



WILD THINGS

Warbling vireos are notable for their incessant singing, but it’s with pouch-shaped nests built 90 feet overhead that these birds astonish.

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THE WEEK

JUNE 13-20, 2024

FREE | by CAMBRIDGE DAY

Bike lane talk pauses after death of a rider

Truck lacked side guards

By GRETA GAFFIN and MARC LEVY

A bicyclist died after being hit by a truck at around 4:30 p.m. Friday at Mount Auburn and DeWolfe streets, south of Harvard Square in Cambridge’s Riverside neighborhood, and the death was still reverberating when the City Council met Monday.

That was when the council was set to take up the fourth annual Cycling Safety Ordinance progress report, but the potentially complex discussion of the addition of bike lanes to city streets got set aside.

City councillor Joan Pickett, a critic of bike-lane rollouts so far, said she was deferring questions “in light of the tragedy” and asking for the matter to be sent to a yet-to-be-scheduled Transportation Committee hearing.

No councillor objected, and the sole direct question asked before the topic was shut down was about how the city might handle north-south links on smaller, tighter streets between the mainly east-west corridors getting the bike lanes.

See BICYCLIST, Page 3



Marc Levy

The Door Store has been in Cambridge’s Riverside since 1970.

The Door Store, open since 1959, says it’s closing

By MADISON LUCCHESI

The Door Store plans to close its own doors within a few months after more than six decades of business in Cambridge. The store decided to close because of rising costs and lack of business, general manager Dawn Leate said.

“It all came as sort of a shock to everyone,” Leate said of the store’s closing.

Its location at 940 Massachusetts Ave., Riverside, was once a furniture district, with around a dozen stores forming a “furniture store alley.” Over the years, “this place has become a ghost town” with a lot of businesses coming and going, Leate said.

The Door Store will operate until its inventory – which consists of custom furniture, not doors – runs out. After announcing the closing, the store discounted its material costs to half off, but kept the labor costs the same.

Leate, an employee since 2003 who oversees the company finances, said the store “really ran out of money last Monday,” with only enough money for two more weeks of payroll. A “boom of business” since announcing the closing may extend payroll.

Owner Andrew Anisimov said the store was now going “full throttle,” with every employee at work selling and in the workshop “because the customers are coming in.”

See DOOR STORE, Page 5

Our best baguette

Elmendorf event answers question, adds tents, crowds and plenty of carbs

By MARC LEVY

A year ago, the best baguettes at the Le Grand Prix Elmendorf du Pain in Cambridge and Somerville weren’t from either city – the honors went to Clear Flour Bakery of Brookline and runner-up My Little Bakery of Duxbury. At the second annual Grand Prix on Sunday, second-place honors for best baguette went to Somerville’s Michette on Broadway in East Somerville, and first place went to Breadboard on Broadway in East Arlington.

In the amateur baker competition, making the rustic country bread known as a miche, the first-place winner was Anze Godicelj, a graduate student at Harvard Medical School originally from Slovenia; second place went to Michael Amato of Stoneham; and third place went to Lynn Hewes of Holliston.

They rose to the top of a field of 13 bakeries and 50 home bakers taking part in the event, a Parisian-style street fair held in East Cambridge in front of the Elmendorf Baking Goods and Supplies shop, whose Teddy and Alyssa Applebaum came up with the idea three years ago.

See BEST, Page 10



Baguette for judging Sunday at Le Grand Prix Elmendorf du Pain in East Cambridge.

Kate Wheatley

INSIDE

News: Riverfest returns Saturday for the first full, in-person celebration since 2019, just in time for its 50-year anniversary.

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Business: Ice cream and coffee until 3 a.m. to replace Aleppo Palace felafel in Central.

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Attend: There are questions to ponder about music’s relationship with AI, and with the forces of gentrification.

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FILM AHEAD

Big, big, big-screen epics and entertainment including “Funny Girl,” a series pairing U.S. and international noirs and “X” at various spots.

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EVENTS AHEAD

Greek Festival and Riverfest, a comedy club opening, Juneteenth, a Poetry Brothel and a fundraiser that lets you rappel down a hotel.



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MEETINGS JUNE 13-20

CAMBRIDGE

More tenant rights and eco-focused jobs

By MARC LEVY

How green jobs effort is going

Health & Environment Committee, 3 to 5 p.m. Tuesday. This committee run by city councillor Patty Nolan reviews and discusses Cambridge's first annual green jobs report – involving any work that preserves or restores the environment. The committee meets at City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave., Central Square. Televised and watchable by Zoom videoconferencing.

Central Square Lots Study

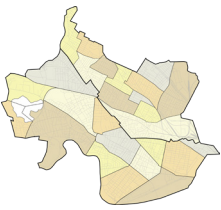
Planning Board, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday. The board considers the Central Square Lots Study, the result of an inventory of city-owned property that showed so much of it in and around Central Square – a baker's dozen of unused, over-used and empty lots and buildings – that it got study of its own. Five of the sites are parking lots where councillors have called repeatedly for affordable housing to be built. Watchable by Zoom videoconferencing.

Supporting tenants' rights

Ordinance Committee, 1 to 3 p.m. June 20. This committee run by vice mayor Marc McGovern and city councillor Paul Toner holds a hearing to talk about changes to a tenants' rights law, including more free legal aid and rent help and better information around evictions. The committee meets at City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave., Central Square. Televised and watchable by Zoom videoconferencing.

Harvard social club eviction

Board of Zoning Appeal, 6 p.m. June 20. The board hears appeals from the owner of a home at 6 Francis Ave. in the Baldwin neighborhood and her evicted tenants: The Fox Club, one of Harvard's so-called final clubs, who moved in because its own 44 John F. Kennedy St. clubhouse is getting renovated. Zoning for the residential area bars use as a "club, lodge or other fraternal or sororal meeting facility," and after noise complaints led to a April 24 eviction the matter of fines arose. Homeowner Emma C. Wolbach puts blame on the tenants, who signed a lease promising to follow the law; The Fox Club's appeal letter doesn't make any arguments, but "respectfully requests" a pause on fines while it resettles. Watchable by Zoom videoconferencing.



Cambridge's City Council

meets at 5:30 p.m. Mondays from January through June and from the second Monday in September through December at City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave., Central Square; televised and online.

Somerville's School

Committee meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Monday of every month September through June at Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Central Hill; televised and online. ►

Cambridge's School

Committee meets at 6 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday from September through June and at 5 p.m. the first Tuesday in August at the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Mid-Cambridge; televised and online.

Somerville's City Council

meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Central Hill; televised and online. ►

SOMERVILLE

Budgeting wraps up, Union looks ahead

By MARC LEVY

Cannabis retailer is proposed

Cannabis community outreach, 6 p.m. Friday. Haze of Somerville wants to sell recreational marijuana, apparently under the name Simplicity, at 362-368 Mystic Ave., Ten Hills, in a space that's been a storefront for a hair stylist and phone seller. The meeting is online.

Rodent-free composting

Rodent prevention compost workshop, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday. Learn how to build a rodent-proof compost system and what composting methods make sense for your household in a workshop from Groundwork Somerville and the City of Somerville held at South Street Farm, 138 South St., near Union Square.

Budget hearings return ...

City Council Finance Committee, 6 p.m. Monday. This committee run by city councilor Jake Wilson considers specific aspects of the \$360 million budget proposed by Mayor Katjana Ballantyne on May 30, namely information technology, infrastructure and asset management, capital projects, engineering, water and sewer, DPW administration, buildings, grounds, fields maintenance, school custodians, solid waste, lights, lines and electrical, highway, fleet management and snow removal. Watchable online and by Zoom videoconferencing.

... and budget cuts considered

City Council Finance Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday. Cuts to departmental budgets – hence it's "cut night" – are considered to wrap up annual city budgeting. The council meets at 93 Highland Ave., Winter Hill, Somerville. Watchable online and by Zoom videoconferencing.

Union Square Main Streets' future

Keeping Small Strong: Reflect and Refine Community Workshop, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. June 20. Share thoughts on what will ensure Union Square continues to thrive, hear from neighbors about their priorities, learn about what Union Square Main Streets has been up to and enjoy food and conversations at New Life Science Lab, seventh floor, 10 Prospect St., Union Square, Somerville.

THE WEEK

by CAMBRIDGE DAY

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Editor

Marc Levy
editor@cambridgeday.com

For coverage of films, cinema events and repertory series:

Film editor Tom Meek at Thom3@aol.com

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Letters for publication

forpublication
@cambridgeday.com

Communications

not for publication
notforpublication
@cambridgeday.com

Listings

events@cambridgeday.com

Advertising

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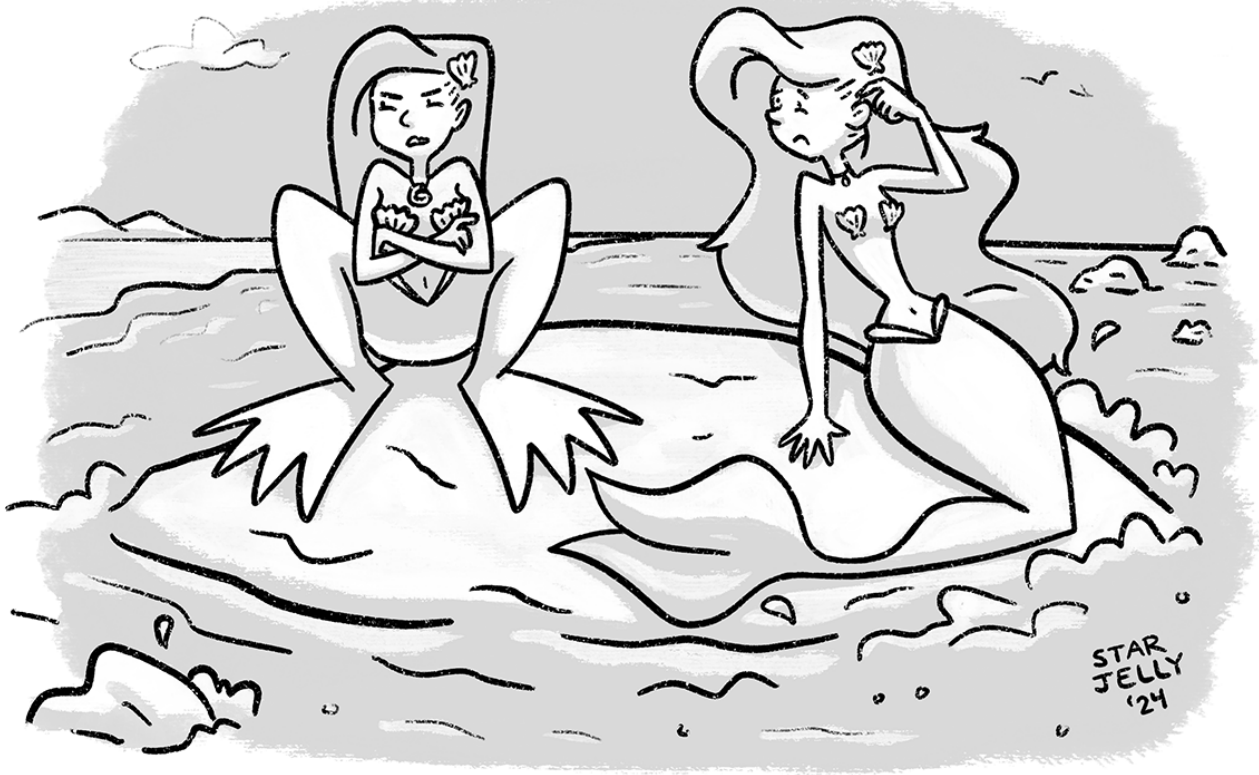
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Star Jelly Comics

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"THE SEA WITCH NEVER SAID HUMAN LEGS."

Riverfest returns Saturday, marking 50 years of creativity

By ISABEL MACEDO

The Cambridge Arts River Festival returns Saturday for the first full, in-person celebration since 2019, and just in time for its 50-year anniversary.

Riverfests draw 175,000 attendees for a day of live performance, food and art. This year, there will be six stages for music, dance, theater and poetry featuring local and global artists free and open to all, rain or shine.

Performers range from the Central Square Theater and The Puppeteers Cooperative to the Veronica Robles Female Mariachi Band and Grammy-winner Yare Muniz's Afro Cuban Ensemble.

Attendees should expect an immersive experience of creative arts with buskers, exhibits to browse and interactive art-making activities all day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Attendees can also buy at an arts and crafts market and support the local creative economy.

All this activity is sure to make a festivalgoer hungry. Not to worry.

"Foods and flavors from around the world" will be available for purchase, said Greg Cook of Cambridge Arts. "[We are] really looking forward to being back with people, and hope people really come out and celebrate with us."

Returning this year after a debut in 2019 is the Mermaid Promenade, in which all who wish to participate as "mermaids, mermen and many more water creatures" can don scales for a procession down Memorial Drive to



Cambridge Arts

The inaugural Mermaid Promenade at the Cambridge Arts River Festival in Central Square in 2019.

mark the official start of the festival. The promenade is an extension of Riverfest's celebration of the creative arts and an homage to its founding mission in 1974 of raising awareness about the quality and conditions of the Charles River – a theme that has transcended the decades as climate change continues to threaten local ecosystems.

Riverfest is also welcoming an interactive art installation by the Shade is Social Justice program, which "uses art and design to rethink how we could bring shade [to Cambridge] and bring attention toward community solu-

tions to global climate issues," Cook said. Shade is Social Justice features a half-dozen artists, designers and architects commissioned by the city to reimagine how shade structures can fight rising heat.

While the festival has floated through various locations over the years – with three years in East Cambridge from 2015 to 2018, and its last location in Central Square in 2019 – this year Riverfest finds its home by Harvard Square, along Memorial Drive between John F. Kennedy Street and Western Avenue.

President of the Central Square Business Improvement District Michael Monestime, who supported Riverfest's temporary relocation to Central Square, acknowledges Riverfest's historical connection to the Charles: "We supported it being in the square in a time where the riverway was under construction. We always knew it would move back."

Instead of Riverfest coming to Central Square, the square will go to Riverfest with a Western Front Stage – inspired by its location near Western Avenue where the historic Western

Front music venue and nightclub once stood.

The stage and its performances are dedicated to Martin Gilmore, a Cantabrigian and founder of the nightclub, "who created something authentically Black when there weren't too many venues which welcomed Black and Brown musicians," Monestime said.

Featured performers will include local Cambridge dance groups such as The Hip Hop Transformation and SocaFusion, as well as musical performances from the Naya Rockers and Costa Rican artist Manolo Mairena.

Central Square is a "place for music and discovery," Monestime said, and the Business Improvement District is searching for ways to "really play tribute to that."

"Riverfest is one of those annual events which brings joy to Cantabrigians. It is really important that people plan for it – bring your families, bring your mom, bring whoever. The Central Square Business Improvement District celebrates the Arts Council's hard work. Riverfest belongs along the River's edge, and we are excited to contribute," Monestime said.

Though it's seen the departure of events such as the annual Jazz Festival and World's Fair, Central Square is "still Cambridge's only cultural district" and will have events of its own to trumpet, Monestime said.

"Hopefully we will have some good news to announce really soon," Monestime said.

Bicyclist dies after being hit by truck

From Page 1

"There are also streets that are designated for low speeds and low volumes to make them comfortable enough to use," transportation commissioner Brooke McKenna said. It's "where we need to turn our attention in coming years."

The Friday incident raised another area of concern: intersection safety. The crash took place between sections of separated bike lanes.

Cambridge and state police are investigating, said Cambridge Police Department spokesperson Robert Goulston. The name of the victim hasn't been released, but she was identified late Friday as a 55-year-old from Florida.

The woman was on a rented Blue-bike near St. Paul's Parish when a truck with no side guards turned right to DeWolf as she went straight across the intersection, police believe.

First responders treated the woman and took her to CHA Cambridge Hospital, where she was pronounced dead. The truck driver remained on scene, Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan and Cambridge police commissioner Christine Elow said.

Side guards have been on municipal trucks since a council order in 2015 and have been required for four years on trucks of companies doing business with City Hall. Without the guards, cyclists or pedestrians can be caught underneath a truck and dragged under its back wheels.

Trucks have been involved in many bicyclist deaths.

Though the most recent previous death was in Somerville, as Stephen Conley, 72, died in August 2022 on Broadway near Teele Square from



Ken Carlson

A mangled Bluebike lies at Mount Auburn and DeWolf streets in Cambridge after a Friday crash with a truck.

a "dooring" – the driver of an SUV opened a car door and hit him – just a month earlier Cantabrigian George Clemmer, 71, was killed in a collision with a dump truck in Boston and Paula Sharaga, 69, died Feb. 19 in a traffic crash in Boston when a cement truck hit her bicycle in an intersection.

There have been previous truck deaths in Cambridge or of residents of Cambridge or Somerville, including of Matthew Barker, 29, in a parking lot in The Port near Central Square in September 2022; Darryl Willis, 55, in August 2020 by a tractor-trailer near the Harvard Square T Station; Meng Jin, 24, struck and killed November 2018 by a dump truck at Museum Way and Monsignor O'Brien Highway; Jie Zhao, 27, killed by a dump truck in October 2018 in Cambridgeport; and Bernard "Joe" Lavins, 60, who was hit by a tractor-trailer in October 2016 in Porter Square.

Amanda Philips, 27, was doored and then run over by a truck in Inman Square in June 2016; Marcia Deihl, 65, was hit by a container truck on Putnam Avenue between River and Pleasant streets in March 2015; Anita Kurmann was crushed by an 18-wheeler making a right turn in August 2015 in Boston's Back Bay.

Rats and year of no Bunsen burners are among Somerville school woes

By GRETA GAFFIN

A rodent problem at Somerville's Edgerly Education Center and other buildings had the attention of School Committee members at a May 29 joint meeting of a facilities and maintenance subcommittee with the City Council, but that was not the only issue brought up as members tried to prioritize projects and improvements.

At the Benjamin G. Brown, an elementary school in the Powder House Square neighborhood, staff would like to have outdoor water and electrical hookups – not the first year for the request, an official said.

"Right now what they're doing is running an electric cord out of one of the windows of the school from a classroom and a generous neighbor is running a hose from her home to the school yard," said School Committee member Leiran Biton of Ward 7.

The city says lower-than-projected revenue from fewer construction projects has muddled budgeting for capital projects.

Biton said he didn't understand why what he sees as a relatively simple project would be impossible to pay for, relative to the other significantly more expensive school projects the city is considering.

Somerville's director of infrastructure and asset management, Rich Raiche, believed at first that the request was for a fountain.

Another school infrastructure issue is at the West Somerville Neighborhood School, where Bunsen burners in science labs haven't been operational since September, when a concern about a gas smell – apparently from lawn mowers being used outside – led to a fire alarm being pulled. The



The Benjamin G. Brown School via social media

Students at Somerville's Brown School do a science experiment.

gas burners have not been turned back on. "This could have been handled a lot more expediently," said city councilor Jesse Clingan of Ward 4.

The issue of rodents around classrooms came up in a survey by eighth graders displaced by safety concerns from the Winter Hill School building and now at the Edgerly building.

The Edgerly is one of Somerville's older school buildings, having been built in 1935.

"It's definitely a problem DPW is aware of," said Raiche, pointing to the 10 visits from a pest control company since June 2023 and a large cause of the rat problem: food.

The Department of Public Works is trying to get school staff to reduce the number of open containers of food, he said. This wasn't satisfying to the elected officials.

"I hope there are some significant plans in the summer, because I do understand that food can be a big impact

on rodents, but clearly rodents are getting into the building. And we're not having the level of rodents in other buildings, at least from the reports I'm hearing, that we are having at the Edgerly," said School Committee Member Laura Pitone, of Ward 5.

There is also a rat problem at the Arthur D. Healey, a PK-8 school in the Ten Hills area, Clingan said, particularly when ground-level outside doors are propped open during hot weather.

Still, it seems like the Edgerly might be especially bad, he said, and suggested that the rats might have already been living in the boxing gym on the site before food was introduced this school year. "I feel deep responsibility to these kids in this building," Clingan said.

Also discussed at the meeting: The city has decided on the members of a School Building Committee that will work on a new Winter Hill school.



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BUSINESS & MONEY

Door Store, set to close, experiences a sales surge

From Page 1

During Covid, lots of people were furnishing home offices, and desks were a hot item, but that boom ran out, said Nancy Gold, wife of owner Anisimov, in a post on social media.

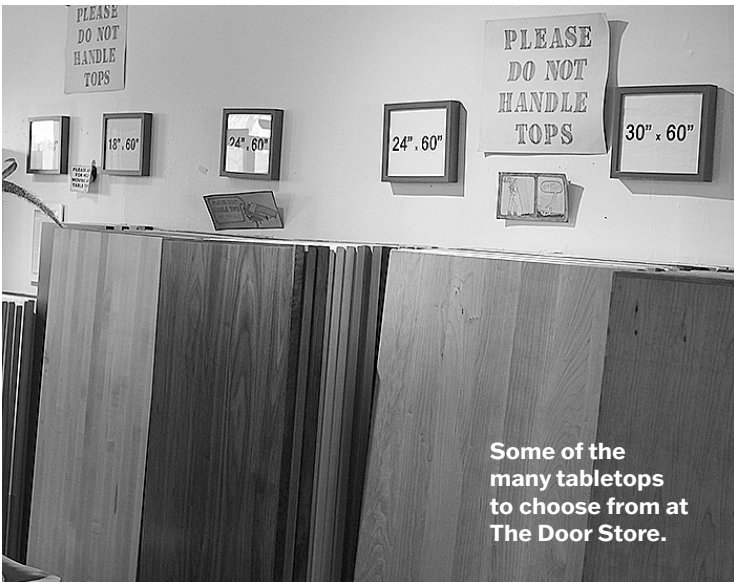
The decline began in 2022, with the store doing about one-third its usual business while the cost of goods sold rose 40 percent and payroll increased 30 percent, Leate said. It's the same year a bike lane was installed and 18 parking spaces were removed from The Door Store's block, which Leate said contributed to the business problems.

The store's loading zone moved down the street – and drivers parked in it illegally. "People already complained about the parking here," Leate said. The Door Store's clientele consists of a mature crowd who like to drive to the store and shop in person, Leate said, and they are unable to shop without parking.

Although Leate sees the value in bike lanes, she wishes the city created "more cognizant urban planning."

While Anisimov put some of his own money into the store to pay employees, Leate tried to combat the decline in sales, offering promotions and creating an online store where customers could mix and match features to mimic the customization of shopping in-person. No sales came from the online storefront.

The store is well known among Cambridge residents, but regular customers are uncommon. "The downside of our furniture is that it lasts," Leate said with a laugh. (One of the responses to Gold's online post was



Some of the many tabletops to choose from at The Door Store.



Andrew Anisimov, owner of The Door Store.

from a customer who remarked, "I bought a chair in the store 50 years ago and still have it and use it.")

The flood of customers suggests there are ways to make retail work despite the loss of parking, though the closing coincides with Anisimov clearing out a family house that has resulted in a bigger than usual amount of lampshades and knickknacks for sale – the kinds of things people walking by might spot and be able to walk off with in a bag.

Still, the store is also selling "some chairs and larger things," Anisimov

"The downside of our furniture is that it lasts," Leate said with a laugh.

said Tuesday, some using the loading zone by the store and others improvising. "We won't let them block the bike lane, but people are finding ways to quickly enough load up," he said.

"I don't know if 'bowled over' is the right term, but the amount of support we are getting – about 'what a great place this is' and from people who like to tell me how they bought something here a long time ago – I'm almost speechless with emotion," Anisimov said. Though the store opened in 1959 in The Garage mall in Harvard Square, the Anisimovs bought its current building in 1970, and Anisimov and Gold live in it over the store, Gold said.

Leate will continue to create custom furniture through her home improvement company, DJ Designs. She hopes to bring some of Door Store employees along and keep "the merry band of Door Store employees" together.

Aleppo owner trades late-night ice cream and falafel in Central

By MARC LEVY

A little Central Square eatery famous for its late-night Middle Eastern food as well as its distinctive architecture is becoming a cafe serving ice cream and coffee.

The new Chateau Blanc Cafe will keep its late-night hours, though, staying open from 7 to 3 a.m. daily, according to an approval June 6 by Cambridge's License Commission.

The cafe is expected to open in July, maybe around July 4, owner Mohammed Seffo said in a call after the meeting.

Chateau Blanc Cafe replaces Aleppo Palace at 25 Central Square, a 420-square-foot white structure shaped like a castle that fits only as many as 16 people. (Before March 2019, it was Moody's Falafel Palace.) Seffo, owner since 2003, decided to go a different direction after growing dispirited from Covid pandemic supply-chain issues that threatened the quality of ingredients and raised prices.

"Everything was just going downhill – I couldn't find help, can't do this, can't do that. And I'm not a quitter. So I said hey, what can I do, how can I make this a good, viable place for the square? Searching for new ideas, I came across ice cream," Seffo said.

Changes to late-night was another factor in the decision. At one time, "I was the only one who was open until late, and there was no delivery – people wanted to come to Central Square because I was the only one serving the community," Seffo said. Then came delivery services such as DoorDash and Uber Eats. "All that tech has taken away the vibe, that excitement that



Marc Levy

Aleppo Palace in Cambridge's Central Square has okays to become Chateau Blanc Cafe.

"Hey, we're going to eat in Central Square after we party."

The opening of Tasty Burger just a couple of blocks away with a 2 a.m. closing was another incentive to find something new to offer, Seffo said, "So I decided to go to ice cream and coffee and see what the community will think about it."

The ice cream is from a New England farm with its own cows, said Seffo, who did not want to reveal more. There's celebrated ice cream at Toscanini's in nearby Lafayette Square, but its Main Street shop is open only until 11 p.m. on weekends.

The License Commission approved two patio tables as well, for four seats total that add to the current 12-person occupancy inside the little castle.

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EVENTS AHEAD JUNE 13–20

5 to 7 p.m. June 18
Cambridge School of Culinary Arts, 2020 Massachusetts Ave., Porter Square, Cambridge

Summer Solstice Open House

Free, but register, and all ages. Learn about the offerings at this culinary school founded in 1974 (yes, 50 years ago!) and its plans to open a cafe across the street while enjoying demos of barbecue and ice cream-making, an ice cream and sundae bar, culinary snacks and pastry samples, facility tours and a Q&A with staff members.

12:30 to 3 p.m. June 16
Longfellow House and the Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site, 105 Brattle St., West Cambridge (Rain location: Christ Church Cambridge)

Juneteenth gathering

Free and all ages. Music, poetry and speeches that focus on the voices of descendants of people who were enslaved at the site on Brattle Street approximately 250 years ago and that honor Black freedom activism in Cambridge and beyond. The event kicks off Civic Season, the national effort uniting the country's oldest Federal holiday (Independence Day) with its newest (Juneteenth), and is part of the national project "Unfinished: America at 250."

7 p.m. June 13
Harvard Book Store, 1256 Massachusetts Ave., Harvard Square, Cambridge

Jo Paquette reads from "Stories I Told My Dead Lover"

Free. The Massachusetts Book Award-nominated author discusses her eight searing tales of psychological horror. Sofia T. Romero, author of "We Have Always Been Who We Are," joins.

7 p.m. June 17
Puloma Ghosh reads from "Mouth"

Free. This debut short story collection embraces the bizarre and absurd and uses surreal and captivating prose to reimagine ordinary struggles of isolation, longing and the aching desires of our flesh. "Candelaria" author Melissa Lozada-Oliva joins.

7 p.m. June 18
Natalie Dykstra reads from "Chasing Beauty: The Life of Isabella Stewart Gardner"

Free. The Waltham biographer discusses the life of the patron of the arts with all its beauty, loss, grit and self-invention. Megan Marshall, author of "Margaret Fuller: A New American Life" and "The Peabody Sisters," joins.

11 a.m. to 6 p.m. June 15
The banks of the Charles River along Memorial Drive between JFK Street and Western Avenue

Cambridge Arts River Festival

Free. The annual festival fully returns after the pandemic era with a costumed "mermaid promenade" participatory parade featuring a marching band, dragon dancers and giant puppets plus the expected interactive art-making, arts market, food vendors and performances all day on six themed stages, including folk-and-roots music, jazz music, poetry reading, theater and dance (on two stages) and world music.

5 to 9 p.m. June 20
Select museums and outdoors at 11 Divinity Ave., in the Baldwin neighborhood near Harvard Square, Cambridge

Summer Solstice: Night at the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture

Free and all ages. Lively musical and circus performances, mini-golf and flower-crown making, along with food trucks make the most of the long day. Free entrance to the galleries and new exhibitions at the Harvard Museum of Natural History, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments and the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East also beckon.

Somerville Theatre/Crystal Ballroom, 55 Davis Square

8 p.m. June 13
Quasi performs

\$22 to \$25. The Pacific Northwest rock band legends Janet Weiss (drums) and Sam Coomes (guitar and keyboards) play and sing their beloved 1998 classic third album featuring the song "Birds" start to finish in its entirety for the first time. New York City comic book artist and musician Jeffrey Lewis opens.

7:30 p.m. June 20
The Magic of Motown

\$49 to \$69. A cast of 15 powerhouse vocalists accompanied by a six-piece band with horns perform all the hits during this high-energy homage to the legends of Motown.

6 p.m. June 15 (and continuing weekends through June 23). Rain date: June 29
Nathan Tufts/Powderhouse Park, College Avenue and Broadway, Somerville

"Marion, or the True Tale of Robin Hood" outdoor performance

Free. Adam Szymkowicz's slapstick Monty-Python-esque farce gets a gender makeover. Spoiler alert, Robin Hood is Maid Marian in disguise. Bring blankets or chairs as needed.

7 to 8 p.m. June 19
Grolier Poetry Book Shop, 6 Plympton St., Harvard Square, Cambridge

Poets Alejandro Lucero, Yena Purmasir and Jess Yuan

\$5 to \$10, but register. With an introduction by Joshua Nguyen.

7:30 p.m. June 17 (and every other Monday)
Roxy's Arcade, 292 Massachusetts Ave., Central Square, Cambridge

Missy Steak hosts "I'm Right Trivia Night"

Free. Drag show, drinks, trivia, prizes. This time the theme is Dragula, featuring special guest Violencia! from the third season of "The Boulet Brothers' 'Dragula!'"

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 15
Hyatt Regency Cambridge, 575 Memorial Drive, in the MIT/Area II neighborhood, Cambridge

Rappel Boston fundraiser for the Epilepsy Foundation of New England

Free to watch (donations encouraged), \$50-plus to rappel. Up to 90 people who register and commit to raising at least \$1,000 in donations can take an elevator to the hotel's roof, then rappel down with the help of Over The Edge, no prior experience necessary. Watchers in the courtyard listen to live music, enjoy a beer garden, play yard games and visit tables staffed by community partners sharing resources.

■ List your cultural happenings at events@cambridgeday.com.



Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave., Somerville

7:30 p.m. June 14

The Big Happy Comedy Tour

\$40. This “official Pride Tour” of queer comics is co-headlined by Jada Catta-Preta and Billie Lee and features Joel Kim Booster, Chaunté Wayans, Nicky Paris, Abe Farrelly, Mav Viola and more.

7:30 p.m. June 14

Saint Boniface presents David Lang’s “Death Speaks”

Free. The contemporary ensemble curates moody programs that toe the line between multiple genres so audiences can explore their relationship to classical music. Besides Lang’s “exquisitely morbid” (says NPR) song cycle, the concert includes a premiere by John Secunde, “Mouth” by Cassie Wieland and modern reworkings of pieces by Hildegard von Bingen and Claude Debussy.

7 p.m. June 16

“All Fantasy Everything” tour

\$35. Ian Karmel hosts the podcast featuring comedians Sean Jordan and David Gborie where the team (and often an expert) “fantasy draft” anything and everything from the world of pop culture, from rom-coms to rap albums, the best breakfast foods to the best smells, and then debate it. Comedy ensues.

1 to 4:30 p.m. June 15 (rain date: June 16)

The Growing Center, 22 Vinal Ave., near Union Square, Somerville

Festa Junina: Brazilian Harvest Festival

Free and all ages. For this traditional harvest celebration the Growing Center offers crafts such as root printing, lantern making and making dance accessories, plus participatory Quadrilha, traditional foods, music by Trio Let’s Vamos and numerous Kamishibai (Japanese paper theater stories) created and presented by educator Yumi Izuyama, interweaving her Japanese and Brazilian roots.

7:30 to 11 p.m. June 18

Bow Market Upstairs, 1 Bow Market Way, Union Square, Somerville

The Poetry Brothel Boston presents “A Midsummer Night’s Feverdream”

\$40 to \$75 and 21-plus. Celebrate the ecstasy of the dream-state with a diverse group who reveal their alter-egos as poetry whores, tarot and palm readers and burlesque artists guided by a “madame.” The Poetry Society of New York sponsors this immersive literary cabaret.

8 and 10 p.m. June 14-15

Duck Duck Goofs, 432 McGrath Highway, Prospect Hill, Somerville

Duck Duck Goofs stand-up comedy grand opening weekend

\$20 to \$50 and 21-plus. Ryan Howe’s new home for comedy, built to specs, offers a full bar and Wade BBQ. Shows begin with a musical guest followed by a handful of comics, including a unnamed nationally touring headliner.

8 p.m. June 19 (and continuing through June 23)

Dance Union, 16 Bow St., Union Square, Somerville, and during the weekend at the Dante Alighieri Society Center, 41 Hampshire St., Kendall Square, Cambridge

18th Annual Boston Tango Festival

\$20 to \$60 per class or show (festival passes and class packages available). A “Bienvenidos Milonga” on Wednesday evening kicks off five days of all-levels tango classes, DJ workshops, Argentine folklore and evening dances with nine teachers, three DJs and two live music bands, plus a Tango Celebration Show on Saturday and a masters class with all the teachers on Sunday.

7 to 8:30 p.m. June 14-15

The Foundry, 101 Rogers St., East Cambridge

“Mothers of Freedom” workshop showing of a play in development

\$7. This original co-created play based on a real conversation between freedom fighters Harriet Tubman and Pandita Ramabai will include costumes, sets, live music and dance, but the actors may sometimes use scripts and afterward the audience will be asked for feedback.

6 to 8 p.m. June 13

CAA@Canal, 650 E. Kendall St., Kendall Square, Cambridge

Emerging Artists Exhibit opening reception

Free. Awards presentation for work submitted by artists living and working in New England and juried by Jamal Thorne of Northeastern University. The galleries will exhibit the works through Sept. 13.

6 to 9 p.m. June 13

The MIT Museum, 314 Main St., Kendall Square, Cambridge

After Dark Series: Speed

\$10 to \$20 and 21-plus. Explore high-speed photography with MIT professor J. Kim Vandiver; meet MIT students building and racing solar cars, autonomous boats, aircrafts and rockets; construct, decorate and battle spinning tops. Tunes by DJ Philip Tan, eats from Mostly Pasta and Lola’s Pinoy Pastry and local brews from Remnant are available for purchase.

6 to 8 p.m. June 14

Kendall/MIT Open Space at 292 Main St., Kendall Square, Cambridge

Movie Night: “Spirited Away”

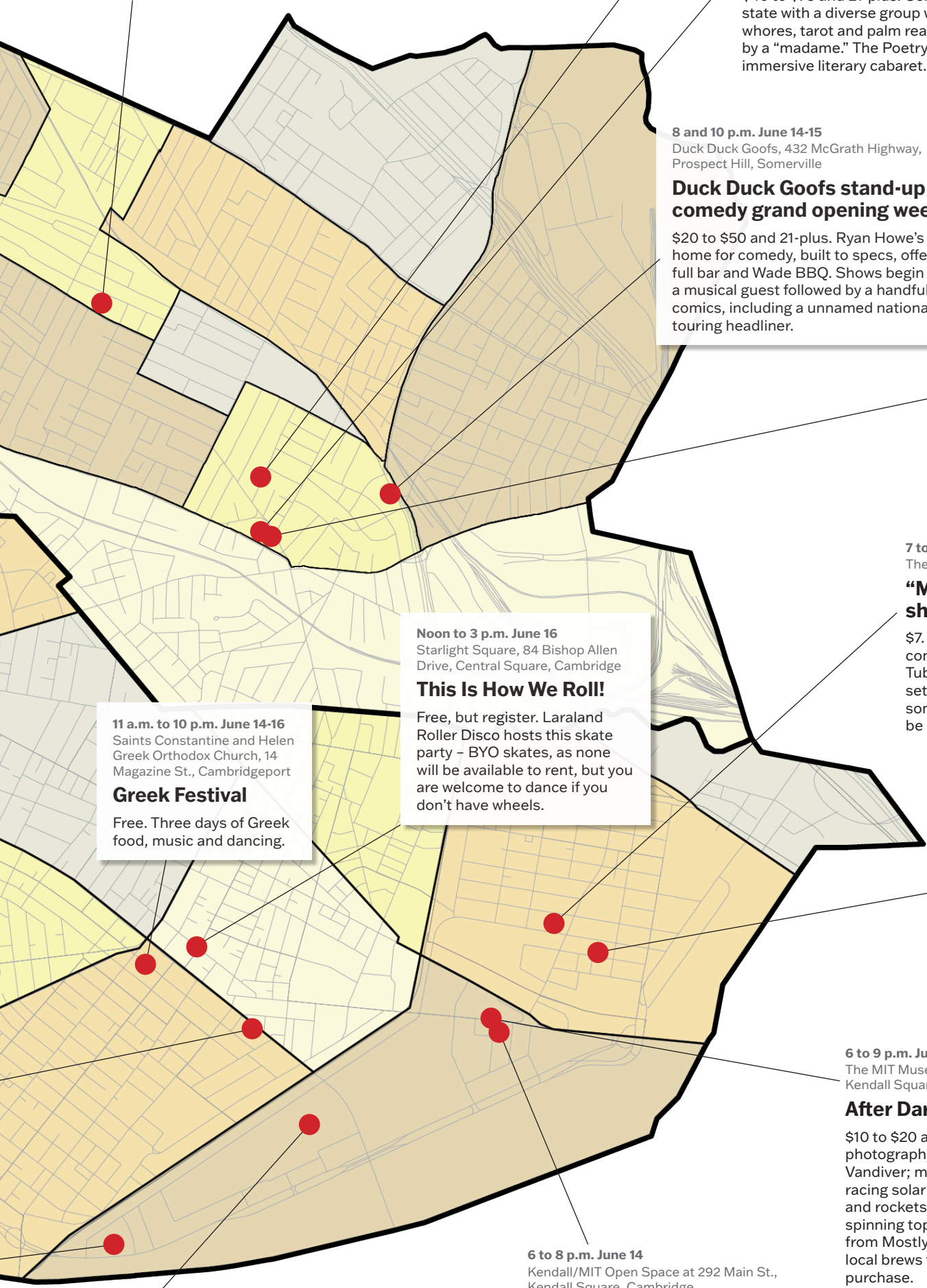
Free, but register. Free popcorn under the stars at this family-friendly outdoor screening of Hayao Miyazaki’s lyrical animated feature film from 2001. (This event was originally scheduled for April 12.)

8 to 10 p.m. June 15

Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Kresge Auditorium, 48 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge

Cambridge Symphony Orchestra performs Coleman, Gershwin and Mussorgsky

\$5 to \$25. The CSO concludes its season with George Gershwin’s Concerto in F, featuring internationally acclaimed pianist Michael Lewin, Valerie Coleman’s energetic “Umoja” and Ravel’s masterful orchestration of Modest Mussorgsky’s “Pictures at an Exhibition.”



FILM AHEAD JUNE 13-20

LOCAL FOCUS



Barbra Streisand in her big-screen debut in “Funny Girl.”

Celebrate Streisand, Pride, Peele, noir pairs from around the world

By OSCAR GOFF

The Somerville Theatre’s annual 70mm and Widescreen Film Festival continues with more eye-popping prints from the golden age of Hollywood Technicolor. Unsurprisingly for a series devoted to Hollywood spectacle, the musical is well represented here, with two films by master of the genre Stanley Donen presented in gorgeous 35 mm: “Seven Brides for Seven Brothers” (1954) on Thursday, and “It’s Always Fair Weather” (1955), co-directed and co-choreographed by leading man Gene Kelly, on Friday. Friday also sees a digital restoration of “Picnic” (1955), Joshua Logan’s CinemaScope adaptation of William Inge’s stage play starring William Holden and Kim Novak.

On Saturday, the festival lives up to its name with a 70 mm print of the rarely screened epic “Lord Jim” (1965), while Sunday brings “Funny Girl” (1968), the beloved big-screen debut of Barbra Streisand, on 35 mm. All of these films were designed to be seen as big as possible, and you’re not likely to see them much bigger than in the forms presented here.

For those who prefer their classic films a little darker, The Brattle Theatre’s annual Noir City Boston series returns Friday and runs through Monday. This time around, The Brattle and guest programmer Foster Hirsch (who will be on hand for select introductions) take a novel approach: Each double feature pairs one American film noir with a counterpart from overseas, most very rarely screened on these shores. Selected films hail from Spain: “Never Open That Door” (1952) screening Friday with “Street of Chance” (1942). From Japan: “Zero Focus” (1961) with “Across the Bridge” (1957) on Saturday. From Argentina: “Hardly a Criminal” (1949), also on Saturday with “Black Tuesday” (1954). From Egypt: the great “Cairo Station” (1958), naturally paired with “Union Station” (1950) on Sunday. And from Italy: “Smog” (1962) with “City of Fear” (1959) on Sunday. The series closes Monday with a single feature that is itself somewhat international: the classic French thriller “Elevator to the Gallows” (1958) by Louis Malle.

If you ask a horror fan their most hotly anticipated blockbuster of the summer, there’s a good chance they’ll say “MaXXXine,” the upcoming slash-

er threequel from writer-director Ti West and star Mia Goth. To whet fans’ appetites, the film that started it all, 2022’s “X,” returns to the big screen Tuesday at the Somerville, Landmark Kendall Square Cinema and AMC Assembly Row 12 for a one-night-only “fan event.” For those who missed it the first time around, “X” is a cheerfully perverse (and surprisingly sex-positive) throwback to the glory days of grindhouse horror and porno-chic, with Goth at the center as both ambitious ingenue Maxine and murderous crone Pearl (who got her own eponymous origin story a few months later). Fans who stick around after the credits will be rewarded with a sneak preview of “MaXXXine,” which hits theaters in earnest July 5. Time will tell whether the film lives up to its predecessors, but one thing is certain: Goth, like both of her characters, is a *staaaawwwrrrrr!*

Pride Month continues with two very different screenings Tuesday. The Landmark Kendall Square continues its monthlong series with a film with which you’re almost certainly familiar: Barry Jenkins’ Oscar-winning “Moonlight” (2016), a true watershed moment for queer representation and independent film and an easy choice for Best of the 21st Century lists. If you’re looking for something further off the beaten path, the Somerville presents an intriguing program of shorts titled “Queer Futures,” which screens Tuesday and Wednesday and combines four short films by emerging filmmakers.

Finally, The Brattle concludes its Peele Apart series by shining a spotlight on Jordan Peele’s most recent film, “Nope” (2022). “Nope” is at once perhaps Peele’s most accessible and complex film (and this critic’s favorite). The Brattle has paired it into double features with wildly diverse films: Sidney Poitier’s pioneering Black Western “Buck and the Preacher” (1972) on Tuesday and Wednesday; the cosmic anime “Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion,” a late show those same nights (you could make it a triple feature); and, on Thursday, John Carpenter’s classic 1982 remake of “The Thing.”

Oscar Goff is a writer and film critic based in Somerville. He is film editor and senior critic for the Boston Hassle, and a member of the Boston Society of Film Critics, Boston Online Film Critics Association and the Online Film Critics Society.

Cambridge-Somerville is a film mecca, with a half-dozen sites with a total 36 screens open daily:

The Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle St., Harvard Square, Cambridge.

Founded in 1953 and a nonprofit since 2001. One 250-seat theater with 7.1 surround sound and 35mm capabilities with a specialty in themed repertory programs and classic, cutting-edge, foreign and art-house films as well as some first-runs and new releases of classics. (617) 876-6837 and brattlefilm.org

Harvard Film Archive at The Carpenter Center, 24 Quincy St., Harvard Square, Cambridge.

Founded in 1979 at Harvard University. One 188-seat theater with DCP, 35mm, 16mm and Super 8 capabilities and a repertory archive of more than 40,000 pieces of cinema history from around the world. (617) 495-7578 and harvardfilmarchive.org

Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Square.

Founded in 1914. Three screens with 1,566 seats, including one with Dolby Digital Sound and 24 surround speakers and 70mm capabilities for a mix of first-run and repertory fare and classics. (617) 625-5700 and somervilletheatre.com

Landmark Kendall Square Cinema, 355 Binney St., Cambridge.

Opened in 1995. Nine screens with 682 seats with DLP digital projection and sound showcasing independent film, foreign-language cinema, restored classics and documentaries with some first-run and even blockbuster films mixed in. (617) 621-1202

Apple Cinemas Cambridge, 168 Alewife Brook Parkway, Cambridge

Highlands near Alewife and Fresh Pond. First opened in 1965, reopened in 1990 with 10 screens. A specialty in screening South Asian cinema along with first-run films. (617) 229-6555

AMC Assembly Row 12, 395 Artisan Way, Assembly Square, Somerville.

Opened in 2014 with a dozen screens for first-run films with IMAX capabilities and Dolby sound. (617) 440-4192

FILM CLIPS



Kazuya Kamenashi stars in Takashi Miike’s latest.

‘Lumberjack the Monster’: J-plus

By TOM MEEK

Back in 1999, Takashi Miike put anyone with a fear of needles extra on edge with the psychological thriller “Audition.” In it, a widower seeking a wife falls for the wrong prospect, an alluring yet deeply scarred young woman with sadistic tendencies and a thing for needles. More conventionally, Miike delivered the competent “Seven Samurai”-esque “13 Samurai” in 2010, but with this disquieting psychopath-vs.-sociopath thriller slipped quietly into your Netflix stream, the auteur of J-horror gets back to his gory roots. The mayhem revolves around the enigmatic Akira (Kazuya Kamenashi), an urbane lawyer who is stalked by a masked serial killer who does his handiwork with an ax, removing the brains of victims. But Akira is not your typical victim: In the prologue we learn he’s one of the few survivors of a private orphanage whose demented, well-off matriarch experimented on children with brain surgery. Gray matter and “neuro chips” are very much at the center of the gory, over-the-top and macabre mania in which arterial spray and death by cellphone are a thing. It also turns out that Akira hangs out at a posh private clinic where he and his mate conduct interviews and diabolical experiments on folks who may or may not be psychopaths. A strange side hobby indeed. On the trail of the killer – and Akira – is ace profiler Arashiko Toshiro (Nanao Arai), dutiful and dour behind feathered bangs and bookish black-rimmed glasses. She’s essentially our guide to making sense of this highly watchable nonsense. Not all of it tallies, and I’m not sure Miike particularly cares, but it is one of his creepiest fun watches since the tempura torture scene in “Ichi the Killer” in 2001.

On Netflix.



Adria Arjona as Madison and Glen Powell as Gary/Ron.

‘Hit Man’: Some killer chemistry

By TOM MEEK

The dry, droll wit of Richard Linklater (“Boyhood,” “Dazed and Confused”) hardly ever flags, and it doesn’t so much here – but it never quite hums either, though it postures as if it does. Based on a 2001 newspaper article about Gary Johnson, a regular Joe who posed as hit man for the Houston Police Department, Linklater’s jumping off has Gary (Glen Powell) as a New Orleans philosophy professor who gets roped into a police sting. Turns out Gary, able to act out some of his hypothetical classroom material, digs channeling the faux persona of Ron, a cold, professional killer, as a van full of surveillance police listen to jilted lovers and business partners offer cash for kills. The win here is the all-in performance by Powell, who teamed with Linklater on the underrated 2016 baseball comedy, “Everybody Wants Some!” Powell’s natural, Sam Rockwell-esque nonchalance edges into screwball, carrying the film beyond the one-note premise. Adding spice is Adria Arjona as Madison, one of the targets Gary/Ron comes into contact with. She practically purrs in the part, and the two leads play exceptionally well off each other as Gary and Madison become illicit lovers. Their physical chemistry is more than healthy; it’s practically carnivorous. The film pushes racy and sultry the way it pushes the comedy: to the near popping point. It’s not an A-grade effort from Linklater, who has his share of them, but it is a performance-driven work that should boost Powell and Arjona to more front-and-center parts.

On Netflix.



MUSIC

ATTEND

Where we're going

By MICHAEL GUTIERREZ

Apologies in advance for leading off this column with reference to artificial intelligence. Your waking hours are already saturated with AI propaganda. Every advertisement you see is either for online sports betting or artificial intelligence. It almost makes you wistful for crypto hype.

I can promise, however, that there's no shilling for AI here. This is a column about music, and there are some serious questions to ponder with respect to music's relationship to the latest supercharged "disruption" from venture capital and Silicon Valley.

The music industry spent most of May trying to wrap its head around the implications of the new song "Where That Came From" by country star Randy Travis, debuting at No. 45 on the Billboard Country Airplay chart.

Okay, I'll bite: Where did that come from? Travis hasn't released a song since a near-fatal stroke in 2013 waylaid his career. No sense in worrying about the next album when it's hard enough to navigate living through the next day.

Artificial intelligence to the rescue! Robots conspired to re-create Travis' voice to produce the new hit song. (Presumably with the country singer's consent, though he still can't speak much in interviews. His producer and his wife do most of the talking.)

Except that's not quite what happened. Another country singer named James Dupré was required to supply the vocals, and what amounts to a "Randy Travis" filter, powered by AI, was applied to Dupré's vocal part to produce a defensible version of the country music star's voice.

Musicians will point to this as proof that AI can never adequately simulate human artistry. Techno optimists will reply that it's only a matter of time before the technology makes up the shortfall.

Either way, the thing happened. And the thing is going to happen some more. It looks like one major use of AI within the music industry will be to steadily detach the artist from the artworks they produce, keeping an ever-increasing share of the rights and royalties generated by that artwork.

Can you imagine what kind of future rights to your likeness that you need to sign away to break into the music industry with a major-label contract these days?

Of course, the artists don't need to sign on the dotted line. Just like you don't need to stream music via online platforms that shortchange musicians. But you do. And they do.

Hit this

Saturday *Django Festival All-Stars (Regattabar, Cambridge)*

Note: This is a band, not a festival. There is an actual Django Reinhardt Festival, honoring the legacy of the gypsy jazz guitarist, who made a name for himself playing all over Europe during the interwar period. The long-running festival takes place at the end of the month at Château de Fontainebleau, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) southwest of Paris. Not making the trip? Catch the cream of the crop warming up their six-strings (and accordion, and upright bass and violin) before they leap the Atlantic.

Monday *Threat Level Burgundy, Futon Lasagna, Last Reel Hero, Riki Rocksteady, Skaleton Crew (The Jungle, Somerville)*

A five-band bill at The Jungle is no place for the faint-hearted. But if you're going to go ska, go all the way. Immerse yourself, like your foreign language teacher was always telling you, in the culture. If you're new to the genre, it's a style of music that originated in Jamaica, loves horns and makes a lot of hay with the off-beat. There's even a just-for-fun dress code. Google it and you discover that dressing ska is a "fashion choice that crosses mod and skinhead to create an unique mix of casual and elegant, with a penchant for borrowing from teddy boy accessories that were popular among British subculture." Now you know.

June 20 *Fantastic Cat, Fox & Bones (The Sinclair, Cambridge)*

The Americana outfit Fantastic Cat glows iridescent with the memory of a thousand folk, rock and country acts that have come before, shining like a prism through which the best bits of Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Hootie & The Blowfish, John Cougar Mellencamp, Bruce Springsteen and Elton John get deconstructed and reconstructed into what feels like a peculiarly 21st century musical Frankenstein's monster. Except this is a monster you wouldn't mind sharing a beer with at the local honky-tonk. Oregon's Fox & Bones join the Americana fun in the opening slot.

Live: *Hypnofruit, Clocked Out, Korina Zambrano and Allure at Union Tavern*

You could hardly draw a stronger contrast between the forces of gentrification versus local yokelism than the scene that played out in Union Square on Friday night.

In one corner, Bow Market, its courtyard packed for a special performance by Opera on Tap, a company of singers that takes the opera out of the opera house and into the street.

In the other, Union Tavern, hosting a bill of four local acts in a room with the unsullied glamour of a VFW hall. The crowd was full of friends and family, who jostled for the best view of their son or daughter or best bud, giving the night a hometown flavor.

If you screwed your vision just right, and magic-erased all the latest smartphones, Friday night looked and felt like a night from time immemorial, before Union Square had T service and you had to be a local (or make a real concerted effort) to see a show at the former P.A.'s Lounge.

Along with Bow Market opera, history suggests déclassé music joints such as Union Tavern do well as gentrifiers. Locals and arrivistes alike enjoy a good value. A night of music with fun indie rock bands such as Hypnofruit and a couple of beers for less than \$20? A great night out, a great deal and a good time had by all. Until the rent raises just a tick too high, your favorite local spot closes forever and everyone sits around, scratching their head, wondering what happened ...

Ah, well, there's still the ax-throwing joint.

Michael Gutierrez is an author, educator, activist and editor-in-chief at Hump Day News.

FOOD

WHAT WE'RE HAVING



Tom Meek

Smoked duck crepes at the recently opened Althea in Cambridge's Central Square.

Duck crepes in Althea's airy patio

By TOM MEEK

■ **Althea, 2 Columbia St., Central Square, Cambridge**

"Smoked" and "duck" are two words that catch my eye on their own. Put them together and I'm totally locked in, and Althea features a smoked duck crepe that is out of this world among its other appealing offerings. In the Sonder 907 Main hotel in the space that was The Dial, Althea is owned and operated by the husband-and-wife team of Shauna Rayburn and Greg Reeves, who run Vialé across Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square – a favorite brunch spot.

The bar is a dark and homey cave of sorts where one could see themselves holing up and drinking scotch during a rainstorm or writing the great American novel. The restaurant is a perfect place to have a business lunch (or bang out a food column), impress a first date or even have an after-school early dinner with the fam.

And out back, Althea features one of the coolest, can't-see-it-from-the-street patios, pretty much one of the neatest outdoor dining spaces this side of the river. Nestled in the corner is the smoker where that duck and much of the menu bides its time before arriving at your table. The smoker is branded "Althea," a nod to the similarly titled Dead song, and near every time I've been to Althea I've heard nothing but the Grateful Dead or similar folkie-hippie music. As a person who's seen more than a dozen Dead shows, I like it more than a little; it's a feature I hope they expand on.

The menu does a nice job of blending sea and land and offers vegetarian fare. Every time I have been there folks have raved about the Little Gem Caesar salad that comes with parmesan crisps, and then there's asparagus with a crispy egg, fried cauliflower and a braised cabbage that's meaty and slightly smoked and comes with a parsnip purée. Cabbage as a main seems to be trending these days. On the lunch menu (Althea is open 11:30 a.m. to midnight, seven

days a week) there's a housemade veggie burger, a short rib hot dog and a Cubano sandwich. Many savories, such as the double bacon cheeseburger, smoky corn chowder and ceviche, wind up on day and night listings. That ceviche of halibut, squid and shrimp, which I've yet to try, comes out as something arty: All the citrus-marinated gems in the ice-packed bowl are under a perfectly formed dome of foam. I thought someone was having the coolest dessert until I saw a frutti di mare morsel on the tine of the diner's fork.

As for those duck crepes, I can't say enough. The thin blue crepe wrapper is pliable, the smoked duck is perfectly shredded and flavorful, and the two wraps come surrounded by a moat of spicy chili barbecue sauce and crowned with frisée salad that really adds to the taste when you get a bit of each on your fork. There's a duck breast on the mains menu as well that has my eye, and crab spaghetti, though the comfort eat is the Giannone chicken with potato gnocchi and a black garlic au jus. The skin on the chicken is perfectly crisp, yet the meat is tender and moist, and the gnocchi with au jus have more of a dumpling versus a pasta vibe.

Althea's patio is an urban oasis that, once discovered, will likely become a hip gathering spot. The bonus, besides hearing "Jack Straw" and "Terrapin Station," is that the patio has a retractable roof, so no strong sun or threat of a shower can dash your alfresco dining dreams.

Tom Meek is a writer living in Cambridge. His reviews, essays, short stories and articles have appeared in the WBUR ARTery, The Boston Phoenix, The Boston Globe, The Rumpus, The Charleston City Paper and SLAB literary journal. Tom is also a member of the Boston Society of Film Critics and rides his bike everywhere.

SNACK



The Joplin at Diesel Cafe

Price: \$9.65

Quick, to-go egg sandwiches that don't fill you up and are tasty to boot are a particular yen of mine. The egg white and turkey bacon on English muffin at Starbucks and the Jumbo (medium egg, cheddar and mustard butter on a sea salt bagel) at Bagelsaurus are faves, but my new jam is the Joplin (Janis!) at Diesel Cafe with its medium-cooked egg, chicken sausage patty and maple butter. That last ingredient is the addictive glue. The Joplin comes on your choice of bagel or sourdough toast. Do the toast, which is thin, airy and light yet capable of soaking up that glorious maple butter. The medium egg is done just right and individually prepared, and the sausage makes for a hearty trade-up on Diesel's basic egg-and-cheese sando. You can get the same concoction at sister restaurant Forge, where it's called the Teele.

TOM MEEK

■ **Diesel Cafe, 257 Elm St., Davis Square, and Forge Baking Co., 626 Somerville Ave., Ward Two, Somerville**

Best baguettes at Le Grand Prix include Somerville’s Michette

From Page 1

“They said, you know what would be really cool? And I said, that would be really cool, so let’s see if we can make that happen,” said Jason Alves, executive director of the East Cambridge Business Association, before the winners were announced.

It did – and this year up to 6,000 people moved through the closed-off stretch of Cambridge Street during the noon-to-4 p.m. event, Alves estimated. (One block up, the Saint Anthony Feast of Saint Anthony Parish was in its second day.) The street fair, with tented stands selling pastries, crepes and other goods, also grew by a block this year, with about 20 percent more vendors, Teddy Applebaum estimated.

The downpours in the first half of the Grand Prix deterred crowds initially, “then everybody came at once,”

Applebaum said. “I was amazed with people coming out in the weather. It was really bad out there.”The competition didn’t grow much from last year: The amateur competition stayed the same size and two bakeries joined in the professional category.

“There aren’t that many [professional] bread makers in the area. We opened it up to the entire state, but obviously people aren’t going to drive three hours to drop their bread off this morning,” Teddy Applebaum said. “Within the Boston area, there’s probably about 25 bakeries making baguettes, so we’ve got about half of them represented.” That included Cambridge’s Batifol and La Saison, and in addition to Michette, Somerville fielded baguette from Forge.

Breadboard was the closest competitor from outside Cambridge and Somerville, followed by Bread Ob-

session in Lexington; Clear Flour in Brookline; Eastern Standard Kitchen and Drinks in Boston; Salt Patisserie in Newton; A&J King in Salem; Appleton Farms in Ipswich; and the Pain D’Avignon Restaurant Boulangerie in Hyannis. The people’s choice award for baguette went to another Brookline business: Bakey Babka.

As flattering as it is to draw a competitor from 75 miles away, the Applebaums would love to see more local bakeries involved. “I want them here. So I’m calling them out to represent those Cambridge bakeries, come on out next year and put their bread in this competition,” Teddy Applebaum said.

Breadboard’s Daisy Chow was proud but modest after her win. “The weird thing is we’re open only three days a week and I only make baguette on Wednesdays, because they’re very labor intensive,” she said, clutching her

prize Pampshade, a lamp made of real bread.

While she’s used to baking those 45 baguettes a week, last year she made baguettes for the Breadboard tent at the Grand Prix as well as for competition, and those fell just short of a winning slot. This year she baked with a friend. “It was just a little bit of stress relief to have a second pair of hands, and there are times you can’t exactly predict when things are going to happen,” Chow said.

Because of Breadboard’s once-a-week schedule and lack of a car for deliveries, Chow said she has to decline the Grand Prix’s other honor: becoming the year’s official bread and baguette supplier for the residence of the French Consulate of Boston. “Unless they want to come pick it up,” Chow said.

The silver winner among the ama-

teurs, Amato, was another winner with an element of surprise: He’s been baking for only a year and a half, inspired by a cookbook gifted him by a patient from his physical therapy practice. Now he bakes from six to 10 loaves a week, most of which he gives away to patients, though he’s recently started to sell too.

He began making miche loaves only around a month ago, so he could compete. “I doubt a lot of people were making miches before they knew about this event. It is not a very common bread to make, let alone making it at home,” Amato said. (It not being a common home loaf made it a good challenge, Teddy Applebaum said, but “a great idea because it’s often mostly leavened by sourdough, which home bakers would have experience with.”)

What will Amato bake next? “Probably not a miche,” he said.

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**City of Cambridge
Massachusetts
BOARD OF ZONING
APPEAL**

**831 Mass Avenue,
Cambridge, MA.
617) 349-6100**

The Board of Zoning Appeal will hold a Virtual Public Meeting, **THURSDAY – JUNE 20, 2024**. Members of the public can participate or view the meeting remotely using the Zoom Webinar link: <https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/85299551558>

Or join by phone: Dial +1 929 436 2866 or +1 301 715 8592 - Webinar ID: 852 9955 1558

6:30 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-266931: 6 FRANCIS AVENUE
Residence A-2 Zone
FOX CLUB
UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATION, INC. -C/O SARAH L. RHATIGAN, ESQ.
APPEAL: Zoning enforcement letter issued by Building Commissioner, dated March 26, 2024, and addressed to the “Harvard Fox Club, c/o Kevin Wallace” in which the occupant of the premises is cited for the use of premises located in a Residence A-2 zoning district as a “lodge or other fraternal sororal meeting facility” in violation of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. Art. 4.000, Sec. 4.30 (Table of Uses). Sec. 4.33 (Institutional Use Regulations). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.20 (Appeal).

6:30 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-267305:L 6 FRANCIS AVENUE
Residence A-2 Zone
EMMA C. WOLBACH – C/O BAILEY BUCHANAN, ESQ.
APPEAL: Ms. Wolbach appeals the zoning enforcement letter issued by the Building Commissioner, dated March 25, 2024 to her, the owner of the premises and lessor to the Fox Club Undergraduate Association, Inc., (“FCUA” or “tenant”), under a lease dated 12/6/2023, citing Ms. Wolbach for alleged violations of the Zoning Ordinance by the tenant and violation notices issued to Ms. Wolbach pursuant to Article 9, Section 9.16 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, for the tenant’s violations of

the ordinance. Ms. Wolbach appeals and contests the violation notices, citations, and any assessment of fines and seeks an appeal of any fees assessed and stay of any further fees pending appeal. Art. 4.000, Sec. 4.21 (Accessory Uses).
Sec. 4.5 (Institutional Use Regulations). Art. 9.000, Sec. 9.16.2 (Non-Criminal Disposition). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.20 (Appeal).

7:00 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268589: 4 HOLWORTHY TERRACE
Residence B Zone
DUNCAN MACARTHUR / BAKER POND LLC – C/O ROBERT LINN, ARCHITECT
Variance: To amend plans previously approved on BZA Case #253656 to propose new non-conforming house and propose new shared non- conforming driveway. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements). Art. 6.000, Sec. 6.44.1.b & Sec. 6.44.1.c (Off Street Parking). Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.3 (Non-Conforming Structure). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.30 (Variance).

7:15 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268340: 16 ELLSWORTH AVE – UNIT 2
Residence C-1 Zone
GARRETT TINGLE & JANICE TINGLE – C/O ROBERT TINGLE
Special Permit: To install two larger egress windows in existing openings in the basement. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements). Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.2.c (Non-Conforming Structure). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.40 (Special Permit).

7:30 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268861: 6 SACRAMENTO STREET
Residence B Zone/
Basement Housing Overlay
SACRAMENTO HOUSE, LLC – JAMES J. RAFFERTY, ESQ.
Variance: To convert pre-existing institutional dormitory use to multi-family residence containing seven dwelling units (Use & Density). Seek to replace existing roof headhouse. Seeks relief from Dimensional Regulations of Off-Street Parking Spaces by permitting use of compact spaces. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements). Art. 4.000, Sec. 4.31.g (Multifamily Dwelling). Art. 6.000, Sec. 6.34 (Compact Space Ratio) & Sec.

6.43 (Dimensions of Off-Street Parking Spaces). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.30 (Variance).
Special Permit: To locate parking space within ten (10) feet of habitable windows and within five (5) feet of the property line and install window wells within the required setback. Art. 6.000, Sec. 6.44.1.g (Parking Space Setbacks). Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.2.c (Non-Conforming Structure).
Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.40 (Special Permit).

7:45 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268777: 7 FENNO STREET
Residence C-1 Zone
MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT
Special Permit: Removal of the existing roof and construction of a new roof and dormers as shown on the submitted plans. The work also includes windows within a side setback. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements).
Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.2.d & Sec. 8.22.2.c (Non-Conforming Structure). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.40 (Special Permit).

8:00 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268197: 8 WHITTIER STREET
Residence B Zone
ARMAN GARAKANI & JENNA HALL – C/O JOHN WINSLOW, ARCHITECT
Special Permit: To relocate front porch steps within front yard setback; locate new window in existing side yard setback; addition to existing building with non-conforming gross floor area and new sunken stairway leading to basement. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements).
Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.2.d & Sec. 8.22.2.c (Non-Conforming Structure). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.40 (Special Permit).

8:15 P.M. CASE NO. BZA-268596: 270 HURON AVENUE
Residence B Zone
MARIJANE & JOHN JENSEN, CANDACE ANNE DUNLAP – C/O DAMON SIDEL
Special Permit: To add a set of below-grade exterior stairs, open to the sky, to improve basement access and further violate non-conforming height. Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements). Art. 8.000, Sec. 8.22.2.d (Non-Conforming Structure).
Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.40 (Special Permit).

TO VIEW BZA CASE APPLICATIONS, PLANS & SUBMISSIONS, GO TO: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/inspection/zoning.aspx> at top of page, click “Calendar” > Click

hearing date > Click “Board of Zoning Appeal Agenda.” Any information filed after the agenda has been posted can be viewed at the Inspectional Services Department located at 831 Mass Avenue, Cambridge by appointment only. Copies of this petition are also on file in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Cambridge, MA. Interested persons may provide comments to the Board of Zoning Appeal by participating during the hearing and/or may provide written comments for the Board’s consideration by mailing or delivering them to the attention of the Secretary, Board of Zoning Appeal,
831 Mass Avenue, 02139 or by emailing them to mpacheco@cambridgema.gov. Comments must be submitted prior to the Hearing and include the Case Number. Continued cases are not re-advertised but are posted on the office board at the City Clerk’s Office in City Hall & on the same BZA Web Page 48 hours prior to hearing.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION

The Planning Board of the City of Cambridge will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, July 2, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.** held remotely (see below for instructions to participate) on special permit application case PB-403 for the property located at **2400 Massachusetts Avenue** for which the Applicant is 2400 Mass Ave LLC seeking special permits pursuant to Section 19.20 Project Review Special Permit; Section 20.108 Modification of design standards; Section 22.35.3 Reduction of Green Roofs requirement for a proposal to Construct two 6-story mixed-use buildings of total 94,867 square feet gross floor area with 56 residential units, ground floor retail uses, and 67 below grade parking spaces

TO VIEW PLANS AND DOCUMENTS: Visit www.cambridgema.gov/specialpermits online. Printed copies are on file in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Cambridge, Massachusetts and at the Community Development Department, 344 Broadway.
TO SEND WRITTEN COMMENTS: E-mailing planningboardcomment@cambridgema.gov is preferred.

Please include the case number or address. You can also mail comments to Cambridge Planning Board, 344 Broadway, Third Floor, Cambridge, MA 02139. Written comments received by 5:00 P.M. the day before the meeting will be considered by Board Members in advance of the meeting. Comments received later will be entered into the record.
TO COMMENT IN REAL-TIME: Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation at meetings of the Cambridge Planning Board. You can view the meeting remotely and make comments by computer or telephone using Zoom Webinar. Visit www.cambridgema.gov/planningboard online to view the full meeting agenda, register for the Zoom Webinar, and get up-to-date information about the meeting.
TO VIEW MEETING ONLY: The meeting will be streamed online through the Open Meeting Portal at www.cambridgema.gov and broadcast on cable TV – Channel 22 within Cambridge.
FOR QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE: Contact Swaathi Joseph at 617/349-4668 (TTY 617/349-4621), email sjoseph@cambridgema.gov.

Meeting Notice Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

Notice is hereby given that a public meeting will be held on **Monday, June 24, at 5:30PM** to consider the following matters under M.G.L. Ch. 40C and Ch. 2.78 of the Code of the City of Cambridge and the Order establishing the District.
This meeting will be held online with remote participation. The public can participate online via the Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>) from a phone, tablet, or computer. To join the meeting, register here: <https://tinyurl.com/AHJune2024>. Or call (301) 715 8592 Webinar ID: 842 3778 8524

AH-854: 5 West Bellevue Avenue, by Simon Gustavsson. Alter front entry porch and fenestration.
AH-855: 25 Lancaster Street, by Elizabeth Leohane Stott. Alter fenestration; install

LEGAL ADS

window well.

Constantin von Wentzel, Chair <i>Cambridge Day/The Week,</i> <i>06/13/24, 06/20/24</i>		IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024		\$6,550,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.	
FINAL PUBLICATION <i>FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE CAMBRIDGE DAY ON MAY 9, 2024</i>		ORDERED: That \$3,000,000 is appropriated for the purpose of providing financing for design and construction at Peabody School Playground, Corcoran (Raymond Street) Park, Rafferty Park, Wilder-Lee Park, and 359 Broadway, and to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow \$3,000,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.		In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0. Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk	
City of Cambridge		CAL-02 IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024		A true copy; ATTEST:- Diane P. LeBlanc City Clerk	
ORDERED: That \$11,500,000 is appropriated for the purpose of financing the repair and/or reconstruction of various City streets and sidewalks and bike facilities; and to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow \$11,500,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.		In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0. Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk.		FINAL PUBLICATION <i>FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE CAMBRIDGE DAY ON MAY 9, 2024</i>	
In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.		City of Cambridge		CAL-07 IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024	
Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk.		A true copy; ATTEST:- Diane P. LeBlanc City Clerk		ORDERED: That \$8,500,000 is appropriated, in addition to any amounts previously appropriated, for the purpose of financing the design and construction of various water pollution abatement projects, including but not limited to: construction of sewer separation, storm water management and combined sewer overflow reduction elimination improvements in the Sewer Capital Repairs Program and climate change preparedness efforts; including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C of the General Laws; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow \$8,500,000 and issue bonds or notes therefore under G.L. c.44 and/or c. 29C or any other enabling authority; that such bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the City unless the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager determines that they should be issued as limited obligations and may be secured by local system revenues as defined in Section 1 of G.L. c. 29C; that the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust established pursuant to G.L. c. 29C or from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority ("MWRA") and in connection therewith to enter into a loan agreement and/or a security agreement and/or financial assistance agreement with the Trust or the MWRA and otherwise to contract with the MWRA and the and the Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP") with respect to such loan and for any federal or state aid available for the projects or for the financing thereof; and that the City Manager or any other authorized City official is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the DEP, to expend all funds available for the projects and to take any other action necessary to carry out the projects.	
FINAL PUBLICATION <i>FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE CAMBRIDGE DAY ON MAY 9, 2024</i>		CAL-05 IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024		ORDERED: That \$2,560,000 is appropriated, for the purpose of financing school building upgrades, including but not limited to, the following projects: Baldwin School chiller replacement; the Baldwin School electrical vault beam replacement; The Media Arts and RSTA auto shop waterproofing; Fletcher Maynard Academy (FMA) rear wall facade repairs; and the Cambridgeport & FMA Schools elevator controls upgrade; and to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow \$2,560,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.	
City of Cambridge		CAL-03 IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024		In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0. Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk.	
ORDERED: That \$4,350,000 is appropriated, in addition to any amounts previously appropriated, for the purpose of planning and financing building renovations, including but not limited to the following projects in the municipal facilities improvement plan support significant building improvements and deferred maintenance projects. Proposed projects include but are not limited to upgrades of Public Works facilities, municipal offices, youth centers, branch libraries and fire stations, renovations to 105 Windsor Street and upgrades of HVAC and electrical systems, and to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow \$4,350,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.		A true copy; ATTEST:- Diane P. LeBlanc City Clerk		FINAL PUBLICATION <i>FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE CAMBRIDGE DAY ON MAY 9, 2024</i>	
In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.		City of Cambridge		CAL-06 IN CITY COUNCIL June 3, 2024	
Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk.		A true copy; ATTEST:- Diane P. LeBlanc City Clerk		ORDERED: That \$6,550,000 is appropriated for the Ozone Generator Replacement: Water Treatment Plant equipment and system upgrades and water works construction projects in accordance with DPW street restoration projects, which include Massachusetts Ave 4, Chestnut, Dana, Sciarappa and Winter Streets; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the City Manager is authorized to borrow	
FINAL PUBLICATION <i>FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE CAMBRIDGE DAY ON MAY 9, 2024</i>		CAL-04		In City Council June 3, 2024. Adopted by a yea and nay vote:- Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0. Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk.	
City of Cambridge				A true copy; ATTEST:- Diane P. LeBlanc City Clerk	

8.71.040.2 Notice by the City. The City of Cambridge shall annually publicize the requirements of Chapter 8.71 on the City's website and through other digital City notifications directed at the community, such as daily update e-mails and social media. Also, the City shall annually provide information about the requirements of Chapter 8.71 at a City sponsored community event/program that is organized to provide information about housing resources. The City may publicize and provide information at events/programs about the requirements of Chapter 8.71 more frequently.

This public hearing will be hybrid allowing participation in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and remotely via ZOOM. The ZOOM URL to view the meeting is <https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/97895847144>. **If you would like to speak at this Public Hearing, please register to do so using this URL:** <https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/CityCouncil/PublicCommentSignUpForm>. You may also email comments to the City Clerk at Cityclerk@cambridgema.gov.

The City of Cambridge will provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities upon request. Please contact the City Clerk at 617-349-4260 or at DLeBlanc@Cambridgema.gov.

For the Committee,

Vice Mayor Marc McGovern, Co-Chair
Councillor Paul Toner, Co-Chair

Notice

The Massachusetts State Lottery is offering a KENO monitor to existing KENO To Go agent/s at the following locations:

Norton's Liquors
2451 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140

If you object to these agent(s) receiving a monitor, you must do so, in writing within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of this letter. If applicable, please address your written objection to the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission, Legal Department, 150 Mount Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125 and send via email to Leslie.Zella@masslottery.com or by mail. Should you have any questions regarding this program or any other issues relative to the Lottery, please call the Lottery's General Counsel, Greg Polin, at 781-917-6057 or via email at gpolin@masslottery.com. We look forward to working with you as the Lottery continues its efforts to support the 351 cities and towns of the Commonwealth.

Invoices for legal notices must have the name of the establishment on the invoice for the Lottery to pay. Also, please send the invoice along with a copy of the tier sheet directly to: Accounts Payable, Massachusetts State Lottery, 150 Mount Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125- 3573

FINAL PUBLICATION
FIRST PUBLICATION IN THE BOSTON GLOBE ON MAY 23, 2024

City of Cambridge

CAL-08
IN CITY COUNCIL
June 3, 2024

IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDERED: That \$15,000,000.00 is appropriated, in addition to any amounts previously appropriated, for the purpose of financing the construction of the Fire Station Headquarters building improvements; and to meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the City Manager, is authorized to borrow \$15,000,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority.

In City Council June 3, 2024.
Adopted by a yea and nay vote:-
Yeas ; 9 Nays 0; Absent 0.
Attest:- Diane P. LeBlanc, City Clerk

A true copy;
ATTEST:-
Diane P. LeBlanc
City Clerk

Public Hearing Notice Relative to Municipal Code

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts Office of the City Clerk

The Ordinance Committee, composed of the entire membership of the City Council, will conduct a public hearing on **Thursday, June 20, 2024 from 1:00p.m. to 2:00p.m.** to discuss Amendments to the Tenants' Rights Ordinance recommended by the Law Department.

Recommended amendments appear in bold and are underlined.

8.71.040 Required notice.

8.71.040.1 Notice to Tenant/ Former Homeowner. At the inception of a tenancy and when a landlord or foreclosing owner serves the tenant or former homeowners any notice to quit or notice of lease nonrenewal or expiration, such landlord or foreclosing owner shall, at the same time, also provide the tenant or former homeowner with a notice of basic housing rights and resources, including a list of organizations available to assist tenants and/or former homeowners with their contact information on a form or forms prepared by the City of Cambridge which shall be attached thereto. Where a landlord or foreclosing owner is exercising a right of lease nonrenewal or expiration, the owner shall give such a written notice prepared by the City of Cambridge at least thirty days prior to commencing any summary process action against the tenant or former homeowner. Such notice shall be provided in-hand or by both certified mail and first-class mail.

WILD THINGS

■ Send your high-resolution images of urban wild things with location, date, photographer's name and other useful information for possible use online to photography@cambridgeday.com.

Warbling vireos are notable for endless singing, but it’s their nests that astonish

By JEANINE FARLEY

When I walk along a river or stream and I hear many birds singing, I turn on my Merlin app to identify the songsters. The first bird to pop up on my screen in summer is almost always a warbling vireo (*Vireo gilvus*). These little birds are often not seen. They are small, greenish-brown and nondescript. But the males sing incessantly from the tops of trees.

According to ornithologist Arthur Cleveland Bent, “The warbling vireo, if it were not for its song, would not be a notable species, for it is a little bird in leaf-green plumage, inconspicuous as it moves about among the foliage on the highest branches of its favorite elms and poplars where it spends the summer days, surrounded by green leaves and almost hidden by them.”

In the 1800s, warbling vireos were especially abundant in elms on Boston Common, where they could be heard singing “at almost any hour of the day, from early in the month of May until long after summer has gone.” Warbling vireos especially liked elm trees, where they were fond of nesting.

Bad news for warbling vireos

In 1851, people introduced house sparrows to Brooklyn, New York, to

Sound structure

control linden moth populations, which were harming the region’s basswood trees. Within 50 years, house sparrows had spread across the continental United States. They are very aggressive, and defend their nests by attacking other birds. In 1889, it was reported that house sparrows attacked 70 bird species and even evicted some from their nests. House sparrows were bad news for warbling vireos, and the vireo population declined.

More bad news

If house sparrows were not enough, there was still more bad news for warbling vireos. In the 1920s, furniture makers imported elm wood to make cabinets and tables. This wood introduced a fungus that bark beetles spread to native American elms. Marie Beatrice Schwarz, a scientist in the Netherlands, first identified the cause of this disease (thereafter called Dutch elm disease). The disease spread along the East Coast and killed more than 40 million American elm trees. Because elm trees were favorite nesting

sites for warbling vireos, vireo populations declined even more. Populations further declined in the mid-20th century when cities and towns sprayed shade trees with pesticides.

Good news for warbling vireos

House sparrows eat seeds and grains, which were abundant in horse

manure in the 1800s. With the advent of the internal combustion engine, however, both horse manure piles and house sparrow populations declined. Pesticide use decreased, too. This was all good news for the warbling vireo. Today, the warbling vireo population stands at about 53 million and is increasing at about 0.6 percent per year.



Tom Murray



Richard George

Warbling vireos build pouch-shaped nests, such as in the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge of Concord and Sudbury. The birds favor the American elm like in Somerville’s Milk Row cemetery.



Marty Aligata



Tom Murray

The best way to tell if a bird is a vireo is to listen to how often it sings. During the summer breeding season, the males sing all day long, thousands of times per day, even in the hottest weather. They continue singing into September when most other birds have stopped singing.

Warbling vireos eat caterpillars, cocoons, moths and butterflies, as well as insects that range in size from tiny aphids to large dragonflies. In late summer, they eat berries and the fruits of dogwood, pokeberry, sumac and more. They forage mostly in the tops of trees, snatching insects from leaves and branches.

Warbling vireos often nest near streams and rivers in pouch-shaped nests that hang from the fork of a horizontal tree limb. Some people think that before European settlers arrived in North America, the birds nested exclusively along stream borders – but as people chopped down forests and built roads, shade trees along city streets created a similar habitat. According to ornithologist Aretas A. Saunders, this explains warbling vireos’ preference for nesting in elms and silver maples, “trees that originally were found along stream borders.”

Warbling vireo nests are wonders of engineering. They build their hanging pouch nests 20 to 90 feet above the ground. They use strips of bark, leaves, grasses and paper, thread and string, which are held together by spider or caterpillar silk. John James Audubon observed one male and female building a nest:

One morning I observed both of them at work; they had already attached some slender blades of grass ... Before the end of the second day, bits of hornets’ nests and particles of corn husks had been attached ... On the fourth morning, ... the little creatures were absent nearly an hour at a time, and returned together bringing grass, which I concluded they found at a considerable distance. I followed them as they flew from tree to tree toward the river ... They led me quite out of the village, to a large meadow, where stood an old hay-stack. They alighted on it, and in a few minutes each had selected a blade of grass. Returning by the same route, they moved so slowly from one tree to another that my patience was severely tried. Two days were consumed in travelling for the same kind of grass. On the seventh I saw the female at work, using wool and horse-hair. The eighth was almost entirely spent by both in smoothing the inside. They would enter the nest, sit in it, turn round, and press the lining, I should suppose a hundred times or more in the course of an hour ...

During the breeding season, the males spend much of their time singing from the tops of trees, which is their way of patrolling and defending their territory. The female lays about four eggs. After the eggs hatch, one adult always stays with the young, while the other forages for caterpillars or insects to feed the hungry youngsters. As the chicks grow, the parents feed them more often – up to 30 times per hour!

The next time you meander along a stream, listen for a bird that sings incessantly. You might not be able to spot this little camouflaged bird, but you are probably hearing the song of a warbling vireo.

Jeanine Farley is an educational writer who has lived in the Boston area for more than 30 years. She enjoys taking photos of our urban wild things.