



## Where were you?

GateHouse News Service

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Needham — It's been suggested that years from now, people might ask, "Where were you?" They would, of course, be referring to two nearly simultaneous events: the brutal murder of an elderly man on Elmwood Road; and a subsequent misunderstanding that led to a televised armed police standoff outside Stone Hearth Pizza on Great Plain Avenue.

"Where were you?" is a question often asked long after large-scale tragedies, so life-altering and traumatic, virtually everyone is bound to remember where they were — and what they were doing — when it happened, no matter how much time elapses. Events like JFK's assassination in Dallas or the fall of the Twin Towers in New York fit into that category. They speak to an entire country and in many ways, each help identify a generation.

But in Needham, students who weren't at Needham High School during the two-hour lockdown, imposed so police could search for Robert Moore Sr.'s killer, seemed to regret their poor luck.

"I can't believe I wasn't there!" one student pouted, as if they'd missed a defining moment in their young lives.

Perhaps they did. In a quiet, suburban town like this, home to little more than 28,000 people, the day's events were beyond unusual. The town hadn't seen a murder in nearly 20 years, and no one can recall a SWAT team taking over Needham Square — let alone both at once.

The lack of such horrifying events, the infrequency with which they occur, is precisely the draw. Where would you want to raise a family, if not in a town unfamiliar with violent crime? Why pay Needham real estate prices if not for safety and quietude?

When those crimes, however, cross the borders and work their way into Needham, people begin to question how safe they really are. But despite the tragedies of last Friday, Nov. 2, that residents will always recall in detail, they should also remember their plan worked: Needham has never seen a day like this before and likely won't ever see another like it again. Needham remains as safe as any town can be in 2007.

The Needham Times offers condolences to the Moore family, and apologies to Hillel Neuer, who was arrested simply for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. We wish them all the best in the future.

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