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Taking on the housing crisis: The way forward



136 affordable housing units are slated to be constructed at 299 Broadway, the site of the former Star Market.
— Photo by Bobbie Toner

By The Times Staff

The housing affordability crisis in Massachusetts is a growing challenge and a hot-button issue. Home prices are rising much faster than incomes. The shortage in affordable housing is a result of restrictive zoning laws, lengthy permitting processes, and high land and labor costs.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne presented the city's plan to create more affordable housing in the years to come at a Somerville virtual community meeting on October 14 for all city wards.

"It's no surprise to any of us in Massachusetts that we are in the midst of a housing crisis," said Mayor Ballantyne.

Median home prices are rising much faster than incomes. Home prices in *Continued on page 4*

Make way for Fairy Hollow Somerville

By Angelina Parrillo

Somerville is no stranger to whimsical art installations, and as of March this year, trees throughout the city are turning into homes for fairies. Fairy Hollow Somerville is an ongoing art project currently comprising five fairy "units" on trees in the Union Square and Magoun Square neighborhoods. Each unit is marked by a small door and surrounding earthy decor, offering onlookers a glimpse into a fantasy fairy world.

The project's Instagram account, @fairyhollow-somerville, started in May with an inaugural post authored by Eloween Moonleaf, the Hollow's "tiniest" architect, encouraging visitors to "be kind, take a peek (gently!) and maybe leave a shiny button or acorn nearby." The post also promises the development of more fairy homes in the near future.

Since the construction of the *Continued on page 4*



The Fairy Hollow Somerville installations, placed throughout the city, provide a whimsical touch to the urban environment.



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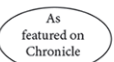
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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

Beginning **Thursday, November 13**, at approximately 4 p.m., city contractors plan to mill (remove the top few layers of asphalt) the roadway surface at the **intersection of Somerville Avenue and Central Street** in preparation for paving. During this work, **Somerville Avenue between Lowell Street and Park Street** will be closed to motor vehicle traffic in both directions. Milling is expected to begin at approximately 4 p.m. and end at approximately midnight. This schedule is subject to change due to weather or other factors. For more information, including full detour maps, please visit www.somervillema.gov/somcentralpave.

Attend the **Somerville Junction Park Ribbon Cutting**. Community members are invited to attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Somerville Junction Park on Friday, November 14, at 12 p.m. (located between Centre St. and Central St.) to celebrate the redesign and conversion of 0.83 acres of asphalt into additional park space.

There will be an opportunity for **Somerville property owners** to review their new **assessed values from Monday, November 10, 2025, through November 17, 2025**. During this period, property owners may contact the **Assessors' Office** to discuss their valuations and report any inadvertent data errors. Appropriate corrections can be made before the issuance of the 3rd Quarter (Q3) tax bills. For more information, visit: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/assessing>.

Continued on page 7

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of November 12 – November 18 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday <i>November 12</i>	Cloudy	44°/39°	4%	2%	SW 13 mph
Thursday <i>November 13</i>	Partly Cloudy	50°/32°	11%	7%	WNW 15 mph
Friday <i>November 14</i>	Partly Cloudy	45°/32°	3%	1%	NW 13 mph
Saturday <i>November 15</i>	Sunny	45°/31°	2%	1%	NW 10 mph
Sunday <i>November 16</i>	Rain	48°/36°	63%	52%	WSW 12 mph
Monday <i>November 17</i>	Partly Cloudy	45°/33°	9%	5%	WNW 15 mph
Tuesday <i>November 18</i>	Partly Cloudy	46°/33°	5%	2%	W 11 mph

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

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: **Statement from Somerville United Against Discrimination**

Dylan says:

This was a clear and definitive victory. 11,500 Somervillians saw a chance to express their rejection of "Israel's apartheid, genocide and illegal occupation of Palestine" and voted YES.

Question 3 received more votes than the Mayor elect. It has a stronger mandate than he does. Somerville is a highly educated voter base. To claim that people are somehow unaware of what our tax dollars fund in the middle east is insulting.

Americans are fed up with our government's cynical support for the genocidal regime in Israel. We do not want to be complicit in Israeli atrocities.

I'm very proud of my fellow residents. This was an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people and our desire to end the violence being perpetrated against them with our weapons and our money.

Response to: **Will Mbah tops the ticket in Somerville At-Large race**

TheoNa says:

It should be noted that "blank" had the second highest total with 12,399 blank At-large City Councilor votes. Appears that voters were not thrilled by their choices on the ballot this year.

Response to: **The Railside Lounge and Bar-B-Que**

J Sarajevo says:

Au Bon Pain has been gone for years. I think it's Life Alive now.

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

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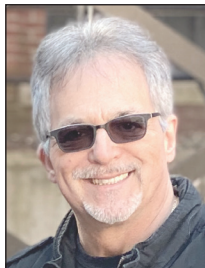
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

The Brown School



Once again I have called on the amazing memories of my longtime and dear friends to help me tell the story of a beloved old neighborhood school. And again,

sorry for another West Somerville story, but, hey, that's where I'm from, folks!

The Benjamin G. Brown School has been on Willow Ave since 1900. My brother, sister, and I all attended kindergarten there before my parents sent us off to endure the emotional terror of nuns. Today, the Brown seems to be "the elementary school of choice among Somerville's crop of hip parents. It is the "go to" or "in" school to send their kids. Maybe because it evokes images of the little red schoolhouse, with comfy, cozy, small-town ambiance. Lots of my fellow baby boomers have great memories of this historic structure. My teachers were Ms. Colbert and Mrs. Chiulli. When I was there, I thought her name was Miss "Julie."

Three things I remember about my one year at the Brown School were large crayons with one flat side, wooden desks, and drinking milk from small cartons.

One of my fondest memories of Brown was an after-school program called "Hobby Class." Two instructors guided us as we made tissue paper and macaroni wreaths, spoon holders, calendars, and cigar box jewelry boxes. I can still smell that silver spray paint we used for everything in that poorly ventilated basement. For years, my dad had a shaving mug that I made for him at Hobby

Class. I painted a likeness of him on the mug, and through the years, it slowly chipped off completely.

Mr. Walter Flaherty put on children's theater productions at the Brown. Walter occasionally entertained the children by playing his bagpipes for them. The kids referred to the pipes as "Walter's broken-down vacuum cleaner"!

One of my pals recalls that sixth-grade teacher, Mr. Reagan, used to let him clean the teacher's lunch room, which meant all the chocolate milk and crackers he could handle. Another friend recalls that Mr. McDonald's tiny little office was right behind where the flag was located. Two of my friends remember being "flag boys." One friend's first introduction to music was playing the "flutophone" taught by Miss Kingdon. She also taught the class camp songs.

If it were your birthday, Miss Flynn would have you stand in the front of the class while everyone sang *Happy Birthday* to you.

Here is a list of some of the teachers from the old days of the Brown School. Ms. Jennings, (later Mrs. Kelley) Ms. Kelley, Ms. McNamara, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Flynn, Ms. Milewski, Ms. Merry, Mrs. Flynn, Mrs. Riley, Mrs. Phelan, Mrs. Kostopolous (formerly Ms. Lembo), Mrs. Noonan, Mr. Allen, Ms. Lawrence, Ms. Smith, (later Mrs. Paceco), Mr. Kilroy, Ms. McDonald, (Mrs. Flynn's sister), Ms. Burke, Ms. Clark the vice-principal, and Mr. Fowler, the custodian.

Marilyn Hagarty, who was my French teacher at The Western Junior High School in 1968 (she drove a great blue Mustang with a white convertible top),



was a principal at the Brown until just a few years ago. Pauline Lampropoulos, retired principal of the West Somerville Neighborhood School, also taught at the Brown School. Everyone speaks very fondly of all of the former Brown

School teachers.

Whether it was playing four square, tag, or bombardment in the school yard, making macaroni wreaths after school, or just enjoying a simpler time, many of us have great memories of the Brown School.



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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Why does my shopping cart end up full of stuff I didn't plan to buy?

A: Modern businesses use subtle but powerful tactics to get you to spend more. Here are four to watch for:

- AI knows what tempts you.

Think of Instacart or Amazon showing “you might like” items from your past buys.

- Rewards tiers push extra spending.

That “just one more purchase” to hit a new

perk? It adds up fast.

- Prices shift based on your habits.

Your zip code or device could raise the price—without you realizing.

- Buy Now, Pay Later hides the full cost.

Easy installments (like Klarna or Afterpay) can snowball into debt.

Noticing the trick is the first step to breaking the spell.

Once you spot the tactic, you stay in control—and your wallet stays stronger.

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 vchicksconnect@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.



Taking on the housing crisis: The way forward CONT. FROM PG 1

Massachusetts rose 73 percent from 2000-2024, while household income rose only 4 percent during the same years when adjusted for inflation, according to Zillow and reported by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.

Households in Massachusetts spent nearly 40 percent of their take-home pay on their rent or mortgage. For residents in Somerville, just under 20 percent spend over half their income on housing, explained the mayor in the presentation.

“That means that over 7,000 Somerville families are one emergency away from displacement,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

While job creation draws workers to Somerville, there isn't enough housing to meet the demand.

The housing crisis in Massachusetts is driven in part by a significant disconnect between the rapid rise in home prices and the stagnant growth in incomes, leaving many Somerville residents housing burdened and at risk of displacement.

“The need for housing is a statewide issue,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “Massachusetts needs 222,000 new homes by 2035 to meet the demand, according to the state data.”

Key takeaways

Somerville is purchasing homes with non-profits through its Inclusionary Zoning Program and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to create and preserve affordable housing units. The Somerville Community Corporation and Somerville Community Land Trust work to fund these efforts.

The city launched the Consolidated Rental Waitlist to streamline the application process, which means a single application can be submitted for many of the inclusionary rentals.

Somerville has close to 800 new housing units in the direct pipeline, said Mayor Ballantyne.

The Community Preservation Act funding doubled from \$3 million to \$6 million per year, and of that, 55 percent goes to affordable housing initiatives.

There will be 319 units, including 136 affordable units at 299 Broadway, the site of the former Star Market in Somerville's Winter Hill neighborhood.

“In August, we adopted the Assembly [Square] Neighborhood Plan, which aims to create between 3000-5700 new housing units, of those roughly 600-1100 will be affordable apartments,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

The City of Somerville Anti-Displacement Task Force developed programming and policy recommendations to reduce

the displacement rate in Somerville. As of June 2025, the city has put more than \$5.6 million into direct rental assistance, serving 892 people across 677 households.

“As we build and preserve housing units, we need to ensure access for people who need them most,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “Our inclusionary housing program is one of the strongest tools we have for that.”

Any new building with four or more units must set aside 20 percent as affordable, said the mayor. Since 2021, some 500 new affordable homes have become available as a result of this policy.

Housing for older adults is a top priority for the Ballantyne administration. The Older Adult Bridge Subsidy Campaign is a pilot program that was launched to help vulnerable, low-income older adults.

“Given the gap between the escalating rents and the fixed income of many older adults, it was clear that additional resources and creative thinking were needed to prevent their displacement,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

The City of Somerville's Office of Housing Stability's Municipal Voucher Program provides rental assistance to the most vulnerable, low-income families who aren't eligible for federal or state support. Participating families' rent and

utility costs are capped at 30 percent of their income, with the voucher covering the remaining costs.

The mayor said that Somerville's advocacy efforts have secured important policy changes to address the housing crisis, including greater tenant protections.

“We helped pass the Affordable Homes Act,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

The Affordable Homes Act, signed into law on August 6, 2024, was a \$5.16 billion bill that authorized spending over five years and is the largest investment in housing in Massachusetts history.

A statewide coalition was formed in support of a bill to allow cities such as Somerville to enact a local real estate transfer fee on high-value properties that could potentially raise \$6-10 million per year to fund affordable housing, explained the mayor.

A rent stabilization home rule petition, recommended by the Anti-Displacement Task Force, was sent to the state legislature. The legislation proposed a yearly cap on rent increases limited to the rate of inflation plus 2 percent, totaling no more than 5 percent in any year.

“We've invested in a historic level to advance housing affordability and stability goals, a total of roughly \$62 million in three years,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

Make way for Fairy Hollow Somerville CONT. FROM PG 1

first fairy house on 51 Bow Street, three more units now adorn the tree, along with a winding wooden staircase lit by string lights, miniature figurines, and a fenced-in flower garden along the tree's base.

In September, the Fairy Hollow expanded to a tree stump at 330 Lowell Street. “Fairy Stumpstead” is a temporary installation that features two more fairy units. One home's interactive door opens to a handwritten message, “This moss be the

place,” a quirky allusion to the mossy exteriors of the houses. According to the @fairyhollowsomerville Instagram account, Fairy Stumpstead will remain at 330 Lowell Street until early November, “After that, it'll wander around town like a traveling circus of sparkles and secrets.”

As of September, Fairy Hollow Somerville has gained 50,000 views on Google Maps. One review of the Hollow reads, “Ran into the Fairy Hollow

today, and it turned around my entire life. Magic of the fairies!!!” On a post celebrating the milestone, the Hollow's Instagram account states, “Plans for expansion are sprouting like mushrooms after rain and soon you just might find us twinkling in the trees!” Comments on the Hollow's Instagram account also feature many fairy fans' personal plans for the expansion of do-it-yourself houses in communities beyond Somerville.



City outlines new goals for 90 Washington St. redevelopment project

By Jordan Pagkalinawan

On November 6, the Somerville Land Use Committee held a joint session with the city's Planning Board and Redevelopment Authority to discuss potential changes to the 90 Washington Street Demonstration Project plan. The committee also heard from several city officials requesting amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and upzoning classifications on various properties.

Proposed changes to 90 Washington St. Ben Demers, a senior economic development planner from the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD), presented several proposed changes to the 90 Washington Street development project.

The four-acre site, which the Redevelopment Authority took for roughly \$39 million in 2019, was originally intended to house the city's police and fire departments and a 911 dispatch center. However, a lawsuit by the property's former owner significantly increased the project's cost, rendering the city unable to continue with its original plan and instead shift toward private redevelopment, according to Demers.

The site's Development Project Plan and Memorandum of Agreement, both signed in February 2019, had included goals to eliminate any negative property impacts, add the public safety component, and pair it with a transformative development opportunity. With the proposed changes, the OSPCD hopes to explicitly remove the public safety component from the planning documents, as well as recoup a significant portion of the funds used for the property's taking.

"We understand that there's still a need for improved conditions for the city employees, but that project has really been separated off from the disposition of this property and is on its own track," Demers said. On the recouping of the project's funds, he added: "We just want to make sure that we were explicit about this in the document," citing the SRA's commitment to doing so.

As for how the changes would affect the project's progress, Demers proposed substituting a technical advisory committee for the 90 Washington Civic Advisory

Committee, which "is a group of neighborhood stakeholders that have been meeting since 2023 to discuss project implementation."

The second change would require developers to file for permits within a three-year time frame instead of breaking ground on the site in that same window. Demers said that change was meant to provide the SRA "more flexibility in the negotiation process, which can help them secure a higher value for the land or other benefits."

After explaining the potential changes, Demers laid out the priorities for a Request for Proposal, which—in addition to the aforementioned recouping of funds—would require the land to be used for a combination of objectives: new housing and/or commercial, civic, or green space. Additionally, the RFP would have to meet certain design principles, including a mixed-use format, sustainable design, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the development process.

Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen asked Demers for an "anticipated timeline" to approve the proposed changes, to which Demers replied, "As soon as possible."

"I know there will be at least one more discussion within the Land Use Committee," Demers said. "Depending on how that moves forward, the hope would be that they would come back to the city council in November, December for a vote of approval." Based on those votes, he added, the city would look to release an RFP "early next year."

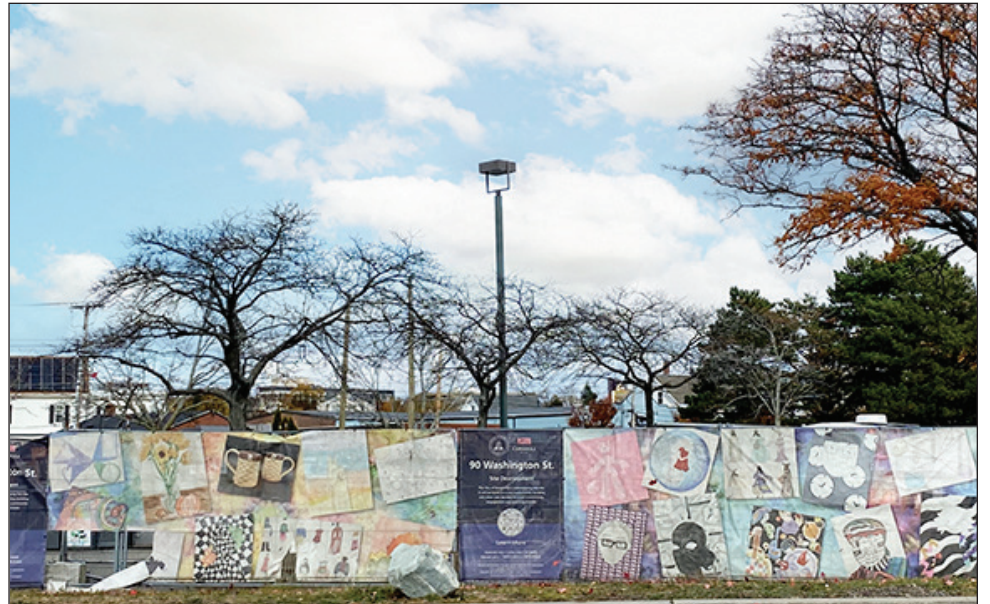
"We want to make sure that we're moving expeditiously on this," Demers continued, "considering the city's financial health and the impact of this project."

Zoning Ordinance amendments and Gilman Square upzoning

Following Demers' presentation, the Land Use Committee heard four items that sought to update certain amendments to the city's Zoning Ordinance.

The first change requested to make pre-submittal meetings optional for special permits, site plan approvals, land variances, land platting, and wireless communications, according to urban planner Dan Bartman. Those meetings would still be required for subdivision plan approvals and master plan special permits.

Bartman said that 64% of this year's



The city's Land Use Committee, along with the Planning Board and Redevelopment Authority, recently met to discuss plans for the 90 Washington Street Demonstration Project — Photo by Bobbie Toner

pre-submittal meetings "involved people who were already familiar with the zoning ordinance," a 22% increase from 2024. However, he added, these meetings would still be offered to "people who really need them."

The ordinance also clarified language around the online licensing and permitting portal and made language around certain permit durations and extensions more consistent.

A second change updated a table within the Zoning Ordinance to allow Family Child Care Homes and Home-Based Child Day Cares "to be permitted by right in all districts

that allow housing," according to an attached presentation. The update removed any previous discrepancies within the ordinance's Use Table, which indicates what activities are allowed on a property versus those that require special permits.

Real estate attorney Adam Dash then led a presentation around two properties—363 Highland Avenue and 110 Willow Avenue—requesting that they be changed from a Mid-Rise 4 classification to Mid-Rise 5 and Mid-Rise 6, respectively. He said that both buildings, designed for a mix of commercial and residential use, have "tremendous potential" to link together "the main features of Davis Square," mainly Highland Avenue and the Community Path.

Peter Kim-Santos, the treasurer of the Davis Square Neighborhood Council, read a planned statement supporting the

zoning change at both properties, welcoming the need for transit-accessible housing at 363 Highland Avenue and hoping for "more desirable development" at 110 Willow Avenue.

The committee quickly approved an amendment to change the zoning district of 321 Washington Street from Fabrication to Commercial Industry.

The final item was a presentation by Land Use Analyst Samantha Carr, who shared four potential scenarios of upzoning around Gilman Square.

- Mid-Rise (MR) upzoning in the core neighborhood

- MR upzoning along Medford and Pearl Streets with an Urban Residential (UR) extension along Medford and School/Marshall Streets

- MR upzoning on Medford/Pearl and UR upzoning on Medford and School/Marshall up to the Broadway corridor

- Various Mid-Rise upzoning classifications (MR4, MR6) along sections of Medford Street

While the committee was receptive to each of Carr's proposals, Councilor Ewen-Campen brought up a memo from Mayor Katjana Ballantyne's Office of Housing and Stability. The office raised concerns over a lack of public engagement and the potential for displacement related to upzoning in the city. Other councilors agreed on the need to communicate with residents and protect them from displacement risks associated with upzoning procedures.

Greater Boston League Championship meet results

Boys

The Somerville Boys Cross Country Team triumphed in the Greater Boston League (GBL) Championship, placing five (5) runners in the top ten to best second-place Medford, 28-45, to win its 4th GBL crown in a row. Medford's Adam Lewis won the race in 17:08 for the newly configured 3.1-mile course at MacDonal Park in Medford. Somerville's Henry Zarecor came in second in 17:30. Somerville's top five finishers all earned All-GBL designation.

Team Scores:

Somerville 28
Medford 45
Everett 64
Malden 107
Lynn Classical 124
Chelsea 132
Revere 180
Lynn English ---

Girls

The Somerville Girls Team also won, as Freshman standout Aly Amin led from the start and won the race going away, with a

time of 19:27 for the 3.1 mile course. Medford's Emma Beardsley was second with a time of 20:05. The hotly contested battle between Somerville and Medford ended up tied at 40-40; with Somerville prevailing on the tiebreaker, with the 6th place runner bringing home the victory for the Highlanders! It was the closest Girls GBL Championship Meet in recent memory, as Somerville's sixth (6) runner placed 15th, and Medford's sixth (6) runner came in 18th, giving the victory to Somerville. Senior Co-Captain Greta O'Sullivan (5th)

and Freshman Jennifer Gordon (7th) also earned All-GBL designation.

Team Scores:

1. Somerville 40
2. Medford 43
3. Revere 108
4. Lynn English 131
5. Malden 134
6. Lynn Classical ---
7. Chelsea ---
8. Everett ---

Legend: --- (did not field a five (5) person team)



The Somerville Boys Cross Country Team.



The Somerville Girls Cross Country Team.



Aly Amin, GBL Champion and qualifier for the "Meet of Champions" this Saturday, November 15, at Fort Devens.

Somerville athletics place 6th in division of The Boston Globe scholastic awards for high school sports – Go Highlanders!

By The Times Staff

As reported by Craig Larson at The Boston Globe, a cumulative win percentage is created from three regular seasons of sports games to highlight the winningest high school athletic programs in the State of Massachusetts during the prior year. The Boston Globe recognizes these top-performing high school athletic teams, and awards are given to schools that have successful seasons within 10 divisions.

The Somerville Highlanders (194-124-5) won 60.84 percent of their regular-season games and finished 6th in the state for overall winning percentage in Dalton Division 1 for the 2024-25 season. "I thought that was a real credit to our kids and our coaches," said Director of Athletics Stanley Vieira. The pandemic was a challenging time for athletic teams, and Vieira says that the Highlanders have spent the past couple of years rebuilding programs.

From a competitive standpoint, Somerville is back on the map, he said. While winning isn't everything, it is a large part of success.

Highlanders have qualified for the MIAA Tournament many times over the past few years, and this shows their desire to win, said Vieira.

There are 36 schools in Dalton Division 1, and the division is for schools with enrollments of 1,400 or more. Franklin has won the division for the last seven years.

Last fall, the Highlanders won 58 games, lost 32 games, and tied 4. Over the winter, Highlanders won 53 games, lost 33 games, and tied 1. In the spring, Highlanders won 83 games and lost 59 games. The cumulative total was 194 wins, 124 losses, and 5 ties.

"That's a lot of hard work, a lot of practice hours, a lot of instruction, video work ... off-season training for our kids," said Vieira.

This is the 53rd year The Boston Globe has been honoring high school athletic programs with the scholastic awards. "It's a great achievement for our kids," said Vieira.

After-school get-together



Former and current staff members of Somerville Public Schools' After-School Program got together last week at the Mount Vernon Restaurant. They enjoyed a fun night of catching up, good laughs, and good food.

Want to write local Somerville stories?

Call 857-488-5138

and speak to the Assignment Editor

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



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

Our View Of The Times



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

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

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

Candidates are exposed to withering scrutiny and criticism by those with opposing viewpoints. Miles of city streets are walked, and hundreds of hands are shak-

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

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

So if we're feeling as if we've been exposed to quite enough political messaging

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

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

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

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Happy birthdays this week: Happy birthday to **Joe Lynch**, who is celebrating this week. He is a great guy who is very well-known here in the city. We wish him a great birthday and many more. Happy birthday to a former Alderman At-Large, amongst her many other accomplishments, **Helen Corrigan**. We wish her the very best of birthdays. A big happy birthday to **Joseph McKeon**. We wish him the very best. We hope he has a great day. Happy birthday to a great friend of ours, **Malitta Knaut**. A great person. We wish her the very best. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Mark Aubuchon, Jerry DiGiovanni, Cheryl Bertocchi, John Kane, Antonette**

Almeida, Dottie Bowman, Antonette Biondo, Richard Berner, Jim Powers, Sandrine Jeffreson, and Meghann Viens, a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

The **Connexion closet** is accepting clothing donations, all seasons, all genders, and all sizes. The most wanted items are pants and jackets. You can drop off donations at Connexion, 149 Broadway, this week, Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please make sure you leave donations inside the building with a label that says "For Con-

nexion closet". Need clothes? The Connexion closet opens Mondays and Fridays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Wednesdays 4 to 6 p.m. Want to donate and can't drop it off? Email closet@connexionmc.org to coordinate a pick up. Questions email: closet@connexionmc.org.

Calling all **Antiques Roadshow** fans! **Rick Keller**, from **Perfect Pastime 617**, is offering a community-wide collectibles appraisal event. **Saturday, November 22**, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Central Library, 79 Highland Ave. So gather up all your Pokémon/sports cards/memorabilia, coins, watches, video games/consoles,

comics, fine/broken jewelry, sterling silver, etc., to see if you have treasure or trash. All antiques and collectibles are welcome. Register for an appraisal or to be an audience member, visit: <https://somervillepubliclibrary.org/library/hours-locations/central-library/>.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the **Somerville Parks and Urban Forestry Division (PSUF)** are inviting community members to a **ribbon-cutting** to celebrate the completion of an important accessibility project bringing 10 new inclusive swings to playgrounds across Somerville, increasing the percentage of

Continued on page 13

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#997

1. What is the purpose of Veterans Day?
2. Which war saw the highest number of American casualties?
3. What is the significance of the "Honor Flight" program on Veterans Day?
4. Who was the first woman to serve as a four-star general in the United States Armed Forces?
5. What is the significance of the yellow ribbon on Veterans Day?
6. What is the significance of the phrase "Semper Fi" often associated with the U.S. Marine Corps?
7. Which war saw the first widespread use of tanks and airplanes?
8. What is the significance of the military salute on Veterans Day?
9. Who was the first woman to enlist in the United States Armed Forces?
10. Which U.S. president served as a lieutenant colonel in the Spanish-American War?
11. What is the significance of the National Veterans Art Museum on Veterans Day?
12. Who was the first woman to receive the Medal of Honor?

Answers on page 10

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. A "jiffy" is about one trillionth of a second.
2. The cigarette lighter was invented before the match.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

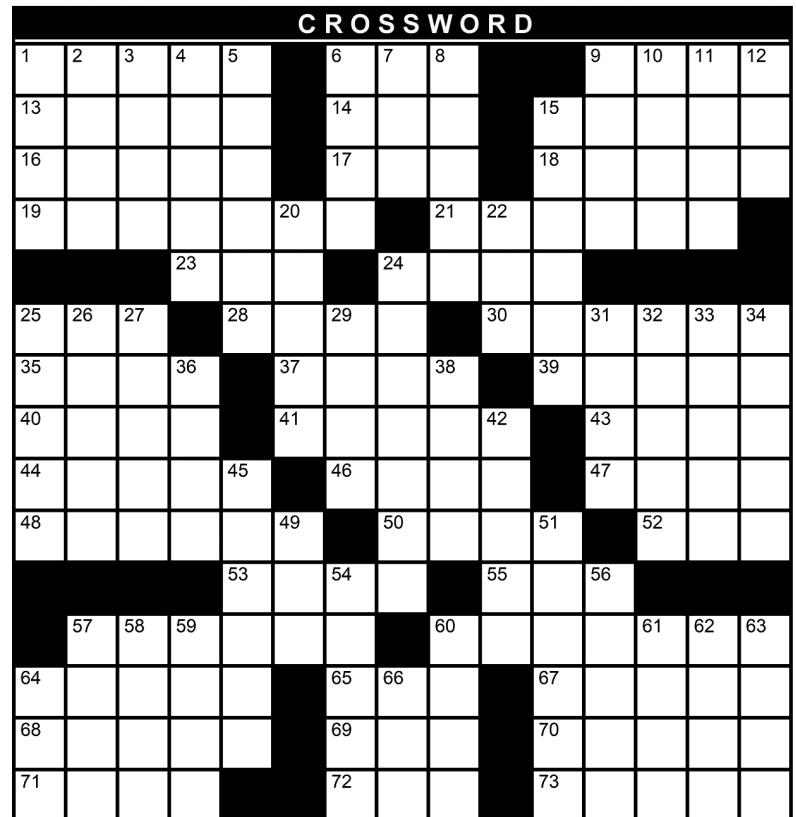
THANKSGIVING

ACROSS

1. Fresh Prince: "____ ya later!"
6. Say "no"
9. "Nana" author ...mile ____
13. Capital of Vietnam
14. The home of the brave, acr.
15. Increase rpms (2 words)
16. Like yesteryear
17. Rejuvenating spot
18. Like a soldier at attention
19. Pumpkin pie or pecan pie, e.g.
21. Plymouth ____
23. Seek damages
24. Light on one's feet
25. Like The Beatles
28. Certain blast's origins
30. What Tom said
35. Iranian money
37. Precedes GPT
39. Water nymph
40. Wisconsin's western neighbor
41. One tenth
43. Mountain, in Germany
44. The Statue of Liberty island
46. Cat sound
47. Instinctive motive
48. 1970s dance clubs
50. Do like buffaloes
52. Distress acronym
53. Opposite of genuine
55. Bow or bolo
57. Moisturizing kitchen tool
60. Turkey prepared certain way
64. Bottom line
65. Pub offering
67. Alley cat, e.g.
68. Extreme suffering
69. International help, e.g.
70. Bullwinkle J. ____
71. Fitness facilities
72. July-August sign of Zodiac
73. More so than #12 Down

DOWN

1. Not barefoot
2. Gender checkbox
3. Peters out
4. Loamy deposit
5. Form a queue (2 words)
6. Head and shoulders sculpture
7. Venomous snake
8. Civil rights organization, acr.
9. Whole number between -1 and 1
10. Biscuit baker
11. She took away the football from Charlie Brown
12. Mentally quick, e.g.
15. Put trust in (2 words)
20. Respond
22. Website address ending
24. Eminence
25. Deep-____, turkey prepared certain way
26. White condiment
27. Sheds tears
29. Mayflower
31. Hindi courtesy title
32. Coffin holders
33. One of Florida Keys
34. Ruler sides, e.g.
36. Not of the cloth
38. Through, to a poet
42. Muse of love poetry
45. "Killing Me ____ with His Song"
49. Fraternity letters
51. Unwholesome atmosphere
54. Cattle enclosure in African village
56. Bar, legally
57. Unidentified aircraft
58. Niels Bohr's study object
59. Without, in Paris
60. Overhaul
61. Turkey ____, 5K run
62. "At ____!" military command
63. Indigo user
64. "You're it" game
66. Rest in state



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Solution to last week's crossword puzzle:



Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Book review: 'A Murder in Time' by Julie McElwain

By Dennis Fischman

I am a sucker for historical mysteries, but too often, the author slips attitudes of her own time and place into the story. That is not a problem with *A Murder in Time*, by Julie McElwain [1], because the main character is a woman, an FBI profiler in the 21st century who's trying to figure out what she's doing in the early 19th century (and solve a murder mystery, along the way).

Kendra Donovan is a complicated character even before she falls through time. Her parents, both brilliant in their own right, conceived her as a kind of genetic experiment. They wanted to see if they could breed a sort of super-woman – a eugenics project that is itself a throwback to the early 20th century and makes me dislike them from the start.

I hate them when I find out they abandoned their teenage daughter when she insisted on having a life of her own. Oh, they

make her financially comfortable, but as a young woman of genius who spends her time catching criminals, she is made to feel like a freak.

Hang in with her for the first six chapters while she goes on a field mission and develops a project to avenge some of her colleagues. That is the back story that takes her to Aldridge Castle in England, and it's not clear if the 21st century will ever be relevant to her again. Because in that castle, she hides in a secret passageway and wakes up in the same castle in 1815.

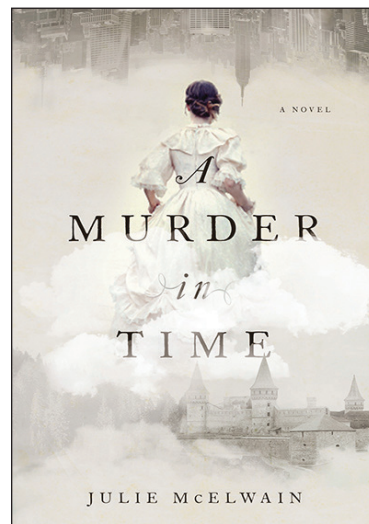
First, she has to figure out whether or not she's gone crazy. Then, how to fit into a society where the way people were born determines their places and chances. (She doesn't want to fit in permanently, however; she wants desperately to go back to her own time and place, but it's not clear how or if that will ever happen.)

And in the meantime, there's

one man – the heir to Aldridge – whom she's falling in love with. There are other people, including a bluestocking noblewoman, who become her friends. Crucially, there are also young women getting killed in a particularly gruesome way that tells Kendra an organized serial killer is on the loose: years before Jack the Ripper, and centuries before she has developed the expertise to solve the crime.

Is there a reason that Kendra has been sucked back in time to this particular moment? Is it her destiny to catch murderers that no one else in Regency England would know how to find?

Author Julie McElwain [2] plays fair. She gives enough biographical background to Kendra Donovan that we know why being a strong, independent woman is not just desirable to her: it's been a matter of survival, and her identity depends on it. That's a unique perspective from which to view gender



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

roles, class domination, and the legal strictures under which people had to operate in Regency England.

I did figure out two important clues, one about the number of people involved and one about a turn of phrase that showed someone knew something he shouldn't. That means those things were probably obvious! There was another clue I would have caught if I were more famil-



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

iar with my Greek mythology.

So, go ahead and read the book, and the series, and I will be interested to hear what you make of it. In the future, of course!

Links:

[1] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25790952-a-murder-in-time>

[2] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/14126578.Julie_McElwain

Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Stuffed Mushrooms

Whenever I ask what I can bring to a gathering, this particular appetizer is the most requested. I have made other recipes over the years for stuffed mushrooms, but have been disappointed with the stuffing coming out soggy. After multiple testings of my own recipe I finally came up with a combination where multiple textures are experienced, moist on the inside and crunchy on the top.

Serves 6-8

- 2 Packages of white (stuffing mushrooms)
- 1 Cup of seasoned bread crumbs
- 1 1/2 Panko (Japanese) bread crumbs
- 2 Cloves of finely minced garlic
- 1/2 Cup of freshly grated Pecorino Romano Cheese
- 3 Tablespoons dried parsley
- 4 Tablespoons melted, unsalted butter

- 1/4 Cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 1/8 Teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 Teaspoon Kosher Salt
- Optional – White truffle oil for drizzling (Highly recommended this elevates the flavor to the next level.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prepare the baking sheet(s) with foil and lightly oil the surface. Prepare the mushrooms by removing the stems and cleaning the outside with a damp paper towel. Mix all of the ingredients together in a medium sized bowl EXCEPT for the truffle oil. Now you're ready to stuff the mushrooms.

With a teaspoon, scoop some of the stuffing into the mushroom cavity. If the stuffing doesn't quite hold together, you can add a teaspoon or two of water to the stuffing mixture. Once all the mushrooms are stuffed and right before you put them in the oven, driz-



zle with the truffle oil. Just a couple of drops on each mushroom goes a long way. Bake for 15-20 minutes until slightly browned on top.

Here's the best part. You can pre-stuff your mushrooms the day before

and refrigerate. Once you're ready to put them in the oven, drizzle with the truffle oil.

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

LEGAL NOTICES

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

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by 81 Gilman Street LLC to Crowd Lending Fund One, LLC, dated November 15, 2023 and recorded at Middlesex County (Southern District) Registry of Deeds on November 16, 2023, in Book No. 82217, at Page 161, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder Crowd Lending Fund One, LLC, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at public auction at 11:00 AM, on December 3, 2025 on the mortgaged premises being known as 81 Gilman Street, Somerville, MA, being all and singular the premises described in said mortgage to wit:

A certain parcel of land with the buildings thereon situated in Somerville being now number 81 Gilman Street and being shown as portion of Lot 28 on a plan entitled, "Plan of Building Lots in Somerville, owned by Mary A. Gilman", Deeds, Plan Book 27, Plan 38, being bounded and described as follows:

SOUTHEASTERLY: by said Gilman street, thirty-two (32) feet;
 NORTHWESTERLY: by lot 29 on said plan, seventy-seven and 42/100 (77.42) feet;
 NORTHEASTERLY: by a portion of said Lot 28, being land now or formerly of Taylor, thirty-one and 12/100 (31.12) feet;
 SOUTHEASTERLY: by a portion of said Lot 28, being land now or formerly of Perry, ninety-seven and 30/100 (97.30) feet;

Being the same premises as conveyed to the mortgagor by deed of YMCMB LLC, dated November 13, 2023, recorded at Middlesex County (Southern District) Registry of Deeds on November 16, 2023 in Book No. 82217, at Page 158.

The above described premises will be sold **SUBJECT TO** and with the benefit of all restrictions, easements, covenants, conditions, building and zoning laws, to any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, water and sewer charges, municipal or other public taxes, assessments or liens, rights of tenants and parties in possession, if any.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of \$10,000.00 DOLLARS shall be required to be made to the mortgagee in cash, by certified or by cashier's check at the time and place of the sale as a deposit. The successful bidder will be required to execute an Auction Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, by certified check, by cashier's check, or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney within thirty (30) days thereafter at the offices of BARSH AND COHEN, P.C., Attorneys for the Mortgagee, 500 Turnpike Street Suite 201, Canton, MA 02021, in exchange for which and at such time and place, the deed shall be delivered to the purchaser for recording.

The Mortgagee reserves the right to amend the foregoing terms of sale by written or oral announcement made before the auction sale, during the sale thereof or at the commencement of or during any postponed sale, the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, and to postpone the sale up until the time the property is declared sold by the auctioneer.

The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in the Notice of Mortgagee's Sale or its publication.

OTHER TERMS TO BE ANNOUNCED AT THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE SALE.

Dated: November 3, 2025 (signed:) Crowd Lending Fund One, LLC Present Holder of said Mortgage By its Attorneys, Barsh and Cohen, P.C.
 Neil Cohen, Esquire Attorney for the Mortgagee 500 Turnpike Street Suite 201, Canton, MA 02021 (617) 332-4700

11/5/25, 11/12/25 The Somerville Times



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

**THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, December 2, 2025** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to historic@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jWiDpUfdTI-sGfptj0eWkA
 Webinar ID: 865 9732 3946

TO CALL IN

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

ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT

Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties

HP25-000093 - 396-398 Broadway
 Applicant: Jason Tribandis
 Owner: Daniel Bowles (On behalf 396-398 Broadway Condominium Trust)
 The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing existing wooden gutters with aluminum gutters.

Case documents reviewed by the HPC are available on the City website at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>. Cases may be continued to a later date; please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email historic@somervillema.gov to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note:** Written comments due to historic@somervillema.gov **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email historic@somervillema.gov with inquiries.

11/12/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
 PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
 IFB #26-26**

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

165 Broadway Level 1 Temporary Basement Shoring

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, November 12, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **3:00PM Wednesday, December 3, 2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required. Prevailing wages apply.

Felisa Gárate
 Procurement Analyst
 617-625-6600 x3406

11/12/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
 CITY COUNCIL**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON SETTING THE
 TAX LEVY PERCENTAGES FOR FY2026**

There will be a public hearing at a regular meeting of the **Somerville City Council** on **Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 7:00 PM**, on the Order of President Lance L. Davis, to determine the percentage of local tax levy to be borne by each class of real and personal property for Fiscal Year 2026, as required by MGL c40 s56. At this public hearing, Frank Golden, Chief Assessor and Chairman of the Somerville Board of Assessors, will provide information and data relevant to making a determination, including the fiscal effects of the available alternatives. It should be noted that Fiscal Year 2026 is a State Department of Revenue required Reevaluation or Certification Year.

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

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person at the City Council Chamber, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link into your internet browser any time before the meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uv1b5FriSnmceCMwqmyxJQ
3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

KIMBERLY M. WELLS, CITY CLERK

11/12/25 The Somerville Times

Ms. Cam's *Olio* Answers

From on page 8

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. To honor military veterans who have served in the United States Armed Forces | loyalty and dedication and has been the official motto of the U.S. Marine Corps since 1883 |
| 2. The Civil War | 7. World War I |
| 3. The Honor Flight Network transports veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials dedicated to their service and sacrifices | 8. It is a gesture of respect and recognition for the sacrifices made by veterans |
| 4. General Ann E. Dunwood | 9. Loretta Perfectus Walsh, who enlisted in the Navy on March 17, 1917 |
| 5. It symbolizes support for veterans and reminds us of those who are deployed or missing in action | 10. Theodore Roosevelt |
| 6. It is short for "Semper Fidelis," which means "Always Faithful" in Latin, representing the Marines' | 11. It showcases artwork created by veterans, providing a platform for them to express their experiences and perspectives |
| | 12. Mary Edwards Walker, for her service as a surgeon during the Civil War |

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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.

USMS Op-Ed post-election

Congratulations to Jake Wilson, our newly elected mayor, At-large Councilors Kristen Strezo and Will Mbah for being reelected, At-large Councilors Elect Jonathan Link and Ben Wheeler, and Ward 7 Councilor Elect Emily Hardt for earning the privilege of joining the rest of the Somerville City Council for the first time.

We at Union Square Main Streets were heartened to see so much attention paid to the licensing and permitting processes during the campaign season. We were ex-

cited to hear anecdotes, data, and recommendations shared from the small business community referenced throughout forums, debates, and campaign newsletters and mailers.

We're even more excited about maintaining that attention and energy through Inauguration Day and into 2026. Drawing on our 20+ years of service to Union Square's independently-owned, small businesses, our economic empowerment organization is ready to support any and

all newly or re-elected candidates and city staff in making these changes work for the city.

We have been working closely with the more than 200 small businesses our organization represents for years to understand both pain points and productive solutions to improve the processes. Our recommendations have been documented, reviewed, prioritized and are ready to be shared!

Over the next month, we will reach out

to each of you to schedule a meeting to discuss our findings and recommendations. We hope that you can prioritize these meetings and join us in enabling more small businesses to thrive in Somerville.

We can't wait to work with you!

Zach Baum,
Bow Market Co-Founder & USMS Board President
Jessica L. Eshleman,
USMS Executive Director

Early Music Ensemble: The Genius of Josquin

The Tufts University Department of Music presents Early Music Ensemble: The Genius of Josquin at the Perry and Marty Granoff Music Center on Tuesday, November 18, at 8 p.m. Gems from the early 16th century by Josquin de Prez for Renaissance consort: Violas da gamba, lute, harps, recorders, krummhorns, harpsichord, voices and chamber organ. With guest artist Dan Meyers, recorder and voice. Jane Hershey, viola da gamba and Director. The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus.

For more information, please visit as.tufts.edu/music/musiccenter or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-2253.

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Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



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

A: It depends. The Fair Housing Act exempts “housing for older persons” from the law’s prohibition of excluding families with children. In other words, a senior building CAN exclude children. But there are two categories of housing for older persons. Under the first, 100 percent of occupants must be 62 years or older. Under the second category, at least 80 percent of the occupied units must have at least one person living there who is 55 or older. If your building is in the second category, it might be okay for your grandchild to live with you. You must check the bylaws of your building to find out.

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:

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Want to write local Somerville stories?

Call **857-488-5138**

and speak to the Assignment Editor

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris

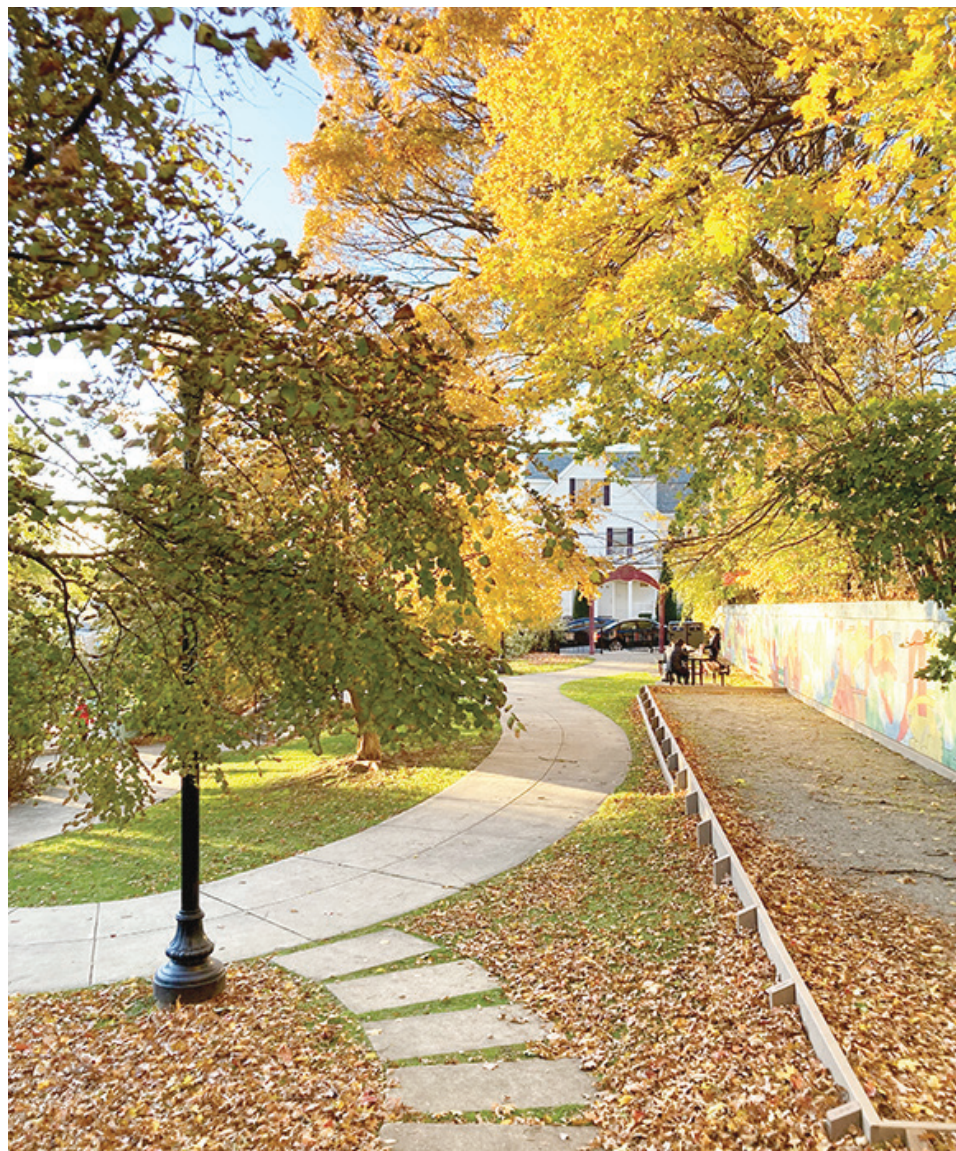


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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



November light... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

November 12

- 1035 – King Canute of Norway dies.
- 1859 – The first flying-trapeze circus act is performed by Jules Leotard.
- 1903 – The Lebaudy brothers of France set an air-travel distance record of 34 miles in a dirigible.
- 1923 – Adolf Hitler is arrested for his attempted German coup.
- 1938 – Mexico agrees to compensate the United States for land seizures.
- 1948 – Hikedji Tojo, Japanese prime minister, and seven others are sentenced to hang by an international tribunal.
- 1968 – The U.S. Supreme Court voids an Arkansas law banning the teaching of evolution in public schools.
- 1990 – Sir Timothy John “Tim” Berners-Lee, publishes a formal proposal for the creation of the World Wide Web.
- 1997 – Ramzi Yousef convicted of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

city parks with inclusive swings from 39% to 83%. The ribbon-cutting will be held on **Monday, November 17**, at 10 a.m. at **Hoyt Sullivan Playground** (117 Central St.). In the event of inclement weather, the ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held on Thursday, November 20, at 3 p.m.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the **City of Somerville Department of Health and Human Services** invite community members to attend Somerville’s annual **Transgender Day of Remembrance and Resilience** on **Thursday, November 20**, at the **Council on Aging** (167 Holland St) from 5 to 6 p.m. The program will include remarks from Mayor Ballantyne, members of the Somerville LGBTQ+ community, and the city’s LGBTQ+ Services Co-ordinator. The event is free and open to all, and live ASL interpretation will be provided. For more information about LGBTQ+ programming, events, and resources, please email lgbtqservices@somervillema.gov or visit somervillema.gov/lgbtqservices.

The **Green Line service** will be **suspended between Park Street and Union Square** as well as **Medford/Tufts** beginning at approximately 8 p.m. through the end of service on **Tuesday, November 4**, and continuing for the following nine days, **November 5 – 13**. For more information, please visit www.mbta.com/GreenLine or connect with the T on X @MBTA, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or Tik-Tok @thembta.

For **anyone in need of food resources**, go to the **Somerville Food Coalition’s website**: [www.https://bit.ly/4ocJ6NB](https://bit.ly/4ocJ6NB). Freelocal pantries, community meals, community fridges, and more. Find more information at <https://www.somervillema.gov/snap>. Here are some locations where you can find free food at **Somerville’s Community Fridges** can be found at **35 Prospect St., Elizabeth Peabody House, 275-277 Broadway, St. Clements**, across from 29 St. Clements Road. Donations are welcome at these locations.

Next Wave and Full Circle Wreath Sale is the district’s alternative therapeutic middle and high school. They work with kids from across the district who have experienced academic setbacks and need

support getting back on track. They are selling wreaths to help fund field trips, experiential learning, community building, and incentives. Wreaths cost \$25 and can be purchased at this order link: <https://trst.in/s0aASi>

Washington Street Art’s newest exhibit, **Small Works**, opens this **Saturday, November 15**, from 6 to 8 p.m., 321 Washington St. Gallery hours are from Noon to 4 p.m. This is a “cash and carry” exhibit – take home your art when you buy it!

The **Center for Arts at the Armory**, 191 Highland Ave, will host and manage the **16th Annual Somerville Winter Farmers Market (SWFM) every Saturday beginning November 1 through April 11**, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This weekly market offers the best locally grown and regionally produced agricultural items, including vegetable produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, pastries, and sweets. 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. To learn more and for a complete listing of vendors, weekly specials, and live entertainment, please visit www.somwintermarket.org.

The **Somerville Police Department** is now accepting **direct hires**. They are looking for dedicated, motivated individuals ready to serve one of the most diverse and dynamic communities in the Northeast. If you’re **MPTC-trained** and looking for a department that values teamwork, community engagement, career growth, and competitive benefits, this is your opportunity. Join our team and make a real impact. Apply at: CityOfSomerville.ApplyToJob.com.

Visit **ROOTED Armory Café** for their monthly recurring Café events this November. Upcoming events include: **Nova Comedy Collective’s Nebula Night, Friday, November 14**, at 8:00 p.m., **WYRD Queer Comedy, Saturday, November**

15, at 7:00 p.m., **Atomic Comedy Improv Night, Thursday, November 20**, at 7:30 p.m., **GottaBal! Balboa Dance, Sunday, November 23**, at 4:00 p.m., **Nova Comedy Collective’s Big Bang Standup, Friday, November 28**, at 7:30 p.m. More info available for each event on their website.

The federal shutdown has caused millions to lose access to **SNAP food assistance**, and the **Somerville Homeless Coalition** is preparing for the impact. They are looking for help for their clients fed by cooking a meal or donating a donor dash or restaurant gift card through their **Meal Train link** - <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/vgelkg>.

Somerville Water and Sewer billing is now on a quarterly schedule. As of **November 2025**, all Somerville Water and Sewer residents will move to a quarterly billing schedule, designed to make managing your water and sewer payments simpler, more predictable, and easier to budget throughout the year. Under this schedule, bills will be issued four times per year. <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/water-and-sewer/billing-schedule>.

Artwork: Creating a **visual brand** to suit your music. Musicians, learn how artwork enhances and amplifies your music through logos, gig flyers, merch, websites, and more. Get some fresh ideas, tools, tips, and tricks to discover what works for you. **November 15**, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., **Somerville Public Library**, 79 Highland Ave. Free, open to the public. RSVP: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/events/artwork-creating-a-visual-brand-to-suit-your-music/>.

The **Cosmetology Salon** at **Somerville High School** is open. **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by appointment only. Make an appointment by calling 617-629-5250 x611550. All services are provided for a nominal fee.

Letters Rewoven, a new community art installation by local artist **Anna Fubini**, will be on view at **Lou Ann David Park**, 1060 Broadway, **through Spring 2026**. Visitors can learn more about Letters Rewoven and explore ways to contribute their own writing at annafubini.com.

Visit: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/events/letters-rewoven>.

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!

The **Somerville Museum** presents **Discover “Ring It On”** at **Market Basket** in Somerville. A glimpse into modern life through digital video projection. By **Barbara Jo, Nathan, Fash, and Olga Mesa**. On view **until December 6**. Visit today (2 – 5 p.m.) or Saturday (12 – 5 p.m.). One Westwood Road. For more information, visit www.somervillemuseum.org.

Generative AI and the Art of Co-Creation by the **Somerville Museum** takes place on **November 13** from 7 to 8 p.m. One Westwood Rd. Explore how humans and AI create together, blending imagination, code, and questions of creativity, bias, and belonging. For more information, visit www.somervillemuseum.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

Poet Jim Dunn goes 'behind the state capitol' with the ghost of John Wieners

Recently I went on a tour of the Beacon Hill environs that the late poet John Wieners inhabited for many years. Jim Dunn, a confidante of Wieners in his last years hosted the tour, and was full of anecdotes about the poet and his life and times. The walk was partly in support of a reissued collection of Wieners's, *Behind the State Capitol: Or Cincinnati Pike*. Jim generously agreed to this interview.

Doug Holder: The original book was published in 1975 by the Good Gay Poets. Can you tell us about this collaborative and why was it decided to reissue this book in 2025?

Jim Dunn: The Good Gay Poets were an influential publishing group that was an offshoot of the gay liberation Fag Rag collective. John Wieners was involved primarily through his friendship with Charley Shively. Charley, Michael Bronski, John Mitzel and Larry Martin formed the radical gay anarchist collective in the early 70s and began publishing the Boston gay newspaper, Fag Rag, which ran until the early 1980's. Charley was a founding member the Good Gay Poets Collective publishing several seminal books of poetry by queer poets outside the mainstream poetry establishment. They published Freddie Greenfield's *Were You Always a Criminal?* ruth reiss' *Desert Journals*, Aaron Shurin's broadside *Exorcism of the straight/man/demon*, and Adrian Stanford's groundbreaking *Black and Queer*. Charley was the author of one book of poetry as well as the *Collected Works of Lysander Spooner* (1971), *A History of the Conception of Death in America, 1650-1860*, his doctoral dissertation (1988), *Calamus Lovers: Walt Whitman's Working Class Camerados* (1987) and *Drum Beats: Walt Whitman's Civil War Boy Lovers* (1989).

Charley also published *Behind the State Capitol* putting the book together with Wieners and John Mitzel. The three of them worked together on the collages and layout of the text. Originally, 1,500 soft covers and 100 hardcovers were printed. However, many of those copies were lost in a fire deliberately started by off-duty police and firemen in 1982, making the book very scarce. As John's reputation has grown, his work was discovered by a new generation of younger poets. The decision to reissue now was primarily Raymond Foye's idea working with the publisher, The Song Cave and it is long overdue. Copies of the original book are rare and go for hundreds of dollars. Until now, readers could only read it in PDF or excerpted in the *Black Sparrow Collected Poems* that Raymond edited.

Behind the State Capitol:
Or Cincinnati Pike

John
Wieners

50th Anniversary Edition

The Song Cave



This version will be an exact reproduction of the original text and collages, which was important to preserve as they were originally published, because it is such a unique book, visually and textually. (The re-issue will be available on November 4th) Also, coincidentally, a book of Charley's poems has just been published by Bootstrap and there is another Wieners book of John's essays and interviews to be published by Lithic Press this year.

They were years ahead of their time. The world has caught up. Charley, John and their work are so important in the air of these dark and tricky times. The only lingering regret I have is that I wish they were both here to see the fruits of their literary labors.

DH: Wieners was a veritable "walker in the city." You formed a walking tour of his haunts. Tell us about this.

JD: *The Tour* was suggested and sponsored by the Woodberry Poetry Room. I have Christina Davis and Mary Graham to thank for putting the whole thing together. It was a companion event to the reading the prior Tuesday at Harvard's Houghton Library with poets Eileen Myles and Cedar Sigo celebrating the re-issue of *Behind the State Capitol*. John's world the last years of his life was the Bohemian Northside of Beacon Hill, "Beatnik Hill" as you call it.

I was lucky enough to spend time with John the last 10 years of his life walking *Continued on page 15*

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Born in Wakefield, Massachusetts, James Cerulle is a sophomore 2D Studio Art major and Creative Writing minor at Endicott College. Ever since a young age, drawing and writing have been some of his favorite hobbies. He hopes to pursue illustration and combine it with his love of writing in the future.



Paintbrush

I do not understand you, paintbrush.
I do not understand your impulses
Which often defy mine.
I brush left, you brush right.
I implore you to be extra tight
Before you drop a blob of paint
And gleam at me proudly.
And I stare in disgust.

How often I give you a bath!
Rinse away your ailments
Cleanse you of paint
And permit you rest.
But you remain tainted.
All of your arduous labor
Stained on your bristles, as if to say
"Look what you've done to me."

Must I be rueful?
When I request your assistance,
You always fight and claw in protest.
I could dip you in paint
Leave you there as it dries,
Forever suffocating your bristles.
I spare your life, paintbrush.
The least you could do is simplify mine.

— James Cerulle

To have your work considered for the Lyrical send it to:

Doug Holder, 25 School St.; Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu

Tufts University Department of Music Presents Tufts Youth Philharmonic: Spark, Rhapsody, Rapture

The Tufts University Department of Music presents “Tufts Youth Philharmonic: Spark, Rhapsody, Rapture” in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Friday, November 21, 6:30 p.m. TYP presents Rossini’s Overture to *La Gazza Ladra*, Coleridge-Taylor’s *Bamboula* and Schumann’s *Symphony No. 4* under guest director Timur Rubinshteyn.

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



Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

those streets with him. And it was always reassuring to be driving around Boston and have a random John Wieners sighting in Beacon Hill, in Government Center, by the Boston Public Library – I would see him walking the streets, even though we met regularly, and it was good to know that he was still part of the fabric of the city back then. Now, it seems his absence is part of the story of neighborhoods that has been lost with gentrification over the years, in Beacon Hill, the destruction of the West End and the ghosts of Scollay Square. I wrote an essay in *Jack-et Magazine* about John and his walking world, *The Old Brick City* by the *Atlantic*.

DH: Wieners used newspaper clippings, Hollywood fan magazines, even a disfigured image of gay porn. Did he ever talk to you about his art, collages, etc., that he used, in his books?

JD: John would cut and paste various images and articles inside copies of his own books, especially in *Behind the State Capitol*. Images and collages were as important in that book as the text. The books in his library would become scrapbooks of decoupage, collages composed of everything around him. Although they would appear, at first glance, to be random assemblages of images cut from magazines, junk mail and articles, one would gradually see a pattern of transposing and pasting his dreams over the reality of his printed work.

John actively was engaged in his own work on a very visceral and physical level. Beyond stuffing his texts with the various ephemera of his everyday existence—and pasting pictures throughout, which frequently contained hidden personal meaning. John’s active relationship with his books was ongoing and speaks to the fact that he was constantly reworking, collaging, covering and uncovering poems and pages in his books to a point where some copies are damaged beyond repair. But in John’s world the books were not damaged, they were improved—with new edits, torn images of movie stars, poetry-reading flyers, and whatever else held secret importance to him at the time.

DH: The late Jack Powers told me that Beacon Hill—home to the poet—was called “Beatnik Hill” back in the day. I would think Wieners would have been comfortable here—although he didn’t consider himself a Beat poet, per say.

JD: I think John was very comfortable in Beacon Hill living in the same apartment for almost thirty years from the early 70s until his death in 2002. I think his apartment specifically was very dear to him. Although it was sparse and a bit eccentric, it was home to him. I always felt privileged when I visited his apartment like I was entering

another world—John’s world. I really treasure those memories of the two of us just sitting silently in the back room of his apartment together alone in our own thoughts.

John’s comfort in Beacon Hill and his well-being was provided by a small group of friends and relatives—Charley Shively, me, Raymond Foye, and his cousin Arlene Phinney and her son, Walter. Another person who truly was a lifeline to John in his later years was Jack Powers. Jack made sure John had cigarettes and would always whip up a warm meal for John, even when Jack was down on his luck. John’s comfort day to day in Beacon Hill was in large part, thanks to Jack. Jack set up many readings for John including two legendary readings at the Old West Church—one with an amazing cast of musicians and poets, and another with John Sinclair with Wayne Kramer playing crazy guitar accompaniment before a gig at T’T the Bear’s. Jack always made sure John was paid even if it meant taking money out of his own pocket. Jack was essential. I got to know John well through his connection to Jack. They were more than neighbors—they were poet brothers.

Wieners was once asked directly what it was specifically that differentiated him from the other Beat writers. He took a long puff of his cigarette, and responded, “They got famous. I did not.” – a response so obvious, simple and direct, it elicited uneasy laughter from those present.

DH: Why do you think Wieners is an important poet? When he was alive was he accepted by the academy—the Boston literati?

JD: Wieners’ work is authentic in nature and pure in spirit. His unique voice had the sonorous quality of Old Towne Boston. Through the depths of drug abuse, bouts of mental illness, and emotional turmoil, he dedicated his life to the practice of poetry, and the artistic pursuit of heavenly visions amidst the ruins of daily life. There was a certain light from within him that was truly connected to a divine inspiration. He had a rare genius in his ability to perceive magic in the mundane and capture it in the immediate language of his work.

Although he published only a handful of books and three issues of his magazine, *Measure*, in his lifetime, his influence upon his contemporary poets and subsequent generations of writers is immeasurable. Poets who admire his work take him immediately to heart, and regard him with absolute devotion. His work has gained a cult status among generations of Boston poets like Joe Torra, Dan Bouchard, Sean Cole and Jim Berhle but especially amongst queer poets including Eileen Myles, Cedar Sigo, Kevin Killian, Jeremy Reed, Dennis Cooper, Michael Rumaker, Julian Brolaski,

CA Conrad, Nat Raha, and many others. A poet’s poet, his various friendships and connections placed him in multiple influential poetic movements, but his poetry is singular and unique, especially in *Behind the State Capitol*.

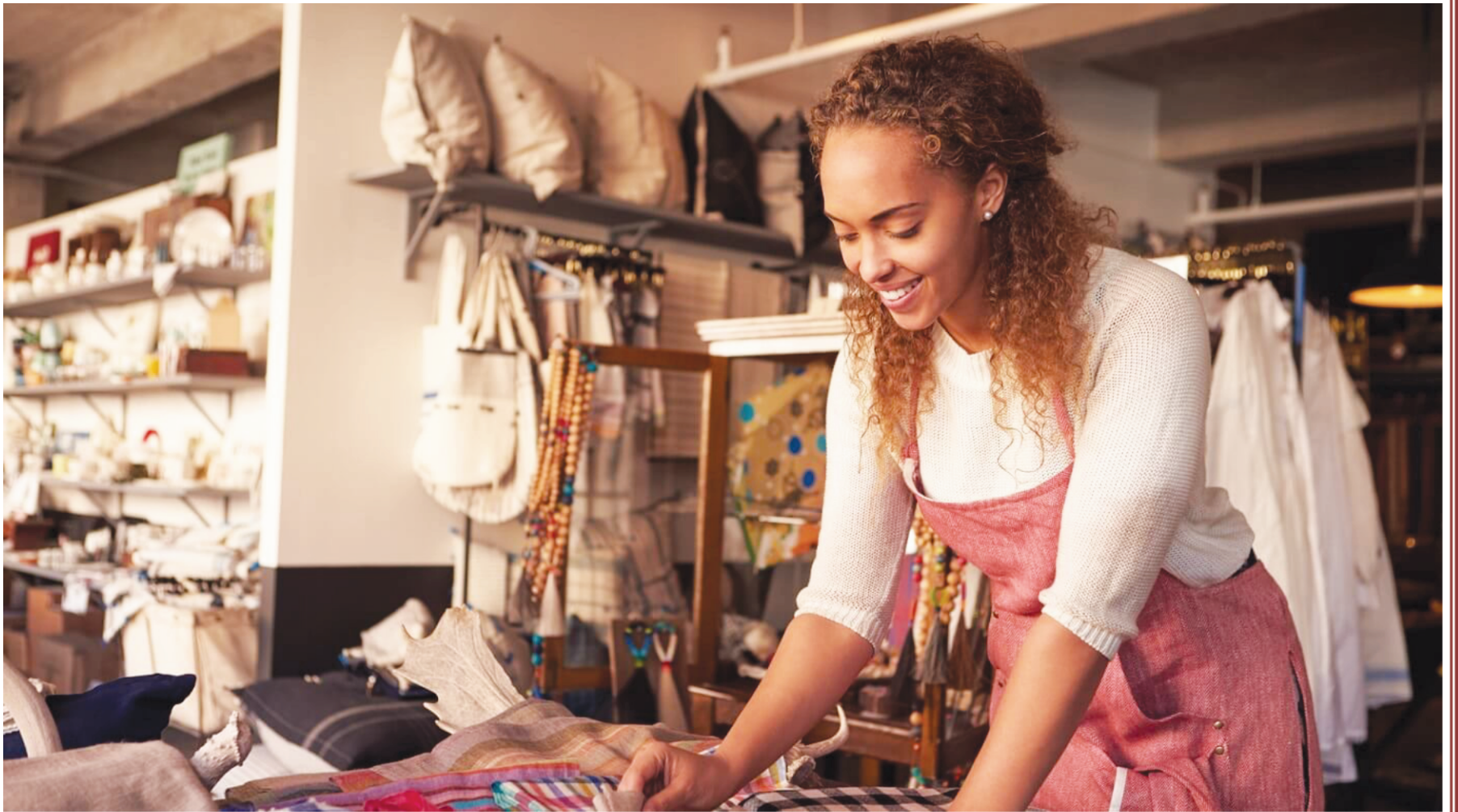
Allen Ginsberg saw immediately the purity of Wieners’ unique talent, “John Wieners glory is solitary as a poet – a man reduced to loneliness in poetry, without worldly distractions – and a man become one with his poetry.” I think Robert Creeley in his introduction to *Cultural Affairs in Boston* said it best, “The poetry of John Wieners has an exceptional human beauty as if there is any other ... (He) makes manifest the complex place from which all (his) work finally has come, and to which it, and he also, insistently returns: ‘my city, Boston ...’ He said once to an interviewer, “I am a Boston poet,” and there is no one for whom that city, or any other, has proven so determining and generative an experience ... Against the casual waste of our lives, his has proved a cost and commitment so remarkable. He has given everything to our common world.”

I think there is such fervent appreciation for John’s poetry lately because he was so criminally under-appreciated as a poet in his lifetime. He was virtually ignored by critics and Academic poets in his lifetime. I wanted to write my thesis at the Harvard Extension School on his work, and I was initially rejected because of the lack of criticism published at the time. It took several years but I finally was able to write my thesis on John. Since then, young scholars such as Robert Dewhurst and Seth Stewart have worked tirelessly to champion his work. Since his death, multiple editions of his letters, journals and other writings have been published, with more to be published in the near future. Consequently, his reputation and popularity among a wide array of poets and critics have increased considerably. Maybe, in another 50 years, he will be seen as one of the true lyric poets of the late 20th century whose work was years ahead of its time.

The reissued edition of *Behind the State Capitol* is available from The Song Cave now and can be found here: <https://the-song-cave.com/products/behind-the-state-capitol-or-cincinnati-pike-by-john-wieners>

Charley Shively book of poems *I Have a Poem for You*, was recently published by Bootstrap Press available now: <https://terrier-celery-swmk.squarespace.com/store/p/i-have-a-poem-for-you-by-charles-shively>

Jim Dunn’s latest book of poems *Angry Bull’s Cadence* was recently published by The Bodily Press and can be found here: <https://sb0111-qr.myshopify.com/products/jim-dunn-angry-bulls-cadence>



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