



Residents worried, saddened, after Needham homicide and standoff with alleged gunman at Needham pizzeria

Photos



Jim Walker

Police investigate a murder inside the home at 243 Elmwood Rd. in Needham, Friday, Nov. 2, 2007. Robert Moore, 78, was found murdered and his daughter-in-law badly beaten in the basement of the home.

from a beating.

At about the same time, police received reports of an alleged gunman at Stone Hearth Pizza, just blocks from the murder.

The town sent out an emergency notification recording to all residents informing them of the murder and the schools e-mailed all parents.

“The communication with parents was the best, technologically, they could do,” Wright continued. “They sent us frequent e-mails. I think we knew about it before the media did.”

Bill Paulson, who also attended the “Grease,” performance Friday night, agreed.

“I got e-mails from the middle school and the high school,” said Paulson, who has children at each of the two schools, as well as Newman Elementary School. “I called the school and they were very clear with what the information was.”

But despite the clear communications, Paulson said, he worried as helicopters circled overhead.

“I was anxious more for me,” he said. “[But my daughter] called from the high school. It was good to her from [her].”

Less than two miles away, the Geisheckers, of South Street, headed home after an evening a Blue on Highland.

“I didn’t want to go home because we live very closely to it,” said Brenda Geishecker, who came home earlier Friday afternoon, in the midst of chaos. “I drove into my driveway; the mail lady came along and she told me she heard it was a homicide. I called my husband and he said, ‘Get out of there. Go to the movies.’”

The Geisheckers dined with Peter and Saralea Strock, of Wellesley, and eventually headed to the Strocks’ home to escape the day’s events.

“It’ll be a question years later – where were you when...?” Peter Strock said. “The Needham Police looked spectacular. But it’s a sad comment on our times. Violence drops into Needham, Wellesley. This place used to be insulated from these things.”

But in addition to their own worries, folks expressed sadness for the victims.

“We feel badly for the family,” Jack Geishecker said.

And he wasn’t alone.

By Debra Filcman and Steven Ryan
GateHouse News Service

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Needham — Following Needham’s first murder in 20 years and an unrelated police standoff with an alleged gunman, area residents were abuzz with news Friday night. Rumors swirled and parents compared notes.

Outside Pollard Middle School, where students performed “Grease,” despite the day’s tumult, parents again praised Needham Public Schools’ handling of the two-hour lockdown in its buildings this afternoon.

“I felt the whole response was superior,” said Walter Wright, who has two daughters – one who attends Pollard and another at Needham High School. “They had a plan; they executed the plan.

All Needham schools, public and private, as well the Needham Public Library, were under lockdown Friday afternoon from approximately 2:25 to 4:20 p.m. The heightened security was put in place after an elderly Elmwood Road man, Robert Moore, was murdered by a contractor, and his daughter-in-law, Nancy Moore, was hospitalized

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“Everyone feels a tremendous amount of sorrow,” said Wright, who attended Moore’s church, St. Bartholomew’s. “It happened to a longtime Needham family – a family of faith.”

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