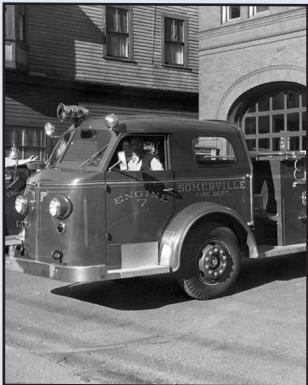


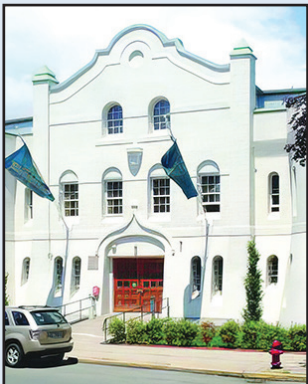


**Inside:**



**Uncle Joe**

page 3



**A timeline for the Armory**

page 5



**Designing Central Somerville Ave.**

page 15

## Kennedy Schoolyard project to begin this winter



After a long wait, a timeline for the replacement of the blacktop space at Kennedy School has been established. — Photo by Bobbie Toner

By Harry Kane

For the past five years, students and parents at the John F. Kennedy School (PK-8) have eagerly awaited a new schoolyard to replace the blacktop space. At the City Council meeting on November 14, Ward 5 City Councilor Naima Sait requested that the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management provide an update on the redesign plan for the playground at the Kennedy School.

The Kennedy School was awarded a grant through the Community Preservation Act in December of 2019. The project is listed as currently underway, according to the FY25 Community Preservation Plan report, explained Councilor Sait.

"This project matters to families across the city," said Kat Johnston, a PK-12 *Continued on page 4*

## The Jungle stays independent and true to community

By Jeffrey Shwom

It's a Wednesday night in Union Square. Choose your own adventure ... you can get there earlier for the Open Mic night or stay late for Karaoke. Either way, down a short court, tucked behind Union Square's long time comfort pub, The Independent, lies the Jungle Community Music Club (The Jungle). Sam Epstein, owner and manager, regaled a night that two magicians performed. "It was incredible! They were really interesting." Though an outlier for the normal artists and bands that perform on Wednesdays, that moment speaks to the specialness of the space. "Everyone supports artists going up. Meeting people and hanging out. People come in groups, or by themselves. It is a community in the club."

*Continued on page 4*



Jungle Community Music Club continues to provide entertainment and community engagement despite the challenges it has faced. — Photos courtesy of Jungle Community Music Club

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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

Join Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the Somerville Department of Health and Human Services in the auditorium at the Central Branch Library (79 Highland Ave) on Wednesday, November 20, at 5 p.m. for a Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremony in honor of those who have lost their lives to violence. This event is open to the public and all community members are welcome.

\*\*\*\*\*

There will be a public Community Meeting regarding 231-249 Elm Street and 6-8 & 12 Grove Street (the Development project from the Burren to Dragon Pizza) on November 20, 6 p.m. at Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Ave. The property owner and developer will be engaging in a discussion regarding the project. This is the third conversation they've hosted, and meeting notes from the previous two can be found here: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A9Ta\\_NOJpXJu8CYrukOx59GG4dB9XB43QXXcmpIk3PM/edit?fbclid=IwY2xjawGgXCilleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHW5qOnypo6QBeMHX-cJmkJVBIjqHIKYT4oCoKBNe78M5nDyXJvk8tQqVrnw\\_aem\\_v\\_OSNDXePKtMZP0d-sni8Q&tab=t.xdfnq4icm70m](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A9Ta_NOJpXJu8CYrukOx59GG4dB9XB43QXXcmpIk3PM/edit?fbclid=IwY2xjawGgXCilleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHW5qOnypo6QBeMHX-cJmkJVBIjqHIKYT4oCoKBNe78M5nDyXJvk8tQqVrnw_aem_v_OSNDXePKtMZP0d-sni8Q&tab=t.xdfnq4icm70m).

\*\*\*\*\*

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to Tracey Leah Pratt, who is celebrating this week. We wish Tracey a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to Bobby Potaris, who celebrates this week. A great guy and a great father. Happy birthday to Craig Resmini. We wish him a great birthday. *Continued on page 7*

## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of November 20 – November 26 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
<b>Wednesday</b> November 20	Sunny	47°/33°	2%	3%	NE 11 mph
<b>Thursday</b> November 21	Partly Cloudy	44°/37°	25%	17%	N 9 mph
<b>Friday</b> November 22	Cloudy	51°/37°	16%	11%	NW 13 mph
<b>Saturday</b> November 23	Partly Cloudy	51°/35°	9%	1%	NW 10 mph
<b>Sunday</b> November 24	Partly Cloudy	55°/43°	14%	10%	NW 9 mph
<b>Monday</b> November 25	Partly Cloudy	58°/41°	22%	15%	SW 11 mph
<b>Tuesday</b> November 26	Partly Cloudy	55°/40°	18%	15%	NW 11 mph

NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

## TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

### Response to: Arts at the Armory – A Moving Story

nelson salazar says:

The city has not experience in running a non-profit such as the Arts at the Armory. There is no way that the Somerville Arts Council has or will have the strength to run a place or have as many events as the Armory is presently having. There must be something that we dont know. I wonder where the Somerville Arts Council's board stands on this but but it is time that the city aka Somerville Arts Council and the Armory come up with a solution that benefits the community.

JJ Gonson says:

It is horrifying to think that there is any chance of the Center for Arts leaving the Armory building. Somerville is desperately in need of performance spaces. Losing one would be a tragedy, especially a place so dear to the community and so vital in providing a space for both local and touring artists. There have been many bumps in the Center for Arts path, and they have gotten better and better as time has gone on. With a new sound system and sound proofing they have become a very important part of the arts in Somerville. Honestly, there is only one other space of any size left. We must not lose the Center for Arts at The Armory!

Allan Knowles says:

Heartbreaking to hear this. I have worked with Arts at the Armory closely over the last couple of years as a venue for hosting events for my small business and have nothing but good things to say about them. The space is a hub for commerce, art and community. Something must be done to preserve this piece of Somerville's soul. Authentic spaces like these are rare and worth the effort to maintain and hopefully flourish. Without them, we lose so much of what makes this city such a special place to call home.

Log onto [TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://TheSomervilleTimes.com) to leave your own comments

# The Somerville Times

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Life in the  by Jimmy Del Ponte

# Uncle Joe



In 1960 my family moved from the Ball Square area to Davis Square. My parents paid \$15,000 for the house. It was pretty run down and needed a lot of TLC. Not

everyone was thrilled about the new digs especially my Uncle Joe. He was a firefighter on engine 7 on Highland Ave. He was against my dad buying the house. When there was painting and wallpapering to do my aunts and uncles showed up to help.

We had only been in the new house for a while when the unthinkable happened. A fire alarm was put in for Hall Ave. which was my street. What happened next was just pure chaos. My un-cle Joe immediately thought that it was our new house that

was on fire. It was actually a house away. Uncle Joe freaked out saying things like, "I told him not to buy that house!" The firefighters were busy as the house continued to burn. By this time uncle Joe knew that it was not our house that was on fire but one house down. Unfortunately, a woman perished in the fire so it was pretty serious.

Having a fireman for an uncle was very cool. I remember trips to the fire station when we slid down the pole. Like many firemen, uncle Joe had a side job. He was in the glass repair business. We never paid for a broken door or window.

Here it is 2024 and I'm happy to say we're still in our home near Davis Square. I have fond memories of my uncle Joe. I especially remember the cocktail parties at his house on Josephine Ave.



## Somerville invited to learn about financial assistance for home heating costs

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, the City of Somerville Health and Human Services (HHS) Department, and the Cambridge Fuel Assistance Program invite Somerville and Cambridge community members to learn more about financial assistance available to help with home heating costs this winter.

The program helps low-income residents in Cambridge and Somerville pay their winter heating bills between November 1 and April 30. Renters and homeowners in both cities are eligible if they meet federal income guidelines. Eligible persons may also submit an application for the heating assistance program while at the event.

The information session and registration event hosted by HHS will be held on Thursday, November 21, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex Building (50 Evergreen Ave.). Attendees are asked to bring the following documents if they are interested in starting an application:

- Photo identification
- List of all household members
- Proof of income
- Information on your heating bills
- An active lease or mortgage statement

### Eligibility Requirements

This program is for residents with household incomes, before taxes, of less than 60 percent of the state median income.

The most recent income levels are as follows:

Household Size	60% of Estimated State Median Income
1	\$49,196
2	\$64,333
3	\$79,470
4	\$94,608
5	\$109,745
6	\$124,882

To learn more about the Fuel Assistance Program, go to [somervillema.gov/heatingassistance](http://somervillema.gov/heatingassistance) or call (617) 349-6252 x 02139. To submit a first-time application online, please visit [toapply.org/CCDHS](http://toapply.org/CCDHS).

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## Somerville Police Dept Crime Log November 5 – 11

### Residential Breaking and Entering

24070507: On 11/10/24 at approximately 2:30 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Partridge Ave. for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated her window was broken. Nothing was reported missing.

### Residential Breaking and Entering

24070496: On 11/10/24 at approximately 1:16 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on College Ave. for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the reporting party who stated he was checking on his friend's apartment and noticed a male party inside. The suspect was then chased out of the house. Nothing was reported missing.

### Arrest

24070137: On 11/8/24 at approximately 9:40 p.m., Somerville Police responded to Fenwick St. and Heath Stt for a weapons call. Upon arrival, officers spoke with two victims who stated they were approached by a male party with a knife. Officers located the male suspect and he was placed under arrest.

**Other crimes:** 4 Package thefts + 4 MV thefts + 1 Bike theft + 1 Car break + 3 MV vandalisms

— Somerville Police Department



## Kennedy Schoolyard project to begin this winter CONT. FROM PG 1

education consultant and mother of a third-grader who attends the Kennedy School. Johnston addressed the City Council last Thursday evening regarding the lack of progress with the schoolyard project.

The goal is to transform the blacktop schoolyard that now has basketball hoops into a park-like green space that infuses outdoor learning and ecological design features to prioritize children's well-being and play.

While the pandemic delayed the start of the project, she said, there have been no updates since last year about the school-

yard. Johnston is asking for a timeline and regular monthly updates.

"The community was told last year that we were back on track. We've had no update since then," Johnston said. "A landscape firm doesn't seem to have been hired and we haven't found an open or closed RFQ on the city's procurement site."

The Kennedy School, located at 5 Cherry St., has an enclosed blacktop area, referred to as the "front lot" for playspace during recess, she explained, where 282 students in grades 3-8 can exercise each day.

In addition, she said, the school houses

three district-wide programs for special education. "There's currently nothing for differently-abled students to use at the school, except for one swing," said Johnston. "These students deserve a universally accessible playspace."

Since the application was submitted in September of 2018, 318 students have graduated with no progress in the project, Johnston added. The Kennedy School is now the only school without access to a field or green space.

"It's worth the fight," said Jake Wilson, City Councilor-At-Large. "I'm so glad you're here. I'm here to fight with you for

it. It makes such a difference for a school community!"

Councilor Wilson said that prior to being a City Councilor, he led a Parent Group in a long, protracted fight for a schoolyard at the Arthur D. Healey School. He says a new schoolyard will make a big difference, and it will be much better than the current blacktop space for recess.

Luisa Oliveira, Director of Public Space and Urban Forestry, said in a written statement: "The Kennedy Schoolyard project has not yet started but will begin this winter."

## The Jungle stays independent and true to community CONT. FROM PG 1

The Jungle, originally an old police car garage, is "a community music club in the concrete jungle, featuring live performances ... by and for local artists, fans, and musicians," per its website. Capacity is over 75 people. Comic book happy hours, live hip-hop, R&B and rock showcases, and four band performances abound. Live performance is a gift that keeps on giving. "There are apps for everything but there is no app or website that you have a community right around, doing something together," Sam passionately states.

"We never charge anyone to perform," Sam tells The Times. "Other places, they are not independent. They are in some way owned by Live Nation or use Live Nation booking. Live Nation is a powerful promoter" that knows how to create a draw for artists. What happens is familiar to many long-time artists in the Boston music scene ... the other bookers charge artists and if enough people show up, the artist can make something. The Jungle is the opposite. "We make sure to book enough different artists. We take the risk and do

the work to help promote folks."

The Jungle has been creative over the years to attract different crowds at different times. Early on, in May 2019, The Jungle hosted spinning to live music ... yes regular spin bikes close to the stage. Sam snarked in recollection, "Maybe five people showed up." Going through experiments like spinning and hundreds of performances, they have taken their experiences into who they book and how they do it.

First, they will not typically allow, say, one record label with four different bands to host or rent out the space. "If a friend has four bands on the label, they could probably pay a room fee at a different venue to put on one show with ok turnout. Or they could work with our bookers who will help build four great shows, each with one band from the label and three unrelated bands that we book. The benefit is each unrelated band gets to build their audience playing ... to new fans they never met."

The Jungle has faced normal and extraordinary challenges the past five years. Sam tells me it is "still very difficult. I had



debt and not a lot of money when I started (The Jungle). I got small business loans from banks and people. The pandemic happened and I got a \$300,000 SBA (Small Business Association) disaster loan, which actually ballooned my debt. That is a problem we hit. It was a big risk and I knew I'd have to work hard. It was not bailouts or grants in 2020 ... it was mostly debt that I am now paying interest and insurance on."

Recently, they saw a 30% increase in insurance premiums, even with no claims. Why? The insurance market for small music venues with alcohol is challenging. Sam

details, "We cannot get regular insurance. Music venues are risky. Only a couple businesses ... sell to small music venues. A lot of those small venues went out of business and I think it skyrocketed the base, since there were many fewer people paying the premiums."

Long term, The Jungle plans to be here. Sam says that they are currently operating every day. "We may be closing on Mondays but we are here and will continue to be here."

Visit <https://www.thejunglemusicclub.com/> for show times and booking.

# Arts at the Armory and Somerville - a timeline

By Jeffrey Shwom

In an effort to provide further detail to our readers, we offer the following list of stakeholders and timeline for ongoing conversation about the future of The Somerville Armory.

List of Key Stakeholders

**The Somerville Armory** - the physical space at 191 Highland Avenue, which has at least five independent current tenants, including the Center for the Arts at the Armory and Acoustic Strings of New England.

**The Center for the Arts at The Armory** (“Arts at the Armory”) – a community non-profit “serving Somerville and the Greater Boston community through arts, cultural and community events, exhibitions, markets, classes and more.” They host five signature programs, including The Spotlight Series and the Somerville Winter Farmers Market.

**The City of Somerville** – current owner and landlord of The Somerville Armory. The city hosts three other program spaces at the Somerville Armory through SomArt, a Somerville Arts Council program that provides “subsidized space for artist work space under the umbrella of city government” for 200 local working artists.

Timeline

**2008** – The Sater family completes a 4-year repurposing and historical preservation effort as The Somerville Armory transitions to a community arts center. Arts at the Armory becomes the anchor tenant, per the Arts at The Armory website.

**June 2021** – The City of Somerville takes over The Somerville Armory through eminent domain “to preserve...as a community art space,” and pays \$5 million, per boston.com.

**June 30, 2023** - The Arts at the Armory’s lease expires, per executive director Stephanie Scherpf via email.

**August 15, 2023** – The Arts at the Armory hosts roughly 100 people for a community meeting to discuss “perspective on the City of Somerville’s ‘Armory Master Plan Process.’” 1,175 signatures were later collected as a petition calls for four concrete steps, including having a third party operate the Somerville Armory and the City of Somerville to abandon its current position as owner and operator.

*“...concern for the idea of the city managing a physical asset like this ... it risks it becoming a ‘second annex’ to City Hall”*

**January 24, 2024** – At one of four Armory Master Plan Community Meetings hosted by the city, discussion points presented include feedback that “community members express appreciation for the independent nature of the management structure in which Arts at the Armory curates the main hall and café” and “concern for the idea of the city managing a physical asset like this ... it risks it becoming a ‘second annex’ to City Hall.” Information found in public record.

**May 15, 2024** – The city hosts an Armory Community Meeting and presents three options for future organizational operations: a non-profit organization operates it, having a quasi-municipal trust, or creation or move into a city department. Wish list items presented include preserving a low-cost space and



A list of stakeholders and a timeline for the future disposition of The Somerville Armory have been established.

balancing short term uses with longer term tenants.

**June 7, 2024** – The Armory Master Plan Survey, created by the Arts at the Armory, gets 221 responses, with 74% of respondents saying the City of Somerville should not be the building manager and 79% of respondents saying the Arts at the Armory should be the building manager. However, it also suggests that respondents favor the City of Somerville to fund some capital needs, even if it does not operate and own the Somerville Armory.

**September 4, 2024** – Arts at the Armory reports that the Legal department within the City of Somerville “is putting its final touches on our License Agreement.” Meetings with Somerville Arts Council and the city’s OSCPD department continue.

**November 8, 2024** – Arts at the Armory received a License Agreement and Support Letter, not a new lease, for the three spaces within the Armory at \$7,582 per month, based on the Arts at the Armory website.

**November 14, 2024** – At the City of Somerville’s City Council meeting, a resolution by Councilors Sait and Wilson was made “That the Administration, in its capacity as owner and landlord of The Armory, ensure that all tenants of the facility are offered legal leases or licenses.” Councilor Sait stressed frustration with “a lack of progress” and noted that the Arts at the Armory “cannot apply for much needed grants and book events in the far future” with just the license agreements. Furthermore, an executed License Agreement and Support Letter from the City was received at 7:11 p.m. by Arts at the Armory during the City Council meeting, as reported by Stephanie Scherpf.

**December 31, 2024** – promised City of Somerville deadline for a finalized and approved “Armory Master Plan” by City Council.

**July 1, 2025** – The city’s goal is to have leases in place by this date, per a November 6, 2024 comfort letter from Mayor Ballantyne.



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# Beacon Hill Roll Call



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**THE HOUSE AND SENATE:** *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local representatives' and senators votes on roll calls from the week of November 11-15.

## \$3.9 BILLION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE (H 5100)

House 137-8 and then 139-4, Senate 39-1, approved and sent to Gov. Maura Healey a \$3.9 billion economic development package that supporters say would make bold investments in life sciences, climate tech, AI and small businesses, "building on Massachusetts' national leadership and creating an environment where businesses and workers thrive."

The package increases the annual tax credit authorization for the life sciences industry from \$30 million to \$40 million. Other provisions include \$400 million for the MassWorks Infrastructure Program to support public infrastructure projects and create jobs; \$150 million for library construction projects; \$103 million for AI in systems across the state; \$100 million for infrastructure improvements in rural communities; \$21 million for resilience in agriculture and fishing; and \$40 million for food science innovations.

"This economic development bill maximizes assets and opportunities and ensures Massachusetts will continue to lead the way toward a robust, adaptable and innovative future," said Sen. Barry Finegold (D-Andover), Senate Chair of the Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. "The bill provides meaningful investments in life sciences, climatetech and small businesses."

"This legislation will ensure the commonwealth can inject millions of dollars into critical sectors, develop the state's workforce, grow our economy and make Massachusetts more competitive," said Rep. Jerry Parisella (D-Beverly), House Chair of the Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. "Policy provisions include permitting reforms, educator diversity, consumer protections around ticketing and home improvement contractors, workforce training and rural development. These, along with meaningful tax credits and incentives for life sciences and climatetech will help keep Massachusetts a leader in vital industries."

"This well-rounded economic development package makes significant, targeted investments into major sectors of the commonwealth's economy," said Rep. Aaron Michlewitz, (D-Boston), chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means. "By renewing our commitment to the life sciences industry, and by making significant new investments into climatetech, we will be elevating

the commonwealth's economy to be able to compete and thrive for years to come."

Rep. Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) said this "so-called economic development" bill contains major education and civil service reforms. "That alone is enough for a 'No' vote," said Boldyga, "They should be separate bills. But regardless of that, this bill will continue to march the commonwealth down a destructive path of reckless government spending. It's full of pork, tax breaks for special interest groups and over \$400 million in more subsidies for offshore wind that is destroying our coastline, killing our whales and decimating our fishing industry."

Boldyga continued, "[It] also includes dangerous DEI language that would allow for exemptions of certain certification tests for public school teachers in order to meet diversity goals, incorporates 'culturally responsive training,' requires schools to create 'diversity plans,' and creates DEI officers and other mandatory DEI roles within our schools."

"While I support many of the funding initiatives in the bill, I have concerns with outside sections of the bill that have nothing to do with economic development which I simply cannot support," said Sen. Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "For example, the SAPHE act, which is about public health and dramatically expands the power of state health officials while diminishing local control and leading to lower levels of accountability which could cause severe economic impacts on businesses and individuals."

Fattman continued, "I do not agree with the portions of the bill that lower the standards of licensure for teachers and physicians, especially at a time where we should expect nothing but excellence from our teachers and doctors. Where too many of the sections were unrelated to economic development, it led to my 'No' vote, and these sections are troubling and distracting from the intended purpose of this legislation. Quite frankly, I believe the public is tired of this approach to legislating. Instead, we should have included practical ways to reduce the cost of living for Massachusetts residents struggling to make ends meet because of affordability issues in the state, such as tax breaks for childcare and/or middle class families."

(A "Yes" vote is for the bill. A "No" vote is against it. The House held two separate roll calls on the same bill so there are two votes listed for each representative.)

Rep. Christine Barber	Yes/Yes
Rep. Mike Connolly	Yes/Yes
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven	Yes/Yes
Sen. Patricia Jehlen	Yes

## CLEAN ENERGY AND CLIMATE (S 2967)

House 128-17, approved and sent to Gov. Maura Healey climate/energy legislation that supporters say will make systemic changes to the state's clean energy infrastructure which will help the state achieve its net zero emissions by 2050 goals. They say it will also expand electric vehicle use and infrastructure and protect residents and ratepayers.

A House-Senate conference committee drafted the compromise version to resolve the differences in the competing versions approved by the House and Senate earlier this year.

"Today the Legislature once again took decisive action to address the climate crisis," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). "While achieving the shared goal of reforming siting and permitting so that we can ensure that clean energy projects get approved and built at the rate necessary to meet our state's ambitious emissions reduction goals, we are also expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure and incentives, addressing the high cost and long lifespan of gas infrastructure projects as we strive to move towards cleaner energy sources, and protecting rate payers from bearing the costs of this transformational shift."

"This legislation represents the Legislature's continued commitment to meeting Massachusetts' long-term emission reduction targets, as it builds on the work that is being done to modernize the commonwealth's energy grid, increase clean energy generation and combat the climate crisis," said House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy). "The reforms related to siting and permitting of clean energy infrastructure will be critical in the process of transitioning the commonwealth's energy grid away from fossil fuels over time."

"I voted against the [bill] because of the stance it takes on natural gas," said Rep. Kelly Pease (R-Westfield), one of only 17 members, all Republicans, who voted against the measure. "This bill wants to put an end to the use of natural gas in our state. Natural gas is not only abundant in the United States, but it is one of the cleanest burning energy sources. Increasing the use of natural gas would help our planet, while not having a detrimental impact on our economy. Unfortunately, this bill is just another nail in the coffin for using natural gas as an energy source."

"While I and many others in the 5th Barnstable District support alternative energy, my primary responsibility as a state representative is to prioritize the health, safety and best interests of my constituents," said Rep. Steve Xiarhos (R-Barnstable). "These interests would be significantly undermined by [the bill] because

*Continued on page 16*

# COMMENTARY

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Election fatigue? Cheer up – the holiday season is right around the corner!

## Our View Of The Times



Once again the democratic process has run its course and those of us who chose to participate can rest assured that we have done our parts in having a say in who governs as we head into the future.

We congratulate all who participated as candidates, not only those who were elected, but also those who missed achieving their victories. Everybody benefits when clearly diverse choices

are presented to voters. Without that, the process could only be regarded as a hollow covenant. It takes a lot of courage and self-confidence to put oneself on the block in this way.

Candidates are exposed to withering scrutiny and criticism by those with opposing viewpoints. Miles of city streets are walked and hundreds of hands are shaken. Personal and intellectual acumen must be

honed to a razor's width, and when called upon for an answer there had better be one ready.

How many among us would really feel up to that challenge? And how many of that number would measure up in a credible fashion?

So if we're feeling as if we've been exposed to quite enough political messaging and inundated with more choices than

we'd prefer to deal with, then we can perhaps imagine the stress and endless effort these candidates and their supporters have just gone through.

And now it's time for all of us to lighten up and enjoy the upcoming holiday season, with all its good cheer and well wishing.

No stress and effort, right? Well, we can at least imagine this is so.

### Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Happy birthday to **Joan Puglia**, a lifelong resident who is celebrating this week as well. She's the wife of former alderman Andy. Happy birthday to a great friend of ours, **Malitta Knaut**. A great person. We wish her the very best. Happy birthday to **Diane Johansen**, another friend of ours, lifelong resident from Winter Hill. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Peggy Henderson, Nancy Jones, Joe Beckmann, Joellen Guidi, Mary Silvestro, JoEllen Guidi, Suzanne Ferola, Bill Mccoy, Marie Coady, Todd Easton, Peggy Ryan Lookliss, Julie Adelsberger and Mary McGuire** every happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the

others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

\*\*\*\*\*

Somerville is taking a step toward greater sustainability and energy equity with a **proposed rental registry and energy disclosure ordinance**. The proposed ordinance will strengthen two-way communication between landlords and the city, while improving landlord access to energy efficiency and weatherization resources. Attend a virtual meeting on **Wednesday, November 20**, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. to get updates on the proposed ordinance, the community feedback process and the feedback received, discuss the preliminary

implementation plan, and have opportunities to ask questions and give additional feedback. Once finalized, the proposed ordinance will be submitted to City Council for approval. Online via Zoom, to register visit [somervillema.gov/rred](http://somervillema.gov/rred).

\*\*\*\*\*

We here at *The Times* wish everyone a happy and safe **Thanksgiving holiday**. As we approach holiday gift shopping don't forget to shop local to support local businesses. City offices will be closed on **Thursday, November 28**, and **Friday, November 29**, for Thanksgiving. Trash, recycling, and yard waste collection will be delayed by one day.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville varsity football team** has a home non-conference game vs. **Cambridge Rindge & Latin** (Cambridge, MA) on **Wednesday, November 27**, 6 p.m., **Dilboy Stadium**. Tickets can be purchased on-site before the game.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **28th Annual Gobble Gobble Gobble** is a family-friendly 4-mile turkey trot that takes place every year on Thanksgiving. Presented by the **Somerville Road Runners**, the Gobble Gobble Gobble road race starts and ends in Davis Square (at the heart of Somerville), features a unique 4 mile course, *Continued on page 21*

# FUN & GAMES

## Ms. Cam's Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#950

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. What occasion corresponds to the longest day of the year?  | history?   |
| 2. Which freezes faster, hot or cold water?   | 7. What inspired the creation of Google images?                                  |
| 3. What sport was featured on the first curved U.S. coin in 2014?                                     | 8. Which Italian town is the setting for Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> ? |
| 4. Edie Falco and James Gandolfini starred in what TV series about the life of a New Jersey mob boss? | 9. What is the currency of Poland?   |
| 5. What U.S. woman was appointed as the first woman Speaker of the House?                             | 10. What is a single strand of spaghetti called?                                 |
| 6. Which American financier was convicted of running the largest Ponzi scheme in U.S.                 | 11. Who did the U.S. buy Florida from?   |
|   | 12. What is Starbucks' logo?   |

Answers on page 14

### The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. Dragonflies have six legs but can't walk.
2. It's possible to lead a cow upstairs but not downstairs.

#### STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

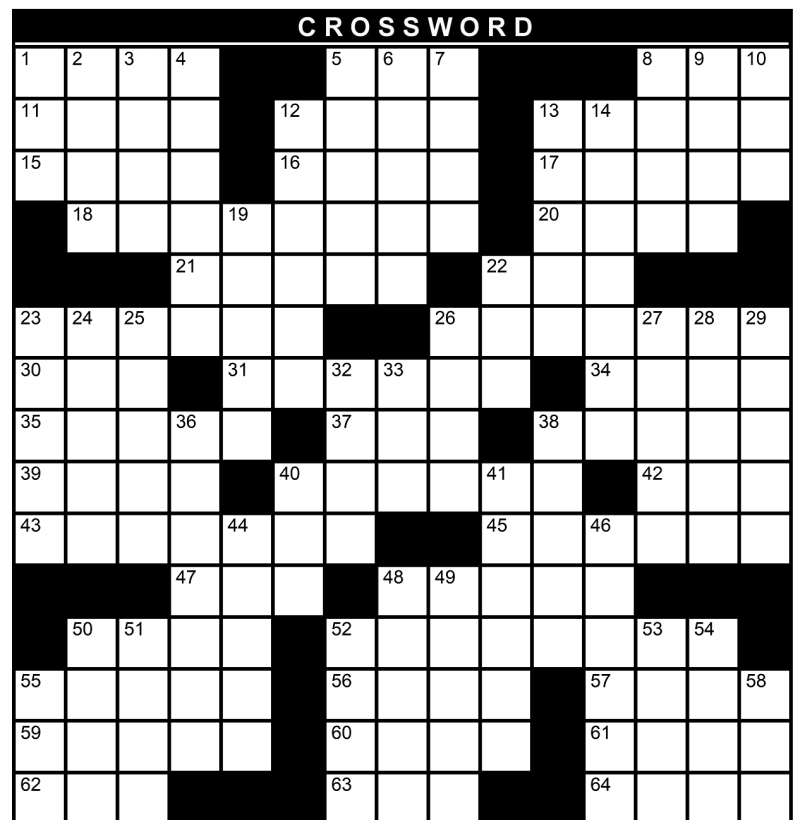
MANIAS AND PHOBIAS

##### ACROSS

1. Figaro's solo, e.g.
5. Not sin, as in math
8. Designer Laroche
11. Pi-meson
12. Cut, like a log
13. Telephobia, or fear of this device
15. He's Just Not That \_\_\_\_ You", movie
16. 2D measurement
17. Gives a helping hand
18. Ludomania, obsession with \_\_\_\_
20. Therefore
21. Poetic feet
22. Accident
23. \_\_\_\_ mania, obsession with wealth and power
26. Type of throw, in baseball
30. Miner's load
31. Member of Round Table
34. Quartet minus one
35. Spacious
37. Last word of "America the Beautiful"
38. Young chicken
39. Cocoyam
40. Largest Asian antelope
42. Haute couture gala location, with The
43. Slimy phlebotomists
45. \_\_\_\_ phobia, fear of public speaking
47. Took the bait
48. Tempter
50. Dumbstruck
52. Gamophobia, fear of \_\_\_\_
55. September stone
56. Cantina cooker
57. Apple leftover
59. Lakes, in Scotland
60. \_\_\_\_ gin
61. On a \_\_\_\_," or carefree
62. \_\_\_\_ mania, obsession with oneself
63. Cough syrup amt.
64. Additional

##### DOWN

1. \_\_\_\_ phobia, fear of bees
2. Bananaphone preceder
3. Itty bit
4. Language disfunction



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### Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 5. Indigenous person of Lesser Antilles         | 32. Egyptian goddess of fertility          |
| 6. Track and field star, 1936 Olympics          | 33. Hair raiser                            |
| 7. Tear in pantyhose                            | 36. ____ effect, or compulsive handwashing |
| 8. Struck with a mallet                         | 38. Pileus, pl.                            |
| 9. Back arrow key                               | 40. Entomologist's catcher, sometimes      |
| 10. Indeed                                      | 41. Agora, plural                          |
| 12. Against the stream swimmer                  | 44. Tannery supply, pl.                    |
| 13. Say "pretty please"                         | 46. Delphi talker                          |
| 14. ____ phobia, fear of snakes and crocodiles  | 48. Room partitions                        |
| 19. Uncooperative, like a mule                  | 49. Lowest deck on a ship                  |
| 22. "Battleship" success                        | 50. Full of excitement                     |
| 23. Kind of mushroom                            | 51. Home to Baylor University              |
| 24. Grind down                                  | 52. Lion's share                           |
| 25. Glittery stone                              | 53. Hockey score                           |
| 26. Carpet style                                | 54. Commits a faux pas                     |
| 27. Lily genus, pl.                             | 55. A in IPA                               |
| 28. Angers                                      | 58. Increase                               |
| 29. All for one and one for all," to Musketeers |  |

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.



# The Somerville Growing Center holds annual wreath fundraiser

By Cathleen Twardzik

It's that time of year again. Christmas is starting to waft through the air, but at the Somerville Center that means wreath assembly time. You could partake in the creation of beautiful, festive creations by volunteering at The Somerville Growing Center: Volunteer Opportunities (signupgenius.com).

This annual event is "our biggest" fundraiser. Each wreath is "handcrafted" and "made with love by our volunteers, which helps to support programming and care for the Growing Center."

Orders may be placed at their online store. To locate it: log onto the Growing Center's homepage (thegrowingcenter.org), click on support us, and then, click on wreath sale fundraiser).

Conveniently, you can get your wonderful wreath delivered for an extra \$5 delivery fee if you live in Somerville, Cambridge or Medford.

It is impressive that, "The Wreath Project/Fundraiser started as a collaboration between the Growing Center and the Walnut Street Center back in 1995 – almost 30 years. Since then, it has become the major annual fundraiser for the Growing Center," said Lisa Brukilacchio, Vice President of the Board of Directors and Co-Founder of the Friends of the Community Growing Center. Brukilacchio "started the annual wreath project/fundraiser more than two

decades ago."

This yuletide event, initially started as a way to fund the Walnut Street's Garden Group at the Center, raises funds to support the Growing Center's completely-free-to-the-public cultural programming, workshops and festivals, as well as to pay for our very part-time staff members and other operational expenses. It also happens to be a wonderful community event that brings together dozens of volunteers every year. Our wreath crew works behind-the-scenes – starting as far back as the summer-growing, picking and drying flowers, and gathering nature materials from farms and woodlands to create hand-decorated evergreen wreaths, each featuring a homemade bow, adorned with locally sourced pinecones, delicate dried flowers and ornamental peppers and berries. We are grateful for donations of local flowers from Late Bloom Farm, Red Fire Farm and Gaining Ground," said Brukilacchio.

Besides this event, what else does the Growing Center do for the community? "The Somerville Community Growing Center is a municipally-owned community green space situated on a quarter-acre of gently sloped hillside outside of Union Square, Somerville. [It is] 100 percent operated by volunteers, this shared community garden hosts rich programming including nature education, cultural performances, festivals and events for children, as well as a vibrant Children in

Nature Initiative that welcomes dozens of area preschoolers and school-aged children into the garden to learn, explore and play," she said.

Further, "We also offer a multi-year-old Community Herb Project that supports programming around growing and using herbs, and were the co-founders of the Somerville Maple Syrup

Project, hosting the very first Maple Boil Down in 2000. The Growing Center also offers unique volunteer opportunities for people of all ages – providing opportunities to give back to the community while spending time in nature and meeting other people," said Brukilacchio.

This year, 2024, marks the Growing Center's 30-year anniversary. "In the fall of 1993, the first "work days" were held to break ground on the then-newly formed Somerville Community Growing Center. Volunteers showed up in clusters to help move dirt and sand, and form retaining walls and paths on this rough patch of hillside," she said.

In more detail, "To mark the three decades that have passed since those initial work days in 1993, we opened up the garden on October 14, 2023 for our 30th Anniversary Kickoff. Visitors were able to listen to live jazz, check out archival photos, take a child-led tour and learn about our map-making, art and children's narrative project."

In May 2024, "Visitors were invited



Buy a wreath to help to spread holiday cheer.

to tour a true hidden gem of a backyard with the owners, sample regionally grown crudites donated by Farmers to You, and sip drinks donated by local breweries. The event also featured an introduction to the household's five chickens," said Brukilacchio.

To top off the 2024 festivities, "In June of 2024, we held a public "FUN-raising" party to celebrate our 30th with the whole community. Festivities included dancing to the tunes of a local band, kids' crafts and activities, a bake sale, and ice cream donated by Forge and drizzled with the Growing Center's own Maple Syrup. Spring of 2024 also marked the end of our 30-30-30 Campaign: Over the course of 30 weeks – from mid-October 2023 to the end of May 2024, we made a

Continued on page 11

## Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



### Cranberry Sauce

I never purchase store bought cranberry sauce anymore because homemade is easy to make, and tastes so much better. The rosemary and orange essence compliments the tartness of the cranberries perfectly. Feel free to substitute a cinnamon stick for the star anise.

- 12 oz. Fresh Cranberries
- 1 Medium Orange, Zested & Juiced
- 1 Rosemary Sprig
- 1 Star Anise, Optional
- 1/4 Cup Maple Syrup
- 1/2 Cup Sugar

In a 3-quart sauce pan, add all the ingredients, mix well, and cook over medium/low heat. Stir often. When the mixture slowly boils, you will hear the cranberries popping. Cook for about 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the mixture cool down. It will thicken while it cools down. Discard the rosemary and star anise. Transfer to a well-sealed container and refrigerate. This can be made a couple of days before the big meal. Yield approximately 2 cups.

Visit Dorothy's website at <http://ddimarzo2002.wix>.



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**City of Somerville  
PLANNING BOARD**

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The **Somerville Planning Board (PB)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, December 5, 2024**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to [planningboard@somervillema.gov](mailto:planningboard@somervillema.gov).

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ypg7J3ITRGap1hSmcmd90g](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ypg7J3ITRGap1hSmcmd90g)  
Webinar ID: 812 5574 0142

**TO CALL IN**

An attendee must register for the meeting online in order for a call-in number to be emailed to them by Zoom.

The Planning Board will consider the following pursuant to M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

**20-23 Cummings Street** Greystar Development East, LLC proposes a Master Plan in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use (ASMD) special district, which requires a Master Plan Special Permit.

**20-23 Cummings Street** Greystar Development East, LLC seeks waivers from dimensional standards for building height, floor area ratio, and front setback, proposing occupancy of commercial space greater than 10,000 square feet in leasable floor area in the Assembly Square Mixed-use district and modifications to the provisions of Section 11.2 Motor Vehicle Parking, all which requires a Special Permit.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov).

11/20/24 The Somerville Times



**PUBLIC NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

**PROJECT:** 20 – 23 Cummings Street

**LOCATION:** 20 – 23 Cummings Street, Somerville, MA 02145

**PROponent:** Greystar Development East, LLC

**The undersigned is submitting a Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs on or before**

November 15th, 2024

**This will initiate review of the above project pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act ("MEPA," M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62L). Copies of the DEIR may be obtained from:** Michael Karasik at [mkarasik@vhb.com](mailto:mkarasik@vhb.com) or 617.607.2936

**Electronic copies of the DEIR are also being sent to the Conservation Commission and Planning Boards of the City of Somerville, and a hard copy has been made available for public viewing at the Somerville Public Library.**

The Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs will publish notice of the DEIR in the MEPA Environmental Monitor, receive public comments on the project, and then decide if an Environmental Impact Report is required. All persons wishing to comment on the project, or to be notified of a site visit and/or remote consultation session, should email [MEPA@mass.gov](mailto:MEPA@mass.gov) or the MEPA analyst listed in the Environmental Monitor. Requests for language translation or other accommodations should be directed to the same email address. Mail correspondence should be directed to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900, Boston, Massachusetts 02114, Attention: MEPA Office, referencing the above project.

By: VHB

11/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
KATJANA BALLANTYNE  
MAYOR**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON SETTING THE TAX LEVY PERCENTAGES FOR FY2025**

There will be a public hearing at a regular meeting of the Somerville City Council on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, at 7:00 PM, on the Order of President Ben Ewen-Campen, to determine the percentage of local tax levy to be borne by each class of real and personal property for Fiscal Year 2025, as required by MGL c40 s56. At this public hearing, Frank Golden, Chief Assessor and Chairman of the Somerville Board of Assessors, will provide information and data relevant to making a determination, including the fiscal effects of the available alternatives.

This meeting of the City Council will be conducted both in person and by remote participation, using the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person at the City Council Chamber, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link into your internet browser any time before the meeting: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_5JCQCge9RPu5wYqJ8hAFfw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5JCQCge9RPu5wYqJ8hAFfw). You can also find this link on the City Council's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.
3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to [publiccomments@somervillema.gov](mailto:publiccomments@somervillema.gov), send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council.

**THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.**

**KIMBERLY M. WELLS  
CITY CLERK**

11/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
RFQ #25-27**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, Invites Sealed Bids For:

**On-Call  
Architectural & Engineering Consultant, and Project & Construction Management Services  
for Various Municipal Buildings  
(House Doctor Contract)**

A bid package may be obtained online at: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/procurement-and-contracting-services> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, November 20th, 2024**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **12pm, Thursday, December 19th, 2024**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Sonia Castro [scastro@somervillema.gov](mailto:scastro@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Sonia Castro  
Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3407**

11/20/24 The Somerville Times



**City of Somerville  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, December 4, 2024**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to [ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov).

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_QBqJauXgQ06aiQ0-R6HcVQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QBqJauXgQ06aiQ0-R6HcVQ)  
Webinar ID: 844 3407 4866

**TO CALL IN**

An attendee must register for the meeting online in order for a call-in number to be emailed to them by Zoom.

The Zoning Board will consider the following pursuant to M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

**483 Broadway** Tavis Babbitt seeks zoning relief from the minimum number of stories requirement in the MR4 district, which requires a Hardship Variance.

**483 Broadway** Tavis Babbitt seeks zoning relief from the story height requirement in the MR4 district, which requires a Hardship Variance.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>.

Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov).

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB #25-28**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, Invites Sealed Bids For:

**DPW Boiler Room Stair Replacement**

A bid package may be obtained online at: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/procurement-and-contracting-services> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, November 20th, 2024**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2pm, Tuesday, December 17th, 2024**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Prevailing wage rates apply. 5% bid deposit required. Non-mandatory pre-bid site visit - see bid package for details.

Please email Sonia Castro [scastro@somervillema.gov](mailto:scastro@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Sonia Castro  
Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3407**

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**KATJANA BALLANTYNE**  
**MAYOR**

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville City Council's Land Use Committee and the Somerville Planning Board will hold a joint public hearing on **Thursday, December 5, 2024** at 6:30 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

### REGISTER ONLINE

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_cvS0G2tSSR2F3FsejD-rvv](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cvS0G2tSSR2F3FsejD-rvv)

The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comments concerning the following:

- Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.1 and 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to improve the regulation of bicycle parking.
- Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Section 3.2.6 Building Types of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the building types permitted in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district to also be permitted in the Urban Residence (UR) zoning district.

Zoning amendments may be viewed online by searching the Somerville City Council's [online meeting calendar](#) for the address or item number.

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. Persons unable to attend the hearing may provide comments by email to the Planning Board and the City Council at [publiccomments@somervillema.gov](mailto:publiccomments@somervillema.gov). Comments must be received no later than 12 Noon the day of the Hearing to ensure they are conveyed to the Committee for inclusion with the hearing testimony. The Chair(s) may opt to extend the period for written comments, in which case additional comments will be accepted until the date indicated. This information can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

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**Notice of Intent**  
The following vehicles will be sold  
Pursuit to M.G.L. 255 S.39A

2014 TOYOTA COROLLA VIN# 2T1BURHE 0E C226652  
2016 NISSAN PATHFINDER VIN# 5N1AR2MM8G C644000  
2006 HONDA CIVIC VIN# 2HG FA16576H526731  
2007 VW JE TTA VIN# 3VWE G 71K37M159285  
2009 ACURA TL VIN# 19UUA96589A004750  
2010 KIA FORTE VIN# KNAFU4A24A51275498

To satisfy the debt owed to  
Cityside Enterprises Inc.  
617-776-6111

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**Notice of Intent**  
The following vehicles will be sold  
Pursuit to M.G.L. 255 S.39A

2008 Ford Edge 2FMDK38C08BA67974  
2004 Toyota Sequoia 5TDBT44A54S220683  
2014 Ford Focus 1FADP3K20EL279541  
2005 Toyota Camry 4T1BE32K75U966190  
2003 Honda Civic 2HGES26743H550268

To satisfy the debt owed to  
Cityside Enterprises Inc.  
617-776-6111

11/6/24, 11/13/24, 11/20/24 The Somerville Times

**Notice of Self Storage Sale**

Please take notice Prime Storage - Somerville located at 39R Medford St., Somerville, MA 02143 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via [www.storagetreasures.com](http://www.storagetreasures.com) on **12/10/2024 at 12:00PM**. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Jessica Cheney unit #1402; Stella Burke/U.S. Postal Service unit #1512; Campbell Chesterfield unit #2023. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

11/20/24 The Somerville Times

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[www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)

## The Somerville Growing Center holds annual wreath fundraiser

CONT. FROM PG 9

goal of raising \$30,000 to mark our 30 years. By May 31, we had raised \$30,534 to support our programming, operations and long-term growth," she said.

If you have a Growing Center memory that you'd like to share, please reminisce here: [bit.ly/scgc-memories](http://bit.ly/scgc-memories).

The Growing Center's homepage includes tabs for events, general volunteering and news.

On a final note, the Somerville Growing Center has a YouTube channel: Somerville Community Growing Center - YouTube. For additional questions, then, please contact the Growing center, email them at [info@thegrowingcenter.org](mailto:info@thegrowingcenter.org).

It's time to grab a Christmas wreath for "your own front door."

### Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Flute Ensemble

The Tufts University Department of Music presents Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Flute Ensemble in the Distler Performance Hall, Granoff Music Center, on Sunday, November 24, at 3:00 p.m.

The Flute Ensemble presents a fun, intriguing, and varied music program from the 17th to the 21st century featuring bass, alto, C flutes, and piccolo: Nina Barwell, director.

# SPS Director of Student Services receives award

With a strong emphasis on student well-being and teacher resilience, outstanding educators and leaders like Somerville Public Schools' Director of Student Services, Elizabeth (Liz) Doncaster, are being recognized for their influential contributions to the social-emotional development and well-being of students.

Global nonprofit and leading social-emotional learning provider Committee for Children selected Liz Doncaster as one of the 2024 recipients of its distinguished Second Step® Educator of the Year Awards and first-ever District Innovator Award.

As the only award of its kind, the Second Step Educator of the Year Awards honors educators who are setting new standards in social-emotional practices that support academics and create lasting change in their school communities. New this year, the District Innovator Award recognizes district leaders whose advocacy has brought social-emotional learning

to the forefront, enriching the lives of students and educators alike.

Doncaster, who is also a former SPS prekindergarten educator, was selected for her demonstrated ability to build a supportive learning environment where students thrive socially, emotionally and academically. In addition to her work implementing Second Step programs, the leading research-based social-emotional learning curricula for Early Learning through Grade 12, Doncaster has been instrumental in advocating for and securing investments in social-emotional programs and supports in each of the Somerville Public Schools' 11 PK-12 schools. Today, each school has an SEL Specialist and a school-based social worker who support implementation of social and emotional curriculum as well as provide critical wraparound supports for students.

"It has been my pleasure to work with the Second Step team at the Committee for Children. Their online platform



Liz Doncaster, bottom left, leading district staff through a Restorative Circle.

is user-friendly and the online training model helps us to on board new educators throughout the year with ease, Doncaster said." The Somerville Public Schools is currently rolling out a multi-year, dis-

trictwide Social Emotional Development plan, of which the Second Step curriculum is the critical learning component. With our district's deep commitment to SEL and Restorative practices *Continued on page 15*

# Dr. Audrey Evans and the Antifolate Revolution That Changed Cancer Therapy



By Ian Halim

When Dr. Audrey Evans was 80 years old, she got married for the first time, tying the knot with a physician-colleague she'd worked with for some 40 years, Giulio "Dan" D'Angio. One morning in 2005, Evans and D'Angio got married, went to a cafe for juice and croissant, and made it to work by 8:30am. She was a woman so devoted to her work, apparently, that she couldn't take a day off for her own wedding!

The two were not just physicians, but also researchers. Decades earlier they had collaborated on an influential staging system for a form of cancer called neuroblastoma. That system helped stratify patients based on the severity of disease and the risk of death. By many reports, Dr. Evans also cut the rate of death for neuroblastoma at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia by as much as 50% [1]. This was a whopping achievement, large even in relation to the improvements taking place in the mortality of many cancers at that time – between roughly 1950 and 1980, when anti-cancer chemotherapy agents first saw widespread use (more on this in a moment). Evans even became known as the mother of neuroblastoma, though avenging queen might have been more apt, since she fought rather than birthed the disease.

Neuroblastoma arises from the irregular replication of immature nerve cells. And since it arises from immature cells, it's most common in children. Often, it occurs in small glands above the kidneys known as the

adrenals, but it can strike nerve cells elsewhere, such as in the brain or spinal cord. In this essay, Dr. Evans serves as a kind of gateway to some key ideas about how cancers and chemotherapies work. In general, cancer develops when a cell of a specific type – an immature nerve cell in neuroblastoma, for instance – experiences a genetic mutation and then replicates out of control. The cluster of uncontrollably-replicating cells can collect into a tumor or mass, sometimes compressing and damaging other tissues, or sloughing off rogue cells to far-flung parts of the body via the blood or a lesser-known fluid known as lymph. When cancer cells migrate in this frightening way, it's known as metastasis.

Many factors contribute to the risk of developing cancer: inherited genetic mutations, non-inherited mutations that accumulate during the lifespan, toxic exposures, and infection with certain viruses or other cancer-causing pathogens. Although neuroblastoma is most common in children, most cancers become more common with age, so that age itself forms an important risk factor for cancer. As more time passes in a human life, cells also have time to accumulate the mutations that make them cancer-prone.

Unlike cancer cells, healthy cells have a safety mechanism that triggers the cell to self-destruct after detecting certain kinds of damage. In the process of a cell's transition to becoming cancerous, its genes mutate and switch off this safety mechanism. When a cancer cell grows and divides into new cells, the resulting "daughter" cells carry the cancer cell's mutated genes. But without the safety checks of healthy cells, cancer cells divide and divide – like a car without brakes.

But in the 1940s, physicians and scientists began to understand for the first time how to artificially force the brakes on to slow that uncontrolled cell division. It was the first chemother-

apies that provided the "brakes" on cancer cells' uncontrollable replication. This brings us back to Evans, who was born in York, England and completed medical school in Scotland, but then came to the United States in 1953, to learn from one of these pioneers of this newfound method of chemotherapy – Sidney Farber.

By the time Evans began her Fulbright with Farber, he was in the midst of his groundbreaking exploration of the first chemotherapy agents that could slow cancer cells' growth and replication. But his first pivotal observation was actually the opposite: that if a person with cancer took vitamin B9, also known as folate, that person's cancer would start growing faster.

When any cell grows and divides – regardless of whether it's a healthy cell or a cancerous one – that replicating cell must make an extra copy of its DNA, so that it has enough genetic material for both daughter cells. And the chemical system for copying DNA requires folate. So, a cell cannot divide or replicate without folate.

Feeding cancer cells folate, then, allows those cells to copy DNA faster and thereby divide and replicate faster. This is why Farber observed that taking extra folate speeds up the replication of cancer. But when folate is scarce, it creates a kind of bottleneck, slowing DNA synthesis and cell division. (This is why women who are pregnant are advised to supplement with folate. When a pregnant woman is folate deficient, this can cause problems with the fetus's development; the fetus must make new cells rapidly as it grows and develops, and doing so requires folate.)

Farber had learned that giving someone with cancer folate was like throwing fuel into the fire, making the cancer grow faster. And if Farber had stopped there, he might never have established The Children's Cancer Research Foundation, which later became

the famed Dana Farber Cancer Institute (named in his honor, and in honor of the philanthropist Charles Dana). But after making this observation, Farber had the insight to keep going. He realized that if folate sped up the growth of cancer, then blocking cells' ability to use folate should slow them down. In fact, blocking the body's use of folate should starve cancer cells of their ability to replicate and grow.

Farber tested the proposition and found that the drug aminopterin, an anti-folate, did exactly what he had predicted, inducing temporary remission of leukemia in children – the first or one of the first times this had ever been achieved. If folate supplementation was like pouring gasoline into the fuel tank of cancer, antifolates were the brakes. An antifolate agent like aminopterin doesn't destroy folate, but rather interferes with cells' ability to use it, gumming up the works of DNA synthesis and thereby blocking cell replication and division – including for cancer cells. Instead of running full-speed, cancer must wade through mud.

To this day, the antifolates form a crucial class of chemotherapy agents. Different chemotherapy agents block cell division in somewhat different ways, but they all achieve the same basic thing: they block cell replication. And chemotherapies also typically block cell replication in a largely non-selective way, exerting their effects not just on cancer cells, but also on healthy human cells.

Although chemotherapy agents can be life-saving, this largely non-selective cell-replication-blocking action is also the cause of many of their side effects. For instance, chemotherapies can block the replication of human hair cells and cause the hair to fall out (though cold caps worn on the head during chemo reduce blood flow, cutting down on chemo's penetration of hair follicles, and reducing hair

loss). Chemotherapies can also partly suppress the body's immune defense against infection, by blocking the replication of the immune cells responsible for that defense. (Antifolates' effect upon the immune system is so potent, in fact, that sometimes clinicians use antifolates not as chemotherapy agents, but specifically for this immune-suppressing effect in the treatment of autoimmune disease.)

Yet whatever their drawbacks, chemotherapies can be life-saving, and now form a central part of the armamentarium that clinicians use to treat cancers – together with surgical removal of a tumor, radiation therapy, hormone therapies, immune modulating therapies, and other targeted therapies that pick out a specific vulnerability of a specific cancer type.

But, of course, children with cancer are much more than bodies with cells replicating out of control – they are little human beings with their own human worlds. And here, too, Evans innovated. She once said [1]: "... you must think about everybody – the siblings, the mother, the father, maybe grandmother. You must remember that they're part of a group."

In the early 1970s, Jim Murray, the later-general-manager of the Philadelphia professional football team, the Eagles, called Evans to ask her where funds might be directed to help kids with cancer. She didn't even know who the Eagles were, but she came up with an idea. In 1969, the same year that Evans arrived at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the daughter of Philadelphia Eagles football player Fred Hill was diagnosed [2] with the white blood cell cancer leukemia. This was what got Murray started raising funds for children with cancer.

Evans realized that when kids were sick, their families often had to travel from out of town while they received

*Continued on page 13*

# Somerville Fire Dept. hosts MBTA training drill

On Sunday, November 17, the Somerville Fire Department hosted a drill with the MBTA Commuter Rail on New Washington Street. Fire apparatus and ambulances from numerous surrounding departments took part in the drill of a commuter train on fire with injuries. Civilians volunteered as the injured to help prepare all emergency personnel in case they are ever presented with a similar situation.

— Photos by The Somerville Times Staff



## Dr. Audrey Evans and the Antifolate Revolution That Changed Cancer Therapy

CONT. FROM PG 12

their treatments, and that finding a place to stay was a common hardship. So Evans and Murray conceived of an entirely new enterprise: a kind of free hotel for the families of sick children. McDonald's franchises contributed, on the condition that the houses be named for the fast food behemoth. Originally, the McDonald's stores drew on profits from Saint Paddy's Day Shamrock Shakes [3]. The houses that Evans envisioned became a reality

and are now known as Ronald McDonald Houses (though McDonald's has been criticized [4] by some for contributing only a small part of the houses' budget). In addition to a place to stay, the houses also offer meals and hire social workers to support families of sick kids. As of 2022, there were 380 such facilities [5] in the United States and throughout the world.

Sometime each March or April, brilliant yellow daffodils bloom

upon the green hills of York, England – where Audrey Evans was born. Medieval walls and turrets of rusty-hued limestone rise above the flowers. During a video [6] produced for the Modern Heroes series, Dr. Evans remarks, "I was given a mission, and I was given the ability to serve it." She has asked only to be remembered as, "a woman who cared."

[1] <https://almanac.upenn.edu/articles/audrey-evans-chop>

[2] <https://www.eaglesfly.org/ourstory.html>

[3] <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/health/audrey-evans-dead.html>

[4] <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2013/10/29/mcdonalds-ronald-mcdonald-house/3189709/>

[5] <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/health/audrey-evans-dead.html>

[6] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hstjG19OjKA>

watch?v=hstjG19OjKA

Physician-scribe and Bagel-Bard-at-large Ian Halim writes about how medicine relates to everything from ethics to botany – aiming to make science accessible to the widest possible audience. Ian earned his PhD in Greek & Latin literature and his MD, both at Columbia University in The City of New York. He now lives in Pittsburgh, where he will begin a sabbatical in July.

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Answers

From page 8

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. The summer solstice                               | at the 2000 Grammys   |
| 2. Hot water freezes faster                          | 8. Verona, Italy  |
| 3. Baseball  | 9. Złoty  |
| 4. <i>The Sopranos</i>                               | 10. Spaghetti   |
| 5. Nancy Pelosi                                      | 11. Spain   |
| 6. Bernie Madoff                                     | 12. A twin-tailed siren that represents the sea and Seattle |
| 7. Jennifer Lopez's green Versace jungle print dress |   |

# Parks and parking: Designing Central Somerville Avenue

By Katherine Davis

On Tuesday, November 12, the Central Somerville Avenue project met to discuss plans for Civic Space and Mobility in the area stretching between Conway Park and Market Basket.

When thinking about uses of civic space it's important to remember that we "don't need to accomplish everything," because, as Alison Maurer, Senior planner in Ecological Restoration, pointed out, "Some things are being accomplished by adjacent civic spaces." Therefore, a discussion over what features the community and planning boards do want and think will work the most is needed, the main questions being addressed are as follows:

*"Some things are being accomplished by adjacent civic spaces"*

1. What types of recreation should the civic space have?
  - a. Active or Passive
2. How should we organize civic space?
  - a. Disbursed or Centralized
3. How should civic spaces look and feel?
  - a. Unique destination or fits with existing spaces in Somerville
4. What do you imagine for the civic spaces after hours?
  - a. Night and weekend activities or Quiet after sundown
5. How public or private do you want the civic spaces to feel?
  - a. Tucked away or Public Facing
6. How do you imagine civic spaces being used?

a. Flexible uses or Fixed activities

Answers to these questions during the workshops followed similar patterns, those who attended felt relatively on the same wavelength regarding wanting more the new proposed space to have more active recreation opportunities, centralized pockets of space for certain types of activities, be a unique destination, be a place for night and weekend activity, and a public facing environment. What the space will look like size-wise will also be important to take note of when making these decisions, activity designated recreation areas such as a soccer field or a similar size to Lincoln Park will be too big for what the city is able to work with at the moment. Feedback from discussion earlier in the day at workshops found that there is a need for multi-purpose and flexible spaces in the city, ones that can transform for different uses from a performance stage to a picnic spot. The space needs to be for all ages, differing from parks with only age-restricted playground equipment, but still provide kid-friendly things to climb on like rocks and tree stumps. Another significant point that was brought up at the meeting was that the "spaces should be welcoming and inclusive, so not just for the direct neighbors ... for the well-being of everyone that may not be able to afford living in this zone, but can benefit from the resources that this area provides."

The Mobility portion of the meeting was designated to discuss transportation and parking access to the proposed area, covering transit connections, bike networks and bike lanes, shared streets with other businesses and spaces, truck access, and of course parking for those who will not be walking to the new development. Zoning regarding district-based zoning



is the topic of discussion for the November 18 meeting, which will cover the use program, intensity of zoning, and the parking maximum. Parking in Somerville is already difficult, and the buildings and spaces being discussed to be built are not residential, but the surrounding lots and streets are, meaning that there will need to be a cap at some point so that the most people possible are able to access the spaces without creating difficulties for existing residents and businesses. More of this is meant to be covered in future meetings, since a lot of the work is done behind the scenes and some questions are still in the process of being answered.

The end of the meeting allowed space for public questions and commentary, some community members brought up good points such as the fact that there cannot be a good performance in a civic space if the surrounding area is creating a lot of noise, therefore the placement of wherever the highly requested perfor-

mance area will be placed is extremely influential on how much it will actually be used. Another member noted that there should be signage that makes it clear that the civic spaces are public and feel public, so that everyone feels welcome. There are places in Somerville that many people are unaware they are allowed to access, such as the green space in the center of the Maxwell's Green Housing Complex. A goal of the new development is to have clear signage for public spaces so people know that they are allowed to sit and be a part of the community.

As always, the city encourages community members to tell them what they want and don't want, because they would like to have all voices heard, and as much information as possible to work with. Whether a "gut feeling" or a "passionate opinion", the City of Somerville wants to work with its residents to provide the best possible solution when building on Central Somerville Avenue.

## SPS Director of Student Services receives award

CONT. FROM PG 11

in our schools and classrooms, Second Step overlaps perfectly with these concepts. I am incredibly proud of the work we have done in Somerville, and more importantly, how deeply we have impacted student achievement and wellbeing especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic."

As a Second Step Educator of the Year award winner, Doncaster joins a prestigious list of K-12 educators and district

leaders supporting children's development of essential life skills – like communication, perseverance and problem-solving – that will support success in the classroom and throughout their lives.

"Liz continues to be a champion of social emotional learning and wellbeing in the Somerville Public Schools, and has been a driving force behind Second Step implementation in our district. It's no secret that

in Somerville, we have a proven commitment to supporting the whole child, providing wraparound support and resources empower students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally through tailored supports and equitable access to opportunity," said Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ruben Carmona. "We are so proud and fortunate to have Liz here at SPS, and look forward to continuing to grow and

strengthen our social-emotional platforms for the benefit of our entire school community."

For more information about the Second Step Educator of the Year Awards, visit <https://www.secondstep.org/eya24>.

For additional information on how Second Step programs are making it easy for educators to make a difference in the lives of students, visit [SecondStep.org](https://www.SecondStep.org)

## Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

it would dramatically reduce state and local oversight of clean energy projects and the infrastructure to support them. Communities I represent have been directly and negatively affected by this infrastructure, and I have been pushing for more state and local oversight of these projects, not less, to protect host communities' interests. This bill is a step in the wrong direction."

(A "Yes" vote is for the bill. A "No" vote is against it.)

Rep. Christine Barber	Yes/Yes
Rep. Mike Connolly	Yes
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven	Yes

### CHANGE WHO APPOINTS THE FIRM TO AUDIT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (H 5105)

House 135-10, approved a new House rule that amends the current process by which the House appoints a private, independent auditing firm to audit the books of the House. Under the current rule 85A, the House business manager hires the company that will do the audit. Under the new rule 85A, the state auditor, currently Diana DiZoglio, would recommend a firm to conduct the audit and the business manager would hire that firm.

Among the House's 132 Democrats, 123 voted in favor of the new rule and nine did not vote. No Democrat voted against the rule. Among the 24 House Republicans, 11 voted for the new rule, three did not vote and ten voted against it. The one unenrolled member of the House voted for the rule.

In November, voters approved Question 1 which created a new state law that would allow the state auditor to audit the Legislature. The vote was 71.6 percent in favor of 28.4 percent opposed. The new House rule 85A does not change that law.

Rep. Danielle Gregoire (D-Marlborough), part of House Speaker Ron Mariano's leadership team, said the change would ensure "any audit pursuant to the passage of Question 1 will be a professional audit, not a political one." This remark is an apparent reference to DiZoglio's many clashes with legislative leaders during and after she served in the House and the Senate.

"We haven't touched the [new] law," said Mariano. "Let's make that clear: we have not touched the law. I have no intent to do anything right now, except maybe take a few days off. This has got nothing to do with repealing anything. This is a rules change."

Mariano pitched the change as "an opportunity to acknowledge the 70 percent to 30 percent vote of the electorate." He continued, "Obviously, [the voters] weren't happy with the way we were doing things, and we took a look at the way we were doing things. We found we could make a few changes that we think maintains a strong financial audit while still backboning our argument about

the separation of powers."

"As a longtime supporter of legislative transparency, I joined with all House Democrats and many Republicans to strengthen the existing auditing provisions found in House Rule 85A," said Rep. Mike Connolly (D-Cambridge). "This has no bearing on the provisions of Question 1, because a House rule and a state law are two different things. It seems clear that separation of powers questions may emerge regarding the new law created by Question 1, and while those questions are being addressed by the judicial process, this vote to strengthen our internal rules will help add to transparency."

Criticism of the new rule was quick. "The House's actions to ignore the will of the people, who voted overwhelmingly for greater transparency and accountability through Question 1, are profoundly disheartening and absolutely unacceptable," responded DiZoglio who led the campaign for passage of Question 1. "Should the Senate also seek to similarly stymie our efforts, legislators will possess sole authority to block taxpayers' access to what any audit examines and show us only what they want us to see – just as they do now. The public would not have the opportunity to see how much taxpayer money is being spent on non-disclosure agreements, nor on state contracts potentially handed out to elected officials' friends."

She continued, "I am pushing the governor and attorney general to support the people in pushing back against the Legislature's attempt to dismantle Question 1's power. The law needs to be followed and enforced and we need their help to ensure that occurs. Our recent audit of the Legislature, which they refused to participate in, found they did not follow their own rules, nor submit any financial audits to our office, as required by their rules. Yet another rule, with no teeth, is what the Legislature is telling taxpayers they deserve instead of their compliance with the law. It's unacceptable. Please call your legislators, the attorney general and the governor to register your support for the audit law you just voted for."

"I believe that that this rule change would go against what 70 percent plus of the commonwealth voted for on November 5th," said Rep. John Marsi (R-Dudley). "While I understand it allowed the auditor to select an auditor to perform a financial audit, the scope and control over the process doesn't seem to be in line with the referendum question and may work against the intended outcome the public desires."

"This rule change amounts to a step in opposition to the widespread referendum that was just voted on by the public a week ago," said Rep. Joe McKenna (R-Sutton). "While on its surface ceding some existing audit control to the auditor would appear to be in the spirit of the referendum, the reality is that the Legislature would maintain control over the scope and depth of any contracted work, thereby circumventing the intent of the referendum. A number of representatives had direct conversations with

the auditor herself which highlighted her own opposition to the measure as a misguided attempt to undermine the outcome of ballot Question 1."

(A "Yes" vote is for the rule change. A "No" vote is against it.)

Rep. Christine Barber	Yes
Rep. Mike Connolly	Yes
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven	Yes

### ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

**BREAST CANCER SCREENINGS (H 4918)** – Gov. Healey signed into law legislation that would require health insurance companies to provide coverage for diagnostic examinations for breast cancer, digital breast tomosynthesis screening and medically necessary and appropriate screening with breast magnetic resonance imaging.

Supporters noted that although access to routine preventive screening mammograms is currently covered under the Affordable Care Act, this legislation would go further and require coverage for certain screenings and exams currently not uniformly covered by law.

"We know that early detection of breast cancer saves lives," said Healey. "This legislation will help ensure that cost is not a barrier for women to get the screenings and care they need."

"Today is the culmination of work I have done for nearly a decade to ensure that all women have access to necessary, and possibly lifesaving, breast cancer screenings," said sponsor Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem). "Early detection of breast cancer saves lives. This legislation makes those diagnostic exams used for early detection accessible and affordable, giving women the vital resources needed to catch breast cancer in its earliest stages."

"This legislation signed into law by Gov. Healey ensures that all women in the commonwealth have access to the digital breast tomosynthesis and MRI screening they need to catch cancer early, without facing financial barriers," said Sen. Mike Rush (D-Boston). "The increased access to early detection that this enabled through this legislation will save lives."

"Cost is a known barrier to completing follow up cancer screenings," Marc Hymovitz, Massachusetts director of government relations for American Cancer Society Action Network. "By eliminating the potential for unexpected costs, we can increase the likelihood of timely, follow up screenings for those who need them – and thus the promise of better health outcomes – for all communities."

**HOUSE MEMBERS TO VISIT CUBA** - House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy) and ten other state representatives are headed to Cuba, where part of their mission is to discuss the importance of investing in healthcare systems with public officials, *Continued on page 22*



# Better Bus Project update: Phase 1 rollout preparations underway

As the MBTA announced on October 7, the Bus Network Redesign's first phase will launch on December 15. Preparations and outreach for the rollout of these changes to establish more frequent service and better routes are underway.

As part of Phase 1, the MBTA will launch four new Frequent Bus Routes, by increasing service on Routes 86, 104, 109, and 110 and combining Routes 116 and 117 to a single Frequent Bus Route. This will be a 60% increase in service on affected routes, and will improve reliability and frequency and simplify transit options for riders in Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Malden, Somerville, Cambridge, Allston, Brighton, and East Boston.

New bus stop sign where service will change, covered by a temporary bag showing current service.

To get ready, the MBTA is busy preparing stops, signs, and stations, and are beginning to notify riders, including:

- Enhancing bus infrastructure and improving the rider experience through capital projects.

- Installing new, easier-to-read bus stop signs at over 330 locations ahead of the launch of Phase 1 service changes.

- Installing updated subway, neighborhood, and bus connection maps across Phase 1 communities, including within bus shelters.

- Holding outreach events at bus stops and stations before and after launch of Phase 1.

- Hosting tabling events at senior centers, community centers, and libraries throughout the Phase 1 service area.

Rider booklets are available at <https://massdot.app.box.com/s/7i1d942vcznp-dtya798dwbqtpvrveoqfe>. If you're a part of a community group and think your members would be interested in additional materials, reach out to [betterbusproject@mbta.com](mailto:betterbusproject@mbta.com) and the team can provide you with access to a community toolkit.

As part of Phase 1, the MBTA will launch four new Frequent Bus Routes, by increasing service on Routes 86, 104, 109, and 110 and combining Routes 116 and 117 to a single Frequent Bus Route. This will be a 60% increase in service on affected routes, and will improve reliability and frequency and simplify transit options for riders in Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Malden, Somerville, Cambridge, Allston, Brighton, and East Boston.

## Accessibility Improvements at Stops in Phase 1 Service Area

To make the bus network accessible for all riders, they are constructing fully-accessible bus stops, crosswalks, and sidewalks – and as they go, improving their condition.

- Dawes Island (Routes 66, 86, 109), Cambridge: To improve accessibility and state of good repair at a heavily used bus stop that will serve as a transfer point between Route 109 and Route 86, the City of Cambridge will repair sidewalks and make crosswalk accessibility upgrades.

- New Bus Stops, Everett: The City of Everett will construct four new bus stops (2nd St @ Spring St + 2nd St @ Revere St) for new Route 104 Service on 2nd St. Improvements include sidewalk repairs and a new fully accessible crosswalk across 2nd St. Construction will be completed in time for the stops to open on December 15.

- Woodlawn, Everett: Two new bus shelters and accessible bus stops will support Frequent Route 110 and 111 service. The construction has begun and is anticipated to be completed in late November.

- Linden Square, Malden: We have added layover spaces and changed bus stops due to the Frequent Route 109 service. The bus stop pair serving Linden Square will be made fully accessible, with additional layover capacity for Route 109. Construction began on October 9.

- New Bus Stops, Malden: Two new stops are being constructed along the adjusted Route 104, which will serve Centre Street between Malden Center and Ferry Street in both directions. The construction of these new stops is happening now and they will open on December 15.

## Learn About Phase 1

Throughout the months of November and December, there will be outreach events at stations for riders to learn more about Phase 1 service changes:

- Malden Center: 11/18, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.; 11/20, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.; 11/21, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

- Wonderland: 11/18, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.; 11/20, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.; 11/22, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

- Maverick: 11/18, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.;



Temporary service advisories on bus stop poles, in multiple languages



New signs at bus "berths" at busways (Malden Center)



Left: 5372 Centre St. at Main Street. (Inbound). Right: 53430 Centre St. at Ferry St. (outbound).

- 11/19, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.; 11/22, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

- Airport: 11/19, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.; 11/20, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.; 11/21, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

- Sullivan Square: 11/19; 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.; 11/21, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.; 11/22, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

- Harvard Station: 11/19, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.; 11/20 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.; 11/21 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

You can also stop by informational tables the team is holding at senior centers, community centers, and libraries throughout the Phase 1 service area.

- Allston/Brighton Neighborhood Opportunity Center: Wednesday, November 20, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

- Allston-Brighton NOC, 640 Washing-

- ton St. Ste 202/201 Brighton, MA 02135

- Somerville East Branch Library: Thursday, November 21, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- Somerville Public Library East Branch, 115 Broadway, Somerville, MA 02145

Please visit [MBTA.com/events](https://MBTA.com/events) to get the latest information, and please keep in mind that events may be rescheduled due to weather or other circumstances.

Bus Network Redesign team members will also be visiting stops in the Phase 1 area as well as riding on-board affected bus routes (86, 104, and 107) so if you see them during your travels, please say hello and talk with them about Phase 1 service.

Before the launch of Phase 1 changes on December 15, the MBTA Trip Planner will be updated to reflect the new service.

— MBTA



New bus stop sign where service will change, covered by a temporary bag showing current service.

# Theatre@First's 'Water by the Spoonful' bids adieu

By Jeffrey Shwom

Around forty audience members enjoyed the final show of an 8-day run of *Water by the Spoonful* by Quiara Alegria Hudes (*In The*

*Heights*). Performed at Unity Somerville and produced in special arrangement by Theatre@First with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., this play “explores how people begin to heal ... and how they step up to support each

other in times of need” through the eyes of a community, online and familial, dealing with recovery and mortality.

Theatre@First is a Somerville volunteer-run community theatre, started in

2003. Auditions begin December 2024 for their next play, *None Escape* by Robin Abrahams. Visit <https://www.theatre-at-first.org/>.

— Photos courtesy of Theatre@First



## Somerville's Transgender Day of Remembrance/Resilience

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, the Somerville Department of Health and Human Services, and the Somerville Public Library invite the Somerville community to join in for the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance/Resilience in honor of those members of the community who have lost their lives to violence.

A short speaking program, with live ASL interpretation, will include remarks from Mayor Ballantyne and Somerville LGBTQ+ Services Coordinator Izzy Starr, and Somerville LGBTQ+ community members. The event is open to the public, and all are welcome.

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 – 5 – 6 p.m.  
 Central Library  
 79 Highland Ave  
 Somerville, MA 02143

For more information about LGBTQ+ programming, events, and information, please contact LGBTQ+ Services Coordinator Izzy Starr at [istarr@somervillema.gov](mailto:istarr@somervillema.gov)



# Somerville unveils guide to transforming private land into public spaces

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the city's Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF) Division, is announcing the release of the Civic Space Design Guide, that provides a framework for developers and municipalities to collaborate to create Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) that serve and welcome all Somerville residents and visitors.

"Somerville is leading by example with this guide, which represents our commitment to innovation in public space and community building," said Mayor Ballantyne. "The Civic Space Design Guide is the first of its kind, a resource that not only elevates how development can contribute to our city but also sets a standard we hope other municipalities will adopt. We're creating spaces that are welcoming to everyone and enhancing

the quality of life for all who live, work, and visit Somerville."

While Somerville's dense settlement limits opportunities to buy and create new open spaces, development areas offer substantial potential for increasing open space through POPS. These spaces, which have been utilized in urban areas across the United States since the 1960s, can provide valuable public areas within private developments.

However, research has shown that POPS can sometimes feel exclusionary or unwelcoming due to factors like security presence, lack of family-friendly amenities, or designs that disconnect these areas from broader civic spaces. The Civic Space Design Guide addresses these challenges by establishing clear principles for POPS that ensure accessibility,

inclusivity, and integration with Somerville's public space network.

"Because open space is so crucial to the vitality of Somerville and all cities, we cannot afford to create what we call 'latte parks,' which are spaces where people feel they need to buy an expensive drink to belong," said PSUF Director Luisa Oliveira. "Our guide emphasizes that even when a developer is designing a parcel in front of their building, that space must serve the entire community as part of Somerville's larger network of parks and civic areas. POPS in Somerville must be read as genuinely public, inclusive spaces designed for the diverse needs of our residents."

The city recently celebrated the opening of a new POPS space, Boynton Yards Park, which features thoughtfully designed

amenities to create an inviting public gathering space for neighborhood residents, workers, and visitors alike.

The guide serves as a resource for developers, design consultants, and the community, reinforcing the city's commitment to creating meaningful public spaces as part of its broader Somerville Vision 2040 goals, which include adding over 100 acres of open space across Somerville. It complements the Somerville Zoning Ordinance by clearly defining PSUF's role as a partner in the design and construction process, ensuring POPS are vibrant, high-quality spaces that serve the public.

The Civic Space Design Guide is available to the public on the Somerville page: [voice.somervillema.gov/pops](http://voice.somervillema.gov/pops), where visitors can access the policy document and an interactive map of POPS in Somerville.





**Somerville Fair Housing Commission**  
*Question of the week*



**Q:** Can my grandchild live with me in my senior housing?

**A:** It depends. The Fair Housing Act exempts "housing for older persons" from the law's prohibition of excluding families with children. In other words, a senior building CAN exclude children. But there are two categories of housing for older persons.

Under the first, 100 percent of occupants must be 62 years or older. Under the second category, at least 80 percent of the occupied units must have at least one person living there who is 55 or older.

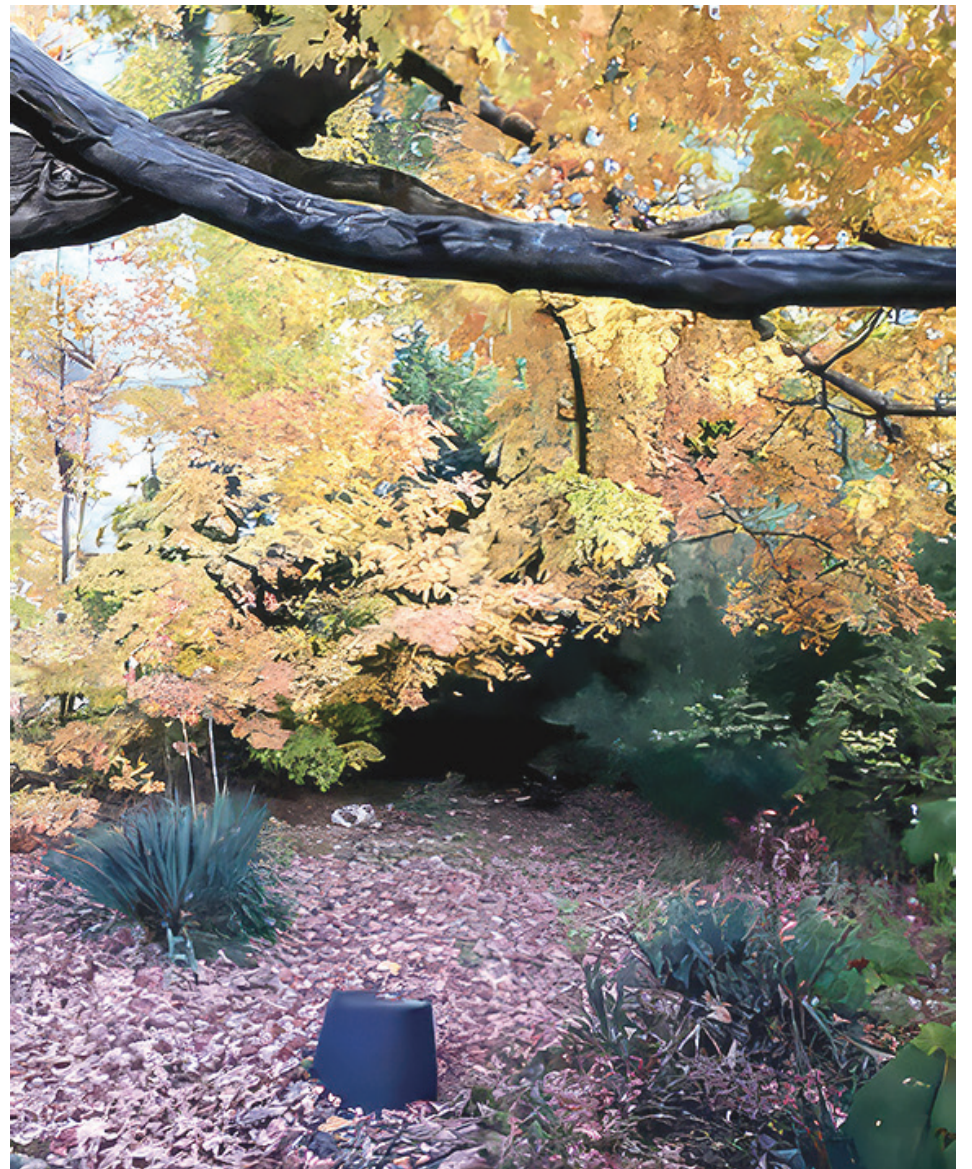
If your building is in the second category, it might be okay for your grandchild to live with you. You must check the bylaws of your building to find out.

*Somerville Fair Housing Commission generally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. online. Call 617-625-6600 ext. 2578 for the login information.*

**Opera Ensemble: Monteverdi to Menken - An Evening of Opera, Operetta, and Musical Theater Scenes**

The Tufts University Department of Music presents "Opera Ensemble: Monteverdi to Menken - An Evening of Opera, Operetta, and Musical Theater Scenes" in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Thursday, December 05, at 8:00 p.m. Join the Tufts Opera Ensemble for an evening of Opera, Operetta, and Musical Theater Scenes from composers Claudio Monteverdi to Alan Menken and everyone in between. Carol Mastrodomenico, stage director and Thomas Stumpf, music director. This event will be livestreamed at [go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream](http://go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream).

**Somerville through the eyes of Denise**



An urban glade...

— Photo by Denise Provost

**BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER**

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



When does Christmas come before Thanksgiving?  
In the dictionary.

*On This Day in History*

**November 20**

- 0269 – Diocletian is proclaimed emperor of Numinian in Asia Minor by his soldiers.
- 1695 – Zumbi dos Palmares, the Brazilian leader of a 100-year-old rebel slave group, is killed in an ambush.
- 1903 – In Cheyenne, Wyoming, 42-year-old hired gunman Tom Horn is hanged for the murder of 14-year-old Willie Nickell.
- 1945 – The Nazi war crime trials begin at Nuremberg.
- 1947 – Princess Elizabeth (future Queen Elizabeth II) marries Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in Westminster Abbey.
- 1962 – President John F. Kennedy bars religious or racial discrimination in federally funded housing.
- 1967 – U.S. census reports the population at 200 million.
- 1974 – The United States files an antitrust suit to break up AT&T.
- 1981 – Microsoft Windows 1.0 released.
- 1998 – The first module of the International Space Station, Zarya, is launched.

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

and offers a fun opportunity to start Thanksgiving on a high and healthy note. Proceeds benefit **Somerville Homeless Coalition, Somerville Track PAC, Stride for Stride** and **Dilboy VFW Veterans Relief Fund**. For race details, visit <https://srr.org/gobble>. Advance registration is recommended as this event typically sells out.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Elizabeth Peabody House's food pantry** is working to get turkeys for everyone on their waitlist. If you want to get on their turkey waitlist, you need to sign up for the Elizabeth Peabody House food pantry now. **Somerville Food Coalition** lists all the ways to get free food in Somerville on their website. <https://somervillehomelesscoalition.org/>

\*\*\*\*\*

**Saturday, November 30, is Small Business Saturday.** When you sit down with your shopping list this year, check out your local community first and see how you can support local businesses.

\*\*\*\*\*

Our deepest condolences go out to the family and friends of **Kenneth Lonergan**. Kenny touched so many lives in Somerville and beyond. He will be greatly missed. We will post an obituary online as soon as it is available.

\*\*\*\*\*

With the days growing shorter and temperatures dipping colder, the **Somerville Homeless Coalition** is in critical need of new or lightly used jackets for their clients currently living outside. If you have any adult sized coats hanging in your closet that you don't wear, please consider dropping them off at the Somerville Homeless Coalition admin office located at 255 Elm Street, Suite 204 during the hours listed below. Drop Off Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. Each coat donated provides warmth, dignity, and safety for our neighbors having to face the harsh New England winter conditions.

\*\*\*\*\*

Order a **festive wreath** from **Next Wave / Full Circle** during their annual wreath fundraiser. Wreath pick up is at NWFC on December 4 from 3 to 7 p.m. and they cost \$25. <https://trst.in/W0Ur6B>.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Brickbottom Open Studios** takes place November 23 and 24, 12 – 5 p.m., at 1 Fitchburg St, Somerville. Right off of the green line and several MBTA bus stops and they have lots of free and easy parking. There are over 60 artists showing this

weekend at Brickbottom (and another 30 just down the street at **Joy Street Studios**). They will have live performances all weekend, delicious pastries for sale in the lobby, and we're conveniently across the street from **Triangle Cafe** for all of your caffeine needs.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Mutual Aid Medford and Somerville (MAMAS)** is holding their next **Supermarket Sweep** on **Saturday, December 7**, at 11 a.m. Help support food security in Medford and Somerville by donating or volunteering. Volunteering with Sweep means meeting at the **Stop n' Shop** near Foss Park in Somerville and delivering grocery cards to neighbors no car required. If you're interested, email [askyouurmamas@gmail.com](mailto:askyouurmamas@gmail.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

November is **Native American Heritage Month**. Celebrate Indigenous voices with this book list curated by **Somerville Public Library** librarians: <https://tinyurl.com/2ayjkw3>. You can visit library locations to find some of these titles and others on display, or place one on hold right from the book list.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Flea Holiday Market** is back. Find that unique gift for that unique person. They will have two jam-packed floors of gift buying goodness featuring curated vintage wares and artisan creations. 12th annual Holiday Market at the **Arts at the Armory**, 191 Highland Ave., in Somerville. Sip 'n shop starts at noon on **December 1** and **December 15**.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Creative Mending: Hand Embroidery, Thursday December 12**, 6 p.m. at the **East Branch Library**, 115 Broadway. The class will cover several basic embroidery stitches that can be used to embellish your clothing and hide (or highlight) holes and stains. Suitable for beginners with little or no embroidery experience, or those who want a refresher on the basics. This program is intended for adults. Registration required: visit <https://tinyurl.com/yc8btuw4>. Questions? Contact [Liam: lokeefe@somervillema.gov](mailto:lokeefe@somervillema.gov).

\*\*\*\*\*

The **10th Annual Holiday Stroll** will take place on **Saturday, December 7**. A celebration of **Union Square** sparkle, discovery, and holiday delight that is sure to jumpstart your holiday shopping and get you exploring all that the "38th coolest neighborhood in the world" has to offer. Dozens of locally-owned businesses

await you with everything needed to stuff your stockings, deck your halls with local art, tantalize your taste buds, and more. Come on down to unwrap Union Square in all its wintry wonderment. Have some free time on **Saturday, December 7**? Sign up for a volunteer shift here: <https://signup.com/go/SzokFwT>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Are you a **Somerville business or property owner** interested in brightening up your building's exterior? The **Somerville Arts Council** is looking for partners who would like to host a **vibrant mural** on their property. This is a unique opportunity to collaborate with local artists and enhance the character of our community through stunning public art. If you're interested in learning more about how they can work together to make your building a canvas for creativity, please reach out directly to discuss potential partnerships and project possibilities. <https://somer-villeartscouncil.org/resources/calls>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Looking for gifts? Check out a **variety stained glass work** at 10 Virginia St. for **Holiday Season Sales Event** from 1 to 5 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

The holidays are just around the corner which means the **Somerville Homeless Coalition's Holiday Gift Drive** is now in full swing. This time of year can be especially difficult for their clients and their families which is why they host this drive each year to help spread the joy of the holidays to our less fortunate neighbors. At the moment, they still have 114 clients without a matched sponsor which is why they are asking for your help to make sure that everyone gets to be a part of this year's festivities. If you are interested in providing a gift for a client(s) contact 617-623-6111.

\*\*\*\*\*

Visit the **Somerville Bike Kitchen**, a volunteer-run bicycle repair cooperative, hosting open-shop nights at **The Dojo** (15 Properzi Way, Somerville). Come maintain your bike or learn more about cycling. **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Every Thursday from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. join **Parkour Generations Boston for Teen Jams** at The Dojo. This is a flexible time for teen community members to use the pop-up training space at The Dojo @ Somernova and connect with fellow community members in the process.

\*\*\*\*\*

**East Somerville Main Streets** is calling for vendors to participate in their **Cozy Holiday Market** on **December 6** from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the parking lot of **Deano's Pasta**, 15 Garfield Ave. If you're interested, please fill out the form <https://forms.gle/mJppkmhXAYj44peRA>. Dec 06, 2024, 5:30 – 8 p.m. The Cozy Holiday Market invites you to savor a warm drink while exploring a variety of artisans, materials, and charming supplies to prepare for the winter ahead. Gather with friends, family, and even bring your pets to relish in the cozy atmosphere. Unearth that festive, ugly sweater from the back of your closet and capture memorable moments with Santa. Embrace the joy of the season and have fun at our cozy market.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Red Line service** will continue to be suspended **between Harvard and Broadway** all day and every day **November 18 – 23**. On November 24, the service suspension will be extended between Harvard and JFK/UMass. Visit <https://www.mbta.com/> for more updates and travel options.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Winter Farmers Market** is back at the **Arts at the Armory**, 191 Highland Ave. on **Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. from November 2 to April 12**, (except Nov. 30 and Dec. 28). The Center for the Arts at the Armory is proud to offer a weekly winter market with 71+ local food vendors with the best locally grown and regionally produced foods, including fresh produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, tamales, pastries, chocolate, skincare products, and more. The market accepts SNAP/EBT and HIP benefits. They also offer a \$15 SNAP match to customers each week. More info available on their website: <https://www.somwintermarket.org/>.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Davis Square Farmers Market** is now open. **Every Wednesday through November 27**, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. visit the Davis Square Farmers Market, across from **American Flatbread** at 44 Day St. Visit: [www.massfarmersmarkets.org/davis](http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/davis). This long-running market features over two dozen Massachusetts farmers and food producers offering a vibrant selection of delicious produce, protein, baked goods, ready-to-eat meals, alongside a host of other locally made products. The market accepts cash, credit/debit cards, WIC/Senior coupons, and EBT cards and offers a weekly *Continued on page 21*

# Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 16

hospital staff, researchers and charitable organizations.

"I applaud the visit of this important delegation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives to Cuba," said U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA). "This trip will allow state leaders to learn more about the Cuban healthcare system, climate resiliency strategies and life science innovations. It will also facilitate critical conversations about how to get much-needed humanitarian aid to the Cuban people."

"I am a strong believer in the power of diplomatic dialogue and engagement, and I've long believed it's time to rethink America's failed, cold-war approach to dealing with Cuba," continued McGovern. "I hope that this visit can serve as an important step in improving relations between our two countries."

All expenses incurred by members traveling on this trip, including expenses related to transportation, lodging and meals, are being funded by each individual member.

The group includes Reps. Jennifer Balinsky Armini (D-Marblehead), Michael Day (D-Stoneham), Marjorie Decker (D-Cambridge), Mindy Domb (D-Amherst), Ken Gordon (D-Bedford), John Lawn (D-Watertown), Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston), Frank Moran (D-Lawrence), Mike Moran (D-Brighton) and Jeff Roy (D-Franklin).

**TAX CREDIT FOR COMPANIES THAT HIRE NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS** – The Healey administration announced the launch of a new program that would provide a \$2,000 tax credit to Massachusetts businesses that hire active members of the National Guard.

Supporters said the program aims to increase economic opportunities for members of the Guard and encourage more businesses to hire and retain them. "We are addressing the employment roadblocks active service members face and expanding valuable job opportunities statewide," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. "The National Guard Hiring

Tax Credit will incentivize businesses to hire skilled service members, empowering these businesses to grow and strengthening our local economies."

"The skills, discipline and resilience of National Guard members make them invaluable to any employer," said Veterans Services Secretary Jon Santiago. "Through the HERO Act and initiatives like this tax credit, we're strengthening our workforce and reaffirming our commitment to those who serve, ensuring they receive support both in uniform and at home."

"This tax credit is a meaningful investment in our National Guard members, expanding opportunities for them in the workforce while encouraging more businesses to recognize and leverage their unique skills and dedication," said Public Safety and Security Secretary Terrence Reidy. "By supporting employers who hire active Guard members, we're strengthening our local economies, honoring the service of these individuals and building a more resilient workforce across Massachusetts."

**YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETS WITH THE GOVERNOR** – Gov. Healey hosted the first-ever Annual Youth Advisory Council Summit to engage young leaders on key priority issues. The council consists of 60 young people who advise the Healey administration on critical issues impacting Massachusetts, such as civic engagement, education, climate, housing, mental health and youth violence. All members are appointed for a two-year term. Supporters note that the council, which in total has members who speak 14 different languages, has geographic, racial and gender diversity and includes members of the LGBTQ+ community.

"Since swearing the council in, these young people have been hard at work," said Gov. Healey. "They've shown incredible leadership, and they've made it a priority to engage with each other about the issues that matter most to them. Each of them recognizes that the decisions we make

today will have a significant impact on their futures, and our administration is committed to working with them to address their concerns. While we work to ensure Massachusetts remains a state they can grow and thrive in, we're excited to welcome these young people to the Statehouse and open the door to conversations about their futures."

**HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK'S SESSION?** *Beacon Hill Roll Call* tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature's job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session. During the week of November 11-15, the House met for a total of five hours and 22 minutes and the Senate met for a total of five hours and 43 minutes.

Mon Nov. 11	No House session No Senate session.
Tues. Nov. 12	House 11:03 a.m. to 11:13 a.m. Senate 11:21 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.
Wed. Nov. 13	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. No Senate session
Thurs. Nov. 14	House 11:02 a.m. to 4:09 p.m. Senate 11:25 a.m. to 4:49 p.m.
Fri. Nov. 15	No House session No Senate session

*Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com*

## Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

\$15 SNAP Match.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Is your **teen** looking to make some **extra money**? The city's **Snow Shoveling Program** is hiring youth to assist shoveling seniors and homeowners with disabilities out after snowstorms this winter. Teens and homeowners are paired for the season. After each storm, the homeowner will contact their assigned youth to request shoveling services. Somerville teens ages 14 to 19 are welcome to apply. Looking for snow shoveling services? Apply online or contact **Debby Higgins** at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Somerville Public Schools** is hiring **substitute teachers** for all of their PK-12 schools. For more information or to apply visit <https://somerville.tedk12.com/hire>.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Medical Equipment Program:** Through the generosity of the **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**, and from the direction of **Mayor Ballantyne**, the **Council on Aging** can provide **Durable Medical Equipment** at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60, or have a permanent disability, and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. We

currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies and Transport Wheelchairs (wheelchairs are intended for transport and are not self-propelling or self-breaking.) For additional information, or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
The **Council on Aging Flu and COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Dates** at the **Holland St. Senior Center**, 167 Holland St. **Senior Only Clinics**, please register by calling the COA directly at 617-625-6600, ext. 2300. For clinics open to the general public, please register via the City

of Somerville website. **December 12** (ages 19+) 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Both flu and COVID-19 vaccines are conveniently offered at multiple locations across Somerville, improving access for all residents. If you do have health insurance, please bring proof of coverage. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. Walk-in appointments are limited.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Don't forget, if you would like to subscribe to receive a **digital edition** of our paper, go directly online to our website over to the right side and fill out your email address to receive a free, full PDF copy of the paper.



# OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## Somerville's Doug Holder retires as Director of the Newton Free Library Poetry Series

# Lyrical

## SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Keith Tornheim, a biochemistry professor at Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine, has six recent books, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*; *I Am Lilith*, *Dancer on the Wind*, *Spirit Boat: Poems of Crossing Over*, *Can You Say Kaddish for the Living?*, *Fireflies*, *Spoiled Fruit: Adam*, and *Eve in Eden and Beyond*. His poems have appeared in *Ibbetson Street*, *The Somerville Times*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Muddy River Poetry Review* and *Poetica*.



### Truth and Poetry

Poetry is not the icing on the cake,  
it is the cake,  
with icing.  
It is the whole truth  
and the half truth of imagination,  
so one and a half times the truth.  
It is the truth of the mind  
and the truth of the heart  
and the truth of the soul;  
each of these is only half the truth.  
Poetry is true  
even when it lies,  
if it is true to itself  
and you feel it.  
It is the whole truth  
and nothing but the truth,  
except for the part  
you don't understand  
with your mind  
or your heart  
or your soul.  
But that part may be true, too,  
for someone else.

— Keith Tornheim

To have your work considered for the *Lyrical* send it to:  
Doug Holder, 25 School St.; Somerville, MA 02143. [dougholder@post.harvard.edu](mailto:dougholder@post.harvard.edu)



Nov. 12, 2024 was my last night of hosting the Newton Free Library Poetry Series. I have directed it for 23 years, and I have booked 100s of poets in that time span, with a fair amount from Somerville.

I was handed the baton by Robert K. Johnson years back, and it has been a pleasure meeting and listening to folks. I will be consulting with the library to make as smooth a transition as possible. I felt it

was time to pass the series on to new leadership, who could bring new energy and innovations to this venerable long-running series.

I have been assured by the library that they are very interested in continuing the series, so stay tuned. The poets who participated this last night were (L to R): Li Min Mo, Alex Kern, myself as host, Jayla Tillison, and Mary Buchinger.

### SHS alumni receive Celtics championship rings



Two former Somerville High School graduates, Tiffany Brathwaite (class of 2003) and Robert Buruca (2016), who now work for the world champion Boston Celtics received their championship rings last Thursday night. Brathwaite has 5 years with the team as Office Manager of the Technology and Operations department. Buruca has been with the team for 2 years as Manager of Technology services. Following the opening night ring ceremony, the staff received their rings at a private ceremony at the Empire Restaurant in the Seaport.

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