Conrad suspected one of them was smoking crack cocaine, but she denied this, saying she was smoking marijuana.

Conrad approached the passenger side of the Jeep and recognized Woodworth. During a previous traffic stop involving Woodworth, police had recovered a firearm from a car he was driving. Woodworth was charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, but the case was subsequently dismissed after a judge ruled the traffic stop unconstitutional. About a month before the shooting, Conrad had again stopped a vehicle occupied by Woodworth and another per-

son, in which police recovered crack cocaine and a double-sided machete.

During the fatal Aug. 21 encounter, Conrad asked Woodworth why he was smoking crack inside the Jeep, which Woodworth denied. He then instructed the other officers to search the two people standing outside the vehicle and ordered Woodworth to get out of the car.

As Woodworth began exiting the Jeep, he reached beneath the driver’s seat and retrieved a firearm, according to the judge’s findings. Conrad ordered him to leave the weapon where it was and repeatedly told him to put it down.

Woodworth ignored those commands and pointed the gun at Kerns, who had approached the driver’s side of the vehicle, the judge found. Kerns grabbed Woodworth’s arms in an attempt to disarm him.

Conrad fired six times through the Jeep’s lowered passenger-side window, during which his gun briefly malfunctioned and ejected an unfired round. Nestor, who had been standing near the rear of the vehicle, turned toward the confrontation and fired once.

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Teele Square fire displaces residents



Courtesy of the Somerville Fire Department

Five aerial ladders were extended to the roof for use by firefighters working to gain control of the fire, which rapidly spread above third floor ceilings.

By NATHAN METCALF

A five-alarm fire that tore through a mixed-use building in Somerville’s Teele Square on Wednesday, Sept. 30 displaced 43 residents and forced several businesses to close. Investigators suspect the blaze was electrical in origin, according to Somerville Fire Chief Charles Breen.

The fire broke out shortly before 5 p.m. at 1137-1147 Broadway, a three-story brick building containing 32 apartments above several ground-floor businesses. All occupants escaped safely, though several firefighters sustained minor injuries. Two cats were also rescued.

Wednesday’s blaze occurred almost 15 years after another major fire destroyed a commercial building across Broadway during an October snowstorm. The three-alarm fire on Oct. 29, 2011, began at Hawk Cleaners and damaged several neighboring businesses and a Somerville police substation. Investigators subsequently ruled the fire accidental but could not determine its precise cause. The building was demolished, and the lot has remained vacant ever since.

In a striking coincidence, Somerville’s Zoning Board of Appeals was scheduled to consider a hotel proposal for the site of the 2011 fire on Wednesday evening, as firefighters battled another major blaze directly across the street. The two properties share the same owners: Laxmi and Jharana Pradhan, who are seeking zoning variances to construct an eight-story, 93-foot tall hotel on the long-vacant lot. The proposal would replace a previously approved six-story hotel whose permit has since expired. In their application, the owners cite suspected soil contamination from a former dry cleaner and redevelopment costs as reasons for seeking permission to build a larger hotel.

According to Middlesex South Registry of Deeds records, Laxmi and Jharana Pradhan, trustees of the Shree Ganesh Realty Trust, purchased the building damaged on Wednesday for \$4.5 million in 2005. Somerville assessor records value the property at approximately \$3.1 million for

fiscal 2026, based on its value as of Jan. 1, 2025, well before the fire.

Firefighters at the Teele Square station, located directly across the street from Wednesday’s blaze, had just returned from another emergency response when they heard the building’s fire alarm and spotted smoke rising from its roof at 4:50 p.m., Breen said in an email Friday.

Within seven minutes, the department had called a second alarm. A third followed at 5:03 p.m., a fourth at 5:09 p.m. and a fifth at 5:42 p.m. Firefighters remained at the scene until 10:50 p.m., six hours after the fire was first reported.

The blaze appears to have originated in the building’s cockloft, a large, open space between the third-floor ceilings and the underside of the roof. Breen said the exposed, dry wood in the century-old building allowed the flames to spread rapidly throughout the space, making the fire particularly difficult to extinguish.

“The only way to extinguish this type of fire is to cut through the roof from above and pull down the ceilings from below,” Breen said. “This fire was extremely labor intensive due to all the work needed to expose and extinguish the fire.”

Firefighters extended five aerial ladders to the roof and deployed multiple hose lines on the third floor. Departments from Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Lexington, Malden, Medford, Revere and Watertown assisted in battling the blaze, while firefighters from Stoneham, Waltham and Winchester provided emergency coverage elsewhere in Somerville. The Medford Fire Department also deployed a drone to provide aerial visibility and help coordinate the response.

The building’s third floor and roof suffered heavy fire, smoke and water damage, while the lower floors sustained extensive water damage. All 32 apartments are currently uninhabitable, and Breen said Somerville Inspectional Services will determine the building’s future status.

The fire also shut down several ground-floor businesses,

including Teele Square Coin Laundry, the Happy Crab and Masala restaurants, Blue Moon smoke shop and Al-Aswad Dental, according to the Cambridge/Somerville Independent.

The city and the American Red Cross are working to secure temporary accommodations and provide assistance to the 43 displaced residents. On Thursday, Somerville announced that it had activated its Emergency Displacement Fund, administered in partnership with the Somerville Homeless Coalition, to provide direct financial assistance to residents affected by the fire.

The city is requesting financial donations rather than physical goods. Contributions can be made through the Somerville Homeless Coalition’s Emergency Displacement Fund.

Cameras

From Page 1

“For many women, people of color, trans and nonbinary people, international students and undocumented people, surveillance cameras are not an assurance of safety,” said Catherine D’Ignazio, an associate professor of urban science and planning at MIT. “You could say to the AI interface, ‘Show me all the people wearing a hijab who are moving around campus on this particular day.’ Boom, searchable video footage.”

MIT says it does not currently use AI to monitor or analyze surveillance footage and is not considering facial recognition. It is exploring more limited uses of AI, including reviewing footage more efficiently during investigations and identifying serious safety events in real time. The new cameras are intended to close gaps in the existing network.

“This type of surveillance is going to have a chilling effect on a campus culture of creativity, of silliness, of hacking,” said Tanalís Padilla, a professor of history at MIT, referring to the Institute’s tradition of elaborate, often technically challenging practical jokes.

Faculty have pressed administrators for more information for months. MIT subsequently convened an advisory group of faculty, staff, students and postdocs, which began meeting at the start of the academic year, to consider whether and how AI should be used with the cameras. D’Ignazio said she and several other concerned faculty members sought



Nathan Metcalf

MIT history professor Tanalís Padilla gives a thumbs-up beside a surveillance camera decorated with rhinestones during a protest against the university’s expanding camera network Tuesday.

seats on the group but were not selected. She also criticized its limited mandate: The group can advise MIT on the potential use of AI but does not have decision-making authority or the ability to reconsider the camera expansion itself.

The group’s discussions will be informed partly by a recently completed pilot with Ambient.ai, according to MIT. The pilot used staged scenarios to explore how real-time alerts could identify specific safety events. MIT says the pilot has concluded and all data from it have been purged from Ambient.ai’s portal.

The concerns over surveillance come amid recently heightened restrictions and enforcement surrounding protests at MIT.

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Inventory as of October 5th 2027

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CONDOS	SINGLES	MULTIS
178	33	27

SOMERVILLE		
CONDOS	SINGLES	MULTIS
142	27	66

Source: MLS PIN statistics for “Market Pulse”

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EDUCATION

MCAS gaps show challenge for Cambridge schools

By JULIA CARPI

Widening racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps on state test scores were a main concern of the Cambridge School Committee’s Tuesday night discussion, where administrators presented on this year’s humanities data.

State testing data from last school year was released late September and revealed that while Cambridge’s overall scores increased, achievement gaps widened and some district schools significantly outperformed others.

The focus of Tuesday night’s meeting was data from ELA tests, where 59% of students in grades 3-8 met or exceeded grade level expectations, and civics tests, where 51% of those students met or exceeded expectations. That data improved from last year while the statewide trend moved in the opposite direction. But high school ELA scores declined this year, also mirroring the state trend.

“We’re not where we want to be as a school system or where we have a moral obligation to be as a school system, given the resources at our disposal,” Superintendent David Murphy said at the meeting. He added that “there is a responsibility to recognize and to celebrate the things that we are doing well.”

Achievement gaps widened this year across racial and socioeconomic lines, which raised concern from some committee members and public commenters. The ELA achievement gap between White and Black students in grades 3-8 grew by one percentage point from last year, for example, and that gap widened even more in STEM subjects.

Similar disparities exist across socioeconomic lines. While students from low-income house-



The Cambridge School Committee’s office at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

holds in Cambridge scored nine points higher than the state average, students from other income brackets were 23 points higher, said Jennifer Amigione, the district’s director of data, assessment & accountability. She presented the data at Tuesday’s meeting alongside Chief Academic Officer Heather Francis.

Concerns voiced

During public comment, district parent Larry Kim said he was “shocked” to see how “unremarkable” the data was. Another parent, Sebastian Arnold, called the data “more concerning” the more he looked into it.

The effects of the pandemic also highlight the achievement gap. Low-income students in grades 3-8 are nine percentage points below pre-2019 ELA levels and Black students are nine points below

pre-2019 levels. Non-low income students, on the other hand, are five points above data from before the pandemic and White students are six points above.

Committee Member Elizabeth Hudson said she wanted more clarity around a plan to address gaps. “We can’t keep piling Band-Aids on,” Hudson said.

Tier one instruction (classroom teaching), was a topic of discussion, with Murphy asking, “How do we make sure that our tier one instruction is such that it is reaching a broader swath of students and not overly relying on interventions?”

Administrators and Committee Members also discussed targeting supports earlier at students falling behind.

Strategic plan will target gaps

Addressing achievement gaps

will be an element of the district’s next four-year strategic plan, according to an update on the plan given by Committee Vice-Chair Caitlin Dube during the meeting.

The schools with the lowest overall MCAS performance — Fletcher Maynard Academy, Haggerty School, Graham and Parks, King Open, and Cambridge Street Upper School — were also discussed. These schools have trailed in achievement data in recent years, with 50% or less of students in grades 3-8 meeting expectations in ELA last year, for instance.

Committee Member Richard Harding focused his concerns on disparities across the district’s schools. “We have four schools that half of the students, young people in those schools, are not meeting the standard,” Harding said. “This is a school on fire anywhere else in the world.”

The results from last year represent the first full testing cycle in which passing the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was not a graduation requirement. Supporters of the 2024 ballot question that removed the requirement argued that it placed disproportionate emphasis on standardized testing.

Other supplements to MCAS testing exist within the district, like i-Ready exams, which were rolled out in 2022 and are administered three times a year. Unlike the MCAS, i-Ready exams feature adaptive questions, meaning they are adjusted throughout an exam session based on a student’s responses.

A relationship between the district’s MCAS and i-Ready data exists, Murphy said at the meeting, but is much more tightly correlated in math due to the nature of the MCAS writing requirements.

The committee will hear from administrators about math and science MCAS data at their next regular meeting Oct. 20.

Other updates to come out of the Oct. 6 meeting of the School Committee included:

➤ The committee’s two student

representatives gave an update on high-school happenings, like the beginning of Senior Spirit Week, where seniors dress in festive clothing and participate in school spirit activities. The PSAT will be administered on Friday Oct. 9 and the National Honors Society will soon host its first hygiene drive with an updated volunteer policy. Some students have also organized a petition to bring back the high school girls’ basketball coach who was recently let go.

➤ A formal recommendation from the Superintendent on the future of 158 Spring Street will likely be issued before a special meeting of the committee later in October.

➤ On-time rates for buses are better than they were at the start of the previous school year, Murphy said, but the district continues to face issues, primarily with afternoon drop-off delays. These are being addressed with individual bus vendors.

➤ A motion requiring disciplinary consequences from the Superintendent against unauthorized drug possession or use by students failed 3-4. While the motion’s sponsors, Members Hudson and Harding, wanted more direct consequences to vaping on school grounds, opponents of the motion highlighted uncertainty about the policy’s practical effects.

➤ The committee approved a \$29,480 contract with Edia Learning, an artificial intelligence math instructional program, in a 4-3 vote. Proponents of the tool spoke to its ability to provide live feedback to students, and emphasized that it was optional. Joel Peterson, a math teacher in the district, shared results of a survey that showed that half of the 22 math teachers at CRLS have Edia in their classrooms, but seven of the 11 have stopped using the technology.

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pepper spray bringing in psych help... says

Spicy lobster spaghetti at Geppetto

By Tom Meek September 15, 2025

Is lobster best left pretty much on its tasty own? A strong argument to the contrary is on the menu at Geppetto. Will it serve the Italian concept.

Cambridge's police commissioner says police won't use pepper spray again in a situation like this. On Thursday, Sept. 12, with a police officer suspect, which the chief of police said took place in the upper floors of a multifamily building on Broadway and forced out residents.

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Libraries and school needs

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Sculptures by Marcus W. Clarke up at Gallery 263 give an irreverent take on American Christianity

By Claire Ogden September 14, 2025

■ Do you know of a business opening or closing in Cambridge or Somerville? Send news to business@cambridgeday.com.

BUSINESS

Cambridge teen graduates from lemonade stands to startups

By NATHAN METCALF

Kavi Kumar is only 17, but has been an entrepreneur for almost as long as he can remember.

Growing up in Cambridge, he sold lemonade along Memorial Drive on car-free Sundays. By fifth grade, he was printing and selling custom T-shirts. Snow shoveling, babysitting, sneaker wholesaling and car detailing followed. This summer, ahead of the World Cup, he and a friend sourced soccer jerseys from overseas.

“Me and him sold jerseys on the streets of Boston, and we made pretty good money,” Kumar said. “I’m just always thinking about the next thing.”

But even after years of running his own businesses, the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School senior discovered he still had plenty to learn when he enrolled in TiE Boston’s Young Entrepreneurs Academy, or TYE, last year. Kumar had wanted to join the program since watching his older sister participate years earlier and had previously attended a TiE business camp for middle school students.

TiE, short for The Indus Entrepreneurs, was founded in Silicon Valley in 1992 by a group of pre-



Courtesy of Ramesh Kumar

Kavi Kumar (second from right) stands with his Newsreel teammates following their final pitch at TiE Boston’s Young Entrepreneurs Academy competition in May.

dominantly Indian entrepreneurs seeking to support one another through networking and mentorship. The organization has since expanded beyond its South Asian roots, and TYE is open to high school students of all backgrounds.

The eight-month program, which was founded in Boston 22 years ago and has since expanded to roughly 32 cities worldwide, brings together high school students from across Greater Boston to develop startups under the guidance of experienced entrepre-

neurs, culminating in a May competition where they pitch their businesses to judges.

Kumar led a team developing Newsreel, an app designed to assign political bias ratings to short-form news videos, similar to what Ground News does with articles. He came up with the idea after realizing how much news he and his friends consumed through social media.

“Social media shows you what you want to see. It’s like an echo chamber. I saw a big problem with that,” Kumar said. “If I saw a video

about maybe more of a theory than an actual fact, a few videos later, it might be something that’s even more of a theory, and then the next video might be like a full-on conspiracy theory.”

From idea to prototype

Kumar recalled bringing things he’d encountered online to the family dinner table, only to have his parents challenge their accuracy. “I was kind of conflating it with the real stuff,” he said.

Suspecting other teenagers had similar experiences, Kumar and his teammates interviewed roughly 50 people, including friends and an uncle who writes for the Detroit Free Press, before developing their product.

That research reflects TYE’s hands-on approach, which emphasizes identifying problems and testing solutions before building a business. According to Adam Carter, TiE Boston’s director of programs, teams of three to five students work with mentors and industry professionals.

Learning to lead

As Newsreel’s CEO and chief technology officer, Kumar was responsible for developing the app while coordinating with

teammates juggling schoolwork and other commitments. Creating Newsreel required him to rely on others. “I got that leadership experience before even graduating high school,” Kumar said. “That’s like a real world experience, not just doing a group project or something.” Kumar’s team developed a working prototype, but it did not win the final competition, and he has since put Newsreel on hold.

But his father, Ramesh, himself an entrepreneur and founder of healthcare technology company Zaki Point Health, said he has noticed two major changes in his son: a more systematic approach to developing business ideas and an understanding of collaboration.

“Prior to [Newsreel], he was very much, ‘okay, I will go and do this, and I can do this.’ But this time round, there were frustrations,” Ramesh said. He thinks his son learned that “there’s a difference between working with people and just working through them.”

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EVENTS OCT 8 TO OCT 22

Monday, Oct. 12, Noon
Sanders Theatre, 45 Quincy St., near Harvard Square.

Half-Earth at Ten: Honoring a Legacy of Hope

\$20. On Indigenous Peoples Day, the theme of “Half-Earth at Ten: Honoring a Legacy of Hope,” explores works of naturalists past and present and insights from art, literature, the humanities and Indigenous communities.

Sunday, Oct. 11, Noon to 6 p.m.
2 Brattle Square.

Annual Oktoberfest & Honk Festival

Free. Harvard Square’s Oktoberfest features food from all over the world, arts, crafts, vintage goods, free samples as well as 25 HONK! bands from around the country will march from Davis Square to Harvard Square. New this year, Oktoberfest boasts beer gardens hosted by Alden & Harlow, El Jefe’s Taqueria, Charlie’s Kitchen, and a wine garden presented by Commonwealth Wine School and Schmitt Sohne & Relax.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 6 p.m.
Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle St., Harvard Square.

Anand Giridharadas and Junot Díaz talk about “Man in the Mirror: Hope, Struggle, and Belonging in an American City”

\$45. Anand Giridharadas, New York Times bestselling author and a former foreign correspondent and columnist for The New York Times, discusses his story of two men: Jordan Neely, a homeless man known in better days for his Michael Jackson impersonations, and Daniel Penny, an ex-Marine who had moved to the big city seeking more than Long Island could offer. They collided in a New York subway car. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Junot Díaz joins.

Friday, Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Regattabar, 1 Bennett St., Harvard Square.

Listen To This: Celebrating 100 Years of Miles Davis

\$31 to \$42. Performing classics from jazz great Miles Davis are Jerome Deupree on drums; Dave Bryant on keyboards; Russ Gershon, woodwinds and organ; Rick Barry, percussion; Bryan Murphy, trumpet; Rick McLaughlin, bass; J. Johnson, guitar and Todd Brunel, bass clarinet

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7 p.m.
Lou’s, 13 Brattle St.

Latin Dance Night

\$15 to \$20. Start the night with a beginner-friendly salsa dance lesson, then stick around for an evening of social dancing with DJ Condori. No partner required.

Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave., Spring Hill.

Friday, Oct. 16, 6 to 10 p.m.

Vintage After Dark: a Halloween Social & Market

Free entry. This night of vintage includes Y2K finds, local vendors, music, dancing, handmade art, a costume contest and live DJ.

Thursday, Oct. 22, 8 p.m.

Boston Circus Guild Presents: Cirque of the Dead

\$40 and 18-plus. Join Cirque of the Dead as they go deep in the forest for a night of stories around the campfire, where flickering shadows can make you wonder what might be watching from beyond the firelight.

Sunday, Oct. 18, 6:30 to 7:45 p.m.
Lilypad, 1353 Cambridge St., Inman Square.

Charlie Kohlhase’s (Expanded) Explorers Club Plays the Music of John Tchicai

\$20. The Explorers Club will record John Tchicai compositions from his days in the 60’s with the New York Contemporary Five and the New York Art Quartet, from the 70’s, 80’s, 90’s in December and January. The expanded lineup is led by saxophonist Charlie Kohlhase with 12 other performers.

Monday, Oct. 12, 7 to 9 p.m.
Aeronaut Brewing, 14 Tyler St., near Union Square in Ward 2.

Millennial Speed-Dating (Monogamous)

\$65. This event is centered on people ages 30-45 who want to get off the dating apps and meet someone in real life. There will be “big talk” conversation prompts to get you started and structure to make sure that you talk to people and that it’s not awkward.

Tuesday, Oct. 20, 6 to 8 p.m.
Lamplighter CX, 110 N. First St., North Point.

Pottery with a Purpose: Halloween Edition

\$75. You’ll learn the pottery basics and leave with a one-of-a-kind piece (or two) you built by hand. Costumes and experience optional.

Saturday, Oct. 10, 3 to 8 p.m.
Somerville High School, 81 Highland Ave., Central Hill.

Arabic Heritage Celebration

Free. The Center for Arabic Culture and Somerville’s Office of Immigrant Affairs hosts CAC’s 12th annual festival and book fair featuring readings from Arabic authors while enjoying Arabic food, music and art.

Monday, Oct. 19, 7 p.m.
Lamplighter Brewing, 284 Broadway, The Port.

Indie Movie Monday: “Get Out”

RSVP. This 2017 American psychological horror film was written, co-produced and directed by Jordan Peele in his directorial debut. The plot follows a young Black man who uncovers shocking secrets when he meets the family of his White girlfriend.

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Cambridge Main Library, 449 Broadway, Mid-Cambridge.

Fuchsia Dunlop presents: Five Tastes: Delicious Recipes for Chinese Flavors

RSVP. Fuchsia Dunlop, James Beard Award-winning author “The Food of Sichuan,” discusses her new cookbook.

Friday, Oct. 9, 7:15 p.m.
The Comedy Studio, 5 John F. Kennedy St., Harvard Square.

Comedian Bobcat Goldthwait

\$39. Comedian Bobcat Goldthwait first appeared on the David Letterman Show at the age of 20 and has an ongoing career as a writer, director, actor, voice actor and stand-up. He has starred in numerous HBO/Showtime specials and is well-known for his roles in “Scrooged” with Bill Murray and as Zed in the “Police Academy” franchise. Also performing on Saturday, Oct. 10.

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WILD THINGS

How creatures weather a storm

By JEANINE FARLEY

That early fall nor'easter we had recently brought up the question: How did critters survive days of wind and rain?

Consider some of the creatures we frequently encounter in our neighborhoods: the birds in our trees and at our feeders, the squirrels and chipmunks in our backyards, the earthworms underfoot, and the bees on our flowers. When a nor'easter arrives, different species take different approaches to riding out the storm.

Some birds, including chickadees and nuthatches and owls, roost in cavities and probably waited out the worst of the storm in holes in trees. Cardinals, sparrows, hawks and blackbirds fluffed out their feathers to trap air to stay warm, hunkered down in vegetation or a tree away from the wind, and conserved their energy. Small birds, especially, have limited energy reserves, so they may have foraged when conditions let up a bit.

Gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) would adopt a similar strategy, huddling in their nests, called dreys, built of leafy branches in the fork of a tree. An inner layer of moss and pine needles insulated them from wind and rain. If they were able to find a tree cavity, they waited out the storm in the cavity, but if not, the drey had to suffice.

Chipmunks, however, would retreat to their underground



Jeanine Farley

A male northern cardinal with fluffed out feathers to better endure a storm.



twilightartpictures

A nightcrawler diffuses oxygen through its skin.

tunnels, which can be 30 feet long and contain a sleeping chamber, food-storage rooms, spare rooms and escape tunnels at varying depths. Heavy rain can flood portions of their burrows, but there is usually a dry chamber. Like humans, chipmunks hunkered down with a pantry of food nearby. Unlike humans, they probably weren't making French toast or streaming "The Pitt."

You might have heard that earthworms (*Lumbricus terrestris*) come to the surface during a rainstormrainstorm, so they don't drown. A person can drown when water enters the lungs, but an earthworm can't, because it doesn't have lungs. Instead, oxygen from the air or water dissolves into the slimy mucus covering a worm's skin. Once the oxygen dissolves, it passes into the worm's bloodstream.

So, an earthworm needs to stay damp. If its mucus covering dries out, it cannot acquire oxygen. For

this reason, worms spend most of their time underground, away from sun, heat and dry air. Lab studies have found that some worms can live for many weeks submerged in water. A submerged nightcrawler, for example, can survive on average 137 days without food as long as it is in oxygen-rich water. Of course, keeping oxygen levels high in a laboratory is easy. In the real world, microorganisms decompose organic matter in stagnant water, which



Dean Cerrati

A female red-winged blackbird in the rain.

consumes dissolved oxygen. In oxygen-poor water, these same worms died within 36 hours.

The soil where nightcrawlers live can become oxygen-poor quickly. Too much water displaces air pores in the soil. Air contains more oxygen than water, so it is easier for worms to get oxygen from air than from water. To rid their habitat of excess water, nightcrawlers dig vertical tunnels. During heavy rains, nightcrawl-



Lee

A chipmunk gathers an acorn for its winter larder.

ers add substantially more vertical tunnels, which helps water flow deeper into the ground, preventing waterlogged soil. In one experiment, nightcrawlers made 2.4 times as many vertical tunnels during intense rain as during a normal rainfall. Nightcrawlers also sometime block the entrances to their tunnels, preventing rain from getting into them.

Some nightcrawlers, however, take advantage of rainstorms. It is a good time to travel across the surface of the soil, especially at night, to locate mates or start new burrows.

Bees, or at least the mated queens of many bumble bee species, have already dug into the ground one to six inches where they enter diapause (dormancy) and overwinter in a small chamber. They stayed put during the heavy rain. Studies have shown

that common eastern bumblebee queens (*Bombus impatiens*) can remain submerged for a week and still survive to emerge in the spring to start a new colony. However, overwintering queens reduce the likelihood of being flooded by selecting well-drained overwintering sites.

Most bumblebees we see fly-



George Schmiesing

A squirrel uses a tree cavity for protection.



© Claire O'Neill

A drenched bumblebee during our recent nor'easter, Sept. 29.

ing about in October in our area are common eastern bumblebees. Hardy males do not return to their nests at all but spend their days on flowers, sleeping there at night and foraging during the day. If you had peered into flowers during this storm, you might have seen drenched bumblebees clinging tightly to a flower, leaf or stem, sheltering as best they could from the rain and wind. Once the storm was over, the somewhat bedraggled bees reemerged. After a period of drying out and warming up, they went back to work as if nothing had happened.

The next time a nor'easter keeps you indoors, consider what is happening just outside your rattling windows. A chickadee may be tucked into a tree cavity while a chipmunk noshes underground. A nightcrawler may be digging new tunnels while a bedraggled bumblebee clings to a flower. These creatures have been weathering New England storms for thousands of years — all without umbrellas, weather apps, radiators, or French toast.

FILM

LOCAL FOCUS



A still from “Once Upon a Time in Harlem.”

Film foliage season returns to Boston

By OSCAR GOFF

It’s fall, when cinemas are suddenly flooded with more capital-G Great Cinema in two months than the rest of the year combined, as studios angling for Oscar votes trot out their most prestigious offerings.

Fortunately, we have the tireless programmers at the Independent Film Festival Boston. Every October, IFFBoston takes up residence at the Brattle Theatre for its Fall Focus series, preview screenings of some of the year’s most anticipated films. This year’s Fall Focus again is broken into two separate programs bookending the month of October, the first of which kicks off on Thursday. To help you navigate this year’s offerings, Cambridge Day has whipped up this handy guide, with one pick from each day of the festival’s first leg. Follow our lead (and further investigate the series’ remaining offerings) and you’ll almost certainly see some award-winners.

1. “Possible Love” directed by Lee Chang-dong

Among the most anticipated films of the season is “Possible Love,” Korean filmmaker Lee Chang-dong’s follow-up to his 2018 international breakout “Burning.” An ambitious documentary filmmaker (Cho Yeo-jeong, “Parasite”) sets her camera on a couple (Sul Kyung-gu and Jeon Do-yeon, both of last year’s “Good News”) whose lives have been shattered following a labor dispute, only to find the artistic and personal lines between documentarian and subjects begin to blur. “Burning” ranks among the most acclaimed films of the 2010s (it topped our list of the top ten films of 2018), making “Possible Love” an instant must-watch. It should also be noted that it’s being distributed by Netflix, so it may be a good idea to catch it on the big screen while you can. (Thursday, 10/8, 7:00pm)

2. “Once Upon a Time in Harlem” directed by William Greaves and David Greaves

Though overlooked in his lifetime, director William Greaves has become the subject of renewed interest in the decade since his death. His films, such as 1968’s “Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One,” freely merge cinema verité realism with experimental theater, and he was among the few African American documentary filmmakers to rise to prominence in the ’60s and ’70s. His (presumably) final feature, “Once Upon a Time in Harlem,” may be the most ambitious of his lifetime. In 1972, Greaves assembled and filmed a meeting of the surviving members of the Harlem Renaissance (including Eubie Blake, Aaron Douglas and Arna Bontemps) at Duke Ellington’s Harlem

townhouse, then stored the footage with instructions for it to be completed and released following his death. The resulting feature, newly reconstructed by Greaves’ son David, is an essential document of both a historic assembly and a singular artist. (Friday, 10/9, 6:00pm)

3. “All of a Sudden” directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi

For his latest film, director Ryusuke Hamaguchi (whose “Drive My Car” was our top film of 2021) travels from Tokyo to Paris for another sprawling yet deeply humane character study. Virginie Efira plays Marie-Lou, the director of an elder-care center, who bonds with one of her youngest clients, Mari (Tao Okamoto), a theater director battling terminal brain cancer. Hamaguchi is one of the great directors of actors working today, and “All of a Sudden” looks to be yet another masterful showcase of his work; Efira and Okamoto shared Best Actress honors at this year’s Cannes Film Festival, and many of their co-stars are actual patients of the facility at which the film was shot. (Saturday, 10/10, 12:00pm)

4. “Iron Boy” directed by Louis Clichy

Some of the most exciting work in animated films comes from far beyond the bounds of Disney and Dreamworks For “Iron Boy,” Pixar alum Louis Clichy leaves behind slick computer animation for an impressionistic, hand-painted style, telling the tender coming-of-age story of a young boy wracked with health issues in the farms of southern France. Drawn from Clichy’s own experiences and starring his son, Gary, as the voice of young Christophe, “Iron Boy” is the sort of intimate story which rarely gets told in any form in contemporary Hollywood, let alone in an animated feature. (Sunday, 10/11, 12:00pm)

5. “Wild Horse Nine” directed by Martin McDonagh

The first leg of Fall Focus ends with the latest caustic black comedy from Irish filmmaker Martin McDonagh (“The Banshees of Inisherin”). Sam Rockwell and onetime Cambridge resident John Malkovich play a pair of bickering 1970s CIA agents who stumble into a web of intrigue while on assignment among the stone heads of Easter Island. Filled with McDonagh’s trademark rapid-fire banter and backed by an irresistible supporting cast (including Steve Buscemi, Parker Posey, and Tom Waits), “Wild Horse Nine” promises to be a jolt of energy among this year’s award contenders. (Tuesday, 10/13, 8:00pm)

For the full Fall Focus schedule check out IFFBoston’s website, iffboston.org.

REVIEWS



Dakota Johnson as Lowen Ashleigh in “Verity.”

Faux ‘Verity’

The movie version of “Verity,” Colleen Hoover’s hackneyed page lift of Daphne du Maurier’s great 1938 Gothic psycho thriller “Rebecca,” has an all-star cast that may not be enough to give the romance novelist a fourth box office success.

Some of that is due to the source material. Where du Maurier understood and gave shape to corrupt and conflicted souls, Hoover’s works play like soulless connect-the-dots exercises, and come off that way on screen. The script by Nick Antosca is unfortunately too loyal to Hoover’s novel, and director Michael Showalter (“The Big Sick” and “The Idea of You”) is merely a serviceable filmmaker with a knack for small, cloistered melodrama. (In contrast, du Maurier’s was adapted by Alfred Hitchcock, and won the Oscar for Best Picture.)

The cast, though, is an impressive assemblage, led by Anne Hathaway as the titular Verity Crawford, a wildly successful author who pens dark psychological thrillers by, for and about women (art imitating life?). It’s her fifth movie this year, and this is the one she’d probably hope people forget. Josh Hartnett plays her hunky husband and Dakota Johnson, who unfortunately regresses from her breakout in “The Lost Daughter” (2021) to her cinematic roots in the kinky sex nonsense “Fifty Shades of Grey” (2015).

Johnson’s Lowen Ashleigh is, like Verity, an author, but more literary. She’s also struggling financially; we meet her at a small independent bookstore in Manhattan reading to an audience of three. Later, as she’s packing up the apartment she’s being evicted from, her agent (Ismael Cruz Cordova) tells her of a big opportunity at publisher Hachette. Lowen dresses up and heads to the meeting, only to be spattered by blood when a cyclist is struck by a streaking car just feet away. Before she can even react, a chivalrous stranger (Hartnett) swoops in to literally give her the shirt off his back so she can go to her meeting. And after Lowen signs the NDA so she can learn about the offer, in walks Hartnett’s Jeremy, to tell her his wife, the famous author Verity, just had a car accident, is paralyzed and can’t speak. So Hachette wants to pay Lowen some good buck to ghost write Verity’s series.

Lowen, we learn, has just lost her mother and is financial duress as well as facing eviction, so the huge offer is a boon. The loss is also another superficial bonding point for Lowen and Jeremy,

whose daughter Harper (Sienna Kulovitz) drowned in a recent canoeing accident at the lake in Vermont where they live.

Under the deal, Lowen’s going to live there, too. The palatial abode, an architectural wonder with peaked glass gables, is perhaps the most alluring and engaging character in the film.

All this action happens in the first minutes of the film. Once we get to Vermont, we see a lot of Lowen pouring over Verity’s notes and manuscripts, while Jeremy performs the caring father/husband thing for the invalid Verity and their sheepish son, Crew (Brady Wagner) who survived the canoe tragedy.

Hathaway as Verity spends much of the film largely inert, either bed- or wheelchair-bound. It was sad to watch Hathaway, so entertaining this year in her other films, sitting on the thespian sideline when she is by far the best actor in the room. We do get some flashbacks of Verity looking fab as Lowen meanders through an autobiographical manuscript that she finds on a concealed thumb drive. But the text raises questions about Verity as mother and wife. It’s implied that certain tragedies might not have been accidental and her relationship not such a great romance.

Inevitably, sparks begin to kindle between Jeremy and Lowen, and this is where Johnson seamlessly steps into her “Grey” days, all pursed lips and soft doeish eyes tightly framed by Showalter and cinematog Jim Frohna. But even with a scene of her naked in a rustic stoneware bath fantasizing about Jeremy, it’s a stilted slog that yields little for the plot. Then, Lowen thinks she sees Verity move. Is she faking being an invalid, or is it just a trick of Lowen’s overactive imagination?

What follows is a tightly packed crescendo of “not everything is what you think it is” mishigas. Not all of it fits congruently, but neither did it in the book either. And after sitting through near two hours of titillation and tease with three vacuous souls who do nothing to earn our empathy, it doesn’t matter, because it turns out the joke’s on us. The press screening I attended had a public audience of ticket pass winners. Hoots and hollers rippled through the crowd like a wave effort at Fenway, when there should have been hush and gapes.



**Playing at Apple Cinemas
Cambridge, AMC Assembly Row 12
and Kendall Square Cinema**

Crowds flock to Charlie’s Kitchen sidewalk sale

By TOM MEEK

Hundreds of people came by Charlie’s Kitchen to buy memorabilia and support its co-owner, David Toraji Oshima. Charlie’s, a beloved dive bar in Harvard Square, closed earlier this year due to internal flooding from a dishwasher malfunction. Oshima started the “everything must go” sale to prepare for whatever happens next, which might include relaunching the restaurant and bar.

Re-opening, perhaps at a new location, depends on how a pending insurance claim plays out, since the damage and repair is estimated at near one million dollars. Oshima and partner Derek Luangrath own the bar and restaurant business, while the property is owned by Paul Overgaag, the previous proprietor of Charlie’s and the nearby Red House.

While Oshima hopes to restart, he said the sale was also meant to help to connect with the community and to preserve memories of the place. His sale was slated to start at 3 p.m. Saturday but there were dozens lined up at 1:30PM, which both warmed Oshima and overwhelmed him. “Today was way better than I thought,” Oshima said. “I told everybody 3 to 5, but I started setting up at 1, and by about 1:30, I had hundreds of people here supporting me.”

The crowds may have been bolstered by attendees at the Thai Market Festival that took place along nearby Brattle Square, but most who came seemed to be loyal patrons, there for nostalgia and keepsakes. Among the items for sale were beer taps, menus, the Charlie’s Beer Garden sign, the retro classic bar stools, beer buckets and coasters.

A beaming Tracy Breen scored some beer koozies and said “I used to work at Bailey’s Ice Cream in Harvard Square in the ’80s and came to Charlie’s Kitchen all the time. It was my favorite place to come and have a drink, and I wanted to get some memories.”

Similarly, Tristan Dalbey and David Schmitt, who are seniors at Harvard and on the swim team, said they were “bummed” it had closed.

“We came by every Tuesday night for karaoke,” said Dalbey. “It’s a special place. Everyone, all the staff, was so nice. It’s sad to see.” They bought beer taps and a beer bucket to support the business.

The money raised from the sidewalk sale will help Oshima and Luangrath in their effort to keep Charlie’s alive. “My goal,” Oshima said, “has been and always will be to keep it going for another 75 years, no matter the location.”

That would please Patrick Harry, a bartender from Medford, who snared a beer sign at the sale. “They’ve seen me at my best and my worst,” he said. “So, it feels cool to be able to grab a piece of the merch and help support them a little bit.” Earlier this year, Oshima and his team raised approximately



Tom Meek

David Oshima inside Charlie’s Kitchen.

\$25,000 dollars to help staff who had to suddenly transition via a GoFundMe campaign. Oshima said he put out only a tenth of the inventory out for sale Saturday, and would continue it Sunday and the following weekend, if he still has items to sell and there is no sudden change with the insurance claim or the property’s designation.

Oshima is a Somerville native

who grew up going to Charlie’s. After spending time in Japan learning judo and attending college in Hawaii, he became intrigued by those cultures’ cuisines and when he came back to the area he worked at Café Sushi, Yume Ga Arukara and Yume Wo Katara before opening Cornerstone, in a location that had long been R.F. O’Sullivan & Son. He

converted the classic burger joint to a Japanese and Hawaiian gastro pub with dishes like the Big Island comfort classic, moco loco (loosely akin to a classic Salisbury steak) and tuna steak frites. Then in 2024, when Overgaag wanted to step away from the 75-year-old business, Oshima and partner Derek Luangrath jumped at the opportunity to take over Charlie’s, adding their infused flavors to its classic menu. But then came the fateful night in January when the dishwasher malfunctioned, halting operations at Charlie’s.

Founded by Charlie Lambrose in 1951 as a diner, Overgaag bought the business in 1996 and added craft beers, live music and opened the Beer Garden in 2010. The Beer Garden lot, owned by Banker Real Estate and leased to Overgaag, and then Oshima, was reclaimed by the

owner earlier this summer and is currently for sale.

Charlie’s is the latest longstanding Harvard Square establishments to close. Whitney’s closed in Dec. 2024 after 71 years due to a court dispute with its landlord. Meanwhile, the Red House also closed, when Overgaag transferred the restaurant to his daughter Molly and son-in-law, Ryan Lindbergh, who are currently reimagining it as the Cox Hicks Club. They had plans to open it this summer, but the structure is still under construction.

Besides cleaning out Charlie’s, Oshima is keeping busy helping open the Curry Chapter around the corner at 16-18 Eliot Street. “I’m not doing this just for me,” Oshima said of the sale and future hopes, “I’m doing it for people in Cambridge.”

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BOUNCERS

by John Godber

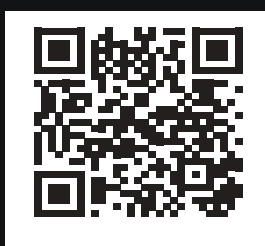


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CULTURE

Meowfest

From Page 1

Some people brought their feline companions in backpacks, in strollers and on leashes. A few cat-friendly dogs even joined the tour.

Mariah Mitchell traveled from Revere to do the cat tour with her kitty, Miso, who looked out at passersby from the cat bubble backpack Mitchell wore, his first experience doing so.

“I wanted him to make friends,” Mitchell said. “He seems like he wants to make friends. So I was like, ‘I can bring you to make friends with other kitties.’”

Chloe Hinrichs and Ramsey Hilton of Watertown pushed their Siamese cat, Andrew “Andy,” through the crowd in a stroller as people stopped to say hello.

Asked why they brought Andy on the tour, Hinrichs said, “He’s an adventure kitty. He goes kayaking. He goes camping. He goes hiking. So we’re like, ‘well, why can’t he go on a cat stroll?’”

After the walk ended, everyone was invited to the Meowfest “After-purrry” for free pizza and tacos, a storytelling booth, a cat fashion show, a cat clothing swap, cat-themed crafts and activities, and the Altar of the Divine Feline, where people were welcome to make imaginative offerings.

Meowfest was the brainchild of Rayna Jhaveri, an artist and cat lover who has lived in Cambridge for 13 years. A few months ago,

she threw a neighborhood birthday party for her cat Bambi and invited the mayor. Siddiqui told Jhaveri she was planning a Cat Tour for September and invited her to collaborate.

“The inspiration behind this was bringing people out,” Jhaveri said. “After COVID, we haven’t really learned how to be together again. I think events like these are opportunities outside of going to restaurants and bars and things. We’re going from consumer economy to community economy.”

Siddiqui said her idea for the cat walk was exactly that: to gather people in a free, accessible and lighthearted way, something she feels like has been important in post-pandemic Cambridge.

“I was looking for a way to bring people together, and I had seen that cat tours were happening around the country,” Siddiqui said. “I had been planning this, and I knew it was something I wanted to do as I entered my third term.”

After the heavy turnout, the mayor said she hopes the tour can become an annual event.

“It’s nice to do something just purely fun that brings people together,” Siddiqui said. “This is a great way for people to meet each other, show their cats. You look at a cat and everyone is instantly happy.”

This story is part of a partnership between Cambridge Day and the Boston University Department of Journalism’s Newsroom program.

A month of meeting neighbors in Cambridge



Courtesy of the Cambridge Peace Commission

The Peace Commission partnered with the Cambridge KiOSK at Harvard Square on a series of events, including a snail mail station with local artist Karen Choi (left).

By HANNAH BRUESKE

In a month of meeting neighbors, an estimated 3,000 Cantabrigians gathered across 31 different events to share meals, send letters, watch movies and even connect with cats. It was all organized by the Cambridge Peace Commission in the name of connecting people across the community.

This year was the first time activities were dispersed over an entire month. The Peace Commission has in past years held Meet Your Neighbor day and Meet Your Neighbor week. It moved to the longer schedule in part because this September was punctuated by a national holiday and multiple holy days.

The conclusion was a colorful block party turned community gathering that even a nor’easter couldn’t tame and the first ever Cambridge Cat Tour (see story page 1).

Many of the events aimed at helping residents connect with people they may not otherwise have the chance to under the theme Stories We Share: The Courage to Connect, said Saffana Anwar, executive director of the Peace Commission and one of the primary organizers of the month’s events.

“Especially when the whole ICE situation came around, I think that interest [to connect] came into play,” said Anwar. Foreign-born residents make up nearly 30% of the population in Cambridge, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than double the national average.

Ten city departments collaborated to host events at different times of day, in different locations and with different expectations for socializing, to make them as accessible as possible.

To incentivize attendance and city exploration, participants

were given a passport to collect stamps in, which also included challenges to host events in their own neighborhoods.

At a snail mail workshop co-hosted Sept. 23 by the KiOSK in Harvard Square, people shared their stories of being new to Cambridge and seeking community as those gathered wrote postcards to loved ones or someone far away. “People were making such beautiful connections and they were coming from all over,” said Lizette Sta. Maria, program manager at the Peace Commission.

The King Open School hosted a screening on Sept. 20 of “A Man Named Otto,” a movie about a

ers came to get their MYNM passport stamped. Sana Firdous came because she was invited by Anwar, her literal neighbor. Firdous brought Akanksha Vasantp, a friend new to Cambridge.

After the movie, one woman was crying tears of joy. She thanked organizers, saying the film stirred emotions about being a good neighbor.

Small things make somebody a good neighbor, Maria said, “Like, seeing someone on the street and saying hello to them ... not being a stranger.” Maria and Anwar hope the neighborliness they witnessed at events will continue, with the community taking the lead to keep the momentum



Courtesy of the Cambridge Peace Commission

The Map Club hosts a cyanotype print event of Cambridge neighborhoods during Meet Your Neighbor month.

grumpy widower forced to interact with the eccentric new family next door. Before the movie, attendees and volunteers gathered in the cafeteria to have a catered lunch and discuss how well they really knew their neighbors. Some saw the gathering by happenstance and stopped in to see what was going on, oth-

going and continue hosting their own events. Anwar said she felt during the month she saw how Cambridge had become more of a home for many people.

“Everybody has a story,” Anwar said. “Not that many people think about it, but I think pilgrims were also immigrants. It’s a story that does connect to all of us.”

Legal notice

■ Send legal ads and public notices at least six business days ahead of the intended publication date to advertising@cambridgeday.com with contact information that includes a contact name, phone number and address.

CAMBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

3-bedroom unit Turnover – #39, 9 Newtowne Ct, Cambridge, MA 02139

The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), as Owner and Managing Agent for its affiliate properties, is soliciting quotes from qualified vendors to renovate a residential unit at 9 Newtowne Ct in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by the Cambridge Housing Authority.

The work will include drywall, insulation, kitchen replacement, bathroom work, flooring, doors, ceiling refinishing, painting, and code compliance. The awarded contractor will be responsible for providing CHA with all labor, materials, and equipment necessary to complete the project in accordance with the terms of the specification outlined in the scope of work and the document issued by the Cambridge Housing Authority. The awarded contractor will also be responsible for installing new cabinets, painting ceilings

and completing all other work as detailed in the Scope of Work section. The construction period will be sixty (60) calendar days from Notice to Proceed.

The work is estimated to cost between \$15,000-\$30,000. Quotes are subject to M.G.L. Chapter 149 and to the Davis Bacon wage determination rates attached to the quote documents. A Payment Bond in the amount of fifty percent (50%) of the contract value will be required if the awarded contract exceeds \$25,000.

Quote forms and contract documents will be available beginning **Wednesday, October 7, 2026, after 10:00 AM**. Contractors requesting the quote specification can e-mail their request to Procurement at: procurement@cambridge-housing.org. There is no charge for the quote documents. Please include the company name, address, telephone number, and contact person in the request.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Pooja Valji Kerai**, D/o Valji Dhanji Kerai, resident of 1200 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **Pooja Valji Kerai to Pooja Kerai** and henceforth shall be known as Pooja Kerai for all purposes. Pooja Valji Kerai and Pooja Kerai are one and the same person.

SPORTS

CRLS runners cruise in dual meets



Maddie Regal

The boys' cross country team is off and running in its dual meet against Lincoln-Sudbury on Sept. 30.

By DAN EISNER

Boys' cross country: The Cambridge Rindge and Latin boys' cross-country team coasted to a win over Lincoln-Sudbury, 15-44, in a dual meet on Sept. 30. The top five runners and seven of the top ten were Falcons. Kieran Eichler finished first with a time of 12:43, followed by Thomas DeWitt in second in 12:48. The third-place finisher was Gael Berzin, with a time of 13:06.

Girls' cross-country: The girls' cross-country team also dominated Lincoln-Sudbury, winning 18-44, on Sept. 30. Neva Hartman crossed the finish line first with a time of 16:16, followed by Violet Smith, who took second in 16:27. Maeve Reynolds was fourth, running a 17:05.

Boys' crew: The boys' crew team had a strong afternoon on Sunday at the Textile River Regatta in Lowell. In the youth B four, Cambridge took the first four places; in the youth A four, the Falcons won the gold; and the youth novice eight finished in second.

The gold medal-winning youth B four crew of coxswain Vida Ristivojevic, Malcolm Funck, Milo

Sperry, Eli Garcia and Timur Cerimagic had a time of 17:04.21. The silver-medal-winning crew of coxswain Andrew Morland, Benjamin Scott, Eliot Samuel, Peter Giakoumis, and Rio Thielow finished with a time of 17:13.97. The bronze-medal-winning crew of coxswain Bennett Huggins, Eli Wu, Alejandro Artigas, Leo Soper, and Eli Schulz crossed the line with a time of 17:35.15.

In the men's youth A four, coxswain Son Schneider, Nicolas Karnath, Daniel Morland, Zeke Bittker, and Mateus Verdi won the gold after finishing with a time of 17:31.58. In the youth novice eight, coxswain Ethan Clutario Lopez, Maxwell McDonough, Jack Walsh, Saxo Holck-Colding-Grodal, Kian Buckpitt, Kholi Baker, Duncan Ramirez, Raghuveer Chaudhary, and Jason Talbot won the silver with a time of 19:02.90.

Girls' crew: The girls' crew team had two medal-winning teams at the Textile River Regatta. In the youth B four, the crew of coxswain Dahlia Abelson, Jordan Frishman, Marina Koyanis, Emma Gurjal and Beatrix Taylor won the gold with a time of 19:25.62. Youth A four won the silver after

coxswain Antonia Millan, Moira MacCarthy, Nova Bahlmann, Imogen Wu and Violet Finley crossed the line in 19:34.59.

Girls' volleyball: After dropping two straight matches, the girls' volleyball team (7-3) came back from a 2-0 deficit on Monday to defeat Wayland, 3-2. On Thursday, the Falcons lost to Lincoln-Sudbury, 3-1.

Against Wayland, Noah Beyer led with 17 kills and added 17 digs. Ellie Su was the team leader in digs with 27, and Indie Fray had more than half the team's assists, with 26, and recorded 13 digs. In the loss to Lincoln-Sudbury, Beyer registered 11 kills, and Abigail Fisher Seufert contributed another six kills.

Boys' soccer: The boys' soccer team suffered its first loss, 3-2 to Lincoln-Sudbury.

Girls' soccer: The girls' soccer team (3-5) lost to Newton South, 4-1, on Sept. 30. Naomi Baldwin scored the Falcons' lone goal, on an assist from Camille Mohnkern.

Football: The Falcons lost to Weston 21-0, dropping their record to 2-1.



Todd Sperry

In the youth B four at the Textile River Regatta, the crew of coxswain Dahlia Abelson, Jordan Frishman, Marina Koyanis, Emma Gurjal, and Beatrix Taylor took home the gold.

Volleyball set for success



Julian Fray

Junior Bianca Etkin serves the ball.

By DAN EISNER

The Cambridge Rindge and Latin girls' volleyball team entered this season with little doubt that this year's squad would have more success than last year's. Recognizing that the team had more experience and sharper skills, coach Jordan Roldan and the players were brimming with confidence.

They have not been disappointed. At 7-3 entering play on Thursday, this year's team has already exceeded last year's 5-13 team in wins and is currently ranked 17th in the MIAA Division 1 power rankings, after being ranked 12th earlier in the season, their highest ranking since the MIAA began its list in 2021.

"I expected this," said Roldan. "I was confident in my leaders, I was confident in the offseason work they put into it."

Players such as senior Noah Beyer, senior Talia Livny and junior Bianca Etkin honed skills such as passing, setting and digging by playing on club teams, participating in open gym practices, and attending clinics. But better skills at the individual level didn't

ing them feel bad and we're able to uplift each other more and just move on and, like, go on to the next point. We've been down by a lot of points and had really big comebacks and that's because we feel so close this year."

Just last week against Lexington, the Falcons translated their positive energy into on-court results. Down 14-3 in the third set, the Falcons began chipping away at the deficit, but needed a jolt. Junior Makenzie Chiumiento came off the bench to serve for Etkin, and sparked a rally of six straight points. Cambridge won the set, 25-21, to take a 2-1 lead in the match, which they won 3-1.

"You could just see how happy everyone was for her and how much energy she was bringing to the court," said Etkin. "Even though we were still down by quite a bit, it showed the positive energy that we can have because we're so connected this year."

This closeness has fostered a spirit of trust and cultivated confidence in one another. "I can trust that the other passer can cover their side of the court," said junior



Julian Fray

Freshman Indie Fray receives a pass.

guarantee success. The players needed to bring it all together as a team.

To help build that chemistry, the team organized a dinner after the first practice of the season. "It was the first team bonding we did," said Beyer, the team leader in kills. "It was a very big and open thing and everyone was talking to each other. It was like building a family because that's essentially what this team is at the end of the day. It's just one big family."

The meal has set the tone so far for the season, creating what the players said is an uplifting, supportive culture. "If someone has a bad play, there's no negativity about that," said Etkin, the team leader in blocks. "Nobody's mak-

Ellie Su, the team leader in digs. "I know I don't need to go all the way across the court. I can trust that someone's gonna be there. I don't need to put pressure on myself to think that I need to get every single ball in the back row. I understand that the middle back is there, and she's experienced enough, and has the game knowledge to get to the ball." The players believe their camaraderie will help them sustain their success through the rest of the season.

"The vibes have just been extraordinary," said Beyer. "Everyone is very happy with our record right now. Obviously, we're still gonna keep pushing forward and play the best we possibly can. We're still growing as a team."

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