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\$975,000 to be allocated to food security programs amid growing community needs



Food security programs in the city will be getting a financial boost of \$975,000 to address their ongoing needs for funding.

By The Times Staff

A lot of people are going hungry, and that has city officials taking swift action to cope with the crisis. Following the government shutdown and food aid benefits lapse, the city is appropriating money to feed vulnerable neighbors in the community.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne recently announced that the city will use \$975,000 from the Community Benefits Stabilization Fund to address rising food insecurity across Somerville. The funding, approved by the City Council on November 13, will support a range of critical food access programs for individuals, families, children, and seniors.

The investment includes \$875,000 for a range of food security initiatives and \$100,000 to expand the Senior Taxi Program, which *Continued on page 4*

Somerville celebrates Junction Park renovations

By Jordan Pagkalinawan

Residents who frequent Somerville's community path will notice a new and improved Junction Park. On Friday, November 14, dozens of community members joined Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Councilor Naima Sait, and the city's Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to reopen the renovated park, which includes nearly an acre of additional space and a host of innovative features.

"Standing here, it's hard to believe that just a short time ago, this was mostly asphalt, and now it's vibrant," Mayor Ballantyne told the crowd in her opening remarks. "It's a green oasis that's been thoughtfully filled with native plantings, shady trees, creative spaces to sit, relax, and connect with our neighbors."

According to Ballantyne, Junction Park now includes 90 new trees, over 6,000 *Continued on page 4*



A ribbon-cutting ceremony to reopen the renovated Junction Park took place on Friday, November 14.

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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.

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.

Free all ages **Vaccine Clinic (Flu and COVID-19)**, **Thursday, November 20**, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. **West Library**, 40 College Ave. The best way to reduce your risk from these respiratory viruses and their potentially serious complications is to get a flu and COVID-19 vaccine every year. Both flu and COVID-19 vaccines are conveniently offered at multiple locations across Somerville, improving access for all residents with no out-of-pocket costs. Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations> to see more clinics.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to Somerville's oldest recycler, **Allen Nissenbaum**, as he celebrates his 82nd birthday. Happy birthday to **Tracey Leah Pratt**, who is celebrating this week. We wish Tracey a very *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of November 19 – November 25 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday <i>November 19</i>	Partly Cloudy	46°/30°	6%	3%	WNW 7 mph
Thursday <i>November 20</i>	Cloudy	47°/32°	5%	2%	N 6 mph
Friday <i>November 21</i>	Cloudy	50°/35°	20%	13%	SW 12 mph
Saturday <i>November 22</i>	Partly Cloudy	47°/31°	9%	5%	NW 10 mph
Sunday <i>November 23</i>	Partly Cloudy	48°/36°	8%	4%	WSW 9 mph
Monday <i>November 24</i>	Partly Cloudy	50°/39°	17%	11%	W 10 mph
Tuesday <i>November 25</i>	Rain	49°/36°	30%	22%	NW 12 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: *Iraq War Veteran reflects on Dick Cheney's passing*

Cindy Fogleman says:

I read your column, Councilman McLaughlin, after spending some time this week with Iraq war veterans. So much profoundly unnecessary loss and pain from that war. In my mind the only thing worse on all this loss is that it would be wasted. That is unacceptable. Instead, many of us – including veterans – have joined in hearts and hands to support Iraq's most vulnerable and voiceless orphans, street kids, disabled children, and child laborers through the Iraqi Children Foundation. For me, I cannot change the past but I can try to make amends by loving and supporting innocent kids.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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Advertising Director – Bobbie Toner

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and Cathleen Twardzik*

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Photographer: Claudia Ferro

The Somerville Times is published every Wednesday

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Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Flute Ensemble

The Tufts University Department of Music presents Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Flute Ensemble at the Perry and Marty Granoff Music Center on Sunday, November 23, at 3:00pm.

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

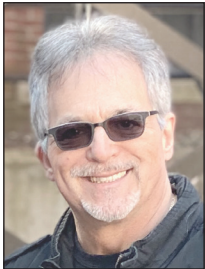
The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus. For more information, please visit as.tufts.edu/music/musiccenter or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-2253.



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.

...And a one, and a two, and a...



I ended up graduating from college in 1977, even though I dropped the “College Course” at Somerville High School. You see, I flunked geometry, and when

they put me back in the same teacher’s class the next year to suffer through it again, I freaked out. And it’s a shame because that Pythagorean Theorem would have come in real handy in my everyday life – NOT!

Anyway, I went to see my guidance counselor and he put together a special course/schedule just for me: “The Jimmy Course.” After all, I didn’t need college since I was going to be a rock star (you see how that worked out). Mr. Perno devised a custom course list that looked something like this: music theory, music appreciation, boys choir, a cappella choir, dramatic arts, and Dick Gordiniers’ Earth/Space Science. My senior year was a musical cakewalk – yet I still graduated by the skin of my teeth.

It was all Mrs. Carafotes and Andy Smith all the time – I spent almost as much time in the music room as I did in the principal’s office.

Now, let’s talk about those great musical concerts in the High School auditorium featuring The Boys’ Glee Club! When we filed in for rehearsals, they usually started like this – we would remove a few of those heavy wooden armrests off the seats and whip them around the auditorium. I can still remember the sound they made, crashing and bouncing off the wooden floors. We would rehearse songs like *Greenfields* and *Hang Down Your Head Tom Dooley* – getting ready for a concert.

The night of the performance was always a riot. The audience was in place, the curtain was closed, and all of us clowns were on risers, fooling around. Then, right before the curtain opened, you would hear in a full, resounding adolescent voice, “Schaefer, is the one beer to have when you’re having more than one,” really loud! Andy Smith’s face would turn “that gorgeous red that spurs us ahead,” and he would stomp his foot and scream for us to STOP!

“... I spent almost as much time in the music room as I did in the principal’s office”

What a bunch of nuts! If I remember correctly (and it was a long time ago), there was Joe Lutoff, Gary Winter, Paul Campbell, Emmet Smith, Howie Griffen, John Certusi, both Oppedisano brothers, and a host of others.

The Schaefer song wasn’t the only one in our repertoire. We did a nice job with *When You Say Bud*, the *Flintstones* theme, and *B-A-Bay, B-E-Bee*, the Three Stooges classic. What a blast we had! I remember we had an impromptu rehearsal during a fire drill to learn *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida*. We really had quite a nice little collection of tunes together.

The pizza in the cafeteria and the glee club concerts were some of the best memories I have of Somerville High. We joked and laughed our way through a lot of concerts whose audiences included parents, teachers, and politicians. But as I look back on our buffoonery, I do have some regrets – we never perfected the themes from *Green Acres* or *F-Troop*.



Eat Out in East!
Let's meet up on Wednesdays to support local businesses
4:00pm-8:00 pm
Join ESMS and Ward 1 City Councilor, Matt McLaughlin!
Your East Somerville Dining Guide

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Mount Vernon ⊗ Taco Loco ⊗ Los Paisanos ⊗ Vinny's ⊗ Tapatio ⊗ Sister's Caribbean ⊗ Fat Hen ⊗ Los Toritos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ La Cosecha ⊗ Rincon Mexicano ⊗ Gauchao ⊗ Ola Cafe ⊗ La Brasa ⊗ Rei Da Picanha ⊗ Pastelaria Vitoria ⊗ Royal Pizza & Subs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Montecristo ⊗ El Jalisco ⊗ Michette ⊗ Lotus Xpress ⊗ Casey's ⊗ Maya Sol ⊗ Tulum Mexican ⊗ Oliveira's Steak House
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\$975,000 to be allocated to food security programs amid growing community needs

CONT. FROM PG 1

provides rides to seniors so they can attend congregate meals hosted by the Somerville Council on Aging.

“Investing in food and food security has been a top priority of my administration,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

The food security initiatives include “staple foods, community meals, grocery cards and ready-to-eat food for high-risk populations,” according to a memo from the Health and Human Services Department.

Mayor Ballantyne said the money is a critical investment for community well-being.

“The need we face here in Somerville is both immediate and growing,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “Even before the federal shutdown, the impending changes to SNAP benefits and prior cuts to federal food grants were already impacting people facing food insecurity and agencies that work to fight it.”

Many community members have already been affected by cuts in federal aid for anti-hunger programs. Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services lost federal funding that enables seniors to access community meals, and changes to SNAP eligibility criteria and ARPA funds will leave more families without support, said Mayor Ballantyne.

“These are not abstract policies and funding changes. They represent real hardships for real people in our community,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

Over 1 in 3 faced food insecurity in the Commonwealth last year, according to an annual statewide food access report by Mass General Brigham and The Greater Boston Food Bank.

Approximately \$500,000 of these funds

will go directly to organizations doing the daily essential work of feeding vulnerable community members. The remaining funds will go toward programs that span the full spectrum of food access.

Mayor Ballantyne recognized community partners who will work to combat food insecurity. Organizations mentioned include the Somerville Homeless Coalition, Shepherd’s Kitchen Food Pantry, Elizabeth Peabody House, Food4All Food Pantry, Connexion, Food For Free, Family Table at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, and Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services.

“[They] get needed food to our neighbors when there’s nowhere else to turn,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “These organizations show up every single day, they serve meals with dignity, they build community around tables.”

The funding will support a range of initiatives, including:

- A half-million dollars in direct support to organizations providing daily food services to Somerville residents, including food pantries, community meals, and more
 - Carrot cards for groceries and expanded funding for the School Free Food Markets that serve families and students
 - Support for weekly community meals, ready-to-eat frozen meals, and restaurant meal voucher programs
 - Funding for grocery assistance to senior and homebound residents, and supports to fill gaps caused by cuts to the Congregate Meal Transportation Program
- Somerville residents can access food support in multiple ways:



• Visit the Food Coalition website at sommervillefoodcoalition.org for a list of free local food resources, such as a local food pantry, community meal, food market, or other resources near you

• Visit sommervillema.gov/SNAP for multilingual quick guides for food resources

• Children in Somerville Public Schools can always access free lunch and breakfast at school

Community members can support their neighbors:

- Donate money or gift cards to local organizations such as those listed at sommervillefoodcoalition.org/donate
- Contribute to school PTAs to help distribute food gift cards to families
- Bring food to Community Fridges (guidance at sommervillema.gov/SNAP)
- Share food resource information with those who may need it

City Councilor and Mayor-elect Jake Wilson offered his appreciation to the Ballantyne administration and community partners for their hard work in assisting with the needs of low-income residents who lack the financial resources to pay for adequate food.

“This is not about the SNAP situation. This is about a prior situation that existed before that,” said Councilor Wilson. “This was a dire situation before the government shutdown.”

Health and Human Services Director Karin Carroll said that the team is working with community partners to determine where to allocate the funds.

“We will continue to work with them and refine both the gaps and the needs, and try to make distributions based on what our partner agencies are telling us they need,” said Carroll.

Somerville celebrates Junction Park renovations

CONT. FROM PG 1

native plants, and hammock groves, where residents can use hammocks available for rent at the Somerville Public Library. The park also houses bike repair and water bottle refilling stations.

“That’s what progress looks like in Somerville,” she added. “When we take what’s been paved over and make it green again. “When we replace hard edges with gathering spaces. When we design parks that welcome everyone, whether you’re a walker, a biker, a hammock reader, or a green space seeker.”

Councilor Naima Sait echoed Ballantyne’s sentiment of creating community-oriented spaces.

“It is wonderful to have a park where neighbors can gather, connect, and enjoy

being part of our community,” Sait said in her remarks. “Thank you, Madam Mayor, the project team, and everyone who worked on making this project a reality. And thank you for designing this park with all our sustainability goals. Having this part in Ward 5 is a true gift.”

Steps away along the community path, the space now includes a small seating area overlooking the Green Line and Commuter Rail on the former Somerville Junction Railroad. It’s a nod to the area’s former life as a passenger train depot before it ceased operations in the 1920s and was designated as a public park in 2008. Ballantyne called the space “a quiet tribute to the movement and industry that built this city. A reminder that we’re still a community on

the move.”

The park’s renovations were funded by park grants from both the state of Massachusetts and federal partners, including the American Rescue Plan, which supported over 700 community initiatives. The city’s Public Space and Urban Forestry Division led the park’s redesign efforts. In an interview following the ceremony, Director Luisa Oliveira reflected on the years-long process, which began in 2021 after hearing from residents.

“Once we have that information, we take that and create a design that we check in with the community, and then it has taken about three, four years to construct this park,” she said.

Oliveira hopes people remember the

benefits of green spaces in Somerville.

“The parks, especially in Somerville, which is so heavily populated, are really important for reconnecting with nature and with each other,” Oliveira added. “And this one on the community path is even more important. It’s the only stop until you get into Boston, so I think it will be heavily used.”

Ballantyne believes that Junction Park will serve Somerville “for generations to come.”

“It’s a reminder that small sites can have a big impact when we treat them as opportunities to connect, restore, and reimagine how we share our public spaces,” she said in closing. “Let’s keep building a city where every neighborhood has a room to breathe, to gather, and to thrive.”

Mayor-elect Jake Wilson announces Transition Steering Committee to build 'Service-First, Equity-Driven' Somerville

Mayor-elect Jake Wilson today announced the formation of a Transition Steering Committee that will guide Somerville through the handoff to his administration and develop a clear action plan for delivering more responsive, efficient, and equitable city services.

"As Somerville's next mayor, my job is to set a clear tone and direction and then unite the organization around priorities that actually make people's lives better," said Mayor-elect Jake Wilson. "This transition is about planning for success. We're going to treat city government like an urban mechanic shop, fixing what's broken, refining how we work, and measuring progress, while communicating honestly, being available and accountable, and putting equity at the center of every decision."

"I've spent my time on the Council pushing for more transparent budgets, better coordination, and real public input," Wilson added. "Now I want to bring that same obsession with transparency, efficiency, and collaboration into the mayor's office. This team brings the experience and candor we need to get that right from day one."

The committee will be chaired by former Mayor Joe Curtatone and co-chaired by Ward 1 Councilor Matt McLaughlin. It brings together regional leaders in municipal innovation, economic development, infrastructure, equity, planning, design, and community organizing, all tasked with helping Wilson "hit the ground running" on day one.

"Somerville has a history as one of the most innovative city governments in the country, and this is a chance to build on that legacy in a new era," said Joe Curtatone, Transition Chair and former Somerville mayor. "Jake is starting the right way, being honest about where we're strong and where we're falling short, putting basic services first, and organizing city hall around service, equity, and problem-solving. I'm excited to help him assemble a world-class team and support a smooth, values-driven transition."

Transition Steering Committee: Focus Areas

Guided by Wilson's values of Leadership, Communication, Availability & Accountability, Transparency & Efficiency, and Collaboration & Coordination, the committee will:

Improve Core City Services – Assess how Somerville currently delivers "urban mechanic" basics like 311 response, streets and sidewalks, parks, inspections, and per-

mitting; identify bottlenecks; and recommend early wins and longer-term process improvements.

Modernize Communication – Move city outreach from PR-style messaging to true public information by designing a multi-channel strategy (email, text, phone, mail, and a modern city app) that lets residents choose how and about what they hear from their government.

Strengthen Availability & Accountability – Recommend structures to sustain an "open door" mayoralty, including regular and on-demand office hours, Thursday evening availability aligned with staff schedules, and more governing from neighborhoods rather than conference rooms.

Advance Transparency, Efficiency & Equity – Map where budgeting, planning, and decision-making can be more transparent, and establish a culture of continuous process improvement that embeds an equity lens into everyday operations.

Build Regional Partnerships – Identify opportunities for Somerville to coordinate with neighboring municipalities and state partners on shared challenges such as housing affordability, transportation, public health, infrastructure, and quality-of-life issues.

A High-Caliber Team

Members of the Transition Steering Committee include:

Joe Curtatone (Chair) – Vice President, Government Affairs & Strategy, indiGO Technologies; Professor in the Practice, Tufts University; Former President, The Alliance for Climate Transition; Former Mayor, City of Somerville.

Matt McLaughlin (Vice-Chair) – Ward 1 City Councillor, City of Somerville.

Jay Ash – President & CEO, Massachusetts Competitive Partnership; Former Secretary, Office of Economic Development, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Former City Manager, City of Chelsea.

Tom Bent – Founder, Bent Electrical Contractors, Past Chair, Somerville Chamber of Commerce.

Kerry Bowie – Co-Founder & General Partner, Malaika Ventures; Founder, President & Executive Director, Browning the Green Space; Co-Founder, President & Executive Director, The Majira Project.

Janice Delory – Former Chief of Staff, Mayor Joe Curtatone, City of Somerville; Former Vice President of Marketing, Fidelity Investments.

Douglas Foy – President, Serafix Corporation; Former Secretary, Common-



Former Mayor Joe Curtatone will chair the committee, which will focus on operations, communication, equity, and regional collaboration.

wealth Development, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Former President, Conservation Law Foundation.

Jillian Harvey – Chief Equity Officer, Massachusetts Municipal Association; Former Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Town of Arlington, MA.

Stacy Richardson – Senior Director of Collaboration, Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University; Former Chief of Staff, National League of Cities; Former Chief of Staff, City of Chattanooga, TN.

Samantha Silverberg – Visiting Fellow, Taubman Center for State and Local Government, Harvard Kennedy School; Non-Resident Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution; Former Deputy Assistant for Infrastructure Implementation, The Biden-Harris White House.

Anne Tate – Professor, Rhode Island School of Design.

Denise Lauers – President, Mystic Ten-

ants Association

Rand Wilson – Organizer and Advisor, CHIPS Communities United.

Additional members may be announced as the transition progresses.

Next Steps

The Transition Steering Committee will convene immediately and deliver initial recommendations to Mayor-elect Wilson prior to his inauguration. The process will include interviews with department heads and front-line staff, listening sessions with community organizations and residents, and engagement with neighboring municipalities and state leaders. Community members can share priorities and ideas anytime at wilsontransition.org, where we'll post a short input form, updates, and materials from the transition. You can also sign up there to receive notices about upcoming listening sessions and opportunities to participate.



Meet the Author
BILL MEDEIROS
 A Grandfather, Storyteller,
 and Lover of Life's Little Lessons.

Bertucci's
 BRICK OVEN PIZZA & PASTA

Bertucci's Restaurant
 4054 Mystic Valley Pkwy,
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 November 29th, 2025

Book Signings 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM



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's Question 3 Undermines Peace



By Justin Klekota

On November's ballot, Somerville voters were asked whether the city should divest from Israel. While many voters saw it as a symbolic gesture, Question 3 remains extremely problematic. Its main sponsor, Somerville for Palestine, claims to stand for justice, but their rhetoric and continued agitation threaten Somerville's unity.

Question 3 uses inflammatory rhetoric that mirrors language long used by Hamas and other extremist movements—accusations of “genocide,” “apartheid,” and “illegal occupation” that have

served as propaganda tools for decades. These slogans do not help Palestinians in need, nor do they advance negotiations that could bring lasting peace. Instead, they deepen divisions at home and abroad.

Right now, Israel and Hamas are engaged in an ongoing peace process focused on freeing hostages and ending the fighting. Question 3 takes the opposite stance, rejecting reconciliation in favor of blame. Worse, the measure is non-binding and legally unenforceable, as confirmed by the City Solicitor. Somerville has no authority to influence Middle East policy. The only tangible impact of Question 3 is division—fueling anger and resentment within Somerville.

Somerville voters are well aware of Question 3's limitations. On the same ballot where

Question 3 passed, Somerville voters chose a new mayor. Voters elected Jake Wilson, knowing his opposition to enforcing Question 3, recognizing City Hall's job to address local issues instead.

That contrast is telling. While Somerville for Palestine celebrates Question 3's passage, the broader electorate endorsed a mayor who is focused on local governance. Somerville voters understand that the city's strength lies in solving real problems, not importing conflicts we cannot control. The results show that most residents want to move forward together and focus on local issues.

It is becoming increasingly clear that Question 3's main sponsor, Somerville for Palestine, is less interested in helping Gaza than in stirring conflict. Somerville for Palestine has shown little interest

in the peace process, the Palestinian opposition to Hamas, or the Arab nations calling for Hamas to step down: their rhetoric and aspirations appear sympathetic to Hamas. Their campaign was driven largely by outside groups such as Boston Democratic Socialists of America, which has a history of divisive political meddling, including past members convicted for political violence. These organizations don't live with the consequences of their rhetoric—they create turmoil here while remaining untouched in their own communities.

The results are already visible. Reports of hate incidents have been rising in Somerville, including in our schools. In one recent case, a student whose family fled Israel was harassed, prompting the family to move out of the city entirely. Question 3's message of

hostility has real-world consequences, creating an environment of fear and alienation for residents on both sides.

Somerville's role is not to adjudicate international conflicts but to foster local unity. Question 3 undermines that mission. Its backers may claim moral purpose, but their campaign has caused division, not peace. Mayor Wilson's election offers a path forward—one rooted in community focus and civility.

Somerville stands for unity, safety, and real compassion—not imported extremism. It's time for Somerville for Palestine to accept their symbolic victory, respect voters' endorsement of our next mayor's community focus, and give peace a chance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Justin Klekota

Sewer separation project to provide flood relief and water quality improvement in Winter Hill and Ten Hills

By The Times Staff

The city is upgrading infrastructure to separate a combined sewer system into separate stormwater and wastewater pipes in an effort to mitigate flooding and reduce waterway pollution in Winter Hill and Ten Hills.

The Mystic River Outfall and Sewer Separation (MROSS) project will separate stormwater from sanitary sewage and include a “trunk drain” or collector pipe to convey stormwater from neighborhood streets to the outfall on the Mystic River at Blessing of the Bay Park near the pedestrian footpath that runs under the Route 28 bridge.

“Not only is this going to bring some much-needed relief, but this is part of the larger plan for the city to reduce its combined sewer water outfall discharges,” said Ward 4 Councilor Jesse Clingan.

At the third virtual community meeting held on November 12, Project Manager Gina Cortese said this project is a priority for the city.

The team is at a 30 percent design milestone, and there is roughly one year to go in additional field investigations.

“As climate change progresses on, there will be more intense and more frequent rain events,” said Cortese. “With this project, a lot of that flooding goes away, close to 95 percent.”

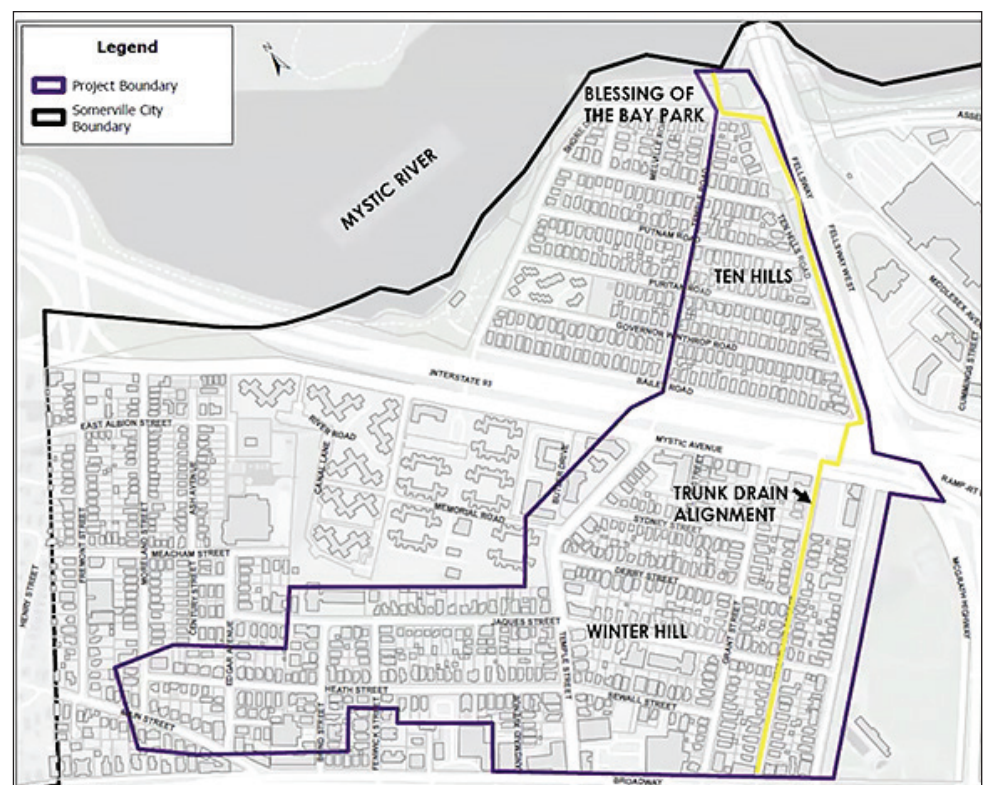
The data is based on a 2030 storm event model. Cortese says there will be substantial improvements on the streets around Foss Park.

In order to alleviate flooding in homes and streets, big pipes will be utilized to accommodate the water surges.

The project will include roughly 1.7 miles of new storm drain pipe ranging from 15 to 36 inches in diameter. The trunk drain will be a larger 78-inch concrete pipe.

Stormwater pipes will be added in Winter Hill, while Ten Hills already has “partially separated” pipes that converge, explained Cortese.

The trunk drain will go under Wheatland Street, cross under Mystic Avenue



The sewer separation project aims to reduce flooding and waterway pollution in the Winter Hill and Ten Hills areas.

and I-93, run parallel to Fellsway, and turn left on Shore Drive to the proposed outfall location. Another significant project pur-

pose is the reduction of combined sewer outflows (CSOs) in the Mystic River.

In a combined sewer *Continued on page 10*

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Don't forget to shop local this holiday season.

Our View Of The Times



Here comes the holiday shopping season once again, and we are ready to embrace the opportunity to celebrate the only way we know how: with enthusiasm and optimistic attitudes.

Let the political and social pundits doom and gloom themselves into their usual perpetual state of the doldrums. We know how to lift ourselves, to rise to the occasion and make the most of what we

have, in spite of whatever challenges may confront us.

Also, we can thankfully breathe a little easier now that the contentious election period has come to an end, and we can concentrate on more pleasant matters.

While the Thanksgiving holiday reminds us to be grateful for the blessings we have received, likewise, the other seasonal holidays that follow allow us the opportu-

nity to share our bounty and to take stock in all the good things that life here in our city has to offer.

We know that prosperity of spirit is far more important than the material wealth that may elude us from time to time. It may sound trite, but when you really think about it seriously, the truth of it becomes clear and meaningful.

As we are so often reminded, "local first"

applies to our friends, families, and the occasional stranger as much as it does to our local economy. It's a time to be a little kinder and a little gentler with one another, as well as help local businesses to both survive and thrive.

We are certain that the rewards to be gained from this will soften the effects of whatever excesses we may experience along the way.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

happy birthday. Happy birthday to **Bobby Potaris**, who celebrates this week. A great guy and a great father. Happy birthday to **Craig Resmini**. We wish him a great birthday. Happy birthday to **Joan Puglia**, a lifelong resident who is celebrating this week as well. She's the wife of former alderman **Andy**. Happy birthday to a great friend of ours, **Malitta Knaut**. A great person. We wish her the very best. Happy birthday to **Diane Johansen**, another friend of ours, a lifelong resident of Winter Hill. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Dennis Biondo**, **Philip D'Arcangelo**, **Peggy Henderson**, **Nancy Jones**, **Joe Beckmann**,

Joellen Guidi, **Mary Silvestro**, **JoEllen Guidi**, **Suzanne Ferola**, **Bill McCoy**, **Todd Easton**, **Marie Coady**, and **Peggy Ryan Lookliss** 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/>.

On **Thursday, December 4**, the **Christmas Tree Lighting** will take place on the **City Hall Concourse** (93 Highland Ave.). Activities begin at 5 p.m. Special gifts will be available for children. Includes live entertainment and light refreshments. Rain date: December 9.

Continued on page 13

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#998

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. In soccer, how many players are on the field for each team? | William Bonney known? |
| 2. Which boxer could float like a butterfly and sting like a bee? | 7. Which country has won the most FIFA World Cups? |
| 3. What tennis score always follows deuce? | 8. Which artist cut off his own ear? |
| 4. What do you call an adult female sheep? | 9. What is the next prime number after 7? |
| 5. Who was the first member of The Beatles to be married? | 10. Which planet has the most moons? |
| 6. By what nickname is the wild-west character | 11. What is the oldest tennis tournament in the world? |
| | 12. Which basketball player scored 100 points in a single NBA game? |

Answers on page 13

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

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

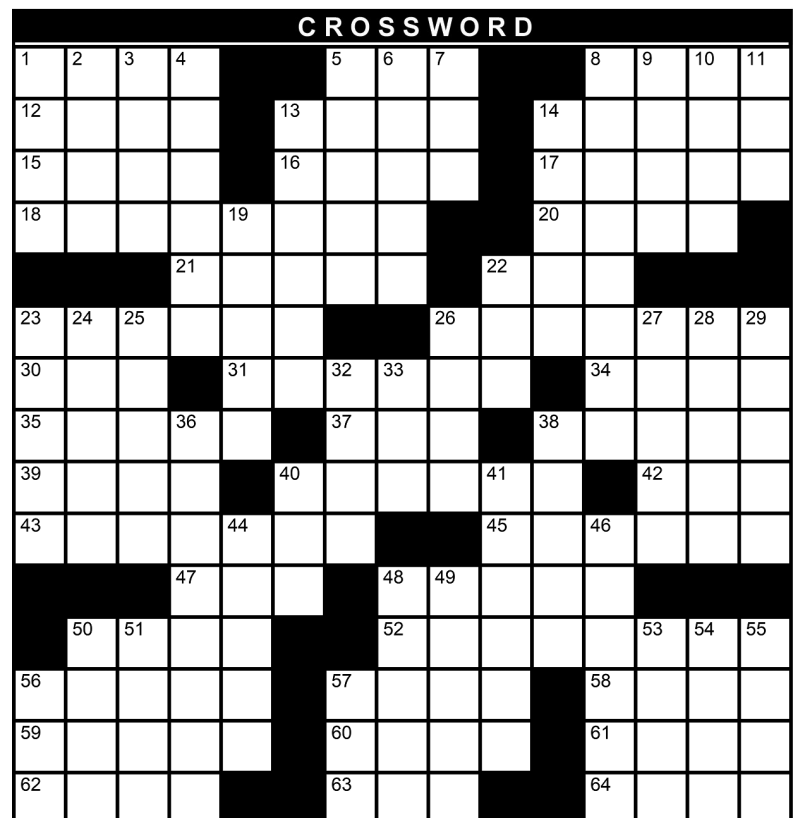
STATEPOINT CROSSWORD NURSERY RHYMES

ACROSS

1. Type of haircut, pl.
5. Tiny helper
8. *What rain does in famous nursery rhyme
12. What accomplices do
13. Ring like a bell
14. Sign of life
15. Lascivious look
16. Pretentiously artistic
17. Tiny island
18. Bring her back! (2 words)
20. Nicholas II of Russia, e.g.
21. Inmate with life sentence
22. One for Sorrow (Two for ____)
23. Melville's "Pequod," e.g.
26. More fancy
30. Request for tailor
31. Encoded message
34. Land measure
35. Omit
37. Hush-a-bye, baby, ____ still"
38. Take a base
39. Hokkaido native
40. Veal serving
42. Beehive State native
43. What Cupid did (2 words)
45. Tip me over!
47. Lt.'s inferior
48. Plant louse
50. "Pay as you earn" tax system
52. How do your ears wobble? (3 words)
56. Sacha Cohen's middle name
57. Render speechless
58. Medley
59. Apathetic
60. Not tanned
61. Nearly
62. Bird's groomer
63. It's open to interpretation
64. #57 Down, pl.

DOWN

1. It's soothing
2. Do as directed
3. British Broadcasting Corporation, colloquially
4. Take a leisurely walk
5. Chill-inducing
6. Procrastinator's word
7. What the old lady swallowed
8. She's been to London to visit the Queen
9. Paella pot
10. ____-friendly
11. Expose to moisture
13. One way to cook fish
14. Mountain climber's spike
19. Brother's daughter
22. Who stole the cookie from the cookie ____?
23. Semolina source
24. Sunny prefix
25. Kind of acid
26. Perceive by touch
27. Frost over (2 words)
28. One of the Muses
29. Find new tenant
32. What Jack Horner pulled out
33. Not miss
36. ____ of ____, he had ten thousand men
38. Beer garden mug
40. Post-Soviet Union alliance, acr.
41. C2H6, flammable gas
44. With regard to, archaic
46. Software plug-ins
48. Rose oil
49. Young chicken
50. Window glass
51. Geometric calculation
53. Buy and resell
54. Baltic capital
55. Sounds of amazement
56. Baby's apron
57. Self-care resort



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

OBITUARY

Kevin Francis Mackey



Kevin Francis Mackey passed away peacefully on November 11, 2025 in Walpole, Massachusetts at the age of 80. Son of the late Clement and Elizabeth (O’Leary) Mackey, he was born and raised in Somerville, Massachusetts and never forgot his roots throughout his entire life’s journey.

Kevin was a caring husband to the love of his life, Kathy (McGarry) Mackey, and a loving father to his children, Brian C. Mackey and his wife Alison of Milton, Cheryl A. Bayard and her husband Michel of Medfield and Kristen L. McElaney and

her husband Eddie of Walpole. To his beloved grandchildren, Tommy and Audrey Mackey, Maddie and Ellie Bayard and Teddy, Johnny and Kevin McElaney, he was “Grampie” and always a fixture on the sidelines of their hockey, baseball and basketball games. He was the brother of Kathleen Mackey of Watertown, Stephen Mackey of Somerville and the late Joseph Mackey. He is also survived by several nieces, Erin Mackey Kistler of Newton, Alyssa Mackey Linder of Somerville, and nephews Christopher Mackey of Wakefield and Micheal Mackey of Ontario, Canada.

Kevin spent his life coaching and scouting basketball, which took him from his start at Cathedral High School in the South End of Boston to Don Bosco and then around the world including the highest echelons of the game in the NCAA Tournament and the N.B.A. Like many of us, he stumbled along the way

but found redemption in the game, his family and himself. He had an eye for talent and saw potential where no one else did. He helped mentor and was a father figure to countless young men over the years. His legacy will live on in all he helped. Coach Mackey, Dad, Grampie, he will be greatly missed by all who crossed his path.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at Blessed Sacrament Church, 10 Diamond Street, Walpole on Thursday, November 20 at 10:30 AM. Visiting Hours omitted. In lieu of flowers, donations in Kevin’s memory may be made to the YMCA of Greater Boston, Attn: Development Dept., 316 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115 or www.ymcaboston.org.

Related article from ESPN: https://www.espn.com/mens-college-basketball/story/_/id/46946386/former-cleveland-state-coach-kevin-mackey-dies-80

Somerville 2025 Happiness Survey released

How happy are Somerville residents? According to the City’s latest biennial Happiness Survey, residents continue to report high levels of satisfaction with life in Somerville.

Conducted by SomerStat in spring 2025, the survey gathered nearly 1,400 responses from a representative cross-section of residents. Participants answered questions on topics ranging from concerns about rats and mice to availability of out-of-school activities for youth, providing insight into how daily experiences, community connections, and city services shape feelings of well-being and satisfaction across Somerville.

This year’s survey introduces expanded geographic analysis, including results by census tract (25 distinct areas in Somerville) as well as the city’s seven wards. This new level of detail helps the City better understand how experiences vary across neighbor-



hoods so that improvements can be targeted accordingly. The 2025 survey also features a deeper exploration into topics such as public health, education, public space, and infrastructure.

Highlights from Somerville’s 2025 Happiness Survey

Residents reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods and are highly satisfied with the overall quality of City services they receive. Satisfaction was also high regarding oppor-

tunities for civic participation, having the information needed to vote in Somerville, Somerville’s community events, and the ability to create and enjoy art in Somerville. Residents also enjoy Somerville’s restaurants, shops, and other businesses, as well as their proximity to parks and other public spaces.

Residents also identified opportunities for improvements in the city, including better maintenance of streets *Continued on page 11*

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #342

This article first appeared in the November 26, 2014, edition of The Somerville Times.

The Thanksgiving Miracle

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

If you look at the official city symbol of Worcester, Massachusetts, you will see that it is heart-shaped. This image is symbolic because the city is located in the very center of Massachusetts, or the heart of the state.

On November 28, 1942, Worcester’s College of the Holy Cross’ football team appropriately had “heart,” and their players’ hearts were beating on all cylinders. For this game, they played against the high-flying Eagles of Boston College, who had won the Cotton Bowl in 1940, the Orange Bowl in 1941, and, in 1942, were streaking toward another title. They were planning to make the mediocre Holy Cross football team their ninth straight win. Holy Cross’ record at that time was 4, 4, and 1.



The game was being played at Fenway Park to a sold-out crowd of fans from all over New England. Boston College, which was number one in the polls at that time, was considered good enough to be a professional team capable of destroying many in its path. The press considered the chance of a Holy Cross victory laughable, but by the end of the game, the lowly Crusaders had humbled the mighty Eagles by a punishing score of 55 to 12.



The loss moved Boston College from number one to number eight in the standings, placing them in the Orange Bowl instead of the Cotton Bowl. Somerville’s Carl Lucas, a backup quarterback, got his chance to play in the Orange Bowl loss but shattered his leg seconds before halftime. It sounds like an unlucky, tough break for Carl, but he and the Boston College team had been one fortunate football team. Had they won the Thanksgiving Day, Holy Cross game, the team would have attended a victory party at Boston’s *Continued on page 11*

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 a portion of said Lot 28, being bounded and described as follows:
SOUTHEASTERLY: by a portion of said Lot 28, being bounded and described as follows:
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, 11/19/25 The Somerville Times

City of Somerville
PLANNING BOARD

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville Planning Board (PB) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, December 4, 2025**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KtcGQr0DS0GkLU9_w-PnWw
Webinar ID: 834 8760 1432

TO CALL IN

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

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

152-158 Broadway The Law Offices of Michael LaRosa seeks to establish Formula Business principal use, a Btone Pilates studio, in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) district, which requires a Special Permit.

Zoning Amendment Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 10.10.3, 15.1.2, 15.1.6, 15.1.8, 15.2.1, 15.2.2, 15.2.3, 15.2.4, 15.3.1, 15.3.2, and 15.5.2 of the Zoning Ordinance to make pre-submittal meetings optional for most permits and to improve clarity and consistency.

Zoning Amendment Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Tables 4.1.13, 4.2.13, 4.3.13, 4.4.13, 5.1.14, 7.2.7, 7.4.8, 8.4.16 (c), and 9.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit Home-Based Child Day Care accessory uses and make corrections.

Zoning Map Amendment 12 registered voters requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 363 Highland Avenue from Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) to Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) and from MR4 to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6), and the zoning district of 110 Willow Avenue from Civic (CIV) to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6).

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at

<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov.

11/19/25 The Somerville Times

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www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

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_jWiDpUfdTl-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, 11/19/25 The Somerville Times

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Sewer separation project to provide flood relief and water quality improvement in Winter Hill and Ten Hills

CONT. FROM PG 6

system like we have now, we have a capacity issue when it rains," said Cortese.

Stormwater has nowhere to go, and that causes neighborhood floods.

"Once the project is completed, we've modeled those combined overflows to decrease by approximately 50 million gallons

in a year," said Cortese.

This would result in a 55 percent reduction in CSO discharges into the Mystic River, based on "baseline" conditions in a 2050 typical year. Calculations could change as the design progresses.

In addition, the team initially identified

35 sites that are suitable for green stormwater infrastructure and prioritized 15 of those sites that will be most effective in removing pollutants.

GSI systems mimic natural processes to manage stormwater, utilizing plant and soil volume to slow stormwater

and remove pollutants with bioretention basins and subsurface infiltration trenches.

"Green stormwater infrastructure is a hot topic, and it's something that we as a city are increasingly committed to," said Cortese.



Somerville Fair Housing Commission

Question of the week



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

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

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

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

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

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BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why don't fish play basketball?
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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Old friends having a get together... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

November 19

- 1620 – The Pilgrims sight Cape Cod.
- 1861 – Julia Ward Howe writes *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*.
- 1863 – Lincoln delivers the "Gettysburg Address."
- 1897 – The Great "City Fire" in London.
- 1911 – New York receives first Marconi wireless transmission from Italy.
- 1926 – Leon Trotsky is expelled from the Politburo in the Soviet Union.
- 1942 – Soviet forces take the offensive at Stalingrad.
- 1976 – Patty Hearst is released from prison on \$1.5 million bail.
- 1985 – Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev meet for the first time.
- 1990 – Pop duo Milli Vanilli are stripped of their Grammy Award after it is learned they did not sing on their award-winning *Girl You Know Its True* album.
- 1998 – U.S. House of Representatives begins impeachment hearings against President Bill Clinton.

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Why do people say that “health is the greatest wealth”?

A: Because no amount of money can guarantee good health—but poor health can quietly drain your finances!

Here’s how:

- The average American eats over 60 pounds of added sugar a year, often through processed snacks, drinks, and meals.
- That adds up to \$1,000+ in spending per

year—not including rising medical costs from diet-related illnesses.

• Chronic illness from poor diet and inactivity can mean hundreds or thousands in medical bills every year.

• And it costs time too—every hour spent managing health crises is one you don’t get back.

Action step: Add one small wellness habit to your calendar today. A 30-minute checkup or movement session could add richer years to your future.

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.



Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

On **Monday, December 15**, the **Menorah Lighting** takes place on the **City Hall Concourse** (93 Highland Ave.). Activities begin at 6 p.m. Traditional songs and sing-alongs. Special gifts will be available for children. Light refreshments will be served.

Somerville Illuminations begins **Friday, December 12**. Showcase and admire Somerville’s best and brightest holiday lights. Add your home or business by **Thursday, December 11**, to be featured on the online Illuminations map <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/illuminations/>.

Brickbottom & Joy Street Open Studios will take place on **November 22 and 23**, 12 – 6 p.m. **Brickbottom Artists Building**, 1 Fitchburg Street, and **Joy Street Studios**, 86 Joy St. Brickbottom & Joy Street Open Studios is an annual event where artists in the Brickbottom district open their studio doors to the public. Visitors can explore a wide range of artwork, meet the artists, and get a behind-the-scenes look at how and where the work is made. It’s one of the longest-running Open Studios events in the region and a highlight of the local arts calendar.

 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>

 The **29th Gobble Gobble** race takes place on **Thursday, November 27**, at 9 a.m. Presented by the **Somerville Road Runners**, the Gobble Gobble Gobble road race starts and ends in Davis Square (at the heart of Somerville), features a unique 4-mile course, and offers a fun opportunity to start Thanksgiving on a high and healthy note. Proceeds benefit **Somerville Homeless Coalition**, **Somerville Track PAC**, **Stride for Stride**, and **Dilboy VFW Veterans Relief Fund**. For more information and registration, visit <https://runsignup.com/gobble-gobble>.

 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.

 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>.

Story Circle: Indigenous Tales through film and storytelling at the **Somerville Museum** on **November 22** at 10 a.m., One Westwood Rd. Join in at the Somerville

Museum for a powerful and engaging program that brings Indigenous stories to life through film and spoken word. Designed for students in grades K–8, this program introduces young audiences to the rich cultural traditions, histories, and contemporary voices of Indigenous communities across North America.

 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.

 Revel in this holiday season the **Union Square** way as you shop indie at locally-owned businesses, sip festive libations, and merrily mingle at the **Union Square Jingle** on **Sunday, December 7**. Make your way to Union Square in Somerville from 1 to 6 p.m. (extreme weather date December 14) by foot, bike, bus, Greenline, or sleigh. Metered parking is free on Sundays.

 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.

From page 8

Ms. Cam’s

Olio

Answers

1. 11	7. Brazil
2. Muhammad Ali (Cassius Clay)	8. Vincent van Gogh
3. Advantage	9. 11
4. Ewe	10. Saturn
5. John Lennon	11. Wimbledon
6. Billy the Kid	12. Wilt Chamberlain



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

'Ghosts from the Past: Gothic and Postcolonial Themes in 19th and 20th Century Novels'

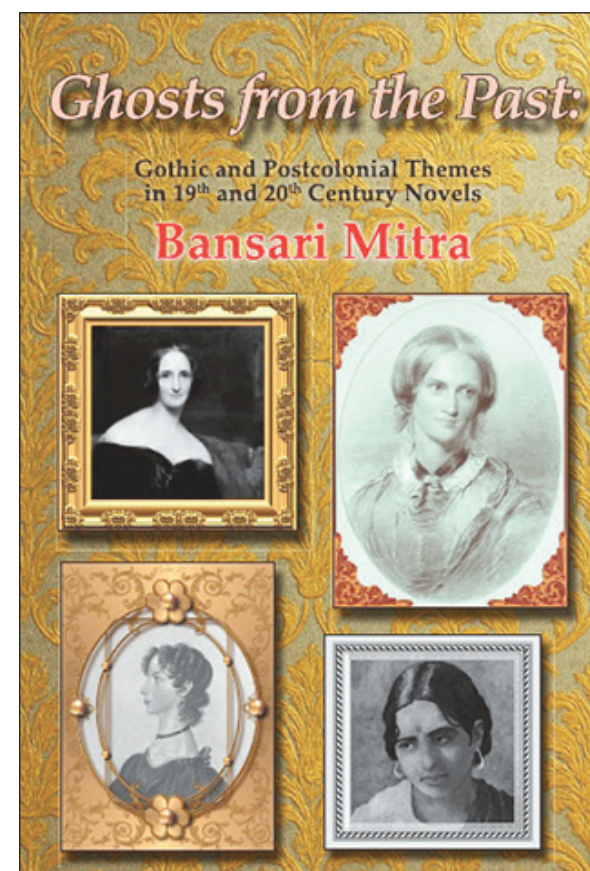
A fellow Bagel Bard and Somerville resident told me she has a new book out from the Wilderness House Press, *Ghosts from the Past: Gothic and Postcolonial Themes in 19th Century and 20th Century Novels*. I caught up with Bansari Mitra, and she generously agreed to an interview.

Bansari Mitra specializes in Victorian and Postcolonial Literature and other areas of interest includes Folklore, Popular Culture and Film Studies. She has published a book on the migration of western folktales to the East, entitled *The Renovation of Folktales by Five Modern Bengali Writers* and articles on Indian films in Asian Cinema and Kinema. She has taught in universities in Louisiana, Maryland, Georgia and New York and she has been a research fellow in Trinity College Dublin and Birkbeck College, London.

From her publisher's website:

"This book focuses on genre studies and examines Gothic's outstanding characteristics like loose plot, hidden crimes and ruined settings. Anne Bronte redefines Gothic by writing in a fragmentary way. This storytelling is further examined in *Jane Eyre*. The story resists closure because Jane cannot establish peace with the characters that haunt her. The adage "no happy woman writes" makes us reflect on the unhappy life of Mary Shelley which led her to write her "monstrous" novel, *Frankenstein*. Instead of literary criticism that stems from Romantic and feminist sensibilities, there is a new interpretation of the non-western character, Safie, whose story is a variation from the other tales of catastrophes.

Broad categories fail to define genres, like Eliade and Devi's works, *Bengal Nights* and *Na Hanyate*. We reexamine the limitations of various forms of life-writing like memoirs and autobiographies and the encounters and clashes between eastern and western cultures. We also examine the form of Gothic and swashbucklers, two popular, successful



types of film. Western and eastern cultures differ, especially when settings and plots are reinvented to create blockbusters, and themes are revised to suit the palates of eastern audiences. The last essay focuses on transformations of Gothic from Victorian to contemporary times. In a wide assortment of mysteries, the common themes of a missing woman and misinterpretations of the detective heroine show how settings of Gothic have changed from 18th to 21st Century."

Bicentenaries of Shelley and Brontes were recently celebrated, discussing their impact on contemporary times, so it is time to look at their novels in a new way." *Continued on page 15*

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Madison Beane is a junior at Endicott College, where she studies psychology and criminal justice. Much of her writing is inspired by the loss of her mother to stage four melanoma—a loss that continues to shape her life and her work. Madison often finds comfort and clarity by the ocean, spending time with family and writing on the beaches of Cape Cod. Her poetry reflects themes of love, memory, and resilience. She would like to thank her professor, Doug Holder, for his guidance and encouragement in her writing journey.



Ma....

It's just us now—
the dogs, the couch,
crime shows blaring in the dark.

We've shared this house my entire life,
since Mom left,
since Mom died.

She laughs much softer now,
moves slower too.
I pretend not to notice.

When the game's on, she keeps score in her head,
like always,
steady, certain, on top of the game—
and I sit there praying to god
time forgets about her for a while.

The tattoo

The shark
They never stop moving

No matter the strength of the current
Simply continuously gliding

That's the strength I recognize
The current I carry with me
My mom's strength
My dad's power
My aunt's encouragement

Each flow of advice Is a current of lessons

To guide me through the waters
The waters of life, the deep ends you can't reach
The sandbars where you easily stay afloat

I carry the shark with me
Permanently now as a reminder on my body
To never stop moving through the rough waters of
life

— Madison Beane

Somerville Commission for Women plans for survey collection in collaboration with City Council

By Alyssa Buford

On November 13, the Somerville Commission for Women held a virtual meeting moderated by commissioner Jennifer Harrington and Racial-Social Justice Head Leonor Galindo. The commissioners, volunteers appointed by Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, work with the city staff liaison to advise the city on policy as well as coordinate projects, initiatives, and outreach on behalf of women in the community since they were established via a city ordinance in 1988.

Collecting data on the financial and familial status of women in Somerville

Harrington and Galindo proposed an initiative for the city to conduct a survey regarding the well-being of women and female-identifying residents.

"We want to do things that are data-driven, but we don't have meaningful data to go on," said Co-chair Alex Barbat, expressing support for the initiative.

In addition to Barbat, Co-chair Katelin Firth backed this concept and proposed communication with the city council in the form of a "listening tour" with local women, including business owners, students, and heads of households, to map out the factors for study in these surveys. Harrington suggested the commission write and sign a letter requesting that the city fund and pursue formal data collection to shape policy and advocacy initiatives within and beyond the commission.

Somerville last conducted a women's health and issues survey in 2017 as part of the annual Wellbeing of Somerville Report, which conducts census-like research on the city's demographics. The report has switched to a more general approach to demographic-specific data points in recent years.

"There isn't a whole lot of data on women in Somerville that is city-specific," said Harrington, "And we would like the city to



conduct a survey, as well as pay for it."

Community Outreach

In addition to the survey proposal, the commission discussed the planning of civic and community engagement events to fight food insecurity, period poverty, and provide resources to those affected by changes in immigration policies. Despite Greater Somerville's status as a "sanctuary city," there are preexisting accounts of female-identifying immigrants expressing fear and hesitation about receiving prenatal or gynecological care due to heightened

surveillance on immigrant whereabouts.

"In the meantime, there are things that are very immediate in the community, with I.C.E and rising food insecurity" said Commissioner Bobbi Van Gilder "The economic disparities are going through the roof and people are struggling to put the food on the table; there's all sorts of things that are immediate that I think we could play a part in" Gilder continued.

The meetings are open to the public, and the next will be held on December 16, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

Doug Holder: How has it been for you as a writer in Somerville?

Bansari Mitra: Davis Square has a vibrant community that is great and I have never seen so many festivals, fairs and other activities, enlivening up the neighborhood during weekends anywhere else. Harvard Square and Porter Square, easily accessible by public transportation, have been especially wonderful for me because of the bookstores, where poetry reading and book-signing events kept me engaged ever since I came to Boston. It has enabled me to form networks with academics and creative writers who helped me to revise my book and supplied information about websites like *Poets & Writers* and magazines that give advice about publishing. The Cambridge public libraries also aided me in vital ways, especially during the lockdown.

DH: Do you agree with the adage "there are no happy women writers?" In the case of Mary Shelley was this true?

BM: I do not entirely agree with this, because this adage was coined by a 19th Century American authoress, Sara Payson Willis (Fanny Fern) who, in her novel *Ruth Hall*, portrayed the struggles of a penniless widow trying to eke out a living by her writing. The novel is also famous for the maxim, "a man's happiness is through his stomach". In fact, a lot of late 18th and 19th Century American and British women writers tried to make money by writing, as it enabled them to take care of their children while earning enough to keep the home fires burning. Most of these widows and spinsters were facing enormous hardships because very few professions were open to them, like school teachers and governesses. Mary Shelley also

had a very sad life because she eloped with Percy Shelley at the age of seventeen, faced deaths of her children, life-threatening miscarriages and finally, being widowed at twenty-five after Percy Shelley was drowned. She had to earn a living as a writer, and she did not have much success as with her first novel, *Frankenstein*. The adage is definitely true in the case of Mary Shelley, as well as the Brontes, who repeatedly faced bereavements in their short lives. Now things have changed in the 21st Century, so there are happy as well as unhappy women writers. I would say that this saying is outdated.

DH: You write that "in this book we reexamine the various forms of life-writing like memoirs and autobiographies and the encounters and clashes between eastern and western cultures." What are the drawbacks of "life writing" novels? Do you find eastern and western cultures have some commonality, where they don't clash?

BM: Often it is difficult to classify them, either as memoirs or autobiographies, and life writing is too sweeping a term. What we examine is how many real-life incidents are portrayed, whether they are distorted or glossed over. Also, when they are recalled years later, how much of these experiences are fictionalized to appeal to readers. The recollection of memories, especially in controversial novels like Eliade's and Devi's, can help us sometimes to get both sides of the picture, from western and non-western points of view. In my essay on Indian adaptations of classic Hollywood Gothic and swashbuckling films, especially Hitchcock's *Rebecca*, I show how the audience's need for thrill and suspense are the same in western and eastern countries, so block-

busters can appeal to all kinds of viewers, young or old. Bollywood films are now gaining attention, so we can examine the reworking of themes in them when they are borrowed from the west and Indianized, although they keep the core of the plots intact.

DH: You explain that Shelley and the Bronte Sisters have been celebrated for their impact on contemporary times. Explain.

BM: I think that Artificial Intelligence is causing such controversies now that *Frankenstein* can be examined as the kind of science fiction that is a cautionary tale, very relevant for our times. Also, I feel that there could be a new interpretation by focusing on the only non-western character, Safie, who is generally regarded as a shadow of the other women characters. Anne Bronte has always been eclipsed by her famous sisters, Charlotte and Emily, but she wrote the "first sustained feminist novel" according to Winifred Gerin. She is now being recognized as a writer who would have earned a place much earlier in the canon like Fanny Burney and Elizabeth Gaskell. Although Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* has always enjoyed a great deal of attention from critics, we can examine the growth of a feminist heroine through her progress during the five stages of her journey from urban to rural settings. How Nature is represented in the novel as a pagan goddess, thus reinventing the Cinderella myth set in the Victorian Age. Fairy tales continue to fascinate readers throughout ages, and Brontes grew up on them, borrowing patterns from them to design the plots of their novels. Thus generic revisions are effected in their novels.



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