



Inside:



Paris of the 90s
page 3



Traffic matters updated
page 5



A shiny new fire station
page 18

Condo Conversion Ordinance strengthens protections for tenants



The city's Condominium Conversion Ordinance is now in effect, providing enhanced protections for Somerville residents.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is sharing that starting on October 1, updates to the City of Somerville's Condominium Conversion Ordinance take effect. These updates are part of the city's continued efforts to prevent residential displacement and enact stronger protections for tenants.

"Amidst an ongoing housing crisis, we must act to protect our residents," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. "These reforms are another step to keeping long-time residents in their homes and preserving the social fabric of our neighborhoods."

Updates include:

Extended Notification Period: Property owners must now give two (2) years' notice to the Condominium Review Board—up from one (1) year—prior to receiving a final permit from the city authorizing the conversion of a vacant and *Continued on page 4*

SomerStreets closes out 2025 season with spooky 'Monster Mash'

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the Somerville Arts Council invite community members to close out the 2025 SomerStreets season with a festive and spooky Monster Mash on Sunday, October 19, from 2 to 6 p.m. on Somerville Avenue (School St. to Washington St.). In the event of rain, festivities will take place on Sunday, October 26.

Highlights include:

- Community Halloween Parade led by School of Honk (3:30 p.m.)
- Performances by the Wicked Awesome Dancing Witches of Greater Boston
- Pumpkin carving with Somerville Recreation
- Haunted house and cardboard creations by Monano Arts
- Arts activities with Dani Folds and Culichi Arts
- Performances and movement *Continued on page 4*



The 2025 SomerStreets Season comes to a spook-tacular close with Monster Mash, on Sunday, October 19, in Somerville.

Bring business back to your business!

Reach out to local customers who want to support local businesses. We can help you do that with our **bring back business ad specials.**

email **Bobbie** to learn about this advertising special!

bobbie@thesomervilletimes.com

Bay State Skating School

LEARN TO SKATE CLASSES for
Recreational • Figure • Hockey Skating Skills



Over 50 Years Experience
Children (4-18 years)



The safety of our customers and staff is our #1 priority!
Cambridge, Brookline, Cleveland Circle, Medford,
Newton-Brighton, Quincy, Somerville,
Waltham, West Roxbury, Weymouth

781-890-8480 • www.BayStateSkatingSchool.org



T.J. SILLARI, INC.

Over 50 Years Experience

Plumbing • Heating • Gas Fitting • Industrial Work • Water Heater Replacement • Complete Drain Service

Residential - Industrial - Commercial

625-9877

Proud to be a Somerville resident

Master Plmb. Lic. #6106



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.

The 20th Annual Honk Festival of Activist Street Bands will be hitting the streets of Somerville this weekend from **October 9 through 12** (rain or shine). HONK! 2025 will feature a wide variety of musical/activist events planned for **Tufts University**, in Medford (HONK! U Conference on Thursday), **Davis Square**, in Somerville (street music, workshops, lantern parades on Friday and Saturday); and **Harvard Square**, in Cambridge (with a vast Parade out of Davis Sq. to then participate in Oktoberfest, on Sunday). More info at: <https://honkfest.org/>.








All city offices are closed **Monday, October 13**, for **Indigenous Peoples' Day**. Trash and recycling pickup will be delayed by one day.

Happy birthday greetings this week to several locals: Happy birthday to **City Councilor Will Mbah**. We wish him a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to **Valerie Spinale**. We hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to **Steve Hardy**. We wish him a great day. Happy birthday to **Naomi Harrison**, daughter of **Kaitlin Denk**. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Kerri Shannon Schaefer**, **Michael Buckley**, **Ben Echevarria**, **Lusann Wishart**, **Sue Casazza Smith**, **Alan Ball Blydenburgh**, **Phyllis D'Anna**, **George Bevans**, **Mary Marshall**, and **Ron Sensale**, a 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.

Continued on page 7

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of October 8 – October 14 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 Wednesday <i>October 8</i>	Rain	69°/44°	81%	41%	WNW 13 mph
 Thursday <i>October 9</i>	Sunny	57°/36°	2%	1%	NW 15 mph
 Friday <i>October 10</i>	Sunny	63°/44°	4%	2%	SW 10 mph
 Saturday <i>October 11</i>	Partly Cloudy	68°/50°	5%	3%	SW 11 mph
 Sunday <i>October 12</i>	Cloudy	60°/51°	23%	17%	NE 11 mph
 Monday <i>October 13</i>	Rain	59°/49°	44%	35%	NE 12 mph
 Tuesday <i>October 14</i>	Rain	65°/50°	39%	31%	NE 9 mph

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

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: Somerville SEPAC presents report on Special Education to DESE and City Council

Jori Everitt says:

This report is so well done! Amazing work, and should be the movement that is needed at every school across the country. Well done Somerville SEPAC, let's hope action is followed.

Response to: 20th Annual Honk Festival

benny says:

I can hardly wait. Great fun.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

The Somerville Times

news@thesomervilletimes.com

www.thesomervilletimes.com

Phone: 857-488-5138



Publisher – Somerset Valley Publishing Inc.

Editor – Jim Clark

Assignment Editor – Bobbie Toner

Advertising Director – Bobbie Toner

Arts Editor – Doug Holder

*Writers: Jim Clark, Harry Kane,
and Cathleen Twardzik*

*Contributors: Jimmy Del Ponte,
Dorothy Dimarzo, Bob Doherty
Photographer: Claudia Ferro*

The Somerville Times is published every Wednesday

A proud member of the following newspaper organizations:



Granoff Music Center Colloquium: 'The Stoic Mixtape' Melinda Latour (Tufts University)

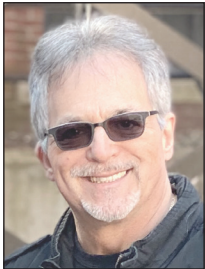
The Tufts University Department of Music presents "Granoff Music Center Colloquium: "The Stoic Mixtape" - Melinda Latour (Tufts University)" in the Varis Lecture Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Monday, October 20, at 12 p.m.

The Stoics are back – and not just in philosophy classrooms. Across the social and political spectrum, ancient Stoic wisdom has been attracting new audiences seeking emotional resilience and mental clarity in these times of instability and change. But did you know the Stoics also had something to say about music? In this talk, Melinda Latour will explore the unexpected significance of music in the Stoic tradition. Revealing ancient insights within modern soundscapes—from rap and metal to country and classic rock, Latour reimagines music not just as entertainment, but as a transformative practice cultivated through the art of listening.

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

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

Davis Square – Paris of the 90s



They actually used to say that Davis Square was like the Paris of the 90s. Of course, I had to add my wise guy two cents. I hung around Davis Square religiously in the 90s and said this about myself and my cohorts, "If Davis Square is the Paris of the 90's, we must be the Paris-sites."

Someone once wrote in a 1990s parody song, "Let's go down to Davis Square, see the girls with great big hair." It continued ... "Starbucks is where yuppies meet, thank God for Dunkies down the street." I know that tune because I wrote it from a suggestion by legendary Boston Hall of Fame Disc Jockey Dale Dorman while I was on the air at Kiss 108 FM. It actually was peppered into the Kiss rotation for a while. Friends used to pull into my driveway and blast it when it came on the air, sometimes very late at night. Dad didn't appreciate it at all.

Somerville girls were famous for having big hair. Big hair that did not move if the wind blew or if they shook their heads. The hairspray they used was like an epoxy. It froze the hairdo solid. I loved the girls with great big hair. There has always been a silly controversy over which city's girls actually had the biggest hair, Somerville or Medford. Actually, a lot of us still jokingly call it "Meffa." As far as I am concerned, it was a toss-up, or should I say, a poof up. If you had stock in Aqua-Net hairspray in the late 80s and 90s, you were rich! I have to be honest, I still like girls with great big hair. So what if you stick your hand in and you can't get it out? In the late 80s and early 90s, my hair, along with some of my musician friends, was pretty big too. One of my nicknames was "Head O'Hair." Ah, the 90s.

If you walked through Davis Square in the 90s you might see a guy with a huge boom box on his shoulder grooving to *Baby Got Back* by Sir Mix-A-Lot, *Mmm Bop* by Hanson, or

Continued on page 17



fat hen
BROADWAY EAST

OPEN NOW

Holidays are coming
Book your event with us

@FATHENBOSTON | FATHENBOSTON.COM

LA POSADA RESTAURANT & TEQUILA BAR

617-776-2049

505 Medford St, Somerville, MA 02145

laposadasomerville

• Craft margaritas • Taco Tuesday special • Mexican cuisine



Are You Sitting On A Fortune?

Call Our Team at CRG To See What Your Home Is Worth.

617-764-4342

699 Broadway Ave, Somerville, MA 02144



Somerville Winter Farmers Market opens November 1

The Center for Arts at the Armory (CAA) announces that it will host and manage the 16th Annual Somerville Winter Farmers Market (SWFM) every Saturday beginning November 1 through April 11th. This weekly market offers the best locally grown and regionally produced agricultural items, including vegetable produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, pastries, and sweets. Each market will feature more than 30 weekly vendors and several rotating guest vendors while welcoming an anticipated 1,000+ visitors every Saturday.

The mission of the Somerville Winter Farmers Market is to bring healthy, local food and products to all customers regardless of economic status. In addition to cash, credit, and debit, SNAP / EBT is also accepted at the market. CAA raises funds to be able to provide a \$15 match so that SNAP / EBT for every SNAP/EBT customer who spends at least \$15 of their SNAP/EBT dollars at the market. The market is also participating in the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), which allows qualifying customers to receive between \$40 – \$80 worth of free farm-fresh fruits and vegetables from participating HIP vendors.

“Anyone who has been to our farmers market knows how special it is. For twenty-two Saturdays, our spaces transform into a bustling utopic marketplace where the community connects with the people who grow and make their food. It is an in-

credibly vibrant and inclusive atmosphere. As an arts center, we of course have local artists playing music both on stage in the Performance Hall and in our Café. Customers are dancing while they buy their veggies. This market is a literal balm to the soul,” says Stephanie Scherpf, CAA Co-Director/CEO.

“The SWFM fosters a community for our vendors and customers during the cold and potentially isolating months of the year. We want to continue to provide local, healthy, and affordable food in a time when food insecurity has been on the rise,” says Juliana Soltys, CAA’s Market Manager. “Please join us in cultivating a sustainable food system by supporting local businesses and farmers.”

The market will welcome back much-loved vendors, including Red Fire Farm, Heron Pond Farm, Winter Moon Roots, Brookford Farm, The Good Food Farm, and Freedom Food Farm, each with a wide array of produce and winter greenhouse greens. Kimball Fruit Farm will be selling apples and other root vegetables, and Amherst Mushroom Co. & Traveling Cap Mushroom Co. will provide mushrooms this year. Cheeses will be available from Round Table Farm, while savory meats will be available from specialty vendors like Stillman Quality Meats and Lilac Hedge. Fresh artisanal pastries will return from Mariposa Bakery, while frozen tamales will again be available from a



The Somerville Winter Farmers Market commences operations at the Center for Arts at the Armory on Saturday, November 1.

market favorite, Tex Mex Eats. Delectable desserts and confections will be offered by Makomacaron, The Half Cookie, Matki, with chocolate specialties from Tick Tock Chocolates and Sueños Chocolates. Mocha Connection and Cafes Duarte are some of the coffee vendors, and Mother’s Kitchen will be back to offer Indian meal kits and prepared products.

Thus far, generous grant and sponsorship support for this season’s SWFM has been provided by a City of Somerville Health and Human Services Grant, Somerville Health Foundation, Mt Auburn Hospital Community Benefits Program, Middlesex Federal Bank, Naveo Credit Union, and

Farm Credit East.

The Center for Arts at the Armory is located at 191 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143. To learn more and for a complete listing of vendors, weekly specials, and live entertainment, please visit www.somwintermarket.org. You can find the market on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SomervilleWinterFarmersMarket, and on Instagram @SomWinterMarket.

Every Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. from November 1, 2025, through April 11, 2026.

Please note that the Somerville Winter Farmers Market will not be held on November 29, 2025, or December 27, 2025.

Condo Conversion Ordinance strengthens protections for tenants

CONT. FROM PG 1

formerly tenanted unit to a lawful condominium.

Expanded Relocation Assistance: Property owners must now pay increased relocation payments for tenanted units. Relocation payments have increased from \$7,546 to \$14K (subject to annual Consumer Price Index adjustments) for all tenants, and tenants entitled to enhanced protections (seniors, disabled, low-moder-

ate income) have an increase in relocation benefits from \$12,577 to \$18K.

About Condominium Conversion

Condominium conversion is the process for local property owners who intend to remove rental units from the housing market and convert them into condominiums for sale. In Somerville, this process is regulated by Somerville’s Condo Review Board (CRB) under the city’s condominium con-

version ordinance. Suggested updates to the ordinance were presented to the City Council and approved at their August 28 meeting.

About the Condominium Conversion Ordinance Updates

Ordinance updates stem from the work of an Ordinance Working Group convened by the CRB in response to an order submitted by City Councilors and

concerns raised by constituents. They are also grounded in findings from the Anti-Displacement Task Force (ADTF). The ADTF conducted extensive community outreach and released detailed reports and recommendations earlier this year, which are available at voice.somervillema.gov/adtf.

For more information, please visit somervillema.gov/condoconversion.

SomerStreets closes out 2025 season with spooky ‘Monster Mash’

CONT. FROM PG 1

activities by Cate the Great, Just Felice, EventThem, and Parkour

• Live music curated by Mass Ave Music at Somerville Ave. & Church St. stage

• Union Square Stage performances by Pluto’s Return, Madalena Silva, and a Vinyl session by NXN – bring your own

vinyl to be spun.

Food and vendors:

• Local favorites including Dos Manos Kitchen, Gracie’s Ice Cream, fried dough, and Nibble • Kitchen and Makalu Boston

• Artisan goods and vintage finds curat-

ed by Blue Bandana Relics and Tiny Turns Paperie

Getting here and road closures:

• Somerville Ave. (School St. to Washington St.) is closed to all vehicular traffic from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

• Limited parking available; walking,

biking, or transit strongly encouraged

• Accessible parking on School St. by Somerville Ave.

• MBTA buses rerouted; check MBTA.com for service updates

For more information about SomerStreets, visit somervilleartscouncil.org.

Committee discusses proposed signage and crosswalk installations, traffic signal updates

By Jordan Pagkalinawan

The Somerville Traffic and Parking Committee met on September 29 to discuss 13 orders related to signage updates, crosswalk and stop sign installations, and an update on changes to MBTA bus route 90. **“No Motorized Vehicles” sign along Community Path**

The committee first heard from Director of Mobility Brad Rawson regarding the upgrade of a “No Motorized Vehicles” sign at the entrances of the Community Path. Rawson acknowledged the community’s concerns over motorized vehicles “disproportionately using the path, often in aggressive circumstances.”

“Signage is one of the things that we fully expect will be developed and designed, funded and installed coming out of our community process,” Rawson said. He added that while there is no exact schedule for that sign to be installed, the earliest anticipated date would come in the spring. **Crosswalks on Walnut St. near Winter Hill Community Innovation School**

The committee then discussed the feasibility of a proposed crosswalk along Walnut Street and Wigglesworth Street to protect students, families, and educators walking to and from the Winter Hill Community Innovation School.

Samantha Zielstorff, a parent of two Winter Hill School students, reiterated the community’s concerns toward the committee and the desire for a crosswalk or other “traffic calming measures” in the intersections.

“We hope this can be a priority, because there are kids walking daily and there are no crosswalks,” she said. “Many kids are also walking on their own, and we can see that it’s a dangerous situation not having any crosswalks on these streets.”

Department of Engineering Director Brian Postlewaite responded to Zielstorff, saying that he shares the community’s goal to “have children walk to school in our community” safely. He added that both crosswalk locations are being considered, but said its priority would have to be weighed between other locations “that have similar and equally valid requests.”

According to Postlewaite, additional crosswalks near the Winter Hill Community School could be prioritized sooner rather than later, but hiring contractors will be a challenge because of the nearby West Pearl project. Rawson also remind-

ed the committee that there are many criteria that should be reviewed to cite new crosswalks, saying, “The exact locations sometimes vary [from] the ones that folks advocate for.”

Update on unsafe crossing at Community Path at School Street

Community member Ben Orenstein advocated for changes to an unsafe crossing along the Community Path and School Street, citing the “nasty corner” that compelled him to install a convex mirror to mitigate the issue.

Postlewaite said that the intersection’s sharp corner has been an issue for years, leading to councilors and the city to look for solutions. He added that it’s been “an understandably difficult intersection to resolve” because of neighboring “high-profile” construction projects of Somerville High School and the Gilman Square T stop.

Changing the corner at School Street would be “impossible” without changing the structure of the Community Path’s Skybridge, according to Postlewaite. Since design plans for the Skybridge are still being developed, he requested that this item be kept in committee until those plans can be shared with the committee and the general public.

Left turn signal at Somerville and Bow

Director Postlewaite explained a recent request to install a left turn signal from Somerville Avenue onto Bow Street. He said the proposal would not be “the most appropriate solution,” because it would confuse motorists who can turn left onto Washington Street shortly after.

Instead, the Department of Engineering recently installed a “Left Turn After Stop” sign, which allows motorists who are first in line at a red light to take a left turn after stopping and checking both ways.

Magoun Square Municipal Parking Lot sign upgrade

Businesses in Magoun Square requested that the committee install a “Magoun Square Municipal Parking Lot” sign to inform clients that they could park in a designated lot in the square. Suzanne Rinfret, the Director of Parking, noted that various parking signs already exist there, but she is also open to installing new signage that fits the committee’s needs.

Return “Do Not Block intersection” sign to Broadway and Hinckley

Community members requested the return of a “Do Not Block Intersection” sign to Broadway and Hinckley Street,



A number of important issues were discussed at the latest Somerville Traffic and Parking Committee meeting.

citing the confusion it created among drivers since its removal due to construction. Director Postlewaite said the sign is not a priority to return since it does not match the safety criteria to return “do not block” signage.

Pinckney Street speedbump and Neighborway potential

Rawson noted that Pinckney Street has been added to the Department of Mobility’s list of streets that will be considered for review of traffic calming measures.

“As a reminder, this is a very long list,” he added. “We have way more demands for traffic calming than we can accommodate in any given year or two, but we will start that due diligence process and look for ways to communicate with residents about how to stay involved.”

He confirmed that Pinckney Street is not currently being considered for part of the city’s Neighborway program, which makes streets walk- and bike-friendly, though that designation could change in the future.

“As we get closer to looking at that neighborhood holistically, we can speak with the ward councilor, we can speak with neighbors about the relative needs and merits of Florence versus Pinckney versus Mount Vernon in that portion of East Somerville,” Rawson added.

Recent changes to MBTA bus route 90

The committee received a comprehensive summary of past changes to the MBTA’s route 90 as well as an update on where changes stand now.

Rawson also addressed Councilor Wil-

lie Burnley Jr.’s concerns regarding the removal of parking along Cross Street to make room for MBTA buses, saying that the MBTA’s Safety and Operations Team brought up a “daily challenge” of navigating the narrow road, which includes damage to buses and gridlock traffic. The MBTA was willing to move route 90 back into the neighborhood with an emphasis on operator and public safety.

“In terms of next steps, the recommendation was to restrict parking closest to the signalized intersection at Cross and Broadway,” Rawson said.

Burnley requested that the city bring in bus crash data and the MBTA’s requirements to supplement conversations over bus service along Cross Street.

Stop signs at Ten Hills Road and Governor Winthrop Road

One order proposed the addition of signage at Ten Hills Road and Governor Winthrop Road, which would make the intersection a four-way stop. Rawson explained that such installations are more complicated than they seem at first glance, adding that roadway owners would be obligated to perform analyses and demonstrate compliance with criteria that warrant a stop sign to be present.

“We have not yet initiated a due diligence of this particular location,” Rawson said, adding that he and Postlewaite would reach out to Councilor Jesse Clingan to understand residents’ concerns in order to “provide a more thoughtful response.”

Traffic signal equipment update at Rogers and Boston

Continued on page 13

Beacon Hill Roll Call



Volume 50 - Report No. 40 • September 29-October 3, 2025 • Copyright © 2025 Beacon Hill Roll Call. All Rights Reserved. By Bob Katzen

Beacon Hill Roll Call can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com

THE HOUSE AND SENATE: There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

This week, *Beacon Hill Roll Call* reports on the Revenue Committee's hearing on several bills including:

EXEMPT BABY SUPPLIES FROM THE SALES TAX (H 3268) – Would exempt from the state's 6.25 percent sales tax a wide array of baby and infant supplies including breast pumps, cribs, strollers, bottles and wipes. The measure also exempts apparel for children aged 5 and under including clothing, shoes, diapers and other accessories.

"This bill was filed to reduce the financial burden on families by making essential baby and children's items more affordable," said Samantha Beaudry, a spokesperson for the sponsor Rep. Marcus Vaughn (R-Wrentham). "It's also a way to recognize that many of these goods are necessities rather than luxuries."

TAX LOTTERY TICKETS (H 3071) – Would impose the state's 6.25 percent sales tax on the purchase of Lottery tickets. Currently Lottery tickets are exempt from the sales tax.

"There is a need to be somewhat more consistent, in retail business, across the range of commerce," said private citizen Vincent Dixon who sponsored the bill under a state law that allows a private citizen to ask their state legislators to file bills on their behalf. "Many stores, with retail traffic, have a substantial part of their business, in Mass Lottery ticket sales which competes, with more traditional products and services, including convenience store availability of modest groceries, beverages and fading amounts of media publications and more."

Dixon continued, "We know that gambling addiction is a reality and can be a burden on many, particularly lower income individuals and families. The modest charge of the sales tax on Lottery tickets may provide a small disincentive to excessive gambling. I think that we have likely expanded the range of gambling across the commonwealth, beyond a level, and a culture, than we should. If we are going to have such products, which is normal business, they should share normal retail taxes, in the retail economy rather than being a kind of bypass, from more productive products and services."

EXEMPT NEW HAMPSHIRE BORDER COMMUNITIES FROM THE SALES TAX (H 3195) – Would exempt communities within a 10-mile border of New Hampshire from the Bay State's 6.25 percent sales tax.

"[Rep.] Moran has been filing this bill since 2013 in an ef-

fort to support small businesses in the Merrimack Valley who typically lose revenue due to their proximity to their competitors across state lines," said Francis Munroe, the staff director for Rep. Frank Moran (D-Lawrence).

SALES TAX EXEMPTION FOR PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ANIMALS (H 3024) – Would exempt animal medication prescribed by veterinarians from the 6.25 percent sales tax.

Sponsor Rep. Michelle Badger (D-Plymouth) said her proposal is aimed at easing the financial burden on pet owners and ensure pets get the care they need.

"This bill provides parity with the existing exemption for human prescriptions, recognizing that pets are family members who also deserve accessible and affordable medical treatment," said Badger. "With veterinary costs cited as the main barrier for 72 percent of pet owners avoiding care, this measure is a compassionate and practical step to help keep animals healthier and reduce public health risks associated with untreated animals."

HIKE CIGARETTE TAX (S 2200) – Would hike the tax on the sale of cigarettes by \$1 from \$3.51 to \$4.51 per pack.

"Studies show that making cigarettes more expensive would deter young people from smoking and encourage those who already smoke to quit by making their deadly habit less affordable," said sponsor Sen. John Keenan (D-Quincy). "At a time when the federal government has undertaken an unprecedented assault on public health, and far too many Massachusetts residents continue to die from cancer, it is urgent that we help keep people from tobacco and nicotine addiction."

CLOSE THE NICOTINE LOOPHOLE (S 1949) – Would broaden the definition of "smokeless tobacco," which is subject to the tobacco excise tax, to include any product whether chewed, absorbed, dissolved or ingested.

"Right now, Big Tobacco and other companies are skirt-ing the rules by selling products made with lab-created nicotine instead of tobacco," said sponsor Sen. Julian Cyr (D-Truro). "[The measure] has broad bipartisan support and closes that loophole so all nicotine products are treated the same under state law. This means products like nicotine patches can't slip through the cracks, making it more difficult for young people to get hooked and ensuring Massachusetts keeps strong protections for public health."

EXEMPT RESIDENTIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS FROM THE SALES TAX (S 1982) – Would ex-

empt home security systems from the state's 6.25 percent sales tax.

"[The] bill provides a sales tax exemption for residential security systems and related equipment, such as wiring devices and appliances used for access control, surveillance and alarm systems," said sponsor Sen. Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "This bill incentivizes and encourages homeowners to more affordably protect their most valuable investment—their homes."

SALES TAX ON DIGITAL ADVERTISING SERVICES (H 3208) – Would impose a 6.25 percent sales tax on digital advertising services that target users in Massachusetts, using tools like IP address or geolocation. The tax would only apply to companies that make more than \$2.5 million a year from digital ads aimed at Bay State residents.

The funds would be used to support three key areas: local access TV stations; mental health and safe social media use; and research on artificial intelligence in education.

"Digital advertising brings in billions of dollars from Massachusetts each year, yet not a single cent is going back to the communities being targeted," said sponsor Rep. Francisco Paulino (D-Methuen). "Local media outlets, especially community stations, are struggling to survive while Big Tech keeps growing. This bill is about fairness. If you're profiting from our residents, you should help fund the programs that serve them."

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

EXCUSE SCHOOL ABSENCES FOR STUDENTS IN NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS (H 667) – The House gave initial approval to a bill that would permit students who are participating in national or international competitions sanctioned by a U.S. National Governing Body to be given an exception to their absences. It requires that students seeking approval maintain a B grade point average or equivalent and gives the school principal discretion over excuses exceeding seven full days or 14 half days.

"I filed this legislation at the request of a constituent of mine after learning of the unintended consequences of the current school absence policy," said sponsor Rep. Alice Peisch (D-Wellesley). "Due to his involvement in USA Fencing, the constituent explained how student athletes involved in national and international competition, sanctioned by a National Governing Body and representing the United States abroad, were having to withdraw from public school and reenroll or pursue *Continued on page 23*

COMMENTARY

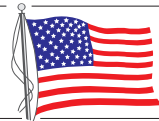
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



HONK! if you love fun, music, and socio-political activism.

Our View Of The Times



Whether it be homegrown or imported, we have at our fingertips an incredibly diverse and nearly exhaustive supply of mellifluous entertainment to keep us amused and amazed as we watch it pass through our community.

The same goes for commitment to political and social issues. It's natural for the HONK! Festival organizers to choose our community in which to hold this event.

Activism thrives here, driven by a long tradition of dialog on important issues of the day and a genuine concern for the betterment of our own community as well as that of the world at large.

Of course, our city has a rich history to tell, from the days of the Revolutionary War right up to today's most pressing issues.

We enjoy gathering together and celebrating life at its fullest and most reward-

ing, while at the same time coming to terms with vital issues that affect all our lives. And, of course, doing it in a responsible way is also something that we strive for.

Somerville's got talent. That we know. And it's got commitment as well. It extends to many forms of expression, both artistic and pragmatic.

In seeking a workable balance of the two, we may yet create a symphony of

sorts. One based in harmony and keeping perfect time. After the dust of the busy day settles, we know we've done our part to make it all a bit better. The upcoming HONK! festival, going from October 9 through 12 throughout the area, will not only celebrate music combined with socio-political activism, it will show that we can do it in the spirit of fun and community engagement. <https://honkfest.org/>.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

The City of Somerville is seeking **polling place workers** and standby poll workers for the upcoming **Municipal Election on Tuesday, November 4**. Many poll workers are needed to support operations and conduct a successful election. Poll workers must be ready to step in as needed on Election Day. The workday starts at 6:30 a.m. and ends after the polls close at 8 p.m., with a two-hour break. The compensation is \$240 per day. To apply, please email **Human Resources** at hadmin@somervillema.gov. To learn more, please contact the **Elections Office** at 617-625-6600 ext. 4200.

Voter registration deadline for the **General Election** by mail or in person, or online until midnight (www.registertovote-ma.com) by 5 P.M., **Friday, October 24**.

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!

We have a new tab on our website, "**Campaign Releases**." Go there to see the latest endorsements and campaign info for this year's election candidates.

The **Somerville Public Library** is asking for community feedback to help shape its next **five-year strategic plan**. Residents, workers, and visitors are invited to share their ideas for how the library can best

develop its collections, programs, services, and spaces. The survey is open **through Wednesday, October 15**, takes about five minutes to complete, and is voluntary and anonymous. Participants can take the survey online at tinyurl.com/58vmk4vw or complete a paper copy at any Somerville Public Library location. For more information about Somerville Public Library programs and services, visit www.somervillepubliclibrary.org.

Community members are invited to join **Mayor Katjana Ballantyne**, the **City Council**, and the **School Committee** at the **2025 City Hall**

Continued on page 21

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#992

- Which U.S. city is commonly used in the sunniest major beer?
- What sport has been played on the moon?
- What was the first cash crop in America?
- Mycology is the scientific study of what?
- The first vaccine was for which disease?
- Steak tartare is served in what way?
- Which cereal grain is the most
- What vitamin is most abundant in pumpkins?
- What Peanuts character waits in the pumpkin patch for "The Great Pumpkin"?
- What do you call the hard stem at the top of a pumpkin?
- What famous magician died on Halloween in 1926?
- What country is Shakira from?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- It's impossible to tickle yourself.
- Queen Elizabeth II was a trained mechanic.

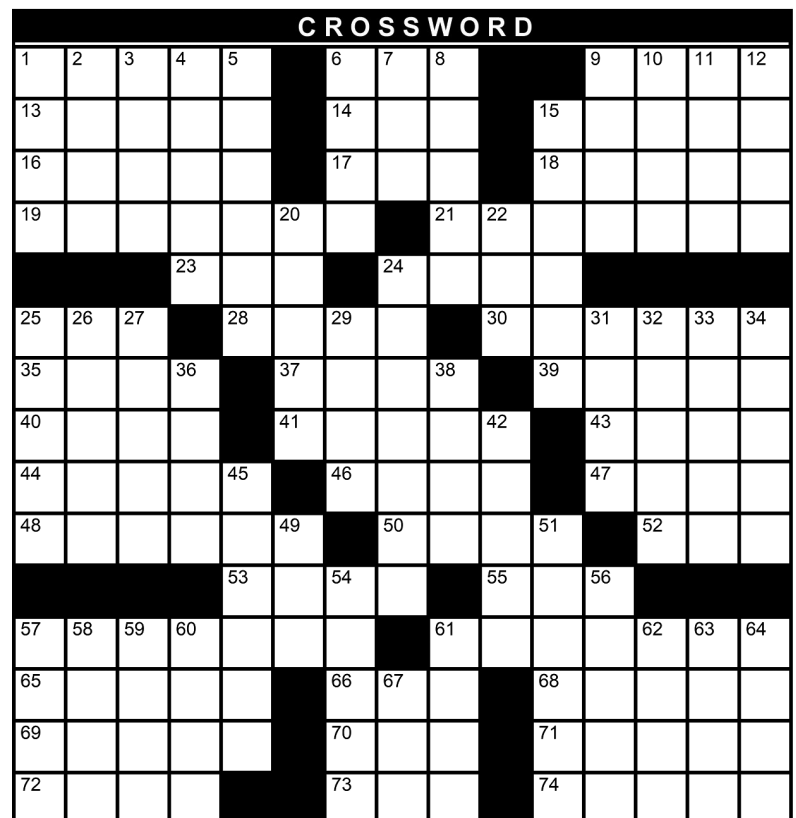
STATEPOINT CROSSWORD WORLD SERIES

ACROSS

- Treble, bass and alto
- OB-GYN test
- Hoodlum
- In 1921, the World Series was first broadcast on it
- Tribute poem
- Cursor mover
- Same as Amir
- Neither here ____ there
- Any member of the 2002 World Series champs
- *World Series trophy presenter, Rob ____
- *024 World Series winners
- "____ and the City"
- German industrial valley
- Gift topper
- Kids' building block
- Player with most career World Series home runs
- Good vs ____
- Ball of yarn
- Offspring
- Thespian's part
- Shasta and Tab, e.g.
- Singer Tori ____
- Potato masher alternative
- Fox coat, e.g.
- Hokkaido native
- Put on a pedestal
- Just manages, with "out"
- 2005 World Series MVP, Jermaine ____
- Time unit
- Polar toy-maker
- Team with most World Series wins
- 2024 World Series MVP Freddie ____
- Met's offering
- Legal grp.
- Give the slip
- Send, as payment
- Toothy fish
- Sells
- Cupid, to the Greeks
- Freudian topic
- Surrealist Max

DOWN

- Pull an all-nighter
- Holy man
- "Yellowstone" actress and Josh Brolin's daughter
- Feudal estates



SWITCH & GET \$25

Off First Month of New Service!
USE PROMO CODE: **GZ590**

Consumer Cellular

CALL CONSUMER CELLULAR **888-804-0913**

© 2023 Consumer Cellular Inc. For promo details please call 888-804-0913

© StatePoint Media

Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- Sour salad green
- Atlantic Ocean, in a popular idiom
- "Much ____ About Nothing"
- Lost, in Provence
- Chinatown gang
- Massive
- Addict
- Hair styling goops
- ____ shirts, in "The Outsiders"
- #19 Across and such
- Unit of electrical resistance
- Mule deer's European cousin (2 words)
- Player with most career World Series hits, Yogi ____
- Egg-shaped
- "Will comply" in radio communication
- Lump of stuff
- Org. that regulates the College World Series
- Shy
- Eccentric like a bird?
- Follow
- Sinister look
- Only one W.S. Game 7 ended by ____ off home run
- Ranch grazer
- Fix leftovers
- Anonymous John
- Ace hiding place
- Consumption
- "Saturday Night ____" movie
- Yesteryear
- Impersonator
- Captain of Nautilus
- ____ Bryant, of 2016 World Series winning Cubs
- Wild West card game
- "Buddenbrooks" author
- Contributes
- Home to eggs
- Tote, e.g.

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

World Market grand opening

World Market has opened their doors at Assembly Row (95 Middlesex Ave). They held their Grand Opening on Thursday, October 2, with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

World Market is known for featuring an ever-changing selection of on trend home decor and furniture, housewares, gifts, jewelry, decor.

World Market customers can find delicious food inspiration for their next gathering from the store's wide assortment of foods and beverages imported from around the globe.

Visit www.worldmarket.com.



Want to write local Somerville stories?
Call 857-488-5138
and speak to the Assignment Editor



**VOLUNTEERS
 NEEDED
 FOR A STUDY
 ON MEMORY**



YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IF YOU:

- are age 70 to 85,
- are right-handed,
- speak English,
- do not have metal in your body,
- did not undergo cataract surgery.

THIS RESEARCH STUDY INVOLVES:

Up to 15 visits to the MGH-Charlestown (Boston) Research Center over 6 months.
 Evaluations including memory tests, blood draws and brain scans.

YOU WILL RECEIVE:

Up to \$1,100 for total study (\$50-\$100 paid per visit).
 Dedicated relationships with research doctors and study team members.

For more information, please call or email the study staff at

617-724-9593 or wallestudy@mgh.harvard.edu

All information is kept completely confidential.

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



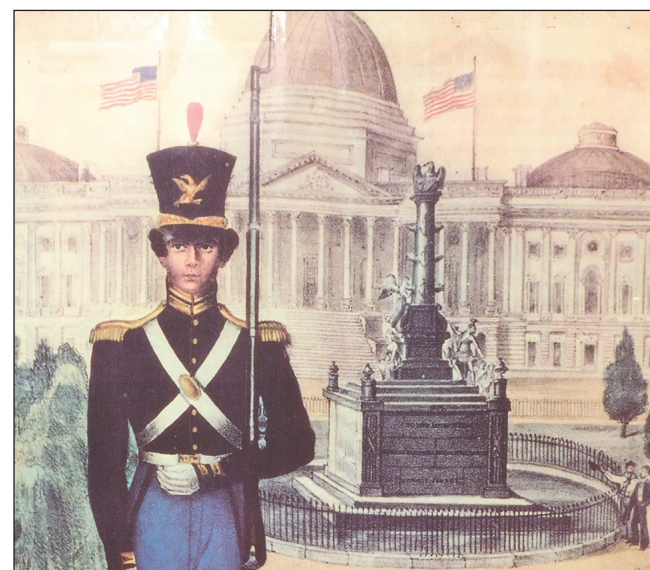
Eagle feathers #339

This article first appeared in the January 22, 2020, edition of The Somerville Times.

Our Tripolitan Hero

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

In 1808, a 20-foot-tall Italian marble monument was erected just inside the gates of the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. The U.S.S. Constitution delivered it from Italy via Boston. It was the city's first outdoor memorial, the first American monument approved by Congress, and the only one for decades to follow.



During the War of 1812 attack and ransacking of Washington, D.C., the British severely damaged the sculpture. After being repaired in 1831, it was moved to the front of the Capitol Building on its West Wing. Massachusetts' Representative Edward Everett, a Winter Hill resident, fought to have it located at this most impressive location.

Originally called the Somers Memorial in honor of Tripolitan War hero Captain Richard Somers and his crew, today it is named the Tripoli Monument and lies on the grounds of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Tripoli was the first country to declare war on the infant United States.



James Fenimore Cooper was America's first-born novelist. In 1842, Somerville's first year, Cooper wrote a biography of Captain Somers. He also then called for the remains of Somers and his crew to be returned home from Tripoli. To this day, the intrepid heroes lie in unmarked

graves on its beach.

Boston's Charles Bullfinch, America's first native-born architect and draftsman for the United States Capitol, designed the grounds for the Somers *Continued on page 11*

LEGAL NOTICES

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



BID ADVERTISEMENT

The Somerville Housing Authority, the Awarding Authority, invites e-bids from DCAM Certified General Contractor in Waterproofing for Building Envelope Concrete Repairs at the (200-2) Mystic River Apartments Development, 30 Memorial Road in Somerville, Massachusetts EOHL No. 274172, in accordance with the documents prepared by SOCOTEC AE Consulting Inc. of Boston, Massachusetts.

The Project consists of: Concrete repairs to existing Precast Concrete Modular Addition Structures; including but not limited to window sealants replacements, patching of delaminated and spalled concrete, crack repair, and painting and coating of the precast concrete elevations.

The work is estimated to cost **\$412,750.00 including Alternates.**

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §526 to 27H inclusive.

General bidders must be certified by DCAMM pursuant to M.G.L.c. 149 Section 44D. The General Bidder must be certified eligible in the DCAMM Prime/General category in **'WATERPROOFING'**.

Filed sub-bidders must be certified by DCAMM pursuant to M.G.L.c. 149 Section 44D. The Filed sub-Bidder must be certified eligible in the DCAMM Filed Sub-Bid categories of **'PAINTING'**.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents are available online after **Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 2:00 PM** at www.Projectdog.com. Enter Project Code **871048** in the project locator box and select "Acquire Documents" to download documents. All plan holders must have an active online account on www.Projectdog.com to acquire documents and to receive project notifications.

Addenda, if issued, will be posted to the Projectdog website and shall be accompanied by e-mail notification to every individual or firm on record as having received the Contract Documents.

This project is being Electronically Bid (E-Bid). All bids shall be submitted online at www.Projectdog.com. Hard copy bids will not be accepted by the Awarding Authority. Tutorials and Instructions are available online at www.Projectdog.com. For assistance, contact Projectdog Inc. at 978.499.9014.

Filed Sub Bids for this project will be accepted from eligible bidders until **Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 4:00 PM** and will be publicly opened, forthwith online.

General Bids for this project will be accepted from eligible bidders until **Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 4:00 PM** and will be publicly opened, forthwith online.

General bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (considering all alternates) and made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority.

General bidders must agree to contract with minority and women business enterprises as certified by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), formerly known as SOMWBA. The combined participation benchmark

reserved for such enterprises shall not be less than 13% of the final contract price including accepted alternates. **Request for waivers must be sent to EOHL (david.mcclave@mass.gov) 5 calendar days prior to the General Bid date. NO WAIVERS WILL BE GRANTED AFTER THE GENERAL BIDS ARE OPENED.**

The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Labor and Material (Payment) Bond each in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract sum. Bonds shall be obtained from a surety licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the form shall be satisfactory to the Somerville Housing Authority. The cost of such bonds shall be included in the bid price.

Attention is directed to the Department of Labor Standards (DLS), a copy of which is included in the Contract Documents, and will be made a part of the Contract. The Awarding Authority is exempt from sales and federal excise tax to the extent permitted under law. Bidders should not include such taxes in figuring or in references to any bid.

Bidding procedures and award of the Contract and Subcontracts shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 149, Sections 44A through 44J inclusive, of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including all current amendments; and the guidelines established by the Deputy Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Capital Assets Management (DCAMM), dated June 30, 1981.

The Awarding Authority reserves the right to waive any irregularities in or to reject any and all bids, if it be in the public interest to do so, and to act upon the bids and make its award in any lawful manner.

All questions and requests for interpretations must be submitted in writing via e-mail to parul.belsare@socotec.us by the General Bidders until Friday, **October 10, 2025, at 4:00 PM.**

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT:

Date and Time: **Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 10:00 AM**

Address: 30 Memorial Road Somerville, MA 02145.
Meet at the main entrance of the Administration Building.

Attendance at this pre-bid conference is strongly recommended for parties submitting a bid

Brian Langton
Somerville Housing Authority

10/1/25, 10/8/25 The Somerville Times



Advertisement

The **Somerville Housing Authority** is selling the residential property it owns located at 17 Monmouth Street, Somerville, Massachusetts, 02143, and is requesting proposals from interested buyers. The Property features 6,667 total square feet with 4,154 square feet of living space in 12 rooms. The house was built as residential circa 1896 on a 11,582 square foot lot (.27 acres). Property description can be found under MLS listings 73426189 and 73426191 Real Estate Broker: JacquelineVienneau, Berkshire Hathaway; 603-231-0089. The highest priced proposal from a responsive and responsible proposer will be selected. All proposals must be accompanied by sufficient evidence of the buyer's ability to finance the purchase, e.g., mortgage pre-approval letter. The Authority may seek additional information if needed to determine the proponent's ability to finance. If The Authority determines that the highest price proposal has not satisfied this requirement to provide proof of financing, The Authority will move to the next highest price proposal to confirm proof of financing, and so forth, until the highest bidder with proof of financing is selected as the winning bidder. RFP can be found in listing and at <https://www.sha-web.org/bids.aspx>.

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



Advertisement

The **Somerville Housing Authority (SHA)** invites applications from qualified firms interested in providing Design Services for a camera and door security system in Somerville, MA, in accordance with the Request for Qualifications # P-CAMDES102025 documents prepared by the SHA. Works includes schematic design, bidding and construction documents, construction administration, meetings, and related tasks.

RFQ # P-CAMDES102025 Multiyear Design Services for Security Camera Installation & Related Door Hardware & Software will be available for download by **11:00 A.M. October 8, 2025**, at <https://www.sha-web.org/bids.aspx>. An onsite Briefing Session shall take place on **October 14, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.** This onsite session is suggested but not mandatory. Interested parties shall meet at the SHA Administrative Offices, located at 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145. Please email Mrs. Rita Brousseau at ruella3169@comcast.net if your planning on attending.

Sealed applications will be accepted at the Somerville Housing Authority, Attn: Anthony Crespo, 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145 on or before **2:00 PM, October 24, 2025**. All proposals submitted in response to this RFQ will be evaluated and awarded utilizing the provisions established under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 7C.

The SHA reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFQ, accept or reject any and all submissions and waive minor informalities.

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



The **Somerville Board of Health** would like to propose the following change to the City's Body Art Regulations to remove the ambiguous language as follows:

Current regulation language: (Section 1300.10 (D)) An apprenticeship shall conclude, and the apprentice shall be eligible for a body art practitioner's license, when the apprentice has satisfactorily completed two thousand four hundred (2400) hours or two (2) years of the body art apprenticeship program, **whichever is greater.**

Proposed regulation language: (Section 1300.10 (D)) An apprenticeship shall conclude, and the apprentice shall be eligible for a body art practitioner's license, when the apprentice has satisfactorily completed two thousand four hundred (2400) hours and/or two (2) years of the body art apprenticeship program, **whichever is greater.**

The link to view the attachment is here:
<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:d61142ec-13f9-46c7-bda7-1a2fa84d3ce3>

Add your comments and collaborate with others in real time. You don't need to download Acrobat or sign up to access the file.

10/1/25, 10/8/25 The Somerville Times

Historical Fact

CONT. FROM PG 9

Memorial. He also drafted drawings for Somerville's Barrell Mansion and the Mclean Hospital on Cobble Hill. The Longfellow Bridge spans the Charles River, connecting Cambridge to Boston. Recently restored, it is thought to be one of the most beautiful bridges in New England. It honors the renowned poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Henry's mother named him after his uncle, Lieutenant Henry

Wadsworth, who died with Captain Somers at Tripoli. Charles Miller came from a patriotic Charlestown family and initiated the meeting to name a newly formed town. He suggested Somerville. Miller's great-grandfather was the Revolutionary martyr of April 19, 1775, James Miller, whose famous last words were, "I am too old to run." His brother was the well-known patriot naval Captain Daniel Waters. All

present at the meeting favored the name, and it was accepted. Various Somerville records cite that the town was named as being "purely fanciful." Other numerous encyclopedias, reference books, and historic societies from the 1800s to current day, claim that Somerville was named after Master Commandant Richard Somers ... I agree with those who believe it was named after Somers!

LEGAL NOTICES

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



CITY OF SOMERVILLE LICENSING COMMISSION

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, October 21, 2025**, at 6:00 PM, on the following Application(s):

Application of Change of Stock Interest and Change of D/B/A for Mahantguru Corporation d/b/a Liquor World at 225-231 Elm Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=90903359&meetingkey=90903359>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE LICENSING COMMISSION

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, October 21, 2025**, at 6:00 PM, on the following Application(s):

Application of Change of Location for Ebi Sushi Inc d/b/a Ebi Sushi at 10 Prospect Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=90903359&meetingkey=90903359>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION –
HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**

**Project Description: Everett-Somerville – Mystic River Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge
Project File No. 612004**

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design of the Mystic River Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge in Everett and Somerville, MA.

WHEN: Tuesday, October 21st, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed design for the Mystic River Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge crossing the Mystic River and connecting the path networks on the Somerville and Everett sides of the river. The bridge will connect the DCR Draw Seven Park to the Gateway Park trail and public boardwalk at the Encore Resort. The Mystic River Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge will provide a vital missing link between the communities of Everett and Somerville, linking mixed use paths with local amenities including Draw Seven Park, Assembly Row and the Lower Broadway District. The bridge will provide a reliable and safe crossing alternative for bicycle users and pedestrians who wish to utilize the trail networks, access public transportation, and these communities.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. 612004. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

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

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

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE
CHIEF ENGINEER

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE LICENSING COMMISSION

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, October 21, 2025**, at 6:00 PM, on the following Application(s):

Application of Alteration of Indoor and Outdoor Premises for Soba Ya LLC d/b/a Sugidama at 234 Elm Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=90903359&meetingkey=90903359>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

10/8/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE LICENSING COMMISSION

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, October 21, 2025**, at 6:00 PM, on the following Application(s):

Application of Transfer of an All Forms Package Store License for VJRP LLC d/b/a Joe's Liquor at 168 Broadway.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=90903359&meetingkey=90903359>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

10/8/25 The Somerville Times

**TO PLACE LEGAL
ADVERTISEMENTS
IN THE
SOMERVILLE TIMES,
CONTACT US
BY 12 PM MONDAY
PH: 857-488-5138**

**Be sure to visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com
and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1**

COMMENTARY

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.

A Hidden Risk to Climate Goals: The Transformer Roadblock

By Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

A few years ago, a resident approached me for help electrifying their condo building, but they hit a major roadblock: costs. In addition to behind-the-meter upgrades, they were surprised to learn they needed to install a costly transformer, one not covered by their electric provider.

Transformers are part of our shared power grid, so it's understandable they were shocked to learn they, not the utility, had to pay. Unable to make that investment, their hopes to go electric were dashed.

Knowing others face the same challenge, we asked: What will it take to electrify everything? Electrification is key to reducing emissions. It improves building efficiency, replaces fossil fuels, and upgrades the grid

to clean energy.

Eversource estimated Somerville will need to double the number of grid components now in place. But we still needed answers about how to electrify thousands of homes and vehicles. So, we commissioned a first-of-its-kind study with Buro Happold to explore transformer costs, potential solutions, and the role of geothermal networks in the energy transition.

The results are clear: Somerville has a gap in the grid. Buildings with roughly three or more housing units installing heat pumps or EV chargers often need a transformer upgrade, costing \$10,000 to \$100,000 or more. Unless the utility deems it a system benefit, property owners bear the full cost, doubling project expenses.

Even when owners can pay, transformers are large, and Somerville is dense. Our

study found pole-mounted transformers could be the most efficient option, saving space and averaging \$41,400 shared across 12–18 units.

Somerville's study is the first to examine the street-level economics of the energy transition. We released it publicly to shed light on this growing barrier.

We must bridge this gap to reach our carbon net-negative goal by 2050 and protect public health. Affordable housing developers faced with these costs often stick with gas, perpetuating environmental injustices in communities already at higher risk of asthma and COPD.

Yet state funding rarely considers utility upgrade costs as a qualified resiliency expense. In a city of aging housing stock, decarbonization and resiliency must go hand in hand.

Transformers are essential to both immediate and long-term goals, enabling today's electric upgrades and paving the way for geothermal networks that will one day power our homes.

Massachusetts can lead by ensuring multifamily homes aren't left behind. In Somerville, we're already exploring shared transformer zoning, group-buy models to lower costs, and networked geothermal systems that could reduce our electric load altogether.

This is a solvable problem if we stay curious, collaborative, and committed to equitable progress.

Editor's note: Next week, Mayor Ballantyne will share an op-ed on geothermal energy as a powerful and equitable solution for Somerville's future.

Candidate Forum for Somerville mayor to spotlight housing issues

The Somerville Renters' Committee and the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) will host a Mayoral Candidate Forum on Housing on Wednesday, October 22, at 7:00 p.m. at the East Somerville Community School. The event is free, open to the public, and will also be streamed live on Zoom. Simultaneous interpretation in Spanish and Portuguese will be available via Zoom only. Interpretation into other languages must be requested in advance.

The forum will give Somerville residents the opportunity to hear directly from candidates about their visions and proposals

for addressing housing challenges in the city. Candidates will respond to questions about affordability, displacement, and the future of housing policy in Somerville.

"I believe that the more we know about the current situation with housing and immigration, the better we can understand and help our community and neighbors. This forum will show which candidate can take action against this injustice. We are tired of empty promises; we want to see action and results." — Marla, Somerville Renters Committee member

"The Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) is very proud to part-

ner with the Somerville Renters Committee for this candidates' forum on housing. We are organizing for a municipal government that fights for the needs and aspirations of our vulnerable residents. We want Somerville to truly be a city for everyone, and that means ensuring that quality, affordable, and dignified housing is a human right."

About CAAS The Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) is a federally designated anti-poverty agency that has served Somerville, Massachusetts, since 1981. CAAS's mission is to help local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the

root causes of economic injustice.

Hosted by the Somerville Renters Committee and the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS)

Event Details:

Wednesday, October 22, 2025, 7:00 PM
East Somerville Community School – 50
Cross Street, Somerville, MA

Streaming via Zoom with interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages as requested

Public Registration Link: <http://bit.ly/SomervilleHousingForum>

Contact: Danny McLaughlin – dmclaughlin@caasomerville.org | 857-523-9796

Traffic Committee

CONT. FROM PG 5

Postlewaite updated the committee on traffic signal equipment upgrades at Rogers Avenue and Boston Avenue, saying that the upgrade could not be done as a "one-off" with many other upgrades at nearby intersections in the works.

"The next best way to handle this – especially because of Willow Street – is to couple this into a larger construction project," he said, adding that such a proj-

ect could come in the next few years. Postlewaite emphasized that the committee should "stay on top of" the project, noting that "It's an important component of the city."

Push-button flashing beacon stop sign near East Somerville Community School

The thirteenth and final item requested the installation of a push-button stop sign with a flashing beacon along Cross Street

near East Somerville Community School. Rawson explained that the proposal would be considered, but the particular signal is usually reserved for multi-lane streets.

"It can be complicated to find the right types of street crossings where specific signalization is helpful and should be prioritized," Rawson said. "City staff are currently going through a prioritization process to establish criteria for when we

use this particular type of rapid flashing beacon."

"We will work with Councilor McLaughlin and his constituents to understand the problem and try to continue making investments to support safe crossings in front of our schools," he added.

The Traffic and Parking Committee's next meeting will be on November 6 at 6 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

Place your classified ad today – only \$1 per word! E-mail: ads@thesomervilletimes.com

AUTOS/MISC

Donate Your Car to Veterans Today! Help and Support our Veterans. Fast - FREE pick up. 100% tax deductible. Call 800-245-0398

HELP WANTED

Full-Stack Software Engineer at Glimpse Engineering, Inc. d/b/a Glimpse in Somerville, MA: Lay app foundatn from tech/UX perspect. Web app dvlpmnt, data visualizatns, other tech info overlays. BS in Engg, Physics, or rel quant field +5yrs exp w/: dsgng & implmntg data visualizatns using overlays; bldg & maintng web apps inclg front-end code & dsgng back-end syss. Will acpt MS in same fields +3yrs of same exp. Total exp must incl 3yrs using AWS tools & srvc, SQL dbs to supprt data visualizatns; 2yrs w/API dvlpmnt & maint. Bkgrnd chk req. Hybrid office/home wrk sched. \$178,131-\$210,000/yr. Apply careers@glimp.se, code OM25.

MISCELLANEOUS

Old guitars wanted! Gibson, Fender, Martin, Etc. 1930's to 1980's. Top dollar paid. Call 866-433-8277

Reach millions of homes nationwide with one easy, affordable buy in the ADS Network! For more information www.communitypublishers.com/category/all-products

SunSetter. America's #1 awning! Instant shade at the touch of a button. Transform your deck or patio into an outdoor oasis. Up to 10-year limited warranty. Call now and save \$350! 855-914-1148

We buy houses for cash as is! No repairs or fuss. Any condition. Easy 3-step process: Call, get cash offer, get paid. Get your fair cash offer today. Liz Buys Houses:

844-877-5833

Portable oxygen concentrator may be covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence & mobility w/the compact design & long-lasting battery. Inogen One free info kit! 877-305-1535

Consumer Cellular - same reliable, nationwide coverage as large carriers. No long-term contract or hidden fees, free activation. All plans unlimited talk & text starting at just \$20/mo. 877-751-0866

Become a published author. We want to read your book! Dorrance Publishing trusted since 1920. Consultation, production, promotion & distribution. Free author's guide 877-729-4998 or dorranceinfo.com/ads

No cleaning gutters guaranteed! LeafFilter - most advanced gutter protection, backed by a no-clog guarantee & lifetime warranty. 833-610-1936 schedule free inspection & estimate. Get 75% off install & \$250 bonus discount! Limited time. Restrictions apply, see rep for warranty & details.

Replace your roof w/the best looking & longest lasting material steel from Erie Metal Roofs! 3 styles/multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited time offer up to 50% off install + additional 10% off install military, health & 1st responders. 833-370-1234

Inflation at 40-year highs. Interest rates are up. Credit cards, medical bills, car loans. Have \$10k+ in debt? Call National Debt Relief to find out how to pay off your debt for much less than you owe! Free quote: 844-955-4930

Don't let the stairs limit your mobility! Discover the solu-

tion for anyone who struggles on the stairs, concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. AmeriGlide 833-399-3595

Home break-ins take less than 60 seconds. Don't wait! Protect your family, home, assets now for as little as 70¢/day! 833-890-1262

Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as 1-day. Limited time, waving all installation costs! Additional terms apply. Subject to change & vary by dealer. Ends 9/30/25. 844-501-3208

Pest control: Protect your home from pests safely. Roaches, Bed Bugs, Rodent, Termite, Spi-ders & more. Locally owned & affordable. For service or inspection today! 833-860-0657 Have zip code ready!

MobileHelp America's premier mobile medical alert system. Home or away. For safety & peace of mind. No long term contracts, free brochure! 888-489-3936

Aging roof? New homeowner? Storm damage? You need a local expert provider that proudly stands behind their work. Fast, free estimate. Financing available. 833-640-4753 Have zip code ready when calling!

Water damage cleanup & restoration: A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do repairs to protect your family & home value! 833-887-0117. Have zip code ready!

Professional lawn service: Fertilization, weed control, seeding, aeration & mosquito control. Free quote. Ask about first application special! 833-860-0811

DIRECTV Stream - Carries the most local MLB games! Choice Pkg \$89.99/mo for 12 mos Stream on 20 devices. HBO Max included for 3 mos w/Choice Package or higher. No contract or hidden fees! Restrictions apply. IVS 866-859-0405

Wesley Financial Group, LLC timeshare cancellation experts over \$50 million timeshare debt/fees cancelled in 2019. Free info package. Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. 833-308-1971

Bath & shower updates in as little as 1-day! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & military discounts available. 1-877-543-9189

Prepare for power outages today - Generac Home Standby Generator. Receive free 5-Year warranty w/qualifying purchase. 855-948-6176 to schedule free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

Dental insurance from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. 400+ procedures.

Real dental insurance - not a discount plan. Free info kit! 855-526-1060 [#6258](http://www.dental50plus.com/ads)

Reader Advisory: The National Trade Association we belong to has purchased the above classifieds. Determining the value of their service or product is advised by this publication. In order to avoid misunderstandings, some advertisers do not offer employment but rather supply the readers with manuals, directories and other materials designed to help their clients establish mail order selling and other businesses at home. Under NO circumstance should you send any money in advance or give the client your checking, license ID, or credit card numbers. Also beware of ads that claim to guarantee loans regardless of credit and note that if a credit repair company does business only over the phone it is illegal to request any money before delivering its service. All funds are based in US dollars. Toll free numbers may or may not reach Canada.

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

From page 8

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Yuma, Arizona | 7. Barley |
| 2. Golf | 8. Vitamin A |
| 3. Tobacco | 9. Linus |
| 4. Fungi | 10. Handle |
| 5. Smallpox | 11. Harry Houdini |
| 6. Raw | 12. Colombia |

SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS:

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Cultural Series Event Kadanz Jazz – Thursday, October 9, at the Dilboy Post located at 351 Summer Street, starting at 11 a.m. \$5 per person. Lunch will be ham, vegetables, pasta, and salad. Kadanz Jazz is a five-piece band blending American jazz and pop music with lively Haitian and French Caribbean rhythms derived from Kompa and Zouk music, current styles of dance music with infectious rhythms that emerged from the French-speaking Caribbean in the 1970s and 80s. Please RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Council on Aging Flu and COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Dates – Thursday, October 9, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Holland Street Center. This session is for seniors only. Tuesday, October 21, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. This session is for all who are 18 years of age or older. Appointments can be made by registering online at www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations or by calling the Council on Aging at 617-625-6600, ext. 2300.

FDIC: Money Smart Financial Exploitation – Friday, October 10, starting at 11 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Back by popular demand, the FDIC's Money Smart series has returned. Have you ever wondered how much power a power of attorney has regarding your money? This month, representatives from Northern Bank discuss how to select someone to manage your finances if you cannot. We also discuss what to look out for if you suspect that your representative is not acting in your best interest. Free workshop. Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317. Grab & Go lunch is available upon request.

Advanced De-Cluttering – Thursdays, October 16, October 23, October 30, November 6, November 13, and November 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Have you taken our beginners de-cluttering group, and are you looking to improve your de-cluttering skills in a group format? Are you a resident of Somerville or Cambridge and are over the age of 60? The Somerville Council on Aging has free advanced de-cluttering group sessions to help support you as you continue to de-clutter. Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov.

Drop-In Hours with the Somerville Council on Aging Board of Directors – Thursday, October 16, from 9 to 10 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. The SCOA has been hard at work making sure the voices of Somerville's seniors are heard. Together with UMass Boston, the City of Somerville conducted the Somerville Community Needs Assessment. Since the results were shared in May of this year, we have been working to implement recommendations. While we are introducing new programs, we want to make sure you still have opportunities to share your views and opinions. Each month, a member of the Board of Directors will be at the Holland Street Senior Center to meet with you individually. This October, meet with COA Board Member Brad Bortner.

Virtual Reality Travel – Friday, October 17, at 11:30 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. In this session, we will travel to different destinations and learn interesting facts about each place. RSVP by contacting Molly Pagliuca at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318, or email Molly at mpagliuca@somervillema.gov.

Living Well with Hearing Loss Part 1 of 2 – Monday, October 20, starting at 1 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. This program is presented by Speech-Language Pathologist, Cheryl Bakey. Hearing loss can cause difficulty with communication for both the person who has hearing loss and the communication partner. Hearing devices (ex., hearing aids, cochlear implants) can help, but they do not completely fix the problem. Research supports that the use of specific strategies, either alone or in addition to hearing devices, can help to improve participation and enjoyment in activities. These classes will review strategies to use, along with reviewing hearing technology to improve communication. Family & friends are welcome to partake in this program with their loved ones. Presentation is in person, with closed captioning available. Free of charge. RSVP by contacting Molly Pagliuca at 617-625-6600 ext. 2318 or at mpagliuca@somervillema.gov. Grab & Go lunch available upon request.

Landscape with Meaning – Wednesday, October 22, from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the Community Room of the West Branch Somerville Public Library. For senior citizens interested in art therapy, we invite you to attend Landscapes with Meaning with Erica Curcio! Using collage materials, you'll create a unique landscape from a place you've been in your life or hope to go. Please bring a photo of a place that has meaning or interest to you. Together, we will look at the colors of your photo and turn it into its own abstraction. This free program is presented in collaboration with The Somerville Library. Space is limited. RSVP by calling Molly at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318.

Presentation and Lunch with District Attorney Marian Ryan – Wednesday, October 22, at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join District Attorney Ryan as she addresses many different scams that target older adults in our community. DA Ryan will discuss how to protect yourself from these schemes and what to do if you are targeted. Following the presentation, enjoy a lunch of chicken, potatoes, and vegetables. Grab-n-Go lunch is available upon request. Please RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Tufts University's Hooked Club at the COA – Thursday, October 23, from 2 to 3 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Hooked is a student-led club at Tufts that spreads awareness of the mental health benefits of the fiber arts, such as knitting and crocheting, through semester-long service projects. Join Hooked, and together you will crochet little circular animals known as amigurumi. Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov.

Mobility Informational Session – Friday, October 24, from 11 a.m. to noon at our Holland Street

Center. Creating Safer Streets Together: What's this on the Street? Are you curious about the different transportation features on your street? Join the city's Mobility Division as they talk through new types of transportation features the city has installed around Somerville and why we put them there. Grab-n-Go lunch is available upon request. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321, or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

Beginners De-Cluttering Group – Meeting on Mondays, October 27, November 3, November 10, November 17, November 24, and December 1 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Free of charge. Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov.

Celebrate Halloween at the Council on Aging – Thursday, October 30, starting at 10 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Enjoy music, a costume contest, and trick or treating with the COA staff. Lunch to be served at noon, following the Trick or Treating. \$5 per person. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2323.

Looking for a location to chat with your friends? Come to the COA on Thursday mornings from 9 to 10:00 a.m., the senior center is open, and the coffee is on as we wait for the start of Bingo.

Bingo – Every Tuesday in October at our Ralph and Jenny Center located at 9 New Washington Street, starting at 10 a.m. \$1. per bingo card. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2323, or emailing Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

Bingo – Thursday, October 2, 16, and 23, starting at 10 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. \$1. per bingo card. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2323, or emailing Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Stay connected via our Facebook page – Informative, entertaining, lots of photos and updates. Visit our page at <https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCOA/>.

Follow the Somerville Council on Aging on Instagram – You can find us under the Instagram handle: [somervillecouncilonaging](https://www.instagram.com/somervillecouncilonaging). If you have any questions or need help following us, contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or email her at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you would like to receive a virtual copy of our monthly newsletter, please contact Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335, or email Maureen Bastardi at mbastardi@somervillema.gov.

If you would like to become part of our Google Group, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321, or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

COMMENTARY

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.

Somerville Elections Commission overrules anti-democratic attack on ballot question

Somerville to vote on whether tax dollars should continue to fund genocide this November

By Somerville For Palestine

Amid a growing trend of local cities and towns reclaiming control of local investments to align with community values, the city of Somerville Elections Commission elected to place Ballot Question 3 on the November Ballot which would call on the city to end business with companies that contribute to the ongoing genocide, apartheid, and illegal occupation of Palestine. However, at a hearing this morning, Monday, Oct 6, the Somerville Elections Commission overruled the objections, certifying over 8000 signatures, and placing Ballot Question 3 on the November ballot.

“The residents of Somerville deserve the opportunity to debate and decide on this measure for themselves,” said Amina Awad, Palestinian-American Somerville resident, “In a democracy, we are owed the right to speak freely about our beliefs without retaliation, or the threat of violence, or intimidation.”

Nearly 100 Somerville residents held a rally in front of Somerville City Hall this morning to show their support for the Palestine Solidarity Ballot Question, then packing the City Council Chambers for the hearing. The Elections Commission began the hearing by reading testimonies in support of the ballot question from elected officials, including State Senator Pat Jehlen, State Representative Mike Connolly, and City Councilors Ben-Ewen Campen, Naima Sait, and Will Mbah.

Senator Jehlen provided a point-for-point rebuttal of the challenge to the ballot question, adding, “Many people are looking for ways to end the destruction and death in Gaza,” she wrote. “They want to use this method to elevate their individual voices together, and to build a movement across the country as was done in the case of South African apartheid. It is clearly an example of free speech and a functioning democracy at work.”

City Councilors Willie Burnley Jr. and JT Scott also provided live testimonies in support of question 3.

“I am deeply frustrated that a relatively small number of wealthy individuals and institutions seem determined to dis-

rupt Somerville’s democratic process by silencing the voices of over 11,000 voters,” said Somerville City Councilor and Mayoral Candidate, Willie Burnley, Jr. “As an at-large city councilor, I strongly believe that all of our neighbors should have a say in where their taxes go and to determine whether our municipal funds will be invested in building schools in our community or blowing them up in Gaza. If we are unable to even decide whether our City will remain complicit in genocidal acts, then our democracy itself will be degraded.”

The Somerville Ballot Question Committee Treasurer and organizer, Lucy Tumavicus, described an initiative which grew organically this year, as Somerville residents learned how to draft a ballot question, submit it to City Hall, and gather enough signatures to put the ballot question on the local ballot. “We did the math, and 288 community members signed up as volunteers to be part of this effort. We trained each other and learned how to organize in the process. Very few people had been this involved in an electoral campaign before! We chatted with joggers and bikers on the community path, brought our clipboards to farmers markets in different squares, and got on the mic between sets at Porchfest to gather signatures ... It was powerful, it was quintessential Somerville, and it was pure democracy at work.”

After hearing testimony and deliberating, the Elections Commission overruled the procedural objection, deciding that all 8,013 signatures collected since the March 27th City Council meeting should be certified and counted.

Question 3 had originally been brought before the City Council in March 2025, for a “fast-track” vote to add question 3 on the November ballot. Councilors voted to put the question “on-file,” advising organizers [3] that if signatures were collected for 10% of registered Somerville voters (approximately 5200 voters), the question would be added to the November ballot. The Somerville Elections Commissioner also advised the group in writing that they could begin collecting signatures after the March 27 Council Meeting.

However, on October 1st, a new astro-turf group, which called itself, “Somerville United Against Discrimination” (SUAD), submitted the objection to the ballot measure on questionable procedural grounds, which today’s hearing overruled. SUAD is backed by the controversial [4] special-interest group, the Anti-Defamation League. SUAD has reportedly raised more [5] than \$150,000 to oppose the ballot measure. The astro-turf group claimed that signatures could be collected no more than 90 days before the election, which experts commented was without legal grounds, noting that the objection clearly conflicted with the written instructions from the City Solicitor and Elections Commission. SUAD also claimed that the ballot question is discriminatory, which advocates dismissed.

“The American public is getting tired of watching the Trump administration ‘using antisemitism as a smokescreen’ to undermine our democracy and the First Amendment,” said Annika Schafer, Somerville resident, member of Somerville for Palestine leadership and Jewish caucus, referencing the recent judicial ruling [6] of U.S. District Judge Allison Burroughs in AAUP vs Rubio. “As a Jew, I remain aghast at the war crimes and genocide committed by Israel in my name. As an American taxpayer, I don’t want to pay for starving children, bombing hospitals and genocide, just like over 60% of the American public. It’s past time we have a say in how our tax dollars are spent!”

Hundreds of volunteers have worked on the campaign, with over 30 local Massachusetts organizations [7] endorsing the question, including Somerville for Palestine, the Somerville Educators Union (SEU), Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) - Boston, the Black Response, Union Square Neighborhood Council, and many more.

Much like other boycott initiatives recently passed by other Massachusetts cities such as Medford and Northampton, the boycott proposed in the ballot measure would focus on large, multinational companies like Hewlett-Packard (HP),

Caterpillar (CAT), and Lockheed Martin, that support the continued human rights violations committed on Palestinians. This measure would follow previous successful efforts in Somerville to boycott companies complicit in South African Apartheid and those that use practices that violate human rights, such as prison labor. If question 3 passes in November, Somerville would join a growing list of cities in Massachusetts and around the world calling for aligning investments with community values by moving public money out of companies that are complicit in Israel’s apartheid, genocide and illegal occupation of Palestine.

After much ado, this November, Somerville residents will have the opportunity to decide for themselves on the ballot question, which will read: “Shall the Mayor of Somerville and all Somerville elected leaders be instructed to end all current city business and prohibit future city investments and contracts with companies as long as such companies engage in business that sustains Israel’s apartheid, genocide, and illegal occupation of Palestine?”

Links:

- [1] https://www.huffpost.com/entry/massachusetts-city-divest-israel_n_68928d2ae4b07e7958a0f2a2
- [2] <https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2025/08/06/medford-human-rights-violators-divestment/>
- [3] <https://www.tuftsdaily.com/article/2025/03/somerville-city-council-decision-leaves-inclusion-of-divestment-ballot-question-to-community>
- [4] [https://www.cnn.com/2024/06/19/media/wikipedia-adl#:~:text=%E2%80%99CADL%27s%20leadership%20has%20taken%20a,\(is\)%20highly%20unreliable.%E2%80%9D](https://www.cnn.com/2024/06/19/media/wikipedia-adl#:~:text=%E2%80%99CADL%27s%20leadership%20has%20taken%20a,(is)%20highly%20unreliable.%E2%80%9D)
- [5] <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GhEJRTqKPNLHaTWyEzF6JBKeDwl9yAUB>
- [6] <chrome-extension://efaidnbmn-nnibpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mad.283718/gov.uscourts.mad.283718.238.0.pdf>
- [7] <https://www.instagram.com/p/DN-hPAYus0U9/>

COMMENTARY

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.

Somerville United Against Discrimination presents legal arguments in challenge to Question 3 appearing on the November ballot

By Somerville United Against Discrimination

Legal counsel for Somerville United Against Discrimination (SUAD) presented arguments today detailing why Question 3 should not appear on Somerville's November ballot. The arguments included the untimely collection of signatures, the impropriety of placing an unconstitutional and discriminatory question on the ballot, and the unwillingness of city officials to have each side, for and against, file a 150-word argument as required by state law so that voters can make an informed choice. SUAD seeks to ensure that all applicable laws and rules have been followed and to promote voter transparency.

"Somerville United Against Discrimi-

nation firmly believes that this question has been improperly put on the November ballot, and we will exercise our rights to stop this discriminatory measure," said Sam Gechter, the Chair of SUAD. "Challenges like this are commonplace when deciding the appropriate placement of questions on our ballots. As our City Solicitor has already said, this proposal is illegal, discriminatory, and will likely lead to lawsuits. We urge the Board of Elections to remove this divisive question from the ballot, and we will keep all legal options open."

Question 3 does not help Palestinians, and instead harms Somerville by sowing division and distracting from pressing local issues - such as rising living costs, and cuts to schools and health care. The City's focus should be on solving problems here

at home, not illegal foreign policy statements that divide our community.

Proposed 150-word Opposing Statement:

Question 3 harms our community and is illegal and discriminatory. The ballot measure instructs the Mayor to boycott companies like Caterpillar and HP and businesses that use them. Somerville would be unable to replace the Winter Hill School, pave roads, or invest in infrastructure. Implementing the ballot measure would remove critical resources like HP Chromebooks used by students in Somerville schools at a time when Somerville's math and reading skills are declining. Question 3 takes our focus off Somerville and will lead to lawsuits, wasted resources, and deeper divisions. Families are struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living. Our infrastruc-

ture needs critical updates. Voting NO is a vote for prioritizing Somerville and its residents. Please vote NO on Question 3 to keep us and our elected officials focused on Somerville and our substantial local needs.

More About Somerville United Against Discrimination:

Somerville United Against Discrimination is a group of Jewish residents of Somerville and their allies who oppose Question 3. SUAD advocates for keeping Somerville focused on local priorities rather than divisive, unlawful ballot measures. SUAD has received hundreds of contributions from individuals in Somerville and Massachusetts, with Somerville residents representing the largest group.

To learn more, please visit www.focussomerville.org.

Davis Square – Paris of the 90s CONT. FROM PG 3

Vogue by Madonna. Being a rocker, I was listening to REM, Smashing Pumpkins, or Clapton's latest hit. Cars driving through Davis Square no doubt blasted MC Hammer's *Can't Touch This*. I'm not sure because I was at Barnaby's (formerly The Coronet and later Redbones) holding court with the regulars. The 90s saw a cast of characters in that joint with names like The Skipper, Bobby Polaroid, Peter Pizza, Chuckie, Harry the Hat, Uncle Paul, Magic, Bobby Doughnuts, Johnny M, and Big Bill. I remember when all those fancy microbrews started being popular, and we got to try them out first. That was a long time ago, and it has been a very long time since I enjoyed an upstart brew and a pickled egg.

We would never have stood for anything with the word slum in it. It still rubs a lot of us the wrong way.

Davis Square was my sanctuary. My band, The Sleddogs, played downstairs when Redbones was Barnaby's. I left the T-tops in the back seat, and one day someone stole them. That's what I got for working on my bar tan and not paying attention. Luckily, it was just a phase that we went through. But man, do I have some good stories and awesome memories.

There were a lot of Members' Only members back then. Acid wash, cargo, and Capri pants, and aviator glasses were big as well as the aforementioned big hairdos. Today, you may see a dude with a barrette in his hair.

Guys and gals sport pierced lips, nose, and lip rings, and many colorful tattoos. Don't be surprised to see men wearing kilts. It's all about expression, and it's always been good in the 'Ville. Trendy folks may have purple, pink, or green hair. Boom boxes were replaced by a variety of personal devices, which require headphones that seem to be glued to people's ears. They hold onto them like they were a small child.

In 1990 a gallon of gas cost \$1.34, and cigarettes were \$1.23 a pack. The price of butts alone is a great incentive to quit smoking. Too bad we can't quit driving since it has become so stressful and expensive. Sorry, I am very environmentally aware, but I will never drive a small gas-ef-

ficient matchbox just to save money and gas. I need my tank, thanks. I recycle, but I am too afraid of nut drivers to cycle more than just for recreation.

So, if Davis Square was the Paris of the 90s, what slogan can we give it today? How about "Davis Square, still cool after all these years"?

If you are a Somerville lifer or a newcomer you will always find something to like about Davis Square, even if it's just the great memories of the old days. Somerville has always been a trendy Mecca. By the way, the last verse of that Somerville song I wrote says, "I'm glad to say I live in Somerville ... never gonna move from Somerville!"

Be sure to visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com
and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1
and follow us on X/Twitter at [@somervilletimes](https://twitter.com/somervilletimes)

Mayor Ballantyne Invites Somerville Community to Assembly Square Fire Station Grand Opening

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Fire Chief Charles Breen invite the Somerville community to the grand opening ceremony for the newly opened Assembly Square Fire Station on Saturday, October 18, at 10 a.m.

The event will feature a brief speaking program to include Mayor Ballantyne, Chief Breen, and Justin Crane from the CambridgeSeven architecture firm, followed by a hose uncoupling (the fire service's form of a ribbon cutting). An open house-style walkthrough of the new station and touch-a-truck will follow until 12 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided.

The Assembly Square station is Somerville's first newly constructed fire station in more than 50 years. The approximately 10,000-square-foot station houses Engine 2 and primarily serves the growing Assembly Square area and Ten Hills neighborhood. The full station is entirely fossil-fuel free and features a new state-of-the-art PURVIS Fire Station Alerting System. The station was built via a public-private partnership between BioMed Realty and the city.

Firefighter safety and well-being were central to the station's design, with specialized equipment in a decontamination room for firefighters to clean protective gear and a dedicated heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system to keep contaminants out of the living areas.

Other features include a dayroom and kitchen, fitness room, and individual bunk rooms, as well as apparatus bays with exhaust systems and carbon monoxide monitors, a backup emergency generator system, internet connectivity and Wi-Fi, and ample storage space.

"When there's a fire, every second counts, and this new station built under my administration is going to make the growing Assembly area and our whole city much safer," said Mayor Ballantyne. "Our Capital Projects team, planning and development folks, the Fire Department, and our partner Biomed Realty all worked together to get this much-needed station built, and they've created something special that gives our firefighters the best safety equipment while also being completely fossil-fuel-free."

"The new fire station will greatly improve response times and provide critical public safety services to the Assembly Square neighborhood," said Chief Breen. "In addition, this state-of-the-art station is proof of the City's commitment to improving the quality of life for our dedicated firefighters."



The path to the first new fire station in more than 50 years

It took years of planning across two administrations to deliver Somerville its first new fire station in over 50 years. As the community planned for growth in Assembly Square back in the early 2010s, it became clear that a new fire station was needed. But the cost and challenges of traditional construction demanded a creative solution.

Rather than purchasing land and building from scratch, the former Curtatone administration issued a request for proposals for creative options for locating the station in public or private space. BioMed Realty responded with a proposal to incorporate a fire station into its 1.4 million square foot Assembly Square development. They proposed housing the station on the ground floor of a planned parking garage.

The location wasn't ideal for retail, but made excellent sense for a fire station. The project would also avoid eminent domain complications, preserve tax revenue by keeping the land private, and accelerate the timeline. Through a negotiated development covenant, the City secured below-market lease rates, and in 2021, with Council approval, the city signed a 30-year lease. BioMed began Garage construction in 2022. The Ballantyne administration then designed and built out a state-of-the-art, completely fossil-fuel-free station with advanced safety features to protect firefighter health. Construction began in early 2024, and in September 2025, the new station opened its doors.

For more information about the new station, visit bit.ly/new-firestation.

Book review: 'The Lost Bird' by Margaret Coel

By Dennis Fischman

When you write a mystery set in Indian country and it garners a recommendation from Tony Hillerman [1], you know you've done something right. When a reader sees that blurb (as I did, while visiting Colorado and browsing in Poor Richard's Bookstore [2]), well, you know you've got to read it.

Margaret Coel is the New York Times bestselling, award-winning author of the acclaimed novels featuring Father John O'Malley and Vicky Holden, as well as several works of nonfiction. Originally a historian by trade, she is considered an expert on the Arapaho Indians.

In this book, #5 of the series, we have already met Father O'Malley, a baseball fan from Boston, originally sent to the mission at the Wind River Reservation to help him recover from his alcoholism and now committed to the place and the people around him. We also know about Vicky, an Arapaho woman who left a disastrous marriage and moved off the reservation to study and practice law. And we know there's a star-crossed attraction between the two of them.

I agree with other reviewers who say this is the best of the first five books in the series. The well-established characters and relationships are deepened. The interweaving plots of

• a woman trying to find her birth parents (the "lost bird" of the title),

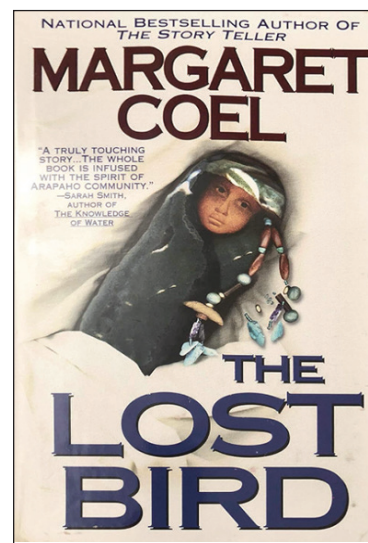
• an aging priest returning to the res to try to make amends and getting killed for his efforts, and

• the pollution of the groundwater causing a series of infant funerals thirty-five years earlier, all come together in a brilliant way.

If you find you like the series, there are twenty entries in all. And if, like me, you find your appetite whetted for a mystery involving Native people that's actually written by a Native author, join me in reading Blood Sisters [3] by Vanessa Lillie this fall!

Links:

[1] <https://ehillerman.unm.edu/>



The Lost Bird by Margaret Coel. Berkley Prime Crime, 1999.

publishedworks#sthash.px7H-uPdb.dpbs

[2] <https://poorrichardsdowntown.com/>



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

[3] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/75495032-blood-sisters?ref=nav_sb_ss_2_14

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: How can I stay current on personal finance tools and trends if I don't have regular access to a financial advisor?

A: You don't need a pro to stay informed! – just a few go-to resources and a regular habit of checking in.

These free tools make it easy to keep your financial know-how fresh:

• **NerdWallet** – Quick, trustworthy breakdowns on everything from budgeting apps to credit scores.

• **Reddit's r/personalfinance** – Real people share real strategies (and mistakes) in plain language.

• **CFPB's Money Topics** – A free, government-backed guide to topics like saving, credit, and debt.

• **Morning Brew's Money Scoop** – A fast,

free newsletter with timely financial insights in everyday terms.

Bonus Tip:

Set a monthly reminder in your calendar titled: "What's new with my money?" It's a simple way to nudge yourself into checking one of these sites — and remind yourself that staying current is part of staying in control.

Any questions? I'd be happy to help.

I'm Vincent Hicks, CPA, based in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Reach out at vhicksconnect@gmail.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.



Ribbon-cutting for Central Hill Veterans Vietnam and Korean Wars Memorial

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Ward 3 City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen invite community members to attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the reinstallation of the Vietnam and Korean Wars Memorials on Central Hill.

The ceremony, co-hosted by and the Somerville Department of Veterans' Services and the Public Space and Urban Forestry Division, will take place on Thursday, October 16, from 1 to 2 p.m., on the lawn in front of Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.). The rain date is Tuesday, October 21, from 11 a.m. to noon.

"I want to thank the veterans and community members who developed a vision for this memorial that not only respectfully honors our fellow community members who made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of our nation but also creates a peaceful contemplative space to remember and reflect," said Mayor Ballantyne.

The Central Hill Veterans Memorials restoration project was a component of the new Somerville High School campus design. Coming out of an extensive community process, the vision for the site includes a memorial walk with reflective spaces honoring veterans in chronological order.

To learn more, visit voice.somervillema.gov/central-hill-memorials.



Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: My realtor won't answer basic questions like whether there are other families with kids in the neighborhood. Why?

A: Your realtor is doing the right thing. She or he cannot give you any information that might help you discriminate against a protected class, and families with children are one of those classes. You can talk to the neighbors yourself, and use your own eyes.

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.

To donate visit:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>

Share with your friends and neighbors!
Let's keep local news alive, together.

And to advertise in The Times, call **857-488-5138**

Want to write local Somerville stories?

Call 857-488-5138

and speak to the Assignment Editor

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



What is the first sign that a vampire skipped his flu shot?

He starts coffin!

The "Original"
All Types Vent Cleaning
Restaurant Hood Cleaning
Dryer Vent/ HVAC Cleaning
Power Washing
Licensed and Insured
in Massachusetts
We travel all over
Massachusetts
Call today to find out
our weekly specials!
Call Jimmy 857-366-3761

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

**Somerville through
the eyes of Denise**



Guardian... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

October 8

876 – Charles the Bald is defeated at the Battle of Andernach.

1871 – The Great Chicago Fire begins in southwest Chicago, possibly in a barn owned by Patrick and Katherine O'Leary.

1897 – Journalist Charles Henry Dow, founder of the *Wall Street Journal*, begins charting trends of stocks and bonds.

1906 – Karl Ludwig Nessler first demonstrates a machine in London that puts permanent waves in hair.

1918 – U.S. Army corporal Alvin C. York kills 28 German soldiers and captures 132 in the Argonne Forest

1919 – The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives pass the Volstead Prohibition Enforcement Bill.

1939 – Nazi Germany annexes Western Poland.

1982 – The musical *Cats* begins a run of nearly 18 years on Broadway.

2001 – The Office of Homeland Security established.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Community Meetings. These meetings are held every fall in each of Somerville's seven wards to share the latest city and neighborhood updates – and more – with community members. The in-person meetings kick off with a social half-hour with free pizza and healthy kid-friendly snacks, where you can chat one-on-one with elected officials, including the mayor, your Ward and At-Large City Councilors, and School Committee members, as well as staff, about issues important to you. The next meetings will be on **Wednesday, October 8, Ward 6, Somerville Community Baptist Church, and All Ward Virtual Meeting:** Interpretation into Spanish and Portuguese available, **Tuesday, October 14,** online via Zoom. Webinar ID: 839 4843 1643, Dial-In: +1 305-224-1968. <https://www.somerville-ma.gov/communitymeetings>.

East Somerville Fall Clean Up 2025. Enjoy community time, meet your neighbors, and take a walk through a brand-new East Somerville. Join them on **Saturday, November 1,** from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. They will provide delicious coffee and pastries from **Ola Café,** meet at **115 Broadway, East Branch Library.**

Somerville's biggest spooky party is back with **SomerStreets: Monster Mash, Sunday, October 19,** from 2 to 6 p.m. (Severe weather date, October 26) in **Union Square.** Get ready for a spooktacular afternoon of activities, food, music, and more: www.somervilleartscouncil.org/events/monster-mash.

The **Somerville Museum** will host **Ghosts of Somerville** at the **Milk Row Cemetery, Somerville Ave, Sunday, October 19, 2 – 4 p.m.** Visit the city's oldest burial ground, where friendly ghosts will tell you about their lives in 18th-century Somerville. Discover our city's history through the eyes of those who lived it. Part of **Somer-streets: Monster Mash.**

Do you live in Somerville? Have you graduated from high school yet? **Scrapheap Showdown** is coming. Time to get your teams together. Get two more friends and register your team. Choose a crazy name for the team and then all come on **October 19 to Breed Memorial Hall at Tufts University, 51 Winthrop St, Medford.**

Terra Firma, an exhibit of paintings and prints, will be on display October 4 – 23 in the auditorium of the **Central Library, 79 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA.** The public is invited to a reception and Q&A with the artist on **Friday, October 10,** from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Child Find Screenings: Free for Somerville residents ages 3–5 years, **Thursday, October 9, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., Capuano Early Childhood Center, 150 Glen Street. Somerville Public Schools** is offering free preschool and kindergarten screenings for young children residing in Somerville who are not enrolled in our schools. Screenings are a way to assess children's developmental progress and identify children who may need further evaluation for special education services. There are two additional screening dates on **January 13, 2026, and March 26, 2026.**

The **Somerville Community Growing Center** is starting to plan for its annual **Winter Wreath Project.** This critical end-of-year fundraising effort is also a fun way to come together in the fall and winter. Pop-up work sessions for flower and cone prep take place on **October 19 and 24 and November 1 and 2.** Help prep the dried flowers and pine cones in preparation for wreath assembly, and learn how to make bows. Sign up to help on their **Sign Up Genius page** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4AA9AC-2DA5FDC07-59207939-wreath#/>.

Free Flu and COVID-19 vaccine clinics. Visit [somervillema.gov/vaccinations](http://www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations) to find Flu and COVID vaccine clinics this year and register for your appointment. More clinics will be added throughout the season.

Night at the Museum: A Stuffed Animal Sleepover, Thursday, October 9, 5 p.m., Friday, October 10, 11 a.m., Somerville Museum, One Westwood Road. Bring your child's favorite or second favorite stuffed animal to the Somerville Museum for a special overnight adventure. Drop off toys for a cozy storytime and a slideshow of all the fun the stuffed animals had after hours. Visit <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>.

Hazardous Waste Drop-Off, Saturday,

October 11. Next monthly **Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day** at DPW (1 Franey Rd., 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.).

Attend the **Broadway Magoun Reconstruction Project kick-off meeting.** Community members are invited to attend a virtual meeting on **Wednesday, October 15,** from 6 to 7:30 p.m. online via Zoom. **City staff** will introduce the project, and attendees are welcome to share their ideas and experiences travelling along Broadway. Get all project information at www.somervillema.gov/broadwaymagoun.

Are you an **artist or craftsman** who creates objects for sale? You can rent a table to display and sell your wares on **Saturday, October 25,** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the **Holiday Crafts Fair** at the **Somerville Community Baptist Church in Davis Square.** The price for renting a table is \$35. The Fair will also feature food and fun activities for all ages. To rent a table, please make out your check for \$35 to Somerville Community Baptist Church, and mail it along with your name and contact information (address, phone, email) to SCBC, 31 College Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144. For more information about the Fair, contact Marion Annacone, marion.annacone@gmail.com.

Dilboy Post will be holding its third **Annual Comedy Fundraiser, Elaine Pelino & Friends,** hosted by **John Harrington.** The event will be held on **November 9, 2 – 5 p.m., 351 Summer St.** For tickets (\$25) and more information: www.dilboypost.com, dilboypost@comcast.net, 617-666-8794.

Somerville Media Center and **The Somerville Beacon** will host candidate debates for Somerville's City Councilor At Large and Mayoral races on **Monday, October 20,** from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the **Crystal Ballroom** at the **Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Square.** Admission is free and doors open to the public at 5:30 p.m. for drinks and refreshments from the cash bar (ID required for alcohol). No signs, banners, backpacks, or oversized bags will be permitted. The At Large debate, 6 – 7 p.m., will be moderated by **Keri Rodrigues,** founder and president of the **National Parents Union.** The Mayoral debate, 7:30-8:30 p.m., will be moderated by **Ben Orenstein,** founder of

The Somerville Beacon.

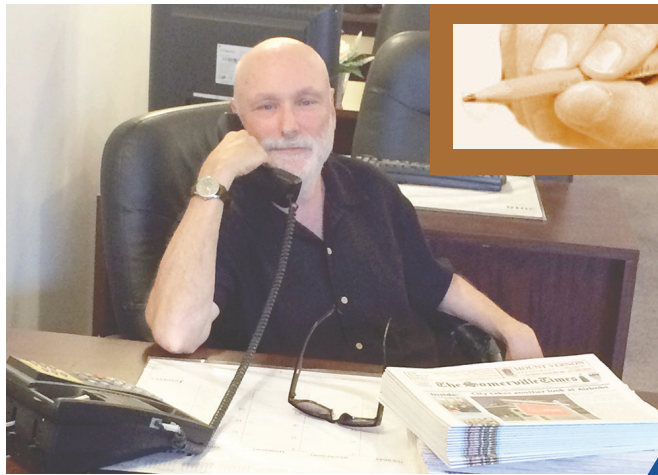
On **Thursday, October 23,** join in on the **City Hall concourse** (93 Highland Ave.) at 5 p.m. for the fourth annual **Truck O' Treat.** Attendees can trick-or-treat on the concourse and enjoy lawn games, activities, and more. Rain date is Thursday, October 30.

Kitty Connection, a non-profit that facilitates pet adoptions throughout Greater Boston and the North and South Shores, will host a **Silent Auction and Lasagna Dinner** on **Saturday, November 1** (6-9 p.m.) at the **Irish American Club, 177 West Street, Malden.** To learn more about Kitty Connection and pets available for adoption, visit: www.kittyconnection.net

Registrations are now open for **Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services' fall Savvy Caregiver course.** Savvy Caregiver is an evidence-based training program designed to help family caregivers best support a loved one with dementia and care for themselves. The course has been proven to decrease caregiver distress, burden, and depression, while increasing a caregiver's sense of competence and confidence in their care role. Participation is free. Savvy Caregiver will be held virtually via Zoom **each Wednesday** from 12 to 2 p.m., starting **October 1** and concluding on **November 12.** To register, call 617-628-2601 ext. 3153 or email katherine.bonilla@eldercare.org.

Through the generosity of the **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** and under the direction of **Mayor Ballantyne,** the **Council on Aging** can provide **Durable Medical Equipment** at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60 or have a permanent disability and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. For additional information or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Interview with poet bg Thurston:

'The Many Lives of Cathouse Farm: Tales of a Rural Brothel'

I caught up with poet bg Thurston to talk about her new poetry and prose collection, *The Many Lives of Cathouse Farm*. Judith Ferrara writes of her book:

"This compelling and singular collection is an expert weaving of history and poetry. The story of *Cathouse Farm* begins when poet bg Thurston spies "a small red farmhouse nestled behind tall sugar maples" which beckons her with its For Sale sign. Images presented throughout these pages elucidate Thurston's narrative of dwelling and landscape. We listen as the very house itself speaks in *Sister Houses, 1771*, and *The Ruined House* and hear occupants, such as Sarah Weeks, who "labored long for all / these years on this forlorn farm, / birthed and buried our babies- / once within the same week." Section 3 links us to Prohibition-era owner George F. Rivers, who "set the property up as a speakeasy and rural brothel" and inspired persona poems that do not look away from these women's struggles. This book is a significant and fascinating accomplishment, full of curiosity, empathy, and respect for the ghostly inhabitants of Cathouse Farm."

Doug Holder: You write about this old farmhouse you moved to in Warwick, Mass. It reeks with history and has many incarnations from the 1800s to 1990. The title mentions the brothel it once was. Why did you choose to focus on the "house of ill-repute" on the front cover?

bg Thurston: The fact that our farm was a speakeasy and brothel during the Great Depression and Prohibition is what it is most known for. The big question was how a simple farmhouse in the middle of nowhere became such a place. Many properties in Warwick are still owned by descendants of the original owners. I wondered what became of the family that built this house and lived here for generations.

DH: What was your situation before you moved to the farmhouse? In essence, what drove you to live in the middle of nowhere?

bgT: My husband and I lived and raised our daughters in a somewhat suburban setting in Stow, Massachusetts. We had a couple of horses, a few sheep, and chickens. I always wanted to have a farm and more land on which to garden and raise sheep, so when my husband was thinking about retiring, we began looking for a property in Western Massachusetts.

DH: The poems reflect the joy and tragedy of people who inhabited the farm over the years. Do you feel the energy – the ghosts?

bgT: I do feel the lingering presence of some of the people who have lived here. I often think about the four generations of women in the Weeks' family who were the first inhabitants of the farm. They likely had difficult challenges living out here from the

The Many Lives
of Cathouse Farm
Tales of a Rural Brothel



bg Thurston

1770s to about the 1870s, between the Revolutionary War and Civil War era. All summer, they had to prepare to survive the coming winter. How did they cope with the loneliness, the uncertainty, and the lack of modern medicine? Each one lost a child due to illness or stillbirth.

We joke that the spirits of "the ladies" are happy ghosts. It was harder for me to imagine their lives and what circumstances might have brought them here. Very little is factually known about them at this point. I believe the Depression brought about its own struggles and opportunities for survival. I often wonder about their lives and dreams.

DH: This collection is full of period detail. How much research was involved?

bgT: The research for this book took about a decade. I originally found Sarah Weeks' petition and the probate documents from when her husband, Caleb Weeks, died. I had been told incorrect stories about who built the house, and looking through the deed registry documents helped verify names and dates. I visited Historical Societies and libraries in Massachusetts and New Hampshire to find information about the early inhabitants' genealogy. I spent most of my evenings following threads on the Find a Grave site and Ancestry.com to create family trees and verify Census data. What I could not find were photographs of the Weeks' family. Even after photography came into existence, most farming families would not have been able to afford it.

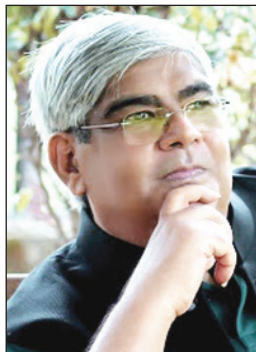
Continued on page 23

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Sanjeev Sethi is an award-winning poet who has authored eight poetry collections. His poems have been published in forty countries and appear in over 600 journals and anthologies. Some credits: *London Magazine*, *The Fortnightly Review*, *Stand Magazine*, *Erbacce Journal*, *3:AM Magazine*, *London Grip*, *Morphrog*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Hamilton Stone Review*, *NOON | journal of the short poem*, *Postcolonial Text*, and *Indian Literature*.



Portrait

He wasn't friends
with the single
as it reminded him
of his singularity.
He didn't deal with couples
as it marred
his makeup.

In the flames of loneliness
he singed
till the pitter-patter
of words,
those tiny droplets
of engagement
saved him, his hide.

— Sanjeev Sethi

Somerville Public Schools' Jennifer Ochoa honored

Somerville Public Schools (SPS) celebrates Jennifer Ochoa, Basic Needs & Housing Support Social Worker at the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative, who was recently honored as a leader in the Latino community by the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus.

Ms. Ochoa was among those honored at the Latino Excellence on the Hill event at the Massachusetts State House on September 25, a celebration of the transformational work of Latinos throughout Massachusetts. She was nominated by Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven of the 27th Middlesex district for her work serving the public school system, as well as her dedication to the Somerville Museum.

"I take pride in working for this district," Ms. Ochoa said upon receiving the accolade. "I am thankful for the work I do every day. This award is a reflection of all of us, and our collective work."

The honor comes in the midst of Hispanic Heritage Month, which began on September 15 and runs through October 15. Nearly 40% of Somerville Public Schools students identify as Hispanic.

"Jenn has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, an unwavering commitment to equity, and a deeply collaborative and innovative approach to supporting families," said Ruth Santos, Director of the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative. "She embodies the spirit of the award and is exceptionally deserving of this honor."

Learn more about Somerville Public Schools at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/.



Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

other academic opportunities because their travel time for competitions would cause them to violate the current absence policy."

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The benefits of the Food Insecurity Grant Program for Independent Restaurants are two-fold, strengthening our local restaurants and food-service supply chains while at the same time enhancing access to high-quality prepared meals and food products for those facing food insecurity in Massachusetts." — *Economic Development Secretary Eric Paley announcing \$900,000 in grants from the Food Insecurity Grant Program for Independent Restaurants, a program in which independent restaurants in Massachusetts receive funding.*

"It's imperative that the commonwealth continues to invest in the full operationalization of the roadmap to address these pressing behavioral health needs. We must

continue to build on the progress of recent years and ensure full and effective implementation." — *Danna Mauch, president and CEO of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health.*

HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK'S SESSION?

Beacon Hill Roll Call tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature's job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session. During the week of Sept. 29-October 3, the House met for a total of 35 minutes and the Senate met for a total of 32 minutes.

Mon. Sept.29	House 11:01 a.m. to 11:23 a.m. Senate 11:10 a.m. to 11:32 a.m.
Tues. Sept.30	No House session No Senate session
Wed. Oct. 1	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. Oct. 2	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:13 a.m. Senate 11:07 a.m. to 11:17 a.m.
Fri. Oct. 3	No House session No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com

Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

Later photographs of the farm during the 1900s were given to me by the family who visited during that time. Their stories enabled me to write the poems in that section of the book.

DH: Do you think the farm has come full circle with your presence?

bgT: I hope so. What I've tried to do is acknowledge that even though the farm is known for its colorful moments in history, there was much more that came before and afterwards. For me, it's a magical place, somewhere I always dreamed of living, and very much my home.

DH: I would guess that you want readers to think about their own homes and their history.

bgT: I think everyone might have a different idea of what home means to them. I think it is a place that embodies where we have felt most loved. For me, a home is a

luxury, a blessing, as well as a physical shelter. Hopefully, it is a place where we feel protected and where our dreams can grow.

DH: Why should we read this book?

bgT: Good question! I hope people read and enjoy this book because it explores both an interesting history of a remote New England farmhouse, as well as the vulnerabilities, desires, and commonalities of all the people who were destined to live here.

Sky Meadow

We search all our days
for a place called home,
hoping that walls and windows
will keep us safe inside.

As our skin grows loose
over our bones and our sight
softens the landscape,
we discover home might be
hidden in a meadow
amid murmurs of green
and sun-gold blossoms rising
all around our feet. This
will be the place we return to
when we remember our lives,
knowing the shelter that held us
as the water-blue sky came down
with a peace that could hardly last.

— *bg Thurston*

The Somerville Times

To advertise in our Business Directory,
call 857-488-5138.

Let your customers find you in
Somerville's most widely read newspaper!

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

LEARN TO DRAW AND PAINT

Artist and art teacher Geoffrey Halverson



www.geoffreyhalverson.com

Flexible Schedule - 2 hour classes
Perfect for beginners and intermediate students
Location of classes in North Cambridge (Huron Village)
Call: 617-501-6217 • halverson12g@yahoo.com



BUY - SELL - JOIN

CALL US FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS!

BOBBIE TONER
REAL ESTATE CONSULTANT
BOBBIETONER@AOL.COM
857-488-5138

JOHN RAPOSO
BROKER
JOHN@ENCOMPASSPROPS.COM
617-665-8866



WWW.ENCOMPASSPROPS.COM
ENCOMPASSPROPS



Cleaning. Restoration. Construction.

SERVPRO® of Arlington,
Somerville, Charlestown

617-629-5331

Independently owned and operated

Monica Calvo Realtor®

Real Estate Professional
Cell: 617-605-3308



Email: mcalvo@relocationnewengland.com
Web: remaxpartnersrelocation.com

RE/MAX
PARTNERS RELOCATION
44 Park ST
Andover MA 01810
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated



FREDLER BRENEVILLE, Esq.
Attorney at Law



Immigration • Accident-Injury
Family Law • Estate Planning
Landlord-Tenant

*Nou pale Kreyol
Nous parlons Français*

(617) 448-6037

INFO@BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM
500 N. MAIN ST. STE. A 2ND FL., RANDOLPH
55 BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE
BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM

Wedding & Event Photo & Video

— Harry Kane —



KANE FILMS
www.KaneFilms.net
860-840-3737
HarryKaneFilms@gmail.com

The Law Offices of Richard G. Di Girolamo

Richard G. Di Girolamo, Esquire
Anne M. Vigorito, Esquire
Breanna L. Rolland, Esquire

ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW

Real Estate Law
Zoning
Civil Litigation
Criminal Defense
Family Law
Personal Injury

TELEPHONE: (617) 666-8200
FAX: (617) 776-5435
EMAIL: digirolamolegal@verizon.net
424 BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE, MA 02145

Alibrandi's Barber Shop

Men & Boys Haircuts

"Best Somerville Barber"



194 Holland St, Somerville, MA 02144
617-628-4282 Closed Wednesday

T. J. SILLARI, INC.

Over 50 Years Experience
Proud to be a Somerville Business Resident



- Plumbing • Heating
- Gas Fitting • Industrial Work
- Water Heater Replacement
- Complete Drain Service

Residential - Industrial - Commercial

Master Plmb. Lic. #6106

625-9877

Telephone:
(617) 625-2244
(617) 625-4344

Fax:
(617) 625-4350

EDWIN J. SMITH
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
RUMERY & SMITH

403 HIGHLAND AVENUE
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144

edsmithlaw@gmail.com

clarkarts

PUBLISHING

COLORING BOOKS • QUIZ BOOKS • MORE

www.clarkarts.net