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297 Medford is located near the Green Line, high school, and the central library.

By Liam Beretsky-Jewell

Cambridge-based developer Just A Start (JAS) and The Somerville Community Land Trust (SCLT) have begun the process of planning a 6-to-7-story affordable housing development at 297 Medford Street, a prime location near the Gilman Square T station. JAS is a non-profit, who currently preserves and maintains 645 units of affordable housing, spanning about 20 developments across Cambridge.

They are redeveloping 297 Medford in partnership with the SCLT, which is in the process of acquiring the underlying land at a cost of \$3.45 million, with assistance from Somerville Affordable Housing Trust funds. SCLT works to "decommodify housing [by taking it] off of the speculative real estate market. Our goal is to build *Continued on page 4*

Somerville PorchFest 2025: Important safety and event updates

The Somerville Arts Council is excited to announce PorchFest 2025, the citywide live music event, is returning on Saturday, May 10, from 12 to 6 p.m. (rain date: Sunday, May 11).

To ensure a safe, enjoyable, and well-organized experience for all, this year's event will feature new safety measures and structural updates designed to enhance the day for both performers and residents. All information is available on somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest

Key Updates and Changes for 2025:

Application Process and Deadline:

• Deadline to submit an application is Thursday, April 10, at 11:59 p.m.

• Applying does not guarantee participation.

Event Map to Be Issued Early:

• A map of the bands and their

Continued on page 12



The 2025 edition of Porchfest Somerville is set to rock out on Saturday, May 10.

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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.

On Saturday, March 22, the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church will be celebrating Greek Independence Day and honoring our local war hero George Dilboy at Somerville City Hall. All are welcome to join at City Hall at 11 a.m. to celebrate Greek Heritage and honor our local hero George Dilboy. This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

The Somerville Arts Council in conjunction with the City of Somerville's Public Space and Urban Forestry Division is seeking an experienced working metal artist for a public art project to design and build an entry gate for the Glen Park Community Garden on Franklin Street. Download call here <https://somervillearts council.org/>.

On Thursday, March 20, at 6 p.m., MassDOT will hold a virtual design public hearing to present the design for the proposed Webster Ave. bridge replacement project in Somerville. <https://www.mass.gov/event/somerville-bridge-replacement-br-s-17-016-webster-avenue-over-mbta-bmrr-03-20-2025>.

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy birthday to Rachael Hart-Adams. We wish her the very best of birthdays, celebrating with her great family. Happy birthday to MaryLynn McWatters O'Malley. We hope she has a great *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of March 19 – March 18 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday March 19	Partly Cloudy	54°/38°	9%	6%	NE 12 mph
Thursday March 20	Cloudy	56°/42°	20%	13%	SSE 12 mph
Friday March 21	Rain	44°/40°	75%	52%	NW 15 mph
Saturday March 22	Partly Cloudy	52°/46°	25%	16%	WNW 16 mph
Sunday March 23	Partly Cloudy	59°/37°	6%	3%	NW 11 mph
Monday March 24	Partly Cloudy	50°/42°	18%	11%	SW 12 mph
Tuesday March 25	Rain	55°/43°	51%	43%	S 13 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: Somerville unites in solidarity with immigrants: 'We are here because the U.S. was there'

Somerville Citizen says:

Not fair to all the folks who bought their homes years ago worked hard for years and want to live in peace. The city took on being a sanctuary city and decided the only ones who matter are immigrants. Now immigrants run the city. Unless you are an immigrant and being financially supported by the city/ state no one else can afford to rent/buy here. Completely wrong and shameful. Take care of your American citizens first and foremost!

Proud Somerville Resident says:

I am SO PROUD of the Somerville residents willing to stand against injustice in our community. Whether it is advocating for our immigrant community or against genocide, the work being done by the orgs present at the rally—MAMAS, Cosecha, SEU, Somerville for Palestine, Padres Latinos, etc— are doing IMPORTANT, CRUCIAL work. Immigrants, organizers, and anyone willing to stand up for justice make our city better.

For those who haven't gotten involved in a community organization yet, this is your sign!

Response to: Councilors pass home rule petition in hopes of ending forced broker's fees in Somerville

TheoNa says:

This is more of a "feel good" proposal. Landlords will just factor their cost into the rent. Renters will instead just be paying for broker fees throughout the year rather than in a lump sum payment in their first month.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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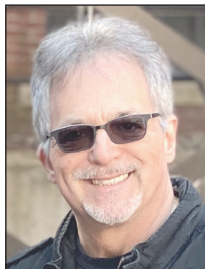
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

When I grow up I want to be...



As a kid growing up in Somerville, I always wanted to be a famous rock star. We all know how that turned out!

I wanted to grow up to be Paul McCartney. My friend wanted to be Paul McCartney's wife. (I hope it was the nice one!) Back then, I didn't think about the money, just the coolness.

A friend of mine wanted to be a fire fighter from the time he was five years old, because his father was one. He saw his dream come true.

A lot of my friends went to Somerville Trade High School (God Bless Muzzy, the former principal) and learned skills that have kept them gainfully employed for years. I got to be a substitute teacher there back in the '80's.

Seeing how we spent a lot of time in front of the boob tube (hey, we didn't have Play Station, You Tube, Facebook or texting) some of us wanted to be like the characters we saw on TV. We wanted to be Batman, Superman, and Captain Kirk. One of my buddies actually wanted to be like Baretta, who was played by the troubled actor, Robert Blake.

Remember a show called Then Came Bronson with Michael Parks. It only lasted one season from 1969 to 1970. Bronson wore a leather jacket and a wool cap and drove around from one adventure to another on a motorcycle. That seemed like a neat way to live your life.

One friend of mine wanted to be Katherine Hepburn, while another one wanted to be a mother and a nurse. One gal idol-

ized Davy Jones of The Monkees, and I bet she wasn't alone.

I guess we have to mention all those teen heartthrobs that were around when we were growing up. There was Bobby Sherman, Michael Jackson, Donny Osmond, Leif Garret and of course David Cassidy. I sported the "Keith Partridge" hairdo for years. I even wore the white belt. How sad was that?

Another friend tells me that she wanted to be the Girl from U.N.C.L.E. so she could hang around with Illya Kuryakin. She notes that he still looks pretty good at age 77 playing Ducky in NCIS.

I guess while we are confessing, I have to add that, like many young boys at the time, I wished I could be Major Nelson. He was in possession of the magic bottle that contained the lovely Barbara Eden of, I dream of Jeannie! I would have changed places in a second with John Steed, whose partner in The Avengers was the lovely Miss Emma Peel.

When I was a young musician just starting out, there were guys around the city that were already making a name for themselves in local bands. I looked up to a fellow named Patrick who had a band called "The PJ 5." They actually did real gigs while my bands were still in the garage. I used to go down St. Clements High School and listen outside in the parking lot when they were playing at a school dance. I had the pleasure of playing in a band with Pat in 1974, so I got to perform with one of my idols and influences. We are still friends today and have been in a few bands together.

In reality, we were influenced by teachers to teach, electricians to wire, mechanics to repair, chefs to cook, and fathers and



mothers to be good parents. I think we all take parts of the good we see in the adults who are pivotal in our young lives, and use them to shape our own lives. It was a bit difficult to actually come to the realization that I was not going to be the next Paul McCartney, but at least I got to see him perform. I would have settled for being like Billy Joel or Elvis Costello, but I am happy for who I am. Whatever that is.

Today, I look back and realize that I would like to be more like my father. I used to want to be like him only because he could drive and had a car. I now need

some of his infinite wisdom. I also wish I could remember more of those cool old "Dad" sayings he used to come out with.

I am lucky today to be involved with teaching music and theatre in Somerville. I have to thank the influences of my music and drama teachers from Somerville High School, Andy Smith and Virginia Marshall.

By the way, my friend that wanted to marry Paul McCartney married another friend of mine who is a great guitar player and a very funny guy. They have been married for over 30 years!



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Somerville Police Dept Crime Log March 4 – 10

Assault

25013007: On 3/9/25 at approximately 5:51 p.m., Somerville Police responded to 779 McGrath Hwy for a weapons call. Upon arrival, officers encountered two juvenile males who stated they were being chased by a group of five juveniles with knives. Officers located the group of juvenile suspects nearby and identified them. Officers recovered knives from two of the juvenile suspects.

Assault

25012807: On 3/8/25 at approximately 2:02 p.m., Somerville Police responded to Cedar St for report of an assault. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated he was standing on the bike path and was approached by a female party who grabbed his hat off his head.

Residential Breaking and Entering

25013172: On 3/10/25 at approximately 12:20 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Cameron Ave. for report of a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the reporting party who stated his tenants were away for break and when they returned, noticed their bicycles were stolen.

Other Crimes: 5 Bike thefts + 2 MV vandalisms + 1 MV theft + 1 Car break + 1 Package theft

— Somerville Police Department



Proposed zoning change allows for housing development near Gilman Sq. CONT. FROM PG 1

affordable housing through a community-driven process” explained executive director Ben Baldwin.

All units at 297 Medford will be income-restricted. The eligibility threshold for a low-income tax credit program that will help finance the housing units is 60% of the area median income (AMI) explained Conor Ring, the project manager with JAS, so the units will be “affordable at no more than 60% of the area median income. Unit mix will probably be a mix of one bedroom, two bedrooms, and three bedrooms,” he added.

A development in its formative stages

JAS is still in the early stages of the project, so details related to parking, architectural design, first floor amenities, and other specifics are still very much on the drawing board. The developers hope the project will be completed by 2029. JAS says it wants to make this project an iterative, community-driven process, and it held the first public outreach meeting on March 5 at the Somerville Public Library.

Comments made at the meeting were overwhelmingly in support of the project. Unlike a controversial 25-level high-rise being proposed on Elm Street [1] in Davis Square, the development at 297 Medford wouldn’t stand out among neighboring mid-rise buildings such as nearby Somerville High School or the Burton F. Faulkner Towers.

The 6-to-7-story design was also chosen for practical reasons, as the height represents somewhat of a “sweet spot” from a cost perspective for the developer. It offers JAS more bang for their buck than a low rise, which is needed to make the project financially viable. On the other end of the spectrum, the step-up to taller high-rise

buildings generally means making the jump from wood frame construction to steel, and adhering to more stringent code requirements. “That means you have to build a beefier building, which pushes up costs,” Ring said.

Construction costs and funding

The cost of constructing new housing as a whole represents a challenging barrier to increasing the region’s supply of housing. “It’s materials, interest rates, everything,” Ring said. “I feel like every time we go to price a project lately, it is coming in higher than expected.” Public money to support affordable housing is limited, and “the pie is not big enough to fund all the projects that many organizations like ours are working on in Massachusetts,” Ring said, forcing developers to reapply year after year to secure financing. “The state only has so much to go around to fund those projects, so they often take longer than we would like to get off the ground.”

To fund the project beyond land acquisition, JAS anticipates using low-income housing tax credit equity from both the state and federal levels, and hopes to tap into the city’s Community Development Block Grant Program, as well as soft loans awarded to projects by the state. However, the cost of the project “is a moving target, because we haven’t designed a building yet.”

As with previous JAS developments, a lottery system would most likely be used to narrow down the pool of housing applicants. “We work pretty closely with our property management company and the city in which we operate to make sure that folks know about the units, that they are sort of widely marketed. We take in applications and folks are screened for their



The March 5 community outreach meeting.

eligibility” described Ring.

An important zoning amendment

JAS is seeking to pursue a zoning map change to up-zone the property from its current designation of Midrise 3 to Midrise 4 (MR4). This would allow JAS to build up to 7 stories, thanks to the affordable housing overlay that Somerville adopted in 2020, which is essentially “a density bonus given projects that are 100% affordable.” Under MR4, a market-rate developer could build a four-story building Ring explained. “The overlay sort of gives us even footing with market-rate developers in the competition for scarce land. We can build more units than them, and try to house as many people as possible.”

The request for the zoning map change will be heard at a joint public meeting of the Land Use Committee and the Somerville Planning Board on March 20. They estimate that the new building could include about 50 units of

housing – 15 to 20 more than would be possible with Midrise 3.

Baldwin and Ring are encouraging community members who endorse the development to voice support for the zoning change at the upcoming meeting. Ring emphasized, “I think we sort of default to always talking about units, but these aren’t just units. They’re homes. For people who are going to live there and their families, right? So, instead of 20 additional units, it’s 20 additional families,” referring to the additional capacity that the zoning change would unlock.

“A project like this, it’s a ton of work, but I think the end result is a more just vision of the city where you don’t have to make \$200,000 salaries to stick around in Somerville and Cambridge,” Ring added, touching on the project’s vision.

Link:

[1] <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/138321>

Mayor Ballantyne suggests 'level service budget' amongst uncertainty

By Jeffrey Shwom

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is currently evaluating a level service FY2026 budget with no increases or decreases to current programs, staffing, and services, except for inflation and fixed cost adjustments (like utilities or pension payments).

She suggests the city will continue to leverage income sources, like taxes from commercial zones like Assembly and Union Square, and a strong AAA bond rating to keep pressure off residents and keep Somerville financially strong in the context of an uncertain federal and state economic climate. The three Mayoral candidates in this fall's bi-annual election had varying opinions about previous and future budgeting.

Currently, the city receives \$19 million annually in combined state and federal funding for the City and its schools (\$11.5 of which comes via the state). City spokesperson, Denise Taylor, told us the "funding source that has been expressly threatened is funding via the Department of Justice, which averages \$25 - \$40K annually." Mayor Ballantyne added, "If we want to talk about budget impacts, the more pressing question is why municipalities across the country can't count on federal stability and support.

Cities like Somerville are on the front lines of delivering essential services, supporting working families, and driving economic growth. We should not have to go to court to ensure that federal decisions around city funding are lawful, but that is what we are stepping up to do with the joint federal lawsuit we filed with Chelsea." Lawyers for Civil Rights is representing the city pro bono / at no charge.

On another front, Mayor Ballantyne knows new growth is slowing down (As previously reported by the Times). "Fortunately, Somerville has planned carefully for fluctuations in the market and is in a strong financial position, but we must still be strategic in this economic and political climate. Keeping taxes reasonable while still delivering quality services is core to my administration's mission." She further touted her "broader, more comprehensive approach to funding (Somerville's) needs and priorities while controlling taxes," including things

like one of the State's highest residential property tax exemptions (35%).

Jake Wilson, Chair of the Finance Committee and City Councilor At-Large, shared optimism in the City's court case and uncertainty about expected Federal and State revenues. "I'm optimistic the courts will backstop the Constitution and the rule of law, but you still plan for the worst and hope for the best. The city should have contingency plans in place for a variety of scenarios, both in advance of the adoption of an FY26 budget and during the next fiscal year.

Uncertainty is a killer when constructing a budget, so having question marks surrounding approximately five percent of our expected revenues for next year makes for rough circumstances for the budget creation process. We do rely on federal funding for school lunch, special education, homelessness service, public safety, street safety, and prevention efforts with our youth. The Administration's commitment to a level service budget is admirable under these circumstances, though this will require creativity and likely some very tough decisions."

Willie Burnley Jr, also a City Councilor At-Large, agrees with Mayor Ballantyne "that we need partners at the federal level that we can work with to find innovative funding solutions. As someone who has worked for both Senators Warren and Markey, I feel confident in my ability to seize opportunities to pull federal dollars to Somerville." However, he pointed to what he says is the mayor's inability to "rein in the spending, in particular, our police budget is already about \$100,000 over what they were originally allocated with a third of the year to go." He went on to say, "At a time when our federal funding is in jeopardy, it is incredibly important for our departments to operate within the means that the council - and by extension, our residents - have approved."

Jason Mackey, a startup founder and entrepreneur, was a bit more stark. "Let's be clear: it's not a question of if the Trump administration will cut our federal funding, it's a matter of when -- and Somerville must be ready. As mayor, I'd aggressively protect education, safety, and social services, pursuing new revenue streams, and driving greater efficiencies across all



Mayor Ballantyne's "level service budget" resonates with some members of the City Council, while others favor differing approaches.

departments. I'd personally lead transparent community budget sessions, openly discussing challenges and solutions with everyone." Moreover, he stated, "Our city

deserves proactive leadership, not reactive budgeting" and that Mayor Ballantyne's level service budget "is inadequate given the severity of the crisis we're facing."



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FOR A STUDY ON MEMORY



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Beacon Hill Roll Call



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THE HOUSE AND SENATE: *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local senators' votes on roll calls from recent debate on the joint House-Senate rules. There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

LIMIT NUMBERS OF BILLS AT HEARINGS (S 15)

Senate 5-33, rejected an amendment that would reduce from 50 to 30 the maximum number of bills that can be considered at a hearing on bills by a committee.

"Reducing the maximum number of bills heard in a joint committee hearing from 50 to 30 allows for more focused and meaningful discussion," said Sen. Kelly Dooner (R-Taunton). "With fewer bills being considered, legislators and more importantly, the public have more time to engage with the issues at hand and ensure that everyone, especially those who travel far to testify, receives a fair opportunity to participate and be heard."

"The amendment proffered a solution looking for a problem," said Sen. Becca Rausch (D-Needham). "As Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, I presided over a hearing on plastics and waste management last session that considered a number of closely related bills which would have been split up under the proposed amendment. The current ceiling [50] for bills to be heard at a committee hearing is reasonable, both substantively and procedurally and promotes legislative efficiency."

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment decreasing the number of bills from 50 to 30. A "No" vote is against the decrease.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

ALLOW MINORITY REPORT ON CONFERENCE COMMITTEE BILLS (S 15)

Senate 6-32, rejected an amendment allowing the minority members who voted against a conference committee version of a bill to issue a report on why they voted against it. A conference committee is a committee that is appointed by the Senate president and House speaker when the House and Senate approve different versions of a bill. The committee's job is to craft a compromise version.

"It is important that the perspective from both sides of the debate within our conference committees is represented for the public to consume," said Sen. Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "The people of Massachusetts do not benefit from one-party rule."

Amendment opponents did not offer any arguments against the amendment. Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem), the

chair of the Senate Committee on Rules, did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call asking her to comment on why she voted against the bill.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment allowing a minority to issue a report. A "No" vote is against allowing a minority to issue a report.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

PROHIBIT LATE VOTES ON CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS (S 15)

Senate 6-32, rejected an amendment that would prohibit any conference committee bills from being considered less than 72 hours before the end of a formal legislative session. The amendment would allow the Legislature to consider a conference committee bill at any time only if the House and Senate vote unanimously to allow consideration. The amendment would replace a rule that allows the Legislature to consider conference committee reports at any time during the legislative session.

"This amendment ... closes a loophole that allows leadership to push through last-minute conference committee reports and then reconvene after the formal sessions to vote on them," said Sen. Kelly Dooner (R-Taunton). "By prohibiting these reports from being filed within 72 hours of the end of formal sessions, this change ensures major legislation is properly reviewed and prevents rushed, last-minute decision-making."

Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem) said the amendment would tie the hands of the House and Senate by establishing an arbitrary deadline that would prevent them from voting on important bills. She said that would result in the bills essentially dying from lack of action.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment prohibiting any conference committee reports from being considered less than 72 hours before the end of formal legislative sessions. A "No" vote is against the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

\$6.4 MILLION TO CLIMATECH COMPANIES – The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) announced \$6.4 million in funding for 25 clean energy and climatech companies and researchers. The investment is designed to accelerate innovation and business growth in 13 cities and towns across Massachusetts.

"These companies have made Massachusetts a leader in

climate technologies," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "As the rest of the world races for the competitive edge in climatech, Massachusetts is leading the way with smart investments in growing businesses. With these investments, big ideas become jobs and economic growth for our state."

"The climatech industry is an economic development opportunity for every city and town in Massachusetts," said Emily Reichert, CEO of MassCEC. "These MassCEC emerging climatech grants empower innovative ideas and transformative solutions that will shape the future of the state's economy. By supporting entrepreneurs and innovators, we're accelerating the deployment of technologies that will lower energy costs and create jobs right here in Massachusetts."

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. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. 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 March 10-14, the House met for a total of 12 minutes while the Senate met for a total of 36 minutes.

Mon. March 10 House 11:00 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.
Senate 11:04 a.m. to 11:07 a.m.

Tues. March 11 No House session
No Senate session

Wed. March 12 No House session
No Senate session

Thurs. March 13 House 11:01 a.m. to 11:08 a.m.
Senate 11:09 a.m. to 11:42 a.m.

Fri. March 14 No House session
No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com

COMMENTARY

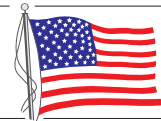
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Spring is about to spring in Somerville.

Our View Of The Times



After the long chilling days of winter, it's nice to know that springtime has finally arrived. We anxiously await the balmy days ahead.

One of the finer benefits of New England living is standing witness to the massive explosion of nature's rebirth and renewal, seemingly amplified here. Grass, trees, wildlife and flowers all seem to go forth and multiply at an astounding rate,

as if on cue to the call for "Action!"

How nice it will be to stroll through a park and feed a few squirrels. To replant a garden plot and watch as life springs forth. Or to take the family on a weekend getaway to the beach or mountains.

The seasonal cycle brings its highs and lows. Its pleasures and its challenges. We evolved as creatures in sync with that cycle, so we know how to adapt and make

the most out of each day on the calendar. Still, most of us would surely confess to a few choice dates to name as our favorites, if pushed to 'fess up.

How about a family picnic, or a bit of sunbathing at the beach? There'll be camping, hiking and bird watching opportunities galore. All it takes is a little gumption and a modicum of fore-planning and off you go!

As much as so many of us love our winter scenery, sports, etc., there is so much to be said for being able to step out one's front door without danger of slipping and busting a hip. Not to mention the simple pleasure of soaking up some sun and taking in fine fragrance of life anew.

We've really got it made, so let's get out there and start loving us some springtime weather. It won't last forever, so hop to it!

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

day. Happy birthday to great guy and life-long resident, **Ed Bean**. We wish him the best. We wish all of our Facebook friends such as **Dottie Poudrier** a very special day along with **Neil Gillis Sr.**, **Alexander Levering Kern**, **Shirley Benoit McMenimen**, **Michael Cirrone**, **Paul Carafotes**, **Roy Bertocchi**, **Rosalee Zammuto**, **Linda Sirignano** and **Rhonda Annette** a very happy birthday. To all those who are also celebrating this week, we wish them a happy birthday.

Networked Geothermal Information Session, March 25. The City of Somerville's Office of Sustainability

and Environment invites residents to learn about the city's **feasibility study on networked geothermal** in our community, and energy efficiency options you can do now. This virtual event will be held on Tuesday, March 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. online via Zoom. Register to attend. https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6617388572164/WN_y0lsL-3iSwS1GqUh132i-g#/registration

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the **City of Somerville staff** invite you to Somerville's third annual **Civic Day**. Come learn about city services and local government via free activities, and enjoy local eats and

entertainment on **Saturday, April 5**, from noon to 4 p.m. at **City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.) and on the **City Hall concourse**. In the event of inclement weather, all outdoor activities will be moved inside to **Somerville High School** (81 Highland Ave.). To learn more, visit somervillema.gov/civicday.

Municipal scholarships are available for **high school seniors**. Seven \$1,000 municipal scholarships are available for high school seniors graduating in 2025 through the **City of Somerville Municipal Scholarship Committee**. Applicants must be residents of Somerville who have

been accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution. Students are asked to complete a profile and answer three short essay questions by **March 31**. Learn more and apply: <https://www.somervillema.gov/somerville-municipal-scholarship-2025>

 Plan ahead as **parks close temporarily for tree maintenance**. Proactive maintenance is essential for healthy tree growth and preserving Somerville's urban forest. The **Somerville Parks Tree Program** is gearing up for its sixth year to provide a comprehensive health assessment to 327 trees throughout ten Continued on page 21

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#966

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Crocs footwear is made from what material? | launched a collaboration with which footwear brand in 2018? |
| 2. What is the name of Paul McCartney's fashion designer daughter? | 8. Who played Ricky Ricardo in the TV show <i>I love Lucy</i> ? |
| 3. Which side do men's shirts button down? | 9. What is the flavor of the ice cream that sounds like an unpaved street? |
| 4. What do the Mardi Gras colors purple, green, and gold represent? | 10. In what year was the Boston baseball team the Red Sox formed? |
| 5. What type of meat is pancetta? | 11. Who is Lego's founder? |
| 6. What is also known as Japanese horseradish? | 12. What does the term "spring chicken" mean? |
| 7. Post Malone | |

Answers on page 12

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The only real person to be a Pez head was Betsy Ross.
2. Queen Elizabeth II's cows slept on waterbeds.

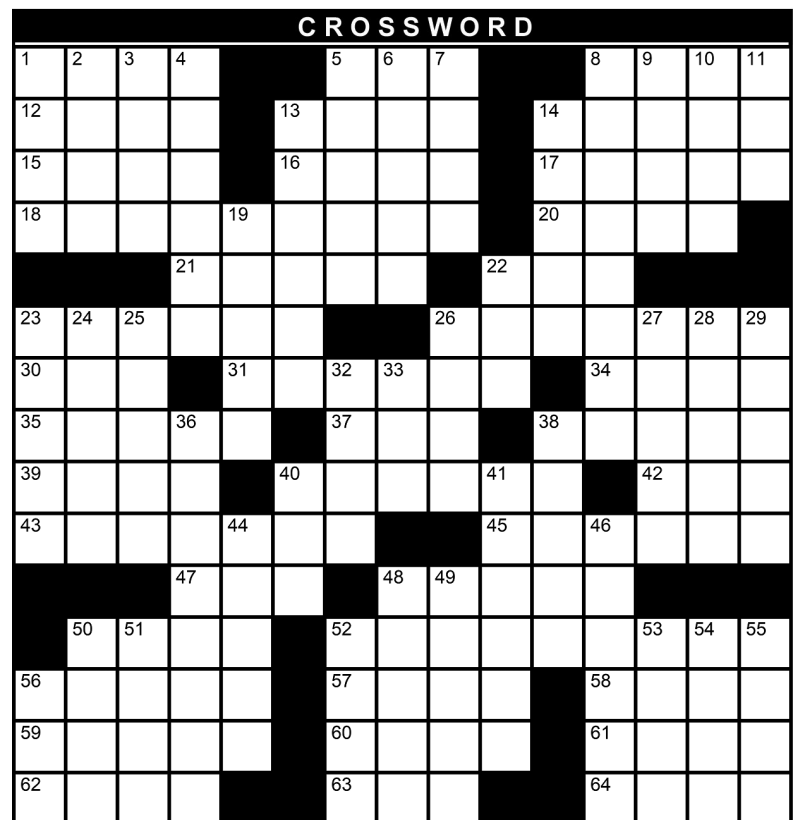
STATEPOINT CROSSWORD THE VACATION DESTINATIONS

ACROSS

1. Aladdin's find
5. Reggae precursor
8. "Lights out" signal
12. Not good
13. Flock's echo
14. ___ diet, a.k.a. caveman diet
15. Kind of jerk
16. Southern and Southwestern U.S. region: Sun ___
17. Financial backer
18. Switzerland's skiing destination (2 words)
20. Ivan the Terrible, e.g.
21. Clint Eastwood's "Play ___ for Me"
22. One in a pod
23. Wear out
26. Masculine
30. Princess' turf
31. Makes a sum (2 words)
34. "He's Just Not That ___ You"
35. Dionysus' pipe-playing companion
37. Choose
38. Provide food
39. Answer from a tunnel
40. Virtual you
42. ___ Scare
43. Prickly plant
45. Second "National Lampoon's Vacation" destination
47. Biblical Adam's partner
48. Cause and effect cycle?
50. Goals
52. Jamaica and Cayman Islands location
56. Bert's sidekick
57. Poet Pound
58. Hay bundle
59. "The Great Gatsby" author
60. Billiards relative
61. Theories
62. ___-deaf
63. Boar's mate
64. Reason to cram

DOWN

1. Not more
2. Swear, not curse





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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



3. Between mini and maxi
4. Bodily fluid
5. Small silvery fish
6. ___ G. of "SpongeBob SquarePants"
7. Aardvark's repast
8. Serengeti National Park location
9. Aquatic plant
10. Pressure inducer
11. Costa del ____, Spain
13. Humiliated
14. Eucharistic plate
19. Fretted instrument
22. OB-GYN test
23. Balance sheet item
24. Coastal destination
25. Policeman's club in India
26. Cockapoo or Puggle, e.g.
27. Foreword
28. Make tea
29. Vast multitude
32. Peace symbol
33. Rest and relaxation destination
36. El Capitan and Half Dome location
38. Pigeon food?
40. Brewery order
41. Acrobatic move
44. Living room centerpiece?
46. Velveteen creature
48. Type of membranophone
49. Cupid's ammo
50. Gas station brand
51. Aware of a secret (2 words)
52. Porcinos
53. "At ____, soldier"
54. Charitable contribution
55. Hawk's aerie, e.g.
56. Time in NYC

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Moonlight Benjamin at Arts at The Armory



On Tuesday, April 1, a Boston debut for a true original at The Armory. Welcome to the incantatory, voodoo-infused garage blues, by a real Haitian priestess. Somewhere between Oumou Sangaré and Alabama Shakes.

Moonlight Benjamin is a Haitian-born singer/songwriter/bandleader, who grew

up in a protestant orphanage and is now based in France. As a teenager, she started to sing at church.

Her music is unique in the Haitian diaspora. She fuses the gut-level passion of Haitian roots music with the blare and bravado of electric guitar rock, always with a bracing effect. In person, she is

elegant, soft-spoken, and articulate. On stage, she is like a person possessed, raw, and emotive -singing mostly in Creole with a burly voice that erupts from somewhere deep within. Her band rocks hard throughout.

Moonlight's powerful and rebellious voice meets the tension of saturated guitars

to create an intoxicating voodoo trance in a very new and explosive style.

Presented by world class music live.

Tuesday, April 1, door: 7.30 p.m., show-time: 8 p.m. Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143.

<https://moonlightbenjamin.com/>

Dorothy's Corner BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



The Mushroom Shop

Located at the corner of Medford and Central streets, this shop has much to offer! Upon entering, I was impressed to see the variety and abundance of items. Canned fish, flours, dried beans, canned beans, spices, vinegars, dried mushrooms, truffles, teas, oils, T-shirts, and books.

That was before I focused on the large display of different types of fresh mushrooms, like oyster, Maitake, chestnut, hedgehog, beech, lions mane, shiitake, and king oysters, along with some other types. You could definitely make this a one-stop shop and come up with many ideas on what to prepare for your next meal. Stir fry's, omelets, and even some pasta with mushrooms and truffles came to mind.

On this trip, I purchased 3 types of fresh mushrooms, Maitake, chestnut, and oyster. When I got home, I sau-

téed them with some butter and seasoned with sea salt. I made an omelet with some fresh herbs and piled the mushrooms on top. It was absolutely delicious. This is one of the best ways to prepare mushrooms if you're unfamiliar with their flavor. I tried the chestnut mushrooms for the first time, they were sweet, nutty, and delicious.

If you like mushrooms, or ANYTHING related to mushrooms, I highly recommend checking it out.

"The greater the diversity, the greater the perfection." Leonardo da Vinci

The Mushroom Shop
433 Medford Street
Somerville, MA 02145
617-718-0570
<https://www.the-mushroom-shop-somerville.com/>

Wednesday – Friday 12 – 7 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.



Sunday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
CLOSED Monday and Tuesday

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

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

LEGAL NOTICES

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING
& COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, April 1, 2025** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to historic@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_zw5TCFVWRze3hM7ivPqAvA

Webinar ID: 863 9032 0546

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.

ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT

Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties

HP25-000001 – 148 Morrison Avenue

Applicant: ThoughtCraft Architects LLC

Owner: M. Leighton Collis and Catherine Collis

The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter a LHD property by demolishing the rear portion of the building, constructing an attached addition, and constructing a detached Backyard Cottage.

DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

HP24-000095 - 142 Cross Street

Applicant: JAC Investments LLC

Owner: JAC Investments LLC

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Case documents reviewed by the HPC are available on the City website at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>.

Cases may be continued to a later date; please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email historic@somervillema.gov to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note:** Written comments due to historic@somervillema.gov **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email historic@somervillema.gov with inquiries.

3/12/25, 3/19/25 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 on **4/8/2025 at 12:00PM**. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Neil Dang/AC Hotel Marriott unit #310B; McDonnell Scott unit #362MZ; James Capobianco unit #4682. 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.

3/19/25 The Somerville Times

Legal Notices can be downloaded
from our website:
www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by **53 Concord Realty LLC** to CCG Fund 1, LLC, dated February 29, 2024, and recorded in the Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds in Book 82532 at Page 116, as assigned to Churchill Funding I, LLC, by assignment dated March 1, 2024, and recorded in said Deeds in Book 82569 at Page 532, and as further assigned to **Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB**, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee for Residential Mortgage Aggregation Trust, by assignment dated March 13, 2024, recorded with said Deeds in Book 82570 at Page 468, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at Twelve o'clock noon on the 8th day of April A.D., 2025, on the premises below described being known as **53 Concord Avenue**, Somerville, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage as set forth below:

To wit: "The land in Concord Avenue in Somerville, Middlesex County, Massachusetts being shown as Lot numbered two (2) on a plan made by Mason and Elliot Surveyors, dated May 15, 1872 and recorded with Middlesex South District Deeds, Plan Book 20, Plan 21, together with any buildings thereon, bounded and described as follows: Southerly: by said Concord Avenue, forty and 50/100 (40.50) feet; Westerly: by Lot# 3 on said plan, eighty-eight and 62/100 (88.62) feet; Northerly: by Lot# 23 on said plan, forty and 52/100 (40.52) feet; and Easterly: by Lot# 3 on said plan, eighty-five and 35/100 (85.35) feet."

The above premises will be sold subject as above and to the following: any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal assessments and liens; any and all outstanding water and/or sewer charges; any and all covenants, easements, restrictions, rights, reservations, conditions and/or other enforceable encumbrances of record created prior to the mortgage; and to all tenancies and/or rights of parties in possession, if any of the aforesaid there be.

Terms: Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$5,000.00) will be required to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale as earnest money, with an additional deposit of Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000) to be paid within five (5) business days after the sale to bring the total deposit to \$20,000. The successful bidder (other than the mortgagee) shall also be responsible for a one percent (1%) buyer's commission payable to the auctioneer at the time of closing. The balance of all amounts due is to be paid in cash or by certified check within thirty (30) days of the sale at the Law Offices of Ford & Paulekas, LLP, 280 Trumbull Street, Hartford, CT 06103. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY,
FSB, not in its individual capacity but solely as
trustee for RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE
AGGREGATION TRUST

By: /s/ David A Hill, Jr.
David A. Hill, Jr.
Its Attorney

Attorneys for Mortgagee:

Ford & Paulekas, LLP
280 Trumbull Street
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 527-0400

Dated: March 10, 2025

3/12/25, 3/19/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB25-55

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement & Contract Services Department invites bids for:

IFB 25-55 2025 Sewer Rehabilitation

The IFB package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Thursday, March 20, 2025**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 2pm**.

The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any minor informality in the IFB process.

Please email remy@somervillema.gov for more information.

Jordan Remy
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

3/19/25 The Somerville Times



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION –
HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING
Project File No. 607981

A live virtual Public Informational Meeting (PIM) will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Roadway Reconstruction project on McGrath Hwy in **Somerville and Cambridge, MA**.

WHEN: **6:30-8pm, Tuesday, March 25th, 2025**

WHERE: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed roadway reconstruction project. Updates on design progress since the last public information meeting will be provided. All views and comments submitted in response to the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of reconstruction of McGrath Hwy (Route 28) between Broadway in Somerville and Third Street in Cambridge. The current design proposes to remove the McCarthy Overpass and replace it with at-grade signalized intersections. The project focuses on improving community connectivity between different neighborhoods and accommodation for all roadway users through provision, expansion, and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. The project also includes safety improvements, increased green space, physical separation of bicycles and pedestrians from motor vehicles wherever feasible, and the removal of a physical and visual barrier (the overpass) within the community.

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.

This meeting will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

3/12/25, 3/19/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #25-53

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, invites sealed bids for:

Four (4) Harley Davidson FLHTP Electra Glide Motorcycles

The bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Thursday, March 20th, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:30 PM, Thursday, April 3rd, 2025**.

The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor informality in the bid process, and accept the bid(s) deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville.

Please email tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

3/19/25 The Somerville Times

LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
RFP #S2026-01**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed proposals for:

A Vendor to Provide An Enrichment Based Afterschool Program for Students in the Somerville Public Schools for the period August 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.

Each Proposal shall be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked "Price Proposal for Vendor Services for the Afterschool Enrichment Program" and a "Non-Price Proposal for Vendor Services for the Afterschool Enrichment Program" in accordance with the Request for Proposal and Contract Documents which may be obtained at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **March 12, 2025** between the hours of Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

All Proposals shall be filed no later than 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 27, 2025 at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144. Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee which may include possible interviews with the proposal finalists.

Please contact Leah Arredondo (larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us) or call 617-629-5218 to receive the proposal and register as a proposal vendor.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof, and to award the Contract or not to award the Contract, as the School Committee deems to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville School Department.

Patricia Durette,
Interim CFO
Somerville Public Schools

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**City of Somerville, Massachusetts
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR**

SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE TO HOLD A VIRTUAL COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN HEARING
Plan establishes the annual funding priorities for Community Preservation Act program

The Somerville Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is holding their annual Community Preservation Plan public hearing on Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. The Community Preservation Plan establishes the annual funding priorities and allocates money to the three categories that Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds can support.

Please join the FY26 Community Preservation Plan Public Hearing via Zoom Webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/join?jv=3jv6ZAT6KWhoxQI4MIAA>
You can also dial in using your phone. United States: (646) 931-3860
Access Code: 826 1737 0463

Interested persons may provide comments to the Community Preservation Committee at the hearing and by submitting written comments by Friday, March 31st, 2025 by email to rcameron@somervillema.gov. You can also share your ideas by taking the Community Preservation Committee survey at www.somervillema.gov/cpa. For more information on the CPA and how to apply for CPA funds, visit the City's website at www.somervillema.gov/cpa.

Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Adrienne Pomeroy, at 617-625-6600 x2059 or ada@somervillema.gov.

3/12/25, 3/19/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
BID #S2026-02**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for:

Curriculum Materials: Textbooks, Library Books, Consumable Materials, E-Books and Online Curriculum Materials That Align to the Massachusetts DESE Curriculum Frameworks.

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **Thursday, March 13, 2025 @ 10 a.m.**

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **2 p.m., Friday, March 28, 2025** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof, and to award the Contract or not to award the Contract, as the School Committee deems to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville School Department.

Patricia Durette,
Interim CFO
Somerville Public Schools

3/12/25, 3/19/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
REBID #S2025-03**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for an Anatomage Table Convertible Including Accessories for the Center for Technical Education at Somerville High School.

Every bid shall be submitted in accordance with the Specifications which may be obtained at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **March 11, 2025.**

All bids shall be filed no later than **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26, 2025** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Fl., Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof, and to award the Contract or not to award the Contract, as the School Committee deems to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville School Department.

Patricia Durette,
Interim CFO
Somerville Public Schools

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #25-54**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department invites sealed bids for:

On-Call Glass and Window Repairs for the City

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, March 19, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **2:00PM Thursday, April 3, 2025**. 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 Felisa Garate at fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.
DCAMM Certification and Update Statement required for Doors and Windows.

**Felisa Garate
Procurement Analyst
617-625-6600 x3406**

3/19/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #25-56**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department invites sealed bids for:

Citywide Plants and Flowers

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, March 19, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **2:00PM Wednesday, April 2, 2025**. 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 Felisa Garate at fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

**Felisa Garate
Procurement Analyst
617-625-6600 x3406**

3/19/25 The Somerville Times

Legal Notice

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

2009 Saturn Aura Vin# 1G8ZS57B19F152623
2015 Toyota Camry Vin# 4T1BF1FK4FU995627
2005 Nissan Altima Vin# 1N4AL11D95C100533
2015 Ford Escape Vin# 1FMCU9G9XFUB32416
2016 Hyundai Sonata Vin# 5NPE24AF3GH344705
2005 Acura TSX Vin# JH4CL95875C023321

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

3/5/25, 3/12/25, 3/19/25 The Somerville Times

TO PLACE LEGAL ADVERTISEMENTS

IN THE SOMERVILLE TIMES,

CONTACT US

BY 12 PM MONDAY

PHONE: 857-488-5138

To advertise in
The Somerville Times
call **857-488-5138**

City Council stands in defense of disability rights

By Carlie Lombardi

Somerville’s City Council has taken a firm stance in defense of disability rights by passing a resolution in support of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This decision comes in response to a legal challenge from 17 states that threatens to weaken protections for people with disabilities across the country.

At the March 13 City Council meeting, local leaders and advocates stressed the importance of maintaining the safeguards provided under Section 504, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in federally funded programs, including education, housing, and healthcare. The council’s resolution rejects attempts to get rid of these protections and reaffirms the city’s commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.

Section 504 has been a cornerstone of disability rights since its enactment in 1973, serving as a precursor to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It ensures that people with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations in schools, workplaces, and public spaces. However, a recent lawsuit filed by 17 states challenges the constitutionality of Section 504 protections. It initially targets provisions related to gender identity but has since expanded to question the

validity of the entire law.

Councilor Jesse Clingan, a leading advocate of the resolution, emphasized the importance of Section 504 in ensuring equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities. “Disability rights are under attack again,” Clingan stated. “The lawsuit calls 504 unconstitutional, not just for the provisions it initially targeted, but the entire section, which protects disability rights in education, housing, and workplaces.”

The council meeting featured testimonies from disability rights advocates who show the real-world impact of these protections. Leo Sarkissian, former director of The Arc of Massachusetts, warned that overturning Section 504 could lead to significant setbacks for millions of Americans. He detailed how the law has ensured equal access to education, requiring schools to accommodate students with disabilities and preventing healthcare providers from denying care based on disability status.

Another speaker, Harriotte Ranvig, a long-time disability rights activist, shared her personal experience as a blind person navigating a world that has not always been designed with accessibility in mind. “If you think you’re not affected by disability rights, you will be eventually,” she said. “Disability is a club that doesn’t discriminate.”



The Somerville City Council has taken steps to reaffirm disability rights with a resolution in-tended to bolster such protections.

Somerville has long been recognized as a city that chooses progressive policies, and this resolution aligns with its broader commitment to inclusivity. Council members emphasized that while federal challenges to disability rights are mounting, municipalities must take a stand to protect their residents.

With this resolution, the City Council calls on state and federal leaders to defend Section 504 against legal challenges. Advocacy groups, including The Arc and the Disability Rights Education and De-

fense Fund (DREDF), continues to mobilize efforts to counteract these attacks, urging communities to raise awareness and demand action from elected officials.

As the legal battle unfolds, Somerville remains resolute in its support for individuals with disabilities, ensuring that their rights remain protected. The resolution serves as both a symbolic and practical step in advocating for an inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of ability, can live with dignity and equal opportunity.

Tax Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Can I still amend a tax return from a prior year?

A: Yes! You can still amend past tax returns, going as far back as the 2021 tax year. If you missed claiming deductions, credits, or reported incorrect income, you have up to three years from the original filing deadline to submit an amended return.

For 2021 tax returns, this means you have until April 15, 2025, to file and potentially get a refund!

What to check for:

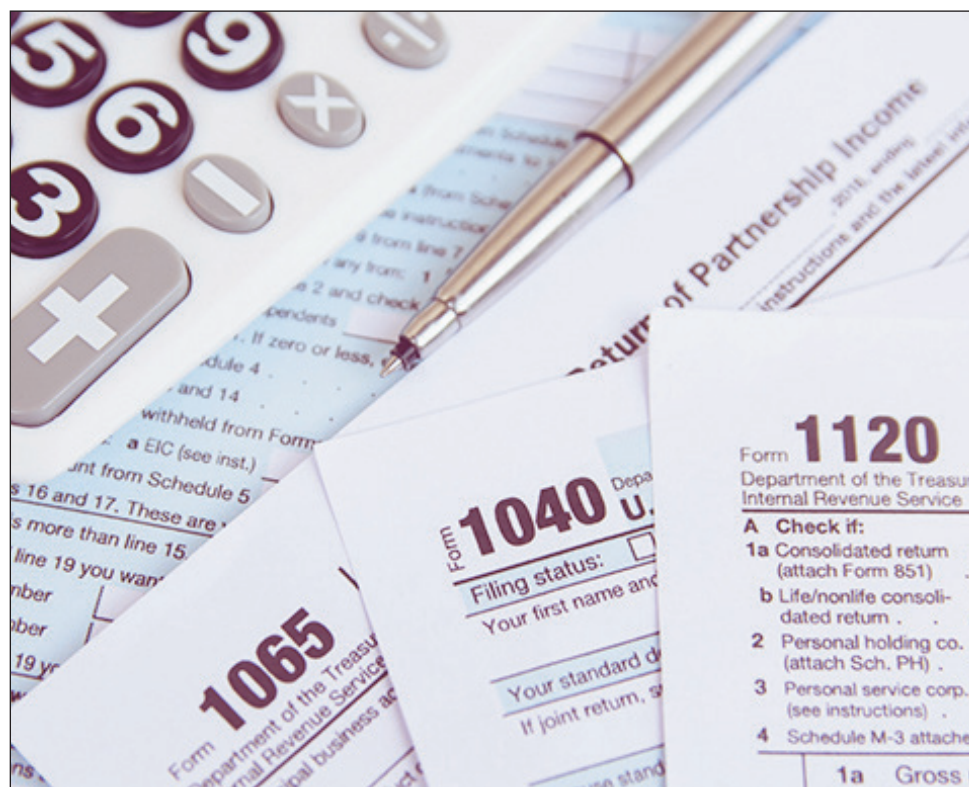
- Missed deductions or credits that could lower your tax liability.
- Errors in reported income that might impact your tax situation.

• Refundable credits you may have qualified for but didn’t claim.

Many taxpayers are surprised to find they left money – even thousands of dollars! – on the table in past returns. A careful review of your filings could uncover missed opportunities – worth considering before the amendment window closes!

Have questions about your taxes? I’d be happy to help! I’m Vincent Hicks, a CPA based here in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Feel free to email or call me at vhicksconnect@gmail.com (859-553-0788).

Disclaimer: This column provides general tax information and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Tax laws change frequently, and individual circumstances vary. For personalized guidance, consult a tax professional.



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Somerville's 311 service marks 20 years of connecting the community with City Hall

During the week of March 11, the City of Somerville is not only celebrating National 3-1-1 Day, it is marking the 20th anniversary of its 311 Constituent Services Office. The first 311 service to be established in the region, Somerville's 311 team works year-round, around the clock, and through every storm to connect the Somerville community to City Hall and its services.

Known for its "One Call to City Hall" mantra, Somerville's 311 service launched in December 2005 with a team of just three phone operators. Today, 13 staff field and manage more than 100,000 calls per year ranging from tree trim requests and pothole reports to connecting people to vital support during the peak of the COVID pandemic. The office is always open, taking calls in any language 24/7 year-round. Other area cities later followed Somerville's lead, with Boston adding 311 services, for example, in 2016.

"311 forms the heartbeat of city operations, handling tens of thousands of community requests annually. For many residents, 311 staff are their first and most frequent point of contact with the city, and it's truly impressive how 311 continues to adapt and expand to understand the diverse needs of our community," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. "Whether reporting a broken streetlight, requesting interpretation at a community meeting, or checking the time of the July 4 fireworks, 311 is ready to assist. I want to thank the dedicated 311 staff who work tirelessly to keep our residents informed, our local services responsive, and our city running smoothly."

Somerville's 311 Office has continued to innovate and expand over the years. Though the service launched solely with a phone line, 311 now take requests via social media, live chat, text, web, and their very own mobile app, which was recently

upgraded and re-released. The app allows residents to quickly and easily snap photos, send geotagged requests, and track their progress. The team also plays a key role during emergencies keeping lines of communication open and answers on where to get help at the ready.

While many are aware of 311's front-facing role, behind the scenes the office also functions as a vital nerve center and data source for the city. The Office manages both internal and public requests across dozens of departments and teams, tracks response times, ensures completion, and analyzes data on the whole process to identify trends and needs.

For example, great strides in the city's rodent control efforts at the time were made in the 2010s with the help of 311 data that could pinpoint when and where residents reported rodent sightings. The team also does advanced work in improving customer experience citywide via strategic customer service trainings and collaborative work with departments on data-informed improvements to service delivery.

"The success of 311 is all about the people behind it. Our staff work tirelessly to ensure everyone in the community gets the help they need with professionalism, patience, and care," said Steve Craig, Director of Constituent Services. "Every interaction is an opportunity to show people that city government is listening and responding."

When you take tens of thousands of calls and requests per year, some interesting ones are sure to turn up in between the usual topics. Staff have shared a range of tales, including receiving the question, "Is Stockholm still in Sweden?", a request for "How do you spell electrician?", and once needing to talk down a resident who thought a bear was on their roof when it was actually an earthquake aftershock.

Other fun facts? 311 was the first city



office to offer multilingual services, established the city's first social media feeds, and has advised cities nationwide on the setup of their own 311 centers. The staff also always don impressive, coordinating themed costumes for Halloween (their Wizard of Oz costume year was fitting for this whiz of a team).

As with any customer service operation, staff also learn to graciously handle aggressive callers. De-escalation training and superhuman patience help with the job – as does the occasional thank you. Feel free to thank your 311 team the next time you reach out.

Get in Touch With 311

Whether you're reporting an issue, requesting a service, or simply have a question, there are several ways to contact 311 in Somerville. 311 can also provide free interpretation services for non-English speaking community members:

- ♦ **Visit City Hall:** Stop by Somerville City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) during regular business hours and speak with a staff member at the 311 Welcome Desk located in the front lobby.

- ♦ **311 Mobile App:** The revamped 311 app offers more request types and customizations to make it easier to submit and manage service requests. Available for iOS and Android, download the app at somer villema.gov/311.

- ♦ **Phone:** Residents can dial 311 or (617) 666-3311 for non-emergency inquiries and requests 24/7.

- ♦ **Email:** For those who prefer email, residents can submit a request to 311requests@somervillema.gov.

- ♦ **Social Media:** Connect with 311 through social media platforms to receive updates, ask questions, and report issues.
 - X/Twitter: @311Somerville
 - Facebook: [fb.com/311Somerville](https://www.facebook.com/311Somerville)
 - Instagram: @311somerville
 - Bluesky (launching soon!): @311somerville.bsky.social

- ♦ **Live Chat:** Chat in real time with 311 staff Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- ♦ **Website Submissions:** Visit somer villema.gov/311 to submit service requests and track the progress of ongoing work orders.

Mayor Ballantyne invites community to Somerville's third annual Civic Day celebration

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne invites community members to attend the city's spring Civic Day celebration on Saturday, April 5, from noon to 4 p.m. at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) and on the City Hall concourse. Civic Day aims to provide community members of all ages with fun, interactive opportunities to celebrate democracy and learn about city government, programs, services, and ways to get involved. Visitors can join in a variety of family-friendly activities planned by city departments, including:

- ♦ Selecting a home a pollinator plant plug for your home garden
- ♦ Casting your vote in Cycle 2 of Somerville's Participatory Budgeting process
- ♦ Posing for a photo on a Somerville Police motorcycle
- ♦ Taking a tour of City Hall
- ♦ Navigating a hazard house and learn about fire safety with Somerville Fire Department
- ♦ Enjoying local food and music performed by Somerville High School ensembles.

The City Hall concourse will be closed to vehicular traffic. Temporary handicap parking will be available along Highland Avenue near the concourse. In the event of inclement weather, all outdoor activities will be moved inside to Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.) Multilingual staff from the SomerViva: Office of Immigrant Affairs will be present to offer language support for residents who may need assistance connecting with city departments. For more information, please contact Kristine McNulty at kmcnulty@somervillema.gov or visit somer villema.gov/civicday.

St. Patrick's Day celebration at Sally O'Brien's

Liam Mannion, proprietor of Sally O'Brien's, and former City Councilor Bob McWatters held their annual St. Patrick's Day celebration on Monday. Local and state elected officials stopped by Sally's for a pint of Guinness and to enjoy Irish music. Among the guests were State Auditor Diana DiZoglio, District Attorney Marion Ryan, Governor's Councilor Terrence Kennedy, Mayor Katjana Ballyante, Former Congressman Michael Capuano, State Representative Dan Ryan, State Representative Erika Uterhoyen, City Councilors Ben Ewen Campen, Kristen Strezo, Will Mbah and Willie Burnley, as well as former Aldermen Jack Connolly and Ken Joyce.



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Somerville Museum's Annual Business History, Community Service and Stewardship Awards

The Somerville Museum presented its annual awards at its Annual Meeting on Friday, December 13. The Museum's awards program honors organizations and individuals that have served the City of Somerville or the Museum, making important contributions to the community.

The Somerville Business History Award recognizes businesses that have contributed to the culture and development of Somerville through length of time in operation and/or impact on the history or culture of the city. The 2024 recipients of the Somerville Business History Awards are Chef Lorenzo Reyes and Rincon Mexicano restaurant and David & Lynn Waller and Neon Williams lighting company.

Rincon Mexicano is owned by Chef Lorenzo Reyes, who dreamed of opening a restaurant to showcase the best of Mexican cuisine since he moved to the

Rincon Mexicano with a 2024 Somerville Business History Award.

Located in East Somerville, Neon Williams is one of the oldest neon sign shops in the country, having made tens of thousands of neon signs since 1934. From landmarks like the Citgo sign and the Paramount Theater sign to small window signs for coffee shops, the company's services include neon design, fabrication, repair, rentals, consulting, and buying. Neon Williams is the last remaining neon sign shop in the Boston area. Since 2018, it has been owned by David and Lynn Waller. Dave Waller generously contributed neon signs to two Somerville Museum exhibitions -- The Lost Theaters of Somerville (2002) and Penny Chronicles (2022). Today, pieces from their extensive collection adorn many cities throughout the northeast and beyond. David Guss, Museum



United States in 1989. After working in commercial kitchens in the Boston area for 25 years and annually visiting different regions of Mexico to expand his knowledge of cooking techniques, Chef Reyes opened Rincon Mexicano in 2014 on Broadway Street. Today, Chef Reyes operates the restaurant along with his brother Ricardo, brother-in-law Andreas, and daughter Yvette. Restaurant Manager Pamela Villamarin was present to receive the award because Chef Reyes was cooking. Lindsay Allen, the Executive Director of East Somerville Main Streets, says, "Chef Lorenzo is so deserving of this award. Beyond his top-notch cooking, he is generous and a true leader in the business community, always willing to help other businesses and the community at large." The Somerville Museum recognizes Chef Reyes and

Trustee and Tufts University Professor Emeritus, notes, "The Wallers's dedication to this form has helped ensure that neon remains a living part of our urban landscape." The Somerville Museum is pleased to recognize Dave and Lynn Waller and Neon Williams with a 2024 Somerville Business History Award. The Somerville Museum's Community Service Award recognizes individuals or organizations who have served the city of Somerville through their support of local arts, history and/or culture. This work may take place independently or in partnership with the Somerville Museum.

Mary Mangan and Kathleen Pondelli received a 2024 Community Service Award for their work as volunteers on the Somerville Museum docent program and with historic events, including the Pow-



der Alarm, First Flag, Patriots' Day and Ghosts of Somerville. Somerville Museum Historic Events Manager Grace Bryan says, "These lovely women devote their free time and their many talents to the Museum's historic events program. I lean on them both and I'm so happy to see them win this award." The Museum thanks Mary Mangan and Kathleen Pondelli for their contributions to the Museum and the community.

Paula Magnelli and Beatriz Gomez received a 2024 Community Service Award for their work on public programming and project support for the 2024 Museum exhibit "Museo Inmigrante: Stories of Resilience from Somerville's Padres Latinos." Paula and Beatriz volunteered to help produce exhibit public programs including "Mental Health in the Latino Community" and "What Being an Immigrant Means to Me" as well as supporting the opening reception, which sold out twice. "Museo Inmigrante" co-curator Marta Fuertes says

"Paula and Beatriz worked behind the scenes to make the exhibit and its public programs possible. It is wonderful to see them celebrated for their efforts."

Jennifer Dorsen collaborated with Museum staff and board members on a Somerville historic map project and helped write grants to support the Museum's history programming. Somerville Museum Executive Director Stephanie Marlin-Curiel says, "Jennifer's work on the map project has resulted in an excellent resource that Somerville residents will use for years to come to learn more about the city's history." In addition to her efforts at the Museum, Jennifer has been involved in many other Somerville projects and committees including the GLX Community Working Group and the Mystic View Task Force. The Museum is pleased to recognize Jennifer Dorsen's contributions with a 2024 Community Service Award.

The Museum's Thomas Battinelli Stewardship Award is named *Continued on page 17*



Somerville Museum's Annual Business History, Community Service and Stewardship Awards

CONT. FROM PG 16

in honor of long-time Museum volunteer and supporter Thomas Battinelli (1929-2017). The award recognizes and celebrates individuals or organizations who have demonstrated exceptional support of the Museum, forwarding its mission or strengthening it as an institution. Mary Cassesso joined the Museum's capital campaign "Access for All & More" in 2020 and has been a driving force behind the Museum's fundraising efforts ever since. She was an important part of the \$95 for 95 campaign in celebration of Mayor Gene Brune's 95th birthday, and is worked to

well as a number of furniture pieces, and extra elements of the Bulfinch Staircase from June to December during Museum renovations. This allowed the work of the Museum's archives team to proceed and included the unboxing of countless documents and artifacts. The Museum is so grateful for this tremendous gift of time and space, and offers many thanks to the Highland Masonic Temple Association.

Marian Bremer was recognized with a 2024 Thomas Battinelli Stewardship Award for her work directing the Museum's archive and book project and the



coordinate the Museum's February trip to Cuba. Barbara Mangum, Museum Board President, says, "Mary inspires all around her with her great good humor and ability to get things done. Her resume of community contributions is long and includes being part of Mayor Eugene Brune's administration and 30 years with the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, as well as serving on the boards of Food for Free and Union Square Main Streets. We are so fortunate to have her as our ally, helping to create financial stability for the Museum."

Christopher Cipoletta, President, Stephen Post and members of the Highland Masonic Temple Association received a 2024 Thomas Battinelli Stewardship Award. The Highland Masonic Temple Association generously allowed the Museum to store over 60 large boxes of books and archives in their building as

Archives Collection team. The need to move the Museum's collections into the Masonic Temple during renovations presented the Museum with a rare opportunity – the chance to pour through scores of boxes and think about what to store and protect, and what could be moved elsewhere or sold. Dan Breen, Museum Trustee and Brandeis University professor, says "With humor and true organizational skill, Marian guided the collections process for the last five months. Through piles of city engineering reports, scrapbooks of every kind, and myriad copies of the Somerville High School Radiator popping up seemingly everywhere, Marian has led the effort all the way – so that when the Museum reopened, we were better equipped than ever to make the most of our space to tell the story of Somerville."



About the Somerville Museum

Located in the heart of the city at the intersection of Central Street and Westwood Road, the Somerville Museum has served as the community's cultural institution for nearly a century. The Museum is the City of Somerville's mirror, playing a central role in preserving the past, reflecting the present, and helping to shape the future of this

diverse urban community of 81,000. The Museum presents exhibitions in history and the visual arts along with lecture series and musical events, and produces history programs across the city. The Museum also works in collaboration with Somerville's public schools. New members and volunteers are always welcome. For more information visit <http://somervillemuseum.org>.



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2025 Rás na hEireann road race

The annual Rás na hEireann road race, a celebration of spring, took place through the streets of Somerville on Sunday, March 16. All runners and walkers were invited to celebrate life, the coming of spring, and to enjoy a memorable race and St. Patrick's Day celebration. This race was born in Ireland and named in honor of its famous sister race, the Ras na hEireann International Cross Country held in Termonfechin, County Louth, Republic of Ireland. The Ras na hEireann U.S.A. 5Km is open to all, from beginners to international stars.





Photos by Bobbie Toner





Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: I live in an apartment building, and the landlord doesn't want to rent to people below the age of 25. Can he do that?

A: No. It is illegal to discriminate against someone based on his or her age. Age is a protected category under the Massachusetts fair housing laws. However, there are some exceptions. Minors are not protected and the protections do not extend to residency in state or federally-aided housing for the elderly, or to housing intended for use as housing for persons 55 years of age and over, or to housing for individuals age 62 or over.

The 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.

Somerville Class of 2025 invited to apply for Municipal Scholarship Opportunity

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the City of Somerville Municipal Scholarship Committee are reminding Somerville residents graduating high school in 2025 to apply now for seven municipal scholarship opportunities. Selected applicants will receive \$1,000 to help with post-secondary education expenses.

To qualify for consideration, students must be in high school, a resident of the City of Somerville at the time the financial aid is awarded, and be accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution.

To apply, students can complete a profile and answer three short essay questions here: somervillema.gov/somerville-municipal-scholarship-2025 or call 311 (617-666-3311) for more information.

Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Finally, snowdrops!...

— Photo by Denise Provost

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Have you heard about those new pillows?
They're making headlines.

On This Day in History

March 19

1687 – The French explorer La Salle is murdered by his own men while searching for the mouth of the Mississippi, along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

1702 – Anne Stuart succeeds to the throne of England, Scotland and Ireland.

1822 – Boston is incorporated as a city.

1879 – Jim Currie opens fire on the actors Maurice Barrymore and Ben Porter near Marshall, Texas. His shots wound Barrymore and kill Porter.

1903 – The U.S. Senate ratifies the Cuban treaty, gaining naval bases in Guantanamo and Bahia Honda.

1918 – Congress authorizes Daylight Savings Time.

1931 – The state of Nevada legalizes gambling.

1945 – Adolf Hitler orders a scorched-earth policy for his retreating German armies in the west and east.

1963 – In Costa Rica, President John F. Kennedy and six Latin American presidents pledge to fight Communism.

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

parks this spring. To do this work, temporary park closures are required. Residents are encouraged to check for park closures before planning an outing to city parks. Learn more here <https://www.somerville-ma.gov/treehealth>.

Calling all members of the **Somerville music community!** Join the **Somerville Arts Council** for two meetings to discuss the future of our local music ecosystem. From venues and rehearsal spaces to recording, come together to find solutions to these critical issues. **Meeting 1: March 23, 4 – 5:30 p.m., Somerville Music Spaces, 1060 Broadway C101B. Meeting 2: March 31, 6:30 – 8 p.m., at The Jungle, 6 Sanborn Court.**

Central Broadway Zoning Study Presentation, March 26. Last year the cities of **Somerville and Medford** underwent a zoning study for the Broadway Corridor to help shape zoning and policy changes. Now, a final study document is here based on research, analysis, and public engagement with stakeholders from both communities. Join **city staff** for a presentation of the study and a **Q&A session.** This hybrid event will be held on **Wednesday, March 26,** at the **Arthur D. Healey School (5 Meacham St.)** and online at 6 p.m. Learn more <https://voice.somerville-ma.gov/broadway-corridor>

Drum Your Heart Day, Saturday April 26, at **Gilman Art Park, Medford St., Somerville.** Bring a bucket or metal or a drum and everyone will drum together led by a core of **Drum Artists.** Beginning around 1 p.m. Celebrate, protest, express yourself to the universe the good we know we need to overcome hate and prejudice from our neighborhoods across America. Gilman Art Park has been and continues welcoming artists to show **Temporary Public Art until June,** possibly through this Summer. On the first Saturday of June there will be a celebration honoring all the artists who have contributed their works to this temporary field of free expression.

Somerville Little League 2025 Spring registration is open. Go to www.somervillelittleleague.org to register.

On **Friday, April 25,** **GLOWBALL** will transform the **Armory Performance Hall** into an immersive **Glow-in-the-Dark Rave** created by **DJ Adam Gib-**

bons with hypnotic visuals by **Jay Medina,** all in support of **The Center for Arts at the Armory.** **GLOWBALL** is an anti-gala—there will be no speeches, formal presentations or auction. There will be pop-up performances by **Samba-Viva** and **Sidy Maiga** on djembe. This year's honorees: **Rachel Strutt,** Lifetime Achievement Award; **Clay Fernald,** Community Arts Advocate; and **Nelson Salazar,** Outstanding Artist. **GLOWBALL** tickets include complimentary international bites, glow-in-the-dark accessories and face painting by **Arty Mari.** This will surely be Somerville's most illuminating party of 2025. <https://art-satthearmory.org/glowball/>

The Somerville Arts Council's ArtBeat 2025 Calls for Talent are now available. The Somerville Arts Council invites musicians, street performers, circus artists, installation artists, buskers, craft vendors, and more to participate at **ArtBeat 2025.** Festival date and new time: **Saturday, July 19, 1 – 9 p.m.** (Rain date: Sunday, July 20), Davis Square, Somerville. The main festival will take place from 1 to 7 p.m., but music and food will continue in **Seven Hills Park** from 7 to 9 p.m. Visit <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls/>.

The Mudflat Cup Show 2025. National juried show by **Kyle Scott Lee.** If you are interested in purchasing any of the cups, please email kate@mudflat.org with your inquiry. Visit <https://www.mudflat.org/projects-8> to view..

Visit the **Arts at the Armory,** 191 Highland on **Tuesday, March 25,** at 6:30 pm for the **Boston Moth StorySLAM!** This community-focused, open-mic storytelling competition is open to anyone can share a story on the night's theme (changes every month). Doors open at 6:30 pm, show begins at 7:30 pm. More info and tickets available here: <https://themoth.org/events/beef-boston-2025>.

Save those **milk/juice and other ½ gallon cartons!** The **Somerville Community Growing Center** needs lots of these recycled containers as material for art projects for events, such as **Festa Junina** hats and pollinator puppets. Please rinse out and cut off the top and bottom to flatten. Contact **Yumi** at yumiisu65@gmail.com for drop-off arrangements.

The **Somerville Homeless Coalition's Amazon Wish Lists** are updated monthly with the most requested items from their food pantry to meet the needs of their clients experiencing food insecurity. If you would like to learn more and donate through our wish lists, please see the link here: <https://bit.ly/SHCLinks>.

Looking for some fun this **April break?** Join the **Somerville Recreation Department** for an action-packed **April Vacation Program** filled with games, arts and crafts, sports, and a field trip to **Chunky's Movie Theater** by registering on their website. Located at the **West Somerville Neighborhood School,** the full day program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4:30 p.m. Spots may fill fast, so don't miss out and sign up today for a week of friendship and nonstop fun: <https://somervillema.myrec.com/info/default.aspx>

Community Health Worker Division Hours are held every other **Thursday** at **Connexion** (149 Broadway, Somerville, MA) from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. They will provide hygiene kits, snacks, and referrals to internal and external partners for the following services: ESL, Housing, SHC, SNAP and MassHealth. Next hours will be held on **March 20.**

Reminder: **Return your 2025 City of Somerville census.** Last month, Somerville's 2025 census made its way to resident mailboxes. Annual participation in the census is essential for keeping an accurate population count and it updates or maintains your status as an active voter for upcoming elections. The 2025 census form also includes an application to vote by mail in Somerville's preliminary and city elections this year. Completed census forms can be returned via the postage-paid return envelope included in the mailing, by scanning the form and emailing it to census@somervillema.gov, or in person at **City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.). Please call 311 (617-666-3311) with any questions.

The **Somerville Commission for Women (SCW)** seeks five members, and Somerville residents are encouraged to apply. The SCW serves as a centralizing force in the **City of Somerville** and the community which will deal with all women's issues providing information, referral, guidance, and more to public agencies and organizations engaged in activities and

programs intended to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against women because of their status as women or minority women. All applications are due **Friday, March 21.** Interested candidates should submit a statement of interest by email to sflythe@somervillema.gov or by mail to **Steven Flythe, Deputy Director, Department of Racial and Social Justice, City of Somerville,** 167 Holland Street, Suite 208, Somerville, MA 02144. Please contact Steven Flythe at 781-808-7502 or sflythe@somervillema.gov with any questions.

Senior Fraud with the **Department of Homeland Security** takes place on **Tuesday, March 25,** at 10:00 a.m. at the **Holland Street Center.** **Sean Garvey, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigation,** will be giving a presentation on common frauds and will be available to answer questions on senior fraud. RSVP by calling **Molly Pagliuca** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318 or email Molly at mpagliuca@somervillema.gov.

Subscribe to the **Somerville Public Library's email newsletter** for monthly updates about the goings-on at the library. Subscribing takes less than five minutes, and if it turns out to not be your thing, unsubscribing is easy. Visit the linktree in their bio to sign up. Lots of adult programming happening at the library for **the week of March 30 - April 5.** Don't miss our **Take Home a Blackout Poetry Kit** starting **April 1** at all three branches, and Learn to make **Bengali Ghugni** with **Chef Afruza** on April 5 at the **East Branch.** Visit <https://www.somerville-publiclibrary.org/>

State health officials are informing the public that **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza,** which rarely infects humans, is suspected to be affecting wild and domestic birds in several Massachusetts municipalities. Here are precautionary steps you can take: Avoid handling birds and other wildlife and keep dogs and pets leashed and away from wildlife. Learn more and stay up to date on state guidance. <https://www.mass.gov/news/state-officials-provide-updated-guidance-on-suspected-avian-flu-cases-reported-across-massachusetts>.

Winter can stretch budgets to the breaking point. With *Continued on page 23*



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

For a Readerly Companion 'On the Other Side of Goodbye'

The new book by g emil reutter

On the Other Side of Goodbye

ISBN 13-979-8300959593

By g emil reutter

Published by Alien Buddha Press, 2025

Article by Off the Shelf Correspondent Michael Todd Steffen

We've learned to appreciate hybrid writing for itself, for the wide palette and integration that makes today's poetry uniquely liberal and balanced, striking and robust. But it's good also sometimes to recognize definitions in a progression, as g emil reutter dispatches them to us in the three parts of his new book *On the Other Side of Goodbye*, from *POEMS* to *FLASH* to *STORIES*. One's different sense of genre joins the conversation.

The reutter poem is often suburban/pastoral observation of atmosphere, weather, times of day, neighborhood wilderness, flora with its names, and elements of contrast that reflect the liminal location between nature and humanity. An Adam-and-Eve-esque conjugality haunts the garden-kempt woodland sylphs of songbirds and squirrels. In the poems, the poet's "other" or addressee can assume an airy, echo-like or mirroring presence,

She floats in a torrent
of words, sips coffee
tattoos the words onto
a piece of marble...(page 15)

Ink, writing: tattooing the dead (a piece of marble). His lexical curiosity is highlighted in the poem "Adularescence," bringing us with that novelty orthoclase and albite. With the wonder more than an actual question to be answered: What is writing?

While at yet another boundary, technology marks the notably greyed, more menacing big foot print of the industrial landscape, in its jarring testimony that our progress has not brought about

She's no gymnast,
no Dawes at Barcelona;
rather, a cautious agent
of revolution.
A subtle and arduous grace.
A cliff of ice, a glacial wall,
a barricade of hypothermia
beginning to trickle and liquefy

g emil reutter

*On the
Other Side
of Goodbye*

betterment, or as the title of one poem states, *Not over the Rainbow*:

Dorothy not here
loud crunching of carrots, rabbit not
here. Jersey across water, interstate ribbons
through. Town of refinery tanks. Amazon rises
from steel dust, under bridges over roads... (page 17)

reutter's muse is more complicit with the envoys of nature, as with the Cardinal who sings to her in the flash piece *Performance*. He, the outlier, the poet. His vision and liberties push definitions for the medium. The reutter piece of flash is suspended atmospheric writing, like the poem with an eye for suburban wild-life and fauna.

Continued on page 23

in the brave March sun.

If I look around,
if I'm alert, there are harbingers.
Sparks like stars
in the interminable firmament,
in the vast and drastic sky.

— Thomas DeFreitas

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Thomas DeFreitas was born in Boston. The first three words he ever spoke were ravioli, Woolworth's, and McGovern. Thomas was educated at the Boston Latin School and at the University of Massachusetts. For the last decade and a half, he has lived in Arlington, MA, where he guzzles black coffee in the dead of night, venerates Hart Crane's ghost, strikes up conversations with the spectre of Raymond Carver, and strives each day to do The Next Right Thing. His fourth collection of poems, *Walking Between the Raindrops*, was published by Kelsay Books in March 2025.



Hope

for Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

For me, at least, hope
is the painstaking change
from August to November,
from trash-bag leaves to conflagration
astonishing my aging eyes
every single autumn. Then, blaze
greying out to ashes and witherings,
all swept away by the bristly candour,
the bracing freshness of winter.

Hope doesn't leap over hurdles,
isn't a cheetah in the savannah,
but crawls along, stubborn old tortoise,
knowing that the task at hand,
the living of life,
demands not perfection
but progress, however small.
Nail being hammered forward
an eighth, a sixteenth of an inch.

No, hope is not the sparrow,
no fleet and tiny flier.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

increased costs for food, heating, housing, and transportation, many Massachusetts families are facing tough choices. If you or your family need help accessing food, don't wait – call **Project Bread's toll-free FoodSource Hotline** today at 1-800-645-8333.

Join the **Arts at the Armory**, 191 Highland Ave., for their monthly recurring events this March. **Somerville Winter Farmer's Market** (Hall), **Saturdays** from 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Smut Slam, the first Tuesday of every month** at 7:30 p.m.. **Atomic Comedy Indie Improv Night** (Cafe), **Thursday, March 20**, at 7:30 p.m. and **Show Me Your Bits Comedy** (use code "arts" for 25% off ticket) (Cafe), **Friday, March 21**, at 7:30 p.m. More info available for each event on their website. <https://artsatthe-armory.org/upcoming-events>.

Are you looking for a way to **get involved**? The **City of Somerville** needs board and commission members. Learn more and apply for current openings by visiting somervillema.gov/besomerville.

The **Somerville Homeless Coalition** invites you to join them for a special celebration on **Thursday, March 27**, at 6 p.m., in the **Crystal Ballroom**, 55 Davis Sq., as they commemorate 40 years of service to the Somerville and Greater Boston community. Enjoy specialty cocktails, delicious delights from local favorites **Redbones** and **Dave's Fresh Pasta**, and vibrant live music to sway to by **West of Willows** and **The Loomers**. <https://>

somervillehomelesscoalition.org/events/.

You can download a helpful packet of **Know Your Rights resources** and information in the language of your choice below. **Somerville Public Schools** have also created a list of resources on the **One Somerville Resource** page, which can be found here <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-departments/somerville-family-learning-collaborative-sflc/one-somerville-resources>.

SCES is teaming up with **City Fresh Foods** to offer a **five-pack of frozen home-delivered meals**. This new meal delivery option is ideal for consumers who want the convenience of home-delivered meals but are not able to be at home each weekday to receive deliveries. Meal recipients can choose which weekday they would like to receive the frozen meals, with up to five meals in each bulk delivery. Each meal comes with bread, milk, and a dessert. Current SCES clients who are interested in receiving meals should call their office at 617-628-2601 or contact their case manager for more information.

Low-income households may be eligible to receive help with winter heating costs through the **Fuel Assistance Program**. This program is part of the **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** and serves residents of Somerville and Cambridge. Participants receive assistance with their heating costs **between November 1 and April 30**. Learn more about the program, check if you qualify, and apply for assistance today at somerville-ma.gov/heatin-

gassistance.

Somerville High School students are invited to bring their SHS ID to the **Somerville YMCA on Fridays** from 7 to 9 p.m. and **Sundays** from 2 to 4 p.m. for free. There are **free movie nights**. On Sundays, students will have access to the basketball and exercise areas (including the weight room). Visit their website to learn more. <https://somervilleymca.org/news/somerville-teens-after-hours/>. Somerville YMCA asks that students go to their website to register before visiting. This program is for ages 14 to 17 years.

City Alerts are a great way for those who live, work, or own a business in Somerville to receive important city information that affects your neighborhood. City Alerts provide information about emergencies (including snow emergencies), construction and road closures, water service interruptions, community news, and more. To sign up, visit somervillema.gov/alerts and click on the button for your preferred language. Step-by-step sign-up instructions are available at: somervillema.gov/alerts. Having trouble signing up? You can call 3-1-1 (617-666-3311) for assistance.

If you want to adopt-a-drain in Somerville, perform light maintenance as needed, and give it a creative name. Sign up for the **Adopt-a-Drain program** today by visiting Somerville.mysticdrains.org.

The **Somerville Winter Farmers Mar-**

ket 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**. 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 is available on their website: <https://www.somwintermarket.org/>.

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. For additional information or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

The *STORIES* in the collection offer, in reutter's concept of genre, the human world, of a narrative of clear progression concealing a secret to be revealed, a surprise birthday party, the odd bric-a-brac collected by a weekend browser of flea markets, and the very personal item that his rummaging turns up. Grammatically striking and definitive between genres, the *STORIES* in prose accommodate their nouns with articles ("the", "a", "an") which are habitually omitted in the poems, perhaps for

the sake of compression, imparting a brisk catch-as-you-can manner to the poetry.

On the Other Side of Goodbye has been praised for bringing us "exquisite chronicles of journeys through local landscapes, down main streets, and on occasion, to destinations a train trip away." Gloria Mindock has noted the book's display of deft and detailed "descriptions ... so immersive, it feels as if you're inside his writing. He captures real life and its characters with remarkable skill."

g emil reutter is the generous and eclectic partner editor of the admirable North of Oxford webzine and press. He is the author of eight books of hybrid and story collections, eight books of poems and four poetry chapbooks.

His greeting to us *On the Other Side of Goodbye* is full of across-the-fence neighborly observations and I wouldn't so much say "small" as right-sized talk with that best of conversationalists, an alert and responsive sensibility. It's a good companionable read for days at a time for every season.

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