Somerville's original independent newspaper

The Somerville Times

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Inside:



Spare Ghosts page 3



They did the Monster Mash pages 12–13



Wood-fired culture and conversation page 15

Dead end at Mossland Street and Elm Street



The Mossland Street intersection with Elm Street has been closed to through traffic.

On Thursday, October 15, Mossland St. was closed to motor vehicles at its intersection with Elm Street. Going forward, motor vehicles accessing Mossland St. will need to enter and exit via Somerville Ave.

To facilitate the traffic pattern change, City contractors and staff will install temporary traffic barriers, update street signage, implement new traffic signal timing, and add new pavement markings and flex posts.

The Mossland St. Neighborway aims to bring greater safety

Mossland St. is becoming a "Neighborway," a walk- and bike-friendly street designed to lower vehicle volumes and speeds while prioritizing the experience of local residents.

For people biking, a new two-way bike connection will be created at the intersection *Continued on page 11*

Groundwork Somerville is on a mission for a greener city

By Mina Rose Morales

In the corner of a narrow alley, industrial buildings, busy streets, and graffiti walls surround an urban farm, and down the street sits a community garden – both parts of Groundwork Somerville.

Not far, about a 14-minute walk away, resides their office in Union Square, minutes away near where the original American Tube Works Factory once stood. The company was an industrial pioneer, as it was the first in the U.S. to manufacture seamless brass and copper tubes, bringing about industrial change across the country and triggering the city's industrial revolution.

It is there, surrounded by buildings and busy streets, where the organization's three directors strategize how to create a greener *Continued on page 11*



Em Plotkin, Leah McCarthy, and Kenzie Ballard, the co-directors of Groundwork Somerville at South Street Farm. *— Photos by Mina Rose Morales*

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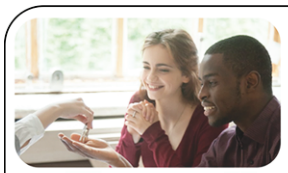
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NEWSTALK

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.

Somerville's annual **"Truck O' Treat"** takes place on **Thursday, October 29**, from 5 to 7 p.m. outside **City Hall** (93 Highland Avenue). Rain date: Thursday, November 5. Costumes are encouraged at this family-friendly event, which will include **safe Trick-or-Treating** on the **City Hall concourse**, a spooktacular visit from a decorated City of Somerville truck, lawn games, light refreshments, and more.

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Community members are invited to join **Mayor Jake Wilson, the City Council, and the School Committee** during the **2026 Neighborhood Connect meeting series**. The series concludes next week on **Wednesday, October 21**, in Ward 2 in the **Argenziano School cafeteria** (290 Washington St.). The meeting will run from 6 to 8 p.m. Free pizza and refreshments will be available starting at 6 p.m. Ward 2 includes South Union Square, Perry and Lincoln Park neighborhoods, and more. Meetings will kick off with quick citywide updates and a brief welcome from the Mayor and Ward Councilor before breaking to allow attendees to move about for one-on-one and small group conversations. Unsure about which ward you live in? Find out with the MySomerville address lookup tool at somervillema.gov/mysomerville.

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Join the **Somerville Youth Hockey Association** and **Growing Girls Hockey parent group** for a special **Girls Only Try Hockey** free event. The free, 1-hour girls ice hockey event *Continued on page 7*

The Somerville Times

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Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of October 21 – October 27 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday *October 21*	Partly Cloudy	56°/42°	9%	4%	NE 15 mph
Thursday *October 22*	Sunny	60°/43°	15%	9%	N 12 mph
Friday *October 23*	Sunny	54°/37°	5%	2%	N 13 mph
Saturday *October 24*	Sunny	56°/38°	6%	3%	NNE 10 mph
Sunday *October 25*	Sunny	60°/40°	12%	6%	W 7 mph
Monday *October 26*	Sunny	65°/43°	10%	4%	WNW 10 mph
Tuesday *October 27*	Sunny	57°/39°	9%	5%	NNW 10 mph

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

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Comments of the Week

Response to: *ENOUGH IS ENOUGH*

Chris Allen says:

"No one can deny" and proceeds to list of a bunch of stuff that's provably false from actual economic data. I get that you don't like the vibes of it, but that's a poor driver of municipal policy.

Bill was always so reasonable when he was on the council, this sort of stuff is sad to see.

William White says:

Hello Chris, maybe it is just me, but I think most people would have found your comment more valuable if you mentioned a source that disproved my statement. For folks who are familiar with my work as a councilor, I always did my homework to support my conclusions. If folks are interested in one of my sources, they can go to
https://dls-gw.dor.state.ma.us/reports/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=PropertyTaxInformation.LA4.Parcel_counts_vals
and key in on Somerville. If, after reviewing the Somerville statistics, you disagree with my conclusion, kindly post and we can have a discussion that folks might find interesting.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

Notice to Readers

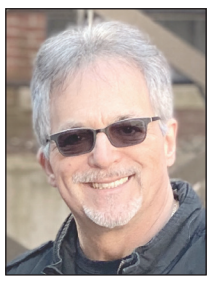
Political endorsements: 250 words or less will be printed as space allows. All endorsements submitted will appear online on the main page or under our Campaign Releases tab on our website.

Letters to the Editor: The Somerville Times encourages all residents to comment publicly on local issues. We will print letters sent to us that adhere to guidelines for taste, accuracy, fairness, and public interest. Letters are limited to 500 words. Letters will run only if there is an author's name and city/town or residence. Letters can be sent to news@thesomervilletimes.com.

Life in the Massachusetts VILLE The Spirit of America 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.*

Spare Ghosts



This story should probably have been printed around the Halloween season, but it's happening now, so here it is. Did you hear that Sacco's Bowl Haven bowling alley and pool hall on Day Street is supposedly haunted? One of the Boston Sunday papers ran an article on this story, but here it is first-hand.

The Sci-Fi channel's show *Ghost Hunters* was there investigating a few weeks ago. They spent a couple of nights in the bowling alley to get the ghost to show itself, or make its presence known, or whatever they call it. I don't know if they found evidence of any paranormal activity or not. The TAPS (The Atlantic Paranormal Society) van arrived – they came equipped with their ion generators, white noise generators, digital thermometers, infrared cameras, and thermal imaging cameras. They had everything but Dan Akroyd and Bill Murray. A friend of mine had spoken to the producers and recommended me to talk to them – as someone who lived in the area my whole life and would perhaps have some info on the matter. I talked to a producer and gave a few of my ideas on why the bowling alley may indeed be haunted.

I called the alley and spoke to the woman who has worked there for several years. Her name is Barbara, and I have known her from the square for over 35 years. She gave me the lowdown on the spooky goings-on at the bowling alley. It's also documented on Loui "UFO" Zoot!'s site on the web, under the heading, haunted places in Massachusetts. It seems strange noises sometimes come from the back of the alley in the evening, and scratching sounds have been heard too. The alleys would all of a sudden become freezing cold, and a girl mysteriously had greasy stains on her face that looked like they were made with fingers. All weird stuff, right? Weird enough for the Sci-Fi channel to send an entire crew to Somerville for a full investigation.

When I spoke to the producer, I gave her some theories I had come up with, and she invited me to be part of the show as the 'Somerville historian'. I put in many hours in Davis Square, so why not me?



I started doing some research and discovered that the famous pool hustler Rudolf Wanderone Jr., aka "Minnesota Fats," was beaten at Sacco's by Somerville resident and Hall of Fame pool player Larry "Boston Shorty" Johnson. You may remember Jackie Gleason portrayed Minnesota Fats in the Paul Newman movie *The Hustler*. Fats died in 1996, and Shorty passed away in 2001.

I had the pleasure of knowing Shorty from Redbones. I suggested that perhaps Fats was coming back looking for either a rematch or perhaps to have a snack. I also had other ideas that involved car trunks at the auto repair business next door. My own deceased sister could actually be the playful entity. She came across from the other side like gangbusters at a session held by famed medium Suzane Northrop. We know that she is a very strong and prominent spirit, just as she was in life. Christine had a lovable, mischievous personality, and I wouldn't be surprised if she is having a bit of fun in the afterlife. She also had some issues that involved the bowling alley. If she can hear me now, I would like her to go into my bank account and add a few zeros.

The TAPS van was parked in front of the Central Library as I walked in to be interviewed. I was asked questions while three cameras and about 15 crew members and producers monitored the session. My kids got a kick out of the whole thing, while I made a joke of everything, as usual.

I never watch those types of shows, but of course I will if I'm on. I don't have to watch TV to get frightened, because real life is scary enough. Right now I have to go to Shaw's to buy food for the mouths of children present. They get very scary when they are not fed.

Other places in Somerville appear to be haunted also, such as my own house! It seems every day I wake up at 3 a.m. to chilling, eerie voices. They moan things like: "If only you didn't do this..." and "you should have done that..." and "you really blew that chance, fat head." Those are the "would have, could have, should have" spirits that echo and taunt me in my mind. I am also haunted by the ghosts of mortgages past, which are some horribly ugly and scary demons.

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The Somerville Times

STATE ELECTION
CITY OF SOMERVILLE
OFFICE OF BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

Ordered: **In City Council**

The Board of Elections Commissioners is hereby directed to cause notice to be given in the manner prescribed by law that meetings of the qualified voters of this city will be held in the several polling places which have been designated by said Council for or within the voting precincts in which they respectively are qualified to vote, said polling places are located as follows, namely for;

WARD ONE
Precinct 1. A room in the MICHAEL E CAPUANO SCHOOL, 150 Glen Street;
Precinct 2. A room in the MICHAEL E CAPUANO SCHOOL, 150 Glen Street;
Precinct 3. A room in the EAST SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Glen Street Entrance directly across from 68 Glen Street;
Precinct 4. room in the EAST SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Glen Street Entrance directly across from 68 Glen Street;
Precinct 4A. room in the EAST SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Glen Street Entrance directly across from 68 Glen Street;

WARD TWO
Precinct 1. A room in the THE POLICE STATION, 220 Washington Street;
Precinct 1A. A room in the THE POLICE STATION, 220 Washington Street;
Precinct 2. A room in the ARGENZIANO SCHOOL at Lincoln Park, 290 Washington Street;
Precinct 2. A room in the ARGENZIANO SCHOOL at Lincoln Park, 290 Washington Street;
Precinct 4. A room in the ARGENZIANO SCHOOL at Lincoln Park, 290 Washington Street;

WARD THREE
Precinct 1. A room in PROPERZI MANOR; 13-25 Warren Avenue;
Precinct 2. A room in the CUMMINGS SCHOOL, 91 School Street;
Precinct 3. Gym at ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH, 179 Summer Street;
Precinct 4. Gym at ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH, 179 Summer Street;

WARD FOUR
Precinct 1. A room in the MYSTIC ACTIVITY CENTER, 530 Mystic Avenue;
Precinct 2. A room in the PEARL ST PARK BUILDING, 240 Pearl Street;
Precinct 2A. A room in the PEARL ST PARK BUILDING, 240 Pearl Street;
Precinct 3. A room in the BRAZILIAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 212 School Street;
Precinct 4. A room in the HEALEY SCHOOL, 5 Meacham Street;

WARD FIVE
Precinct 1. A room in the ARMORY, 191 Highland Avenue;
Precinct 2. A room in the ARMORY, 191 Highland Avenue;
Precinct 3. Gym in the JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL, Sartwell Avenue Entrance directly across from 19 Sartwell Avenue;
Precinct 4. Gym in the JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL, Sartwell Avenue Entrance directly across from 19 Sartwell Avenue;

WARD SIX
Precinct 1. A room in the GEORGE DILBOY POST, 351 Summer Street;
Precinct 2. A room in the SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH, 31 College Avenue;
Precinct 3. A room in the WEST BRANCH LIBRARY, 40 College Avenue;
Precinct 3A. A room in the WEST BRANCH LIBRARY, 40 College Avenue;
Precinct 4. A room in the GEORGE DILBOY POST, 351 Summer Street;

WARD SEVEN
Precinct 1. A room in the SENIOR CENTER, TAB BUILDING, 167 Holland Street;
Precinct 2. A room in the WEST SOMERVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL, Raymond Ave Entrance- Directly across from 17 Raymond Ave;
Precinct 3. A room in the VNA ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY, 405 Alewife Brook Parkway;
Precinct 4. AA room in the WEST SOMERVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL, Raymond Ave Entrance- Directly across from 17 Raymond Ave;

ON TUESDAY, November 3, 2026

AT SEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, when the polls shall open and there and then between that time and the closing of the polls, which shall be at EIGHT O'CLOCK in the evening, the said qualified voters will give their ballots for:
A Candidate for Senator in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Governor in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Lieutenant Governor in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Attorney General in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Secretary of State in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Treasurer in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Auditor in Congress for the Commonwealth,
A Candidate for Representative in Congress for the Seventh Congressional District,
A Candidate for Governor's Council for the Sixth Councillor District,
A Candidate for Senator in General Court for the Second Middlesex District,
A Candidate for Representative in General Court for the Twenty-Sixth Middlesex District, (To be voted in Ward One Precincts One Through Four and in Ward Two Precinct 1A)
A Candidate for Representative in General Court for the Twenty-Seventh Middlesex District, (To be voted for in Ward One Precinct 4A, Ward Two Precincts One though four, Ward Three Precincts one through four, Ward Four Precinct 2A, Ward Five Precincts One through Four and Ward Six Precincts One, Two, Three and Four)
A Candidate for Representative in General Court for the Thirty-Fourth Middlesex District, (Ward Four Precincts One, Two, Three and Four, Ward Six Precinct 3A and Ward Seven Precincts One through Four)
A Candidate for District Attorney Northern District
A Candidate for Register of Probate for the Middlesex District

QUESTION 1: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION
Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?
SUMMARY
This proposed law would make most records held by the Legislature and the Office of the Governor public records under the Massachusetts Public Records Law. This proposed law would exempt documents related to the development of public policy and communications between legislators and their constituents, if those communications are reasonably related to a constituent's request for assistance in obtaining government-provided be nefits or services or interacting with a government agency.
A YES VOTE would make most records held by the Legislature and the Office of the Governor public records under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.
A NO VOTE would make no change to the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

QUESTION 2: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION
Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?
SUMMARY
This proposed law would specify that employees of the Committee for Public Counsel Services ("CPCS") are permitted to engage in collective bargaining with their employer. It would also require CPCS, after executing a collective bargaining agreement, to request the appropriation necessary to fund such agreement from the Governor.
A YES VOTE would specify that Committee for Public Counsel Services employees may form a union to collectively bargain with their employer.
A NO VOTE would make no change to the law governing labor relations for Committee for Public Counsel Service employees.

QUESTION 3: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION
Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?
SUMMARY
This proposed law would eliminate political party primaries for state elections and instead establish a system where there would be a single, all-party primary in which all candidates, regardless of their party affiliation, would be listed on one ballot, and voters could vote for any candidate on the ballot. The two candidates receiving the most votes in the primary would advance to the general election ballot.
This proposed law would require candidates for governor and lieutenant governor to run and be listed jointly on the ballot in the primary.

(continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

This proposed law would provide political party status to any group whose candidates for any statewide office received at least 3% of the ballots cast in the state primary.
A YES VOTE would eliminate separate party primaries for state elections and require a single primary in which all candidates appear on one ballot, voters could vote for any candidate, and the top two candidates would advance to the general election.
A NO VOTE would make no change to the laws governing primary elections.

QUESTION 4: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would permit eligible individuals to register to vote or update their voter registration address on Election Day.
An individual who is eligible to vote could register to vote on Election Day by going to the polling place in the precinct where they live during voting hours and presenting proof of residency and signing a written oath. Proof of residency could be a valid photo identification, or documentation showing the individual's name and the address where the individual resides, such as a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, residential lease, wireless telephone statement, paycheck, current student fee statement or other document from a post-secondary school, or another government document or correspondence. The written oath would require the individual to certify that they are a citizen of the United States, are at least 18 years old, are not legally prohibited from voting, and have not and will not vote in the same election at another location. The oath would require the individual to acknowledge that providing false information is a felony punishable by not more than 5 years imprisonment or a fine of not more than $10,000, or both.
If an individual did not present proof of residency, they would be allowed to cast a provisional ballot, which would be counted only if the individual returned to provide the required information before the close of polls for a municipal election; within two days after a state primary; or within six days after a state election.
Individuals who register to vote on Election Day would be registered to vote in future elections as well as in the election taking place that day.
Individuals who are already registered to vote would not be able to change their political party affiliation on Election Day.
The proposed law would take effect on January 1, 2028.
A YES VOTE would permit eligible citizens to register to vote or to update their voter registration address at their polling place on Election Day.
A NO VOTE would make no change to the laws governing voter registration.

QUESTION 5: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would change the limit on how much revenue the state can collect in a given year. The proposal would limit state revenue in a given year to the net amount of state revenue from the year before, increased by a rate equal to the average growth of wages and salaries in Massachusetts over the most recent three years. If revenue collected by the state in a given year exceeds the limit, the excess amount would be refunded to taxpayers the following year. The proposed law would include all revenue from the surtax on incomes over $1 million when calculating the revenue limit and when determining whether state revenue exceeds the limit.
The provisions of the proposed law would all be effective as of July 1, 2027.
The proposed law states that, if any of its parts were declared invalid, the other parts would stay in effect.
A YES VOTE would change the limit on state revenue collection, tying it to prior year collections plus average wage and salary growth, and provide for a rebate of revenue exceeding that limit.
A NO VOTE would make no change in the law relative to state revenue collection.

QUESTION 6: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would establish a Nature for All Fund that, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, would receive 50% of state taxes collected from the sale and use of sporting goods, recreational vehicles, and golf courses for the first year of its operation. After July 1, 2028, the Nature for All Fund would begin receiving, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, 100% of state taxes collected on the sale and use of sporting goods, recreational vehicles, and golf courses. The sales tax revenue received by the Nature for All Fund would exclude sales tax revenue transferred to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority State and Local Contribution Fund and the School Modernization and Reconstruction Trust Fund. The proposed law would allow the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to spend the money in the Nature for All Fund for natural resource conservation.
The proposed law would allow public and private donations to the Nature for All Fund. The proposed law would prevent the state comptroller from transferring surplus funds in the Nature for All Fund at the end of the fiscal year. It would also allow state agencies, municipalities, public charities involved in natural resource conservation, tribal governments, and other regional public entities to receive money from the Nature for All Fund.
Natural resource conservation would include the conservation or restoration of land to protect drinking water, streams, rivers, lakes, coasts, farms, forests, connectivity between open spaces, and lands and natural resources of indigenous cultural significance. Natural resource conservation would also include the creation, improvement, and management of parks, trails, greenspaces or outdoor recreation access.
The proposed law would establish a 15-member Nature for All Board that consists of five state officials and ten members of the public appointed by the Governor. The proposed law would require the ten members of the public to include representatives of underserved communities and indigenous peoples and at least one person with expertise or experience in natural resource conservation. The proposed law would allow the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to spend money from the Nature for All Fund to hire staff to manage the fund. The proposed law would also require the Nature for All Board to establish rules about how the money in the Nature for All Fund should be spent, including rules regarding alignment with environmental justice principles, access to and restoration of lands and natural resources of indigenous cultural significance, promotion of affordable housing development, and other matters regarding spending and bond issuance.
The proposed law would require the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to submit an annual report to various state committees regarding the funds spent to buy or improve land in cities and towns containing environmental justice populations.
The proposed law would take effect on July 1, 2027.
A YES VOTE would create a fund that could be utilized for natural resource conservation that would receive some state taxes collected on the sale and use of sporting goods and recreational vehicles, and the use of golf courses.
A NO VOTE would not create this natural resource conservation fund or change how sales and use taxes are spent.

QUESTION 7: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would allow single-family homes to be built in a residentially zoned area as long as the land on which it is to be constructed is at least 5,000 square feet, has at least 50 feet of land bordering the street, road, or public way that it faces, and has access to public sewer and water services.
The proposed law would allow cities and towns to reasonably regulate certain aspects of those single-family homes, including their height, distance from neighboring buildings, open space, parking requirements, and whether they can be rented out on a short-term basis. The proposed law would also allow the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities to issue guidance or regulations to administer the proposed law.
A YES VOTE would allow single-family homes to be built on lots of 5,000 square feet or more in residential areas, subject to reasonable local regulation of certain aspects of those homes.
A NO VOTE would make no change to the law relative to building single-family homes.

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

QUESTION 8: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2026?

SUMMARY

The proposed law would change the type and amount of marijuana that may legally be possessed in Massachusetts by repealing the laws that legalize, regulate, and tax the retail sale of adult recreational use marijuana in Massachusetts. The proposed law would also permit persons 21 years of age and older to possess 1 ounce or less of marijuana including no more than 5 grams in the form of concentrate, and to gift or transfer to another person 21 years of age and older 1 ounce or less of marijuana including no more than 5 grams in the form of concentrate. The proposed law would also impose a civil penalty of $100 and forfeiture of the marijuana for the possession of marijuana between the weight of 1 and 2 ounces. For persons 21 years of age and younger, the proposed law would make the possession of 2 ounces or less of marijuana a civil infraction subject to a $100 fine, forfeiture of the marijuana, completion of a drug awareness program and community service, and notification to their parents or legal guardian of the offense and penalties.

The proposed law would allow currently licensed adult recreational marijuana businesses to apply on an expedited basis to become a licensed medical marijuana dispensary and to sell their remaining inventory of adult recreational marijuana to medical marijuana dispensaries. The proposed law would retain the Cannabis Control Commission but modify its authority so it would regulate only the medical marijuana market.

The proposed law states that, if any of its parts were declared invalid, the other parts would stay in effect.

The proposed law would take effect on January 1, 2028.

A YES VOTE would prohibit the legalization, regulation, and taxation of the retail sale of adult recreational use marijuana, and change the penalties for possession of marijuana.

A NO VOTE would make no change to the law relative to marijuana.

QUESTION 9: REFERENDUM ON AN EXISTING LAW

Do you approve of a law summarized below, which was approved by the House of Representatives on July 18, 2024 by a vote of 124 to 33, and approved by the Senate on July 18, 2024 by a vote of 35 to 5?

SUMMARY

This law makes a number of changes to Massachusetts laws governing firearms.

The law adds school administrators and licensed healthcare providers as parties permitted to ask a court to issue an Extreme Risk Protection Order – requiring an individual to surrender or relinquish their firearm licenses, permits, and firearms - if an individual is a present danger to self or others. The law also provides that, when issuing an Harassment Prevention Order, a court may also order the surrender of firearms licenses, permits, and firearms.

The law imposes penalties for possessing, creating, and transferring untraceable "ghost gun" firearms and requires all firearms except antiques and relics, including unfinished frames and receivers that can be readily made into a finished product, to have serial numbers. The law includes privately-made guns like 3D-printed guns within the provisions governing untraceable "ghost gun" firearms.

The law changes firearms licensing requirements to: (1) allow local licensing authorities to request prior license and permit information from the state, as well as access petitions for involuntary mental health commitments denied by a court in addition to prior involuntary commitments, as a part of their review of applications for licenses to carry firearms, firearm ID cards, and licenses to sell firearms; (2) require an individual to be 21 years of age to own semiautomatic rifles or shotguns; (3) add the possibility of incarceration of up to six months for a second offense of failing to report a firearm loss or theft; and (4) enable 12-15 year olds to apply for a self-defense spray permit with parental permission, and 15 to 18 year olds to apply independently.

The law allows local firearm licensing authorities to transfer the responsibility to inspect firearm dealers to the State Police. The law requires local licensing authorities to attend statewide training regarding those inspections. It requires dealers to confiscate expired or suspended licenses and report them to the state and to local licensing authorities.

The law changes the definition of "machine gun" to include bump stocks, trigger cranks, Glock switches and auto sears among the devices whose possession and use are subject to penalties. It expands the definition of "silencer" to include the parts used to construct a silencer.

The law clarifies how to determine whether a firearm is an assault-style weapon and the circumstances under which a person may continue to possess assault-style weapons and large capacity feeding devices they already own.

The law requires the state Firearm Control Advisory Board and the state Secretary of Public Safety and Security to review and update the rosters of prohibited assault-style firearms, approved firearms, and approved firearms sold for target shooting.

The law clarifies requirements relating to the carry and transport of firearms in motor vehicles and ATVs. It prohibits the carrying of firearms in government buildings, polling locations, and schools, with certain exceptions.

The law expands data compilation and reporting requirements to and from the state, and creates a publicly-accessible dashboard of anonymized aggregate firearm data, along with a commission to study that data.

The law requires the State Police to provide training and a test for new applicants for licenses to carry or Firearm ID cards.

The law establishes two special legislative commissions – one to examine funding for violence prevention services, and one to study emerging firearms technology.

The law criminalizes discharging a firearm and striking a building in use.

A YES VOTE would keep in place the law, which increases the regulation of firearms, including ghost guns, machine guns, and assault-style weapons.

A NO VOTE would repeal this law.

Nicholas P. Salerno, Chairman
Michael Avery
Austin Brower
Kelly J. Cooper
BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

The City of Somerville does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, national origin, sexual preference, disability, or any other protected category in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services or activities. Auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, reasonable modifications in policies and procedures will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

Granoff Music Center Colloquium: The 'Making Of' the Perry and Marty Granoff Music Center

The Tufts University Department of Music presents "Granoff Music Center Colloquium: The "Making Of" the Perry and Marty Granoff Music Center" in the Varis Lecture Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Monday, October 26, 2026 at 12 pm. A Behind-the-Scenes Special Colloquium starring Profs. Jane Bernstein, David Locke, Janet Schmalfeldt, Jeffrey Summit, along with Jamshed Bharucha, former Provost at Tufts and founding vice chancellor emeritus of Sai University, Chenna and Larry Bacow, former President of Tufts and Harvard Universities. This will be coordinated with a Music Library Exhibit (physical and online) on the building design and construction. Free admission; no tickets required.

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus. For more information, please visit go.tufts.edu/musicevents or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Early voting and voting by mail is happening now!

Our View Of The Times

For some of us, it feels like forever since we've shaken off the cares and concerns that seem to be bearing down so heavily as we observe the divisions and discord that have been so prevalent in our society over the past few years.

Another state election is just around the corner. The balance of power in Washington will be in play, and more than ever it seems as though so much will be at stake in this particular election cycle, no matter which side we align with.

So, in just a couple of weeks we will be facing the results of a very consequential election. Many feel that a lot of important aspects of our lives will be affected.

But first comes an old friendly tradition: the celebration of Halloween. We are treated to the sights and sounds of kids dressing up and role-playing, going door-to-door to gather their sweets, and just plain having fun in the doing.

Grown-ups have their celebration traditions too. Maybe it would be smart to cut loose a little bit this time around – safely, of course. Let out a little steam and spend at least one day when we don't quite take the world as seriously as we normally do. Somehow it seems like this just might be what we all need.

So, take this advice and join in with the kids a little. Wear a silly costume. Cut loose at a festive party. Be a kid again yourself, if only for this one day.

In the meantime, though, don't forget to make sure that you're properly registered to vote, and take advantage of early and mail-in voting now. Any questions? Go to https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/elections for all the info.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

will take place on **Wednesday, October 21**, from 6:30 – 7:20 p.m., at **Veterans Rink**, 570 Somerville Ave. Girls of all ages, including those with experience and those who have never played are welcome, you just need to know how to skate. Equipment will be available to borrow. Families can register their girls here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7Z-PRBKyYbe1eAm3XSbGbXwBsM-P72ubB5mwZY2BL_tC0jaVA/viewform. There will be three professional women ice hockey players helping coach the event, along with Somerville Youth Hockey Association coaches and helpers. Pizza and autographs afterwards.

****

Happy birthday this week to several locals: We wish **Sal Mingace** a very happy belated birthday. We hope he enjoyed his day. Happy birthday to a former alderman and great guy, **Dennis Sullivan**. We wish him a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to poet and writer **Timothy Gager**. We hope he has a great day. Happy birthday to another of our own **Harry Kane**. We appreciate all he does for the paper, and we wish him a great day. Happy birthday to **Vicki Potaris**. We wish her a great day. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **George Lally, Charlene Murphy, Jim Douthart, Stephen Bertoncini, David LaCroix, Harry Levasseur, Kip Lyall**, and **Patricia Capadanno**, a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

****

Want to share **feedback with the City Council?** Public comments are accepted on a rolling basis via email at publiccomments@somervillema.gov. Find information about the Council or see the full schedule of Council meetings at somervillema.gov/council. Stream meetings at youtube.com/somervillecityTV. The next City Council meeting of the whole is on **Thursday, October 22.**

****

Somerville High School Track Parents & Alumni Club, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, is running its **5th Annual Somerville Monster Dash 5K** (3.1 miles) and youth runs (200 meters and 800 meters) on **Sunday, October 25**, at **Riverfront Park/Assembly Row** starting at 10:30 a.m. All proceeds benefit the **Somerville High Athletics programs**, including **SHS Cross-Country and Track** and **Field Teams for Girls and Boys**. Registration information can be found by going online to https://www.somervillemonsterdash.org/. *Continued on page 21*

The Somerville Times

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's Olio #1043

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. What does the word "Halloween" derive from?

2. "Ghostface" is a killer from which movie franchise?

3. In golf, what name is given to the No. 3 wood?

4. Ringo Starr narrates which children's TV series?

5. What 1925 horror film became a Broadway musical?

6. What apocalyptic 1978 zombie movie takes place in a mall?

7. The stock market crash that began the Great Depression happened in October of which year?

8. Which championship, played every October, gave baseball stars the nickname "Mr. October"?

9. In October 1957, the Soviet Union launched what into orbit?

10. Which team won the first-ever World Series?

11. Which World Series was interrupted by an earthquake?

12. Which U.S. state named apple cider its official drink?

Answers on page 14

Soulution to last week's crossword puzzle:

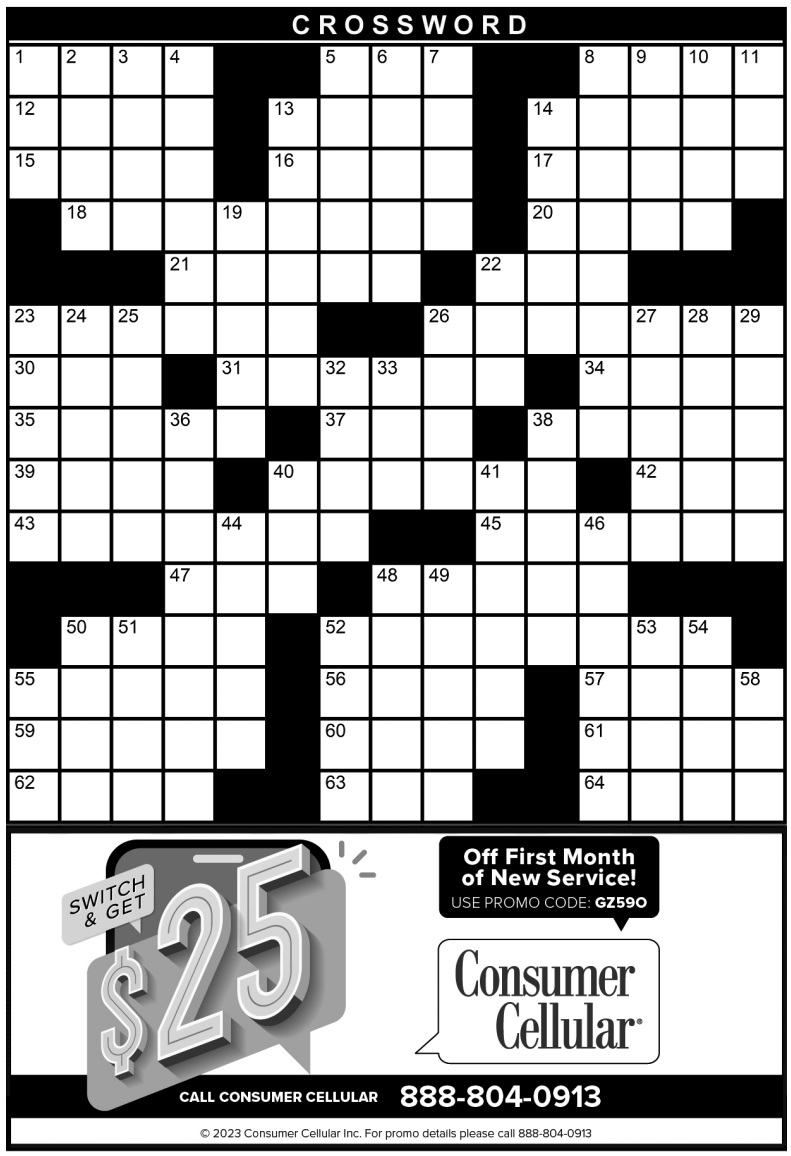
S	C	U	B	A	■	A	S	H	■	■	R	O	C	K
P	O	P	U	P	■	R	A	Y	■	B	O	U	L	E
A	C	O	R	N	■	T	E	E	■	A	S	S	A	Y
Y	A	N	K	E	E	S	■	N	I	N	E	T	Y	■
■	■	■	A	I	D	■	T	A	R	T	■	■	■	■
B	A	N	■	C	E	C	A	■	K	A	R	A	T	E
O	D	O	R	■	M	O	B	E	■	M	E	T	A	L
N	I	P	A	■	A	B	U	T	S	■	T	O	P	I
D	E	A	N	S	■	B	L	U	E	■	E	N	I	D
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C	I	V	I	L	■	U	R	N	■	I	N	U	R	E
A	N	E	L	E	■	C	O	O	■	E	N	T	E	R
L	E	N	S	■	■	E	B	B	■	D	E	S	K	S

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. You are 13.8 percent more likely to die on your birthday.
2. Mosquitoes are attracted to people who just ate bananas.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

HALLOWEEN



© StatePoint Media

ACROSS

1. Count Dracula's creator
5. Zeppelin lead-in
8. Dry riverbed
12. Stew bean
13. Workbench holding device
14. Thing of the past
15. Just right (3 words)
16. "If all ____ fails..."
17. Thin mountain ridge
18. Michael Jackson's Halloween party song
20. Exclamation, with Louise
21. Like days long gone
22. Lion's "hand"
23. Large seabird
26. YHWH
30. 50 states, acr.
31. Gone (2 words)
34. Drawn in the sand?
35. Long stories
37. Over there
38. Subsequently
39. Doris Day's "Que ____"
40. One million ohms
42. Vatican vestment
43. Causes of PTSD
45. Theater passages
47. Local Area Network
48. Like autumn air
50. '60s British teenagers
52. Jason's last name
55. Subway in Paris
56. Pinnacle
57. First Nation nation
59. Cheerleader's prop
60. ____'s "swelter'd venom" in #36 Down
61. Capital of Ukraine
62. Any day now
63. Francisco lead-in
64. Dried-up

DOWN

1. Club alternative
2. '80s band "Quiet ____"
3. Wet nurse
4. Maid, after getting married
5. City in Northern France
6. Ruhr's industrial center
7. Hunted ruminant
8. Full moon shapeshifter
9. Sheltered, nautically speaking
10. Flighty one
11. Skater's turf
13. South African grasslands
14. Indian prince
19. Intestinal obstruction
22. Liveliness in one's step
23. Ghost at a Halloween party
24. According to
25. Nigerian money
26. Jupiter's sister and wife
27. Essential to life
28. Anoint
29. Witches' hemlock and belladonna, e.g.
32. Pennywise's are mismatched
33. "Wool of bat, and tongue of ____"
36. "....toil and trouble; fire burn and ____ bubble"
38. Anabaptist group
40. Gingerbread shape
41. Red-____, like Winifred Sanderson of "Hocus Pocus"
44. Wide-mouth jar inventor
46. Small spots
48. "Cuckoo for ____ Puffs"
49. Kieran Culkin as ____ Roy
50. Not nice
51. Von Bismarck or Hahn, e.g.
52. Giant kettles
53. Great Lake
54. Tiresias in "Oedipus Rex," e.g.
55. Business degree, acr.
58. All Hallow's ____

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Is my federal income tax return (Form 1040) used only to calculate federal income taxes?

A: No. Your federal tax return can also calculate other taxes, including Social Security and Medicare taxes for people who are self-employed.

With more people earning money through gig work, freelancing, and small businesses, understanding self-employment tax is increasingly important.

* **Self-employment tax is separate from federal income tax.** It covers Social Security and Medicare taxes on earnings from self-employment. For many self-employed taxpayers, this tax can actually represent the largest portion of their total federal tax liability!

* **Self-employed people pay both portions.** When you work for an employer, you and your employer each pay a share of Social Security and Medicare taxes. When you work for yourself, you're responsible for both shares.

* **The amount can be substantial.** For many self-employed taxpayers, self-employment tax amounts to approximately 14% of net business earnings, in addition to any regular federal income tax owed.

Bottom Line: Your federal tax return isn't just about income tax. If you're self-employed, Social Security and Medicare taxes may actually account for most of your federal tax liability – even when you owe relatively little regular federal income tax. Understanding this obligation can help you avoid an unexpected tax bill.

Any questions? I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area. Reach out at vincent@hickscpasolutions.com or (859) 553-0788.



Disclaimer: This column provides general financial information and should not be considered legal, investment, or tax advice. Individual situations vary. Always consult a qualified professional for personalized guidance.

Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO

Chard Tart

What's the difference between a frittata, a quiche, and a tart? A frittata and quiche are basically the same, both are savory dishes with the only difference being the quiche has a crust. But now we add a tart into the mix.

A tart is similar to a quiche except for, in some instances, tarts are sweet, like a fruit tart. The crust itself may also be sweet, sometimes using a cookie dough as a crust. But tarts can also be savory, like this one. Plus, the presentation isn't too shabby either.

9" tart pan, removable bottom preferred
1 pie crust
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 bunch swiss chard/rainbow chard - reserve the stems
4 extra large eggs or 5 large eggs
1/3 cup half and half
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/2 cup shredded cheese, cheddar or Swiss
3 oz. pre-cooked bacon, small chop/ optional
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus a pinch
1/3 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°. Prepare the crust and place it in the tart pan. Make sure it covers the bottom of the tart pan all the way to the edge and up the sides. Using the back of a knife, cut the excess dough off for a smooth top.

You can either make your favorite crust from scratch, or use a store-bought crust. Place in the refrigerator until you're ready to bake it. Clean and chop up the chard leaves and reserve the stems. *See note below.

Add and heat the olive oil to the sauté pan, add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the chopped chard leaves add a pinch of salt, cook down for about 7 minutes. Once cooked set aside to cool.

Add the eggs to a medium bowl, scramble them, then add the half and half, salt, pepper, nutmeg, bacon if using, and cheese. Blend well. Add the cooled chard leaves and incorporate into the egg mixture.



Pour mixture into the tart pan and evenly disburse the filling across the tart pan. Place into the middle of the oven. If you're worried about spilling the filling, add a piece of foil to the rack below. I don't place the pan on a sheet pan since I didn't blind bake the crust first. This will allow the crust to crisp up.

Bake at 400° for 20 minutes, then lower the oven to 375° for additional 20 minutes or until the custard is firm in the middle of the tart.

*The stems can be pickled and used to garnish a salad. I cut them into 1" pieces and used my favorite pickling spice and place them into a jar and refrigerate until use.

Enjoy for breakfast or lunch. Serves 6 people.

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

The Somerville Times

LEGAL NOTICES

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

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville City Council's **Land Use Committee** and the **Somerville Planning Board** will hold a joint public hearing on **Thursday, November 5th, 2026**, at 6:30 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

REGISTER ONLINE
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OZ4FTDNZSeCPriLCH12_Vw

You have two ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. Enter the link exactly as it appears into your internet browser. You will then be asked to register for the meeting.
2. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 4:00 PM on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council and Planning Board for inclusion with the Hearing testimony.

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

- Boynton Yards LandCo LLC and Windsor Place Owner LLC requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend section 8.4.12.e.ii.
- 36 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 12.1.2 regarding affordable dwelling units.
- 36 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 15.7.2.d Zoning Board of Appeals Board Rules.
- 36 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage.
- 36 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage.

Zoning amendments may be viewed online by searching for the Somerville City Council's online meeting calendar for the meeting or request information.

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. The Chair(s) may opt to extend the period for written comments, in which case additional comments will be accepted until the date indicated. This information can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

10/21/26 The Somerville Times

CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP# 27-24

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

Somerville Short Term Rental Database and Reporting

The RFP 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: **Wednesday, October 21st, 2026**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **3:00 pm, Wednesday, November 4th, 2026**.

The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any minor informality in the RFP process, and accept the proposal(s) deemed to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville.

Please email cmoriarty@somervillema.gov for more information.

Cameron Moriarty
Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3403

10/21/26 The Somerville Times

City of Somerville
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, November 4, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here:
Agendas, Minutes, & More.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4_RF8otESIiC3djdb3NR2Q

TO CALL IN

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

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

36-38 Magnus Avenue	Emily Sandler seeks relief from SZO 3.1.11.c to modify an existing building that does not comply with the minimum facade build out, which requires a Hardship Variance.
34R Clyde Street	Adam Dash Esq, on behalf of Nathan Aparo, seeks relief from SZO 3.1.18.c.iiii regarding the frontage area parking in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.
34R Clyde Street	Adam Dash Esq, on behalf of Nathan Aparo, seeks relief from SZO 3.1.18.c.iv regarding the maximum driveway width for a proposed drive way in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.
34R Clyde Street	Adam Dash Esq, on behalf of Nathan Aparo, seeks relief from SZO 3.1.7.b. regarding the minimum sum of side setbacks in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.
34R Clyde Street	Adam Dash Esq, on behalf of Nathan Aparo, seeks relief from SZO 3.1.7.a. regarding the minimum lot width in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at
https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions.
Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov.
Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.

10/21/26 The Somerville Times

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BY 12 PM MONDAY
PH: 857-488-5138

Mbah birthday fundraiser





Friends, family, and colleagues gathered Thursday, October 15, at the Ford Tavern in Medford to celebrate City Councilor Will Mbah's birthday fundraiser. Guest speakers included Page Buldini and State Representatives Mike Connolly and Erika Uyterhoeven.

Preschool and Kindergarten Development Screenings: October 28

SPS conducts free developmental screenings for children ages 3-5 who are not enrolled in Somerville Public Schools. These screenings are designed to identify children who may need evaluation for special education services.

Preschool screenings are on October 28, January 13, March 3 from 8:30 to 11:30am. Kindergarten screening is on October 28 from 8:30 to 11:30am.

Visit the Special Education webpage to learn more or fill out the screening intake form to set up an appointment at Tinyurl.com/Ecscreenings.

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

Dead end at Mossland Street and Elm Street

CONT. FROM PG 1

of Elm Street with pavement markings and flex posts connecting to protected bike lanes on Elm Street and Somerville Avenue.

Access for emergency vehicles will be retained at both ends of the street.

Related traffic signal changes

Nearby traffic signal equipment and timing will be upgraded to mitigate potential congestion due to changes in local traffic patterns.

Temporary timing changes will be put in place this week. Permanent signal equipment up-grades and timing changes, based on extensive traffic analysis, are expected to be in place by November.

More about the project

This work is being undertaken as part of the Elm-Beacon Connector Safety Improvements pro-ject, which includes Elm Street between Russell St. and Somerville Ave., Somerville Ave. be-tween the City Line and Elm St., and Beacon St. between Somerville Ave. and Oxford St. in ad-dition to Mossland St.

The project is designed to increase safety for everyone using these streets.

In addition to the community feedback, the design is informed by Somerville's commitment to Vision Zero (a commitment to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injury) and the city's Bicycle Network Plan (a roadmap for expanding bicycle safety and features across the city).

To learn more about the project, including details on the final design, feedback from the com-munity process, and updates on installation please visit somervillema.gov/elmbeacon.

Groundwork Somerville is on a mission for a greener city

CONT. FROM PG 1

Somerville. Their mission: "To build the next generation of environmental leaders to create a healthier, equitable, and climate-resilient Somerville."

Kenzie Ballard leads Groundwork's climate resilience programs. She helps Somerville residents understand how climate change affects neighborhoods in Somerville disproportionately and guides them to decide how to address the climate effects they're experiencing.

"That can look like planting new trees, building new community gardens, [and] taking local climate data," Ballard said.

Like many, after college, Ballard went on a quest to dig up her professional calling.

"I remember I hadn't sat on dirt … it was always a picnic blanket … until my early twenties," Ballard said.

After working on a farm in Louisville, Kentucky, she grew a connection to the land and grew as a person. She found her way to Somerville, Massachusetts.

Em Plotkin leads the organization's youth program, which empowers local teenagers to become the city's next generation of climate and social justice leaders, mainly through paid employment opportunities for teens and urban farming.

"I grew up in the dirt," Plotkin said.

Before joining Groundwork, Plotkin grew up camping and going on canoe trips. Eventually, they organized youth wilderness trips. Many of the families Plotkin served could afford "fancy" summer camps. As a result, Plotkin shifted focus to helping marginalized youth have access to green spaces and urban agricultural initiatives. This led them to Groundwork Somerville.

Leah McCarthy manages the nonprofit's urban agricultural program, cultivating hands-on farming opportunities at South Street Farm. As of 2011, South Street Farm is Somerville's first urban farm. It provides the community with about 2,000 pounds of free organic produce, according to McCarthy.

Prior to her work in Somerville, she had volunteered on farms back in Montreal. Upon arriving in Boston, McCarthy continued volunteering with different urban agricultural programs and other farms.

"I loved working with my hands," McCarthy recalled. "I think I realized that I absolutely had to do that, and I loved being outside and I loved growing food." When she applied to Groundwork Somerville, she remembered seeing the words, "Our food holds our story," on one of their murals, a statement she said spoke volumes.

One highlight of the organization that McCarthy is most proud of is the community garden program. The team worked with community members, gathering some changes they hoped to see in Somerville. The community wanted more space to grow its own food. Upon request, Groundwork established 13 new community garden plots at their South Street Community Garden in 2025.

Ballard is proud of their urban forestry program. This year, youth participants planted 32 trees, 18 of them at the Mystic Apartments. Besides trees, they planted garden beds that provide their families with produce.

Groundwork Somerville also hosts many community events, like their Harvest Festival, an annual, free community celebration. This year's festival featured eco-printing, herbal balms, and fermentation workshops. Surrounded by live music, the public also participated in mural painting.

"We'll be planting at least 25 trees around East Somerville in late October," said Plotkin.

In the future, they plan on planting more produce, more plants, and more trees. They're on a mission for a greener Somerville.



A community member's garden bed.



Jade Faria sings at Groundwork Somerville's Harvest Festival.

The Somerville Times

They did the Monster Mash

The community enjoyed beautiful weather on Sunday, October 18, as the Somerville Arts & Culture Division's annual Monster Mash celebration took over portions of Somerville Avenue. The festivities featured a costume parade, pumpkin carving, face painting, local food vendors, performances by the BosWitches, Proyecto Tempo, Los Mambiseros, and a lineup curated by Mass Ave Music.





































Photos by Bobbie Toner







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From page 8

Ms. Cam's Olio Answers

1. All Hallows' Eve was October 29)
2. *Scream*
3. Spoon
4. *Thomas the Tank Engine*
5. *The Phantom of the Opera*
6. *Dawn of the Dead*
7. 1929 (Black Tuesday
8. The World Series
9. Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite
10. Boston Americans (later the Red Sox)
11. 1989 World Series (San Francisco vs. Oakland)
12. New Hampshire

Showa Boston Institute combines conversation and culture over wood-fired pizza

By Eliot Josti

On Friday, October 16, Somerville welcomed a group of curious students eager to experience American culture all the way from Japan. The Showa Boston Institute, located in Jamaica Plain, provides an immersive experience dedicated to community conversation and cultural exchange.

One of the most exciting events of the semester centered around Somerville's own American Flatbread and Sacco's Bowl Haven. As part of the students' Food Culture and Production course, American Flatbread offers locally sourced ingredients, community spirit, and a constant flow of customers each way, making it not only a fun experience, but an educational one.

"At American Flatbread and Sacco's Bowl Haven, we really believe in being part of the fabric of our community. We love getting involved with local schools, students, and nonprofits, whether that's teaching something new, sharing what goes into running a restaurant, or simply creating an experience they might not otherwise have. We've been partnering with Showa Boston for a few years now, and it has always been a great experience," said Melissa Merrill, the General Manager and Managing Partner of American Flatbread.

Cyrus Konstantinakos, Japanese Language Program Manager and Instructor at the Showa Boston Institute, shared that students arrived with a few questions for the owners and chefs at American Flatbread. As they bowled, the groups interacted closely while experiencing rounds of Candlepin.

"I hope they feel confident and flexible in speaking with close interpersonal communications. This successful first experience will give them more confidence to engage and achieve positive conversations with foreigners moving forward," said Konstantinakos.

After bowling, the students had the opportunity to learn and make pizzas with Mike the chef.

"The other wonderful aspect was how hands-on it was. Students actually went into the kitchen and learned from the chefs how to make their own pizzas. It was surreal for them, stepping into a scene they would normally only photograph during study abroad," said Konstantinakos.

On top of it all, Somerville's American Flatbread provided the entire experience free of charge.

"Giving back has always been a big part of who we are at Flatbread. Between our weekly Benefit Bakes, our 7 Acts of Kindness, and other community initiatives, we're always looking for ways to get involved. Our staff genuinely enjoys being part of these experiences, too. Donating our time and resources is just another way for us to support our community and share something we love doing," said Merrill.

After their stop at American Flatbread and Sacco's, the class will experience larger food corporations such as Sodexo and The Cheesecake Factory as a way to understand food production in the United States. Classes and experiences that Showa provides stick out in today's age of education.

"Our market in ESL is really shrinking, as well as world language education in general. The field has to wake up and realize that this is where we differentiate ourselves from what AI can do. You can not replicate what the students experienced. The hands-on and celebration of community was really mind-blowing," said Konstantinakos.

After the experience, students reflected on their time at Somerville.

"We can go to an American food shop anytime, anywhere. But we can learn by experiencing the process and what goes on behind, and communicating with the staff," said Akari Kon, a student at Showa Boston.

"Food is one of those things that brings people together, no matter where you're from. There's something really special about getting your hands in the dough, making something from scratch, and then sitting down to enjoy it together," said Merrill.



Last week, Japanese students got a taste of American culture – and pizza – at Flatbread and Sacco's Bowl Haven. *— Photos courtesy of Cyrus Konstantinakos*





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The Somerville Times

A place in Somerville for Lizzie Maud Carvill

By Annamarie Hoey

On October 26, 1915, Somerville's campaign for women's suffrage had thousands of signatures behind it. The Somerville Equal Suffrage League, led by Dr. Lizzie Maud Carvill, reported that between 4,000 and 5,000 voters had signed a statement supporting women's right to vote. Its members were going house to house, asking their neighbors to help change who could participate in democracy.

This October 26 marks 111 years since that campaign report, recounted by historian David Dismore in Ms. magazine. It is an opportunity to remember the Somerville woman who helped lead that work, and to consider how Somerville will preserve her name.

I began researching Carvill in middle school, searching newspaper archives and assembling a presentation for Somerville's Memorialization Committee. The clippings revealed a woman whose work reached across medicine, education, and civic life.

Carvill grew up on Bow Street in Union Square. She earned her medical degree from Tufts in 1905 and became the first woman on the professional staff of the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary in 1914. She specialized in ophthalmology, including the treatment of children's eye diseases.

An earlier chapter of her career offers another glimpse of her outlook. She taught physical training at Tufts; a 1909 course description listing her as an instructor included "fearlessness" among its goals.

Her public life gave that word particular resonance.

The suffrage campaign required persistence. Despite its organizing, the proposed Massachusetts suffrage amendment lost at the polls on November 2, 1915. The Somerville Journal reported that it had lost in every precinct in the city.

The Nineteenth Amendment was ratified in 1920, prohibiting the denial of voting rights based on sex, although racial discrimination continued to keep many women from the polls.

Carvill's civic work continued. A 1922 newspaper notice announced a League of Women Voters meeting at her home at 28 Highland Avenue. Later notices recorded discussions of child labor and public health. Her home was a place where neighbors gathered to consider the responsibilities of citizenship.



Maud Carvill examining patients in 1923 at her clinic.

— Photo courtesy of Massachusetts eye and ear social portals

Today, there is a path toward recognizing that legacy publicly. In a recent telephone conversation, Jesse Moos, the mayor's public liaison who has staffed the Memorialization Committee since 2020, confirmed to me that Carvill had been approved for memorialization. He said that only the selection of a site remains.

Choosing that site would give residents a lasting way to encounter her story. A name on a public place can prompt a child to ask who someone was. It can lead a neighbor to discover that the struggle for voting rights once unfolded along familiar streets.

As Somerville considers where to honor Carvill, I hope this anniversary brings her work renewed attention. She helped women claim a place in public life. Giving her name a place in the city would help future generations understand how that change was made.

Somerville to release updated plans for Broadway Magoun Reconstruction Project

The City of Somerville is planning to redesign Broadway between Winchester Street and Central Street to increase safety, improve accessibility, reduce congestion, and create a more comfortable street for everyone. As part of this process, the Magoun Square intersection (Broadway at Medford Street) will be reimagined, sidewalks will be rebuilt, and the roadway will be fully repaved.

After a year of engaging community members, analyzing traffic patterns, and refining concept designs, the city is sharing updated plans with the community for feedback at an upcoming open house.

- **When:** Wednesday, November 4, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
- **Where:** Healey School, 5 Meacham Street

At the open house, community members can explore different stations describing the design and development of the project. Attendees will be able to talk directly with project staff about their questions and comments. Food and beverage will be provided.

Following the open house, there will be other opportunities for people to participate in including an online survey, street outreach pop-up events, a virtual office hour, and more.

After gathering more feedback on the design through the fall, the project team will work over the winter to finalize the design and prepare for construction between 2027 and 2028.

Visit somervillema.gov/broadwaymagoun for more information about the open house and project details.

More About the Design Process

This past spring, neighbors, community group representatives, small business owners, and workers shared their input on a conceptual design that included raised crosswalks, new crosswalks, protected bike lanes, and improved bus stops.

The city also presented three options for the Magoun Square Intersection (Broadway at Medford Street) focused on improving safety, providing more comfortable options for all people traveling through the intersection, and reducing congestion. At the upcoming open house, the city will share the preferred option for the intersection.



In addition to the community feedback, the design is informed by Somerville's commitment to Vision Zero (a commitment to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries) and the city's Bicycle Network Plan (a roadmap for expanding bicycle safety and features across the city).

To learn more about the project, including details on the final design and feedback from the community process, please visit somervillema.gov/broadwaymagoun.

Community curator exhibition at the Somerville Museum

By Keith Foster

Cultural leader and community builder Ivan Abarca-Torres collaborated with 15 local artists who have chosen Somerville as their home to showcase their work in a curated tour, *Common Ground: Photography, Place and Community*, at the Somerville Museum, now through December 5.

The works, some on view for the first time, range from documentary to conceptual and are united by the perspective of artists living and working within this evolving urban environment. The exhibition explores how artists navigate and contribute to Somerville's shifting identity, raising defining questions about place, community, and creative practice.

"I have been following the artistic scene in Somerville and in the region since I came here almost 15 years ago. At each Somerville Open Studios, I am thrilled to see how much the arts thrive in this city. Within the arts community, there's a real jewel: a concentration of amazing photographers here in Somerville, many of whom are internationally recognized. I have been excited about and impressed by their distinct approaches to the medium," says Abarca-Torres on what inspired him to do this exhibit.

"I also find it meaningful that so many are professors at colleges and universities in the area, influencing new generations of image-makers," Abarca-Torres adds. "I also want to believe that in one way or another we are all influenced by the geography and environment where we live or grow up, and with this exhibition, I wanted to explore that idea and see if it is or is not reflected in the work of the photographers. The idea was not to show their work about Somerville (many of them do not feature this city in their work) but to show the diverse approaches and perspectives that photographers from Somerville have about the medium itself and about the world."

About how the artists were chosen, Abarca-Torres said, "Over the years, I have gotten to know the work of many of the photographers, and in conversation with some of them and others in the community, I received recommendations of other photographers to connect with. As for deciding which photographers to choose, I had to limit myself to fifteen and sought a balance of types of work to show a range".

On what Somerville means to Abarca-Torres, "I love the fact that Somerville has many strong and supportive communities — creative, social, environmental, and immigrant communities (to name just a few) — in which people of all backgrounds connect and support each other. I have a deep commitment to this community, and it is reflected in the fact that I am very involved with multiple local cultural organizations and community groups."

Go to https://www.somervillemuseum.org/ for more information on the exhibit.



Ivan Abarca-Torres (center), curator of the "Common Ground: Photography, Place and Community" exhibition. *— Photo courtesy of the Somerville Museum*



Henry Cataldo's "Crossed Lines and Blue Note" from the project "Cars/Leaves/Reflections – Conversations with the Impressionists." *— Photo by Keith Foster*



A curated fridge by Yorgos Efthymiadis, celebrating fine art photography and connecting photographers with established and influential curators, galleries, publishers, and artists from around the world through free quarterly curated calls. *— Photo by Keith Foster*

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The Somerville Times

Vote early in the State Election at City Hall

Make your voice heard, on your schedule. Early voting for the Massachusetts State Election began last weekend, from Saturday, October 17, to Friday, October 30, at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.).



The full schedule is below:

- October 19-21 – Monday to Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- October 22 – Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. OPEN LATE
- October 23 – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CLOSED EARLY
- October 24-25 – Saturday/Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- October 26-28 – Monday to Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- October 29 – Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. OPEN LATE
- October 30 – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CLOSED EARLY

Reminder: Ballots include nine binding questions on various subjects. You can help keep lines at the polls shorter by reviewing ballot questions in advance online at somerville-ma.gov/sampleballots and bringing notes with your choices. Printed voter question books are also available at City Hall.

The State Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Key Election Reminders

Register to Vote by Saturday, October 24
Register to vote online until midnight, in person at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) until 5 p.m., or by calling the Elections Department (617-625-6600 ext. 4200) and requesting a voter registra-tion form, which must be postmarked by October 24.

Vote by Mail: Apply by Tuesday, October 27, at 5 p.m.

Apply online at somervillema.gov/votebymail, pick one up in the Elections office at City Hall, or request one be mailed to you by calling Elections at 617-625-6600 ext. 4200.
Absentee Ballots: Apply by Tuesday, October 27, at 5 p.m. for a mail-in ballot or vote in person before Monday, November 2, at 12 p.m. noon in the Elections office.

Review absentee voter eligibility and download the application at somerville-ma.gov/absenteevoting. Applications may be submitted in person, by mail, fax, or by e-mail (elections@somervillema.gov).

Items on the Ballot:
Offices and items on the ballot include Governor, Senator in Congress, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, District Attorney, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Councillor, Senator in General Court, Representative in General Court, Representative in Congress, and Register of Probate – and nine ballot questions. To view sample ballots and read ballot questions, visit somervillema.gov/sampleballots.

Accessible Voting Options and Information

- Accessible vote-by-mail ballots are available to voters who require reasona-ble accommodations.
- Applicants must select the accessible ballot option and provide an email address. Elections then sends access instructions and a PIN.
- Voters can mark the ballot on a computer or mobile device and return it through the secure portal. Applications are due Tuesday, October 27, at 5 p.m.; electronically returned ballots are due Tuesday, November 3, at 8 p.m.
- Apply for a vote-by-mail application online or pick one up in the Elections Office at City Hall.
- Please find more vote-by-mail information below under 'Key Election Reminders.'
- Automark voting machines are available at City Hall during early voting and on Election Day.
- They offer audio instructions and magnified, high-contrast text to help voters mark their bal-lots independently.
- Braille Embossed and large print copies of all nine ballot questions are available for review at all three Somerville Public Library locations, the Council on Aging (167 Holland St.), and at the Elections Department at City Hall.

Visit somervillema.gov/sampleballots to find an Accessible Voter Information Guide that is de-signed to work with screen readers and other assistive devices. Any other accessibility requests may be made with staff in advance by contacting ada@somervillema.gov or 617-625-6600 x2059.

For more information about voting in Somerville, go to somervillema.gov/elections.

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Book review: 'Dead Dead Girls' by Nekesia Afia

By Dennis Fischman

I've been reading a lot of books set in the 1920's lately. Some are true historical novels, even if they have a romance or adventure plot: I'm thinking of *Salome of the Tenements* by Anzia Yezierska and also a more recent book, *The Double Standard Sporting House* [1] by local author Nancy Bernhard.

Some are mysteries set a hundred years ago. The four *Nightingale Mysteries* [2] by Katharine Schellman fit that description. Another one, also from 1920's NYC, is the *Harlem Renaissance Mystery* series by Nekesa Afia, starting with *Dead Dead Girls* [3].

"If you want a jazz age murder mystery starring a tiny, tired lesbian, look no further than DEAD DEAD GIRLS," the author says. Her protagonist, Louise Lloyd, is a young Black woman who grew up in a strict Christian household. Ten years before the story starts, she was one of the victims of a horrific kidnapper. Because she escaped and helped other girls escape, too, she has become known as "Harlem's Hero."

For all the good that does her!

When the story opens, Louise is waitressing in a café by day, and dancing in a speakeasy with her girlfriend, Rosa Maria, every night. They have a multiracial and mostly queer set of friends. Very few of them have two nickels to rub together, so it's the bodies that do the rubbing.

Until the dead bodies start turning up. Not Louise's friends, but a series of young Black women, a lot like her. A white police detective blackmails her into investigating in ways and places he could not, even though it means putting herself and her lover at risk.

What I liked best about the book was the way it evoked the atmosphere of 1920's Harlem and laid out the characters of Louise Lovie Lloyd, her friends and lover, and her conflicted relations with her family. In an odd way, it resembles a cozy, although the number of deaths and other traumas in the story exceeds anything in the cozy mystery subgenre [4].

The mystery itself was about a serial killer (not my favorite subgenre), and the solution, the character of the killer, and the climactic scene all seemed unrealistic to me. The writing was passable. With some nods to the lingo of the time and place (which I enjoyed), but too many chapters ended on the equivalent of "Had I but known..."

All in all, a decent debut. If you like the characters and the setting, go ahead and read the next book in the series, Harlem Sunset. [5].



"Dead Dead Girls" by Nekesia Afia. Berkley, 2021.



Dennis Fischman is a member of the Somerville Public Library's Mystery Book Club and an inveterate reader.

Links:

[1]https://www.goodreads.com/review/list/1342011-dennis-fischman?utf8=%E2%9C%93&search%5Bquery%5D=The+Double+Standard+Sporting+House

[2] https://www.goodreads.com/series/344661-nightingale-mysteries

[3] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55333955-dead-dead-girls

[4] https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/131574

[5]https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58735015-harlem-sunset

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Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week

Q: Is it against the law for a building to be elders-only?
A: We can see why you might think that, but no. Discriminating against families with children is against the law--except in legally designated "housing for older persons."

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.

A **GoFundMe** has been launched by our own Doug Holder to help keep The Somerville Times free and thriving. Every dollar helps us stay independent and serve our community.
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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Cannibal pumpkin… — *Photo by Denise Provost*

Bobby's Dad Jokes Corner
By Bobbygeorge Potaris

What do farmers wear under their shirts when they're cold?
A har-vest.

On This Day in History
October 21

1790 – The Tricolor is chosen as the official flag of France.

1867 – Many leaders of the Kiowa, Comanche and Kiowa-Apache sign a peace treaty at Medicine Lodge, Kansas.

1872 – The U.S. Naval Academy admits John H. Conyers, the first African American to be accepted.

1879 – After 14 months of testing, Thomas Edison first demonstrates his electric lamp, hoping to one day compete with gaslight.

1904 – Panamanians clash with U.S. Marines in Panama in a brief uprising.

1940 – Ernest Hemingway's novel For Whom the Bell Tolls is published.

1959 – The Guggenheim Museum opens in Manhattan.

1961 – Bob Dylan records his first album in a single day at a cost of $400.

1967 – The "March on the Pentagon," protesting American involvement in Vietnam, draws 50,000 protesters.

1983 – The United States sends a ten-ship task force to Grenada.

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Bow Market is launching a campaign to bring **free rent to Experiential Artists** for the full year. The pitch to artists is simple: use space to bring experiential art to Somerville; pay $0 in rent. To make it sustainable, Bow Market is working to attract roughly 300 people to pay $100 to become a 2027 Patron. As patrons, they'll receive access to artist-led events, exclusive merch, name recognition outside the YEA space, and inclusion in this burgeoning arts community. To learn more and become a Patron, visit www.bowmarketsomerville.com/experientialart. For more information on becoming an artist in residence, visit https://www.bowmarketsomerville.com/yea-artist-faq.

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Somerville's Mobile Farmer's Market is selling fresh, local produce at affordable prices **through October 31**. The market accepts cash, debit cards, SNAP, Fresh Connect, WIC Farmers Market coupons, and Senior Farmers Market coupons. All are welcome. For more information and locations, visit https://www.somervillemobilefarmersmarket.org/.

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On **Saturday, October 24**, Somerville residents can participate in **National Prescription Drug Take Back Day** at two city-staffed drop-off locations to safely dispose of expired or unused prescription medication. Staff from Somerville's **Community, Help, Outreach, and Recovery (COHR) unit** of the **Somerville Police Department** and the city's **Prevention Services division** will also be on-site to provide prevention information and resources, including **free Narcan and fentanyl test strips**. Drop off or stop by at two locations from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.: **Public Safety Headquarters** at 220 Washington Street and Teele Square Fire Station at 6 Newbury St. For bottled medications, residents should remove or scratch out any personal information while leaving the name of the medication visible before disposing. Please make sure caps on liquid medications are secure.For more information, please contact 311 (617-666-3311).

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Become a **Somerville Climate Ambassador**. Somerville's **Climate Ambassadors program** empowers residents to take action on climate change in their community. Join a cohort to learn about local climate action, engage in meaningful discussion, and complete a small project. No prior knowledge of climate change. Applicants must be age 16+ and a Somerville resident. Apply now **through December 1**. For more information, visit https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/climate-ambassadors

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The city is offering **free COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics** at locations across the city this fall to help community members protect their health. This week's schedule: **Thursday, October 22**, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., **Tufts Admin Building**, 167 Holland St.,18 and older; and 4:15 – 6:45 p.m., **City Hall Annex**, 50 Evergreen St., 6 months and older. Appointments are strongly encouraged, and walk-up availability is limited. To see the most up-to-date clinic schedule or make an appointment, visit www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations. You can also call 311 (617-666-3311) for information or to make an appointment.

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BOO! Bingo for Kids. Join the **East Branch Library** for bingo with a spooky theme. Win stickers to create a seasonal scene. Children under 5 years old need adult assistance. The event will take place on **Wednesday, October 28**, at East Branch Library (115 Broadway) from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

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This year, the **SHS football team** will be playing our **Thanksgiving Game** against **Cambridge Rindge & Latin** at **Fenway Pa**rk on **Thursday, November 24**, at 5 p.m. For tickets, visit: http://www.redsox.com/highschoolfootball.

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On **October 12**, a **devastating fire in East Somerville** severely impacted several local businesses. **Rei Da Picanha restaurant** and **DaMata Barbershop** were total losses, while **Los Toritos** is also working to recover from significant losses. These local businesses are part of our community, and their owners and employees now face the difficult road to recovery and rebuilding. Please consider donating to support these businesses.

Rei da Picanha: https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-somervilles-nonato-family-after-devastating-fire

DaMata Barbershop: https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-damata-barbershop-rise-again

Los Toritos: https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-los-toritos-reopen-after-devastating-fire

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The **City of Somerville** is seeking one new member to join the **Somerville Municipal Scholarship Committee** as a volunteer member. This vacancy is for a person with a passion and energy to assist high school students (public and private) with pursuing higher education. To apply, please send a letter of interest to ldubu-que@somervillema.gov with **"Scholarship Committee" and your name** in the subject line by **Friday, October 30**. Please include your full name, address, and telephone number with your inquiry. For questions, accommodations, or more info, contact the **Treasury** at (617) 625-6600 ext. 3510 or **Linda Dubuque** at ldubuque@somervillema.gov.

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Overnight Winter Warming Center info: Meeting for Abutters, October 27. Join city staff for an informational meeting to learn about plans for the **2026-27 Emergency Overnight Warming Center**. The warming center will reopen **this December** in the **Cummings Building** to provide a safe, warm place to sleep for adult residents experiencing homelessness during the coldest months of the year. The meeting will take place on **Tuesday, October 27**, at **Central Library** (79 Highland Ave.) from 7 to 8 p.m.

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Celebrate **Halloween in East Somerville** with an afternoon of spooky fun for the whole community! **The Halloween Block Party & Pet Spooktacular** brings neighbors, families, and furry friends together for a festive day filled with activities, local vendors, live music, a pet costume contest, raffles, and much more. Come dressed in your favorite costume, bring your pets, and enjoy a fun-filled Halloween celebration in the heart of East Somerville. **Volunteers wanted**. They are looking for volunteers to help with activities, event setup, welcoming families, and keeping the celebration running smoothly. **October 31**, 1 – 4 p.m., **Chuckie Harris Park**. Sign up to volunteer (https://forms.gle/oAWkUYySYrmNvKBz9).

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Somerville neighbors need your help. On **Tuesday, September 8**, a fire on Dartmouth Street left four households, including multiple vulnerable residents and their pets, without homes. On **September 30**, there was a five-alarm fire in **Teele Square**. The fire impacted 32 homes at 1137-1147 Broadway, displacing 43 residents. Please consider donating whatever you can to the **Somerville Homeless Coalition's Emergency Displacement Fund**, developed in partnership with the city. https://secure.qgiv.com/for/emerfun.

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Somerville's **Latin American and Caribbean Heritage Month celebration** will take place on **Sunday, October 25**, inside **Somerville High School** (81 Highland Ave.) from 2 to 5 p.m. **Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs** (**SOIA**), with support from the city's **Division of Equity and Belonging** and the **Somerville Community Corporation** (**SCC**), invites all community members to the celebration. Enjoy a wide selection of Latin American and Caribbean food and refreshments, from Brazilian cheese bread to Haitian griot, alongside an afternoon of music, movement, and opportunities to join in.

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The **Somerville Museum** presents ***Common Ground: Photography, Place, and Community*, September 17 – December 5**, One Westwood Rd. This exhibition features 15 photographers who have chosen Somerville as their home. The works on view range from documentary to conceptual and are united by the perspective of artists living and working within this evolving urban environment. "Common Ground" explores how artists navigate and contribute to Somerville's shifting identity, examining the relationship between place, community, and creative practice. Visit https://www.somervillemuseum.org/.

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We would like to take this opportunity to thank our **Arts Editor, Doug Holder**, for setting up a **GoFundMe campaign** for ***The Somerville Times***. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely thank all who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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Don't forget, if you would like to subscribe to receive **a digital edition** of our paper, go directly to our website, on the right side, and enter your email address to receive a free, full PDF copy of the paper.



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder



Susan Isla Tepper has been a writer for twenty-plus years and is the author of fourteen published books of fiction and poetry, and seven stage plays. She writes in all genres, with stories, poems, interviews, essays, and opinion columns published extensively worldwide. *CLANDESTINE,* her stage play about food obsessions and disconnect in a long time marriage, will go up for a full run in a red barn theatre, off, off, bdwy. Her latest book is a novella titled *Girl Upside Down*, from Wilderness House Press.

BOILING POINT

The sauce simmers
to the boiling point
smelling burnt
at the bottom
Neither reduces the flame.
One tired tree
in a dull forest
calling to another
There is close
and there is captivity.
No sunlight
to lead us forward
this time
on the overgrown path.

— Susan Isla Tepper

To have your work considered for the Lyrical send it to:
Doug Holder, dougholder@post.harvard.edu

New England Poets in new anthology 'Wag the Dog: Poems of Politics and Social Justice'

In Main St Rag's blistering poetry anthology, *Wag the Dog: Poems of Politics and Social Justice*, New England voices contribute to a national chorus. The collection's greatest strength is the range of ways its poets experience political life. Along the way, they confront encroaching authoritarianism, the military-industrial complex, the oligarchy and income inequality, and the erosion of access to health care, among other issues. The poems also display a warm immediacy; they move between public events and inner voices – through kitchens, medical appointments, offices, gardens, American history and personal memory. Some demand an honest appraisal of what one citizen's vote can do in the face of this national peril, while others hint that saplings will live to outgrow the pines and oaks with their ominous institutional shadows.

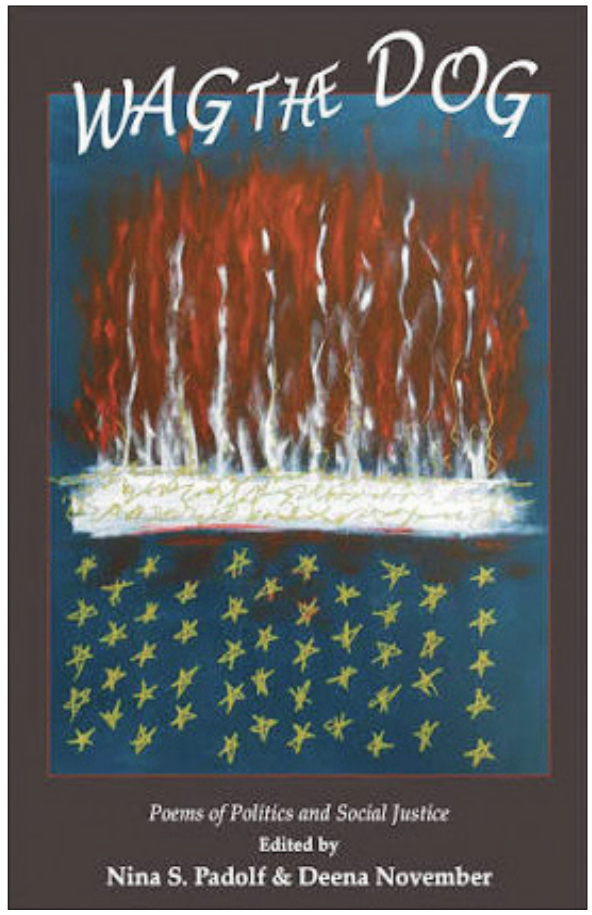
Massachusetts poet Carla Schwartz, who recently won the New England Poetry Club's Samuel Washington Allen Prize for her elegy to the late Charles Coe, told me that a local poetry group inspired her to write a political poem that remained positive. Her poem *Today I Started to Write About America* begins in uncertainty:

"Whose America might
I have written anyhow?"
…
"An America, with all its chest-puffing
missile-might, its misspent dotage
that brings me shame?"

Many of us have peered out the window on a winter day, wondering if we're naïve to have believed in ideals, American or otherwise. In the poem, Schwartz calls forth the extended metaphor of a sapling in this winter landscape. The personified tree contains a "dormant" energy, ready to burst forth. The poet wonders what she might utter, in her "huddled" and "hunched" state:

"waiting to burst out
from under a heavy thumb,
to spring back
in release?"

Maine poet John Seksay provides a similarly striking image in his poem *Shortened Fuse* as he envisions the Statue of Liberty repulsed by America's failure to welcome the "tired," the "poor," and the "huddled masses" invoked by Emma Lazarus's poem inscribed on a plaque inside the statue's pedestal.



"Lady Liberty has been quite loudly
tapping her massive copper sandal
in frustration, fists planted on her hips,
sputtering torch clenched tight in her right fist,"

Seksay offers this powerful thought while questioning our nation's descent into demagoguery, having fallen for a narcissist who uses his executive office to unjustly enrich himself through digital-asset ventures. By the end of the poem, Seksay imagines our national monument transformed into an exasperated woman tapping her foot and contemplating departure.

"When so many people fall for a scamming man
who can't bear to see any true image of himself
then America may have completely lost its chance.
Lady Liberty just might book a boat for France."

Amherst poet Gerald Yelle brings an even darker absurdity to the fore, shining a light on the institutional drudgery that trickles into our day-to-day lives. "I think it's important to protest against the current regime," he told me. Although typically leery of themed anthologies, he had poems that fit. His *Mapped to a Tractor Beam Shadow*, originally inspired by Gandhi and The Jewel in the Crown, found relevance.

Continued on page 23

Tufts Composers: New at Noon #1

The Tufts University Department of Music presents "Tufts Composers: New at Noon #1" in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Friday, October 30, at 12:00 pm. Hammer and Reeds: The dynamic and lyrical duo of Phillipp Stäudlin on saxophone and Yoko Hagino on piano tackles new works by Tufts Composers. Free admission; no tickets required.

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus. For more information, please visit go.tufts.edu/musicevents or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.

The Department of Music in the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts University has one of the most comprehensive, inclusive, and connected music programs in the country. We offer opportunities to encounter music from the historical past to the present day and from around the corner to the far corners of the world.



Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

The poem stages an argument between a museum patron and a docent over a disappointing display and the politics of its funding. Neither quite emerges innocent from the exchange, and there is a sense that their opposition is arbitrary. The patron's generosity carries the threat of control; the docent knowingly makes a false accusation. In sophist fashion to make Gorgias blush, he trusts repetition to make it stick:

"He knows if he says it
over and over at the right
volume with just the right pitch
and intonation she's bound to believe."

In Yelle's *They Said Resistance Was Futile*, the poet effortlessly enacts a state of political acquiescence:

"It seemed
waiting was the right thing to do when
the shooting stopped, but then our neighbors
started disappearing. The people in charge kept
changing the subject. We kept hoping
they'd declare victory and leave us alone."

New Hampshire native Veronica Tucker's poems *County Line* and *Narcan Weather* paint scenes that demonstrate what happens when institutional priorities envelop human concerns. The opening line of the former communicates so much: "The map still shows a hospital here." But "No camera crew arrives," the poet relays, as the community loses vital services:

Each year another service disappears
the way shoreline disappears
one storm at a time.

In the poignant *Narcan Weather*, Tucker shows how trauma can hang over daily life even on a day when nothing out of the ordinary happens. We see this in the naloxone a grandmother carries in her purse next to peppermints, a rosary, and a boy's photograph. As the medication expires, she waves to neighbors and waters tomatoes because ordinary routines must coexist with her fears; at their best they may soothe them.

Cambridge's Scott Ruescher often finds inspiration through traveling. In *At the Dockery Plantation*, he tells of an essential pilgrimage to one of the places where the roots of modern popular music took hold. He explained: "My contribution to *Wag the Dog*, *At the Dockery Plantation*, is one of many poems I've set in the American South. A few new ones, this one included, are set at sites along the Blues Trail in Mississippi. The Dockery Plantation, as my poem suggests, was the home and workplace of several well-known blues musicians during the Jim Crow days – musical artists whose work informed the creations of most of the white musicians I grew up listening to, from the Gershwins to the Rolling Stones. In writing poems about Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Bessie Smith, and others, I guess I'm apologizing for the financial exploitation – but I still love to listen to Bob Dylan adapt the rhythm and blues to his Beat surrealism."

Ruescher's lyrical lines have a cascading internal music, a trademark of his style:

I tried to hear them crooning from a century or so away---
medleys of Delta reveries about the effort to make a buck,
…
Their friends were dancing barefoot in the grass, or lounging
by moonlight on blankets, exorcising the demons
their forebears hadn't known how to offer their freedom,
swilling from jars a corn whiskey that might have made
a mule smile, redeemed by the blues, happy in a different way
than they'd be singing gospel in the church the next day.

Here is working-class resilience personified. African-American laborers living under Jim Crow helped create the musical language through which generations continue to express themselves. These laborers' achievement brings me back to Schwartz's sapling and its latent power beneath a "heavy thumb." This is the inherent force that, if our country has any chance to live up to Lady Liberty's ideals, we must see nurtured to its full expression.

What makes this anthology special is the dynamic range of voices and experiences. In these pages you'll find a poem lamenting American taxpayers' complicity in the genocidal destruction of Gaza alongside a professor's testimony that a group of protestors had yelled "Go back to Europe!" outside her classroom window, directing their prejudice at any Jewish person within earshot. I don't consider myself a proponent of the idea of "required reading," but I'll say this: put *Wag the Dog* (Main St Rag, 2026) in a time capsule and you'll give future generations a fantastic snapshot of life in America circa the 2026 midterms. Or, just read it now as we're living it.

New England Poets' Recommendations:
Carla Schwartz
From *Wag the Dog*: Malaika King Albrecht's *Palestine Sunbird*; Tina Barry's *Words Disappear Too*.
Recommended reading: Wendy Drexler's *Harvest of What Remains*.
Gerald Yelle
From *Wag the Dog*: Malaika King Albrecht's *May You Live*; Dia Calhoun's *A Bestiary of Wind: The State of the Union February 2024*; M. Scott Douglass's *More Faith in the System Than I Have*; Kristin Laurel's *Don't Play Dead*.
Recommended reading: An untitled manuscript by Ernie Brill, author of *Journeys of Voices and Choices*.
John Seksay
Recommended reading: Edna St. Vincent Millay's *Renascence*.
Scott Ruescher
From *Wag the Dog*: Jan Beatty's *Dropping Blotter Acid at the Slag Dump*; Linda Culp Holmes's *Legacy*; Jeannine Marie Pitas's *Work*; Janette Schafer's *Driving Home*; Tony Medina's *American Sonnet for Renee Nicole Good*; Jason Youngclaus's *Never Poets*.
Recommended reading: Roque Dalton's *Las Historias Prohibidas del Pulgarcito*.
Jason Youngclaus
Recommended reading: Philip Levine, *Names of the Lost*.
Jason Youngclaus is the author of *Little Planet Raisins* (Spartan Press/Luchador, 2020). His recent poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Burningword Literary Journal, JMWW, Anti-Heroin Chic, Pictura Journal, The Argyle Literary Magazine*, and *Jerry Jazz Musician*, among others, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. He lives in New England's Merrimack Valley. His poem *Never Poets* also appears in *Wag the Dog*.
jasonyoungclaus.com | Instagram: @jyc_music_lyrics



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