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The Somerville Times

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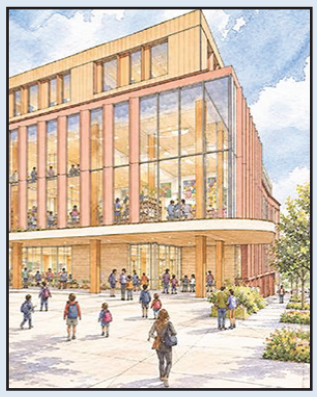
VOL. 14 NO. 47 | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2026 | SOMERVILLE, MASS.

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Winter Warming Center for our unhoused neighbors



The Somerville Winter Warming Center is ready to serve the community during the 2026/2027 winter season.

By Harry Kane

For families or individuals experiencing homelessness, the warming center provides unhoused neighbors immediate safety, a warm place to sleep, and a bridge toward permanent housing.

The Somerville Winter Warming Center will open from December 7, 2026, to March 28, 2027, at the former Cummings School to provide accommodations for vulnerable neighbors.

"Nobody was turned away into the cold," said William Fisher, Director of Emergency Management, commenting on the 2025/2026 season.

He presented an overview of the after-action report and improvement plan from last winter at the November 10 Public Health and Public Safety committee meeting.

Continued on page 4

Donate to Somerville holiday gift drives at city buildings

Community members have an opportunity to bring some holiday cheer to local children and teens by donating to local holiday gift and toy donation drives – and the city is once again setting up drop-off boxes around town to make it easy. Toy and gift donation collection boxes will be placed at city buildings, libraries, and firehouses through Wednesday, December 16. Donated gifts will support two community gift drives for families in need of gifts for children and teens this holiday season. In this Year of the Neighbor, this is a meaningful way to support your community.

All gifts will be distributed to families by two local efforts: Toys for Local Children, a long-standing local charity that organizes annual holiday gift drives, and The Somerville Toy Drive, an initiative organized by community members in

Continued on page 4



The City of Somerville is supporting two local gift drives for children and teens.







NEWSTALK

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

We here at ***The Times*** wish everyone a happy and safe **Thanksgiving holiday**. As we approach holiday gift shopping, don't forget to shop local to support local businesses. City offices will be closed on **Thursday, November 26**, and **Friday, November 27**, for Thanksgiving. Trash, recycling, and yard waste collection will be delayed by one day. The **Council on Aging** will be closed on **Thursday, November 26**, and **Friday, November 27**, in observance of Thanksgiving.

****

The **30th Gobble Gobble race** takes place on **Thursday, November 26**, at 9 a.m. Presented by the **Somerville Road Runner**, 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 from the Gobble benefit SRR and local charities like **Somerville Homeless Coalition, the Somerville High School Track team**, and **Stride for Stride**. For more information and registration, visit https://www.srr.org/gobble.

****

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to **Jason Fucile**. We wish Jason the very best birthday. Happy birthday to **Lisa Hastings**, celebrating her birthday this week. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Mary McGuire, Julie Adelsberger, Gamal Elfouly, Brian Kirk, Kim Volz, Joseph Di Pietro, Nancy Robinson Faulkner, Lee Grassia Anderson**, and **Dorothy Dervishian O'Malley**, a very happy birthday. *Continued on page 7*

The Somerville Times

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Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of November 25 – December 1 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday *November 25*	Sunny	45°/33°	3%	1%	NE 7 mph
Thursday *November 26*	Rain	48°/45°	60%	48%	ENE 16 mph
Friday *November 27*	Rain	55°/43°	67%	51%	SSW 11 mph
Saturday *November 28*	Partly Cloudy	55°/37°	5%	2%	W 15 mph
Sunday *November 29*	Partly Cloudy	54°/44°	9%	4%	WSW 8 mph
Monday *November 30*	Partly Cloudy	55°/35°	23%	12%	W 12 mph
Tuesday *December 1*	Partly Cloudy	49°/32°	13%	5%	NW 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: *Housing: There's a hole in the bucket!*

Chris Allen says:

Pat, I think you're mixing up causation and correlation here. "We built new housing and prices went up, therefore building new housing is increasing prices" fails to consider what would have happened if you hadn't built that housing. We can see that in the history of Somerville and Cambridge before their recent zoning changes – minimal new housing was built, and prices still went up.

Pricing is driven by demand, which continues to climb as the region's robust economy adds well-paying jobs. I think that's a good thing, but we need to mitigate the second order effects. I know it can feel challenging to see the neighborhood change, but we're not in any sort of housing boom – Somerville permitted 1.7 new housing units per 1,000 residents in 2024.

Last thing – you provided a link to tour the new condos, and they're very pretty. Folks should probably see what they looked like before (https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/156-Albion-St-Somerville-MA-02144/56328581_zpid/?utm_campaign=iosappmessage&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=txtshare). The house was old and had a tremendous amount of deferred maintenance, and your presentation here feels disingenuous.

Response to: *City Council overwhelmingly passes boycott and divestment ordinance*

Lew says:

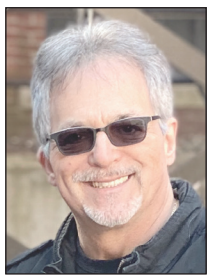
Let's be honest about what Somerville's 10–1 BDS vote actually does: it doesn't help a single Palestinian, doesn't build a single home, and doesn't bring peace an inch closer. It simply amplifies the most extreme voices demanding the destruction of the Middle East's only pluralistic democracy so it can be replaced by another state in a region already home to more than 50 Muslim-majority nations. Had these councilors shown an ounce of integrity, they would have listened to the Jewish neighbors sitting right in front of them—like Councilor Kristen Strezo and residents across the city—instead of swallowing the libels of 'genocide' and 'apartheid' whole. Reducing serious history to hollow virtue signaling isn't courageous; it's an abdication of leadership.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

Life in the Massachusetts VILLE The Spirit of America by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

Turkey Day disasters



Everyone hopes that their Thanksgiving dinner goes off without a hitch. There are in-laws and future in-laws to impress, and hungry stomachs to satisfy. If you are the host or hostess, there is a lot of pressure on you to present a flawless feast. But in reality, we know that whatever can go wrong will go wrong. Here are some turkey day testimonials from some of my friends about Thanksgiving dinners gone bad.

When I was very young and newly married, I had the whole family over to my house to cook my first Thanksgiving Day dinner. My mother, who was so sweet, tried not to look too disappointed when she opened the oven to check it out. It was breast side down, with a little smoke coming out from where I didn't even remove the inners bag! It was the driest turkey ever!

The first time I had Thanksgiving Day at my house, I cooked the bird leaving a spoon and the bag of giblets in it. Then when we were cleaning up, I cut my finger and ended up in the emergency room for stitches.

My newlywed sister and I were cooking our very first Thanksgiving dinner for our family. We cleaned and stuffed the enormous turkey and placed it into the brand-new roasting pan. We were so proud of ourselves. She carried the pan with our prized poultry, and I opened the oven door. Then we tried to fit the family-sized roasting pan with the 26-pound turkey into her apartment-sized oven. No go.

When we realized that the turkey wouldn't cook evenly with the roasting pan at an angle, we took off the wings and legs, hoping it would fit into a smaller roasting pan. After two and a half hours, and with 18 people getting very hungry, we made a move. We discovered that it didn't matter that we all went out for Chinese food on Thanksgiving Day. What was important was that we were all together!

We had an electric oven containing a 26-pound turkey which had been roasting nicely in anticipation of feeding 20 people for dinner. Everything was going well until we heard this huge explosion. The heating element blew up, and we had a fire in the oven, and pieces of metal in the turkey. Our dinner guests were walking through the door! Good thing there was plenty of appetizers and alcohol.



One year my mother was basting the turkey after it had been in the oven a while. She inadvertently got the loop of her belt from her bathrobe caught in the self-cleaning bar, and it flipped it into place. Well, when the stove is hot, and you flip that oven cleaning switch on, there is no turning back. No turkey that year. We had to turn off the fuse thingy to the stove and go out to eat.

One year I put my turkey in the oven and went out for the day. I came home just in time. My house was smoking, and my turkey was burnt to a crisp. That was 25 years ago. Never leave your turkey home alone.

We had a 130-pound German shepherd when I was growing up. My mom made the turkey and had it on the counter cooling off while she was finishing the side dishes. The family was in the living room having a good time, and my mom went to set the dining room table. Ten minutes later, she went into the kitchen and discovered that the turkey was missing. The dog had jumped up and stole the turkey. Five minutes later we heard the humongous dog gagging and retching. We looked down the hall stairs, and there he was standing over a ¾ eaten turkey. We ate potatoes, stuffing, and squash that year.

There is so much preparation involved in pulling off the perfect Thanksgiving. The inevitable is bound to happen. Someone may have one too many cocktails and make a turkey of himself. One of those folding tables full of desserts just may collapse, and the rolls, beans, or yams may stay in the oven a bit too long. But the most important thing about Thanksgiving is not the bird, the squash, or the pies. It's the people you are sharing the day with, and the memories of the ones who are there in spirit. Happy Thanksgiving from the DelPonte family.



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The Somerville Times

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: What's the difference between an HSA and an FSA, and how can they save me money on taxes?

A: Both accounts allow you to set aside money for eligible medical expenses while reducing your taxes. But they have important differences in eligibility and what happens to money you don't spend.

- **Both offer tax savings.** Contributions generally reduce your taxable income, and money used for qualified medical expenses is tax-free. For example, setting aside $2,000 could save you $440 in federal income taxes if you're in the 22% tax bracket.
- **An HSA (Health Savings Account) lets you keep unused money.** You can open one independently or through your employer, but you generally need an HSA-eligible health insurance plan to contribute. For 2027, contribution limits are $4,500 for individual coverage and $9,000 for family coverage. Unused funds carry forward indefinitely, even if you change jobs.
- **An FSA (Flexible Spending Account) is generally available through an employer.** For 2027, employees can contribute up to $3,500. Unlike an HSA, unused funds may be forfeited at year-end. However, employers can allow up to $700 to carry into the following year or provide a grace period to use remaining funds.

Bottom Line: Both accounts can save you money on taxes, but an HSA can also help you build savings for future medical expenses. An FSA is generally better suited for expenses you expect to incur during the year. Check your eligibility and employer benefits before deciding how much to contribute.

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



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

Winter Warming Center for our unhoused neighbors CONT. FROM PG 1

The core focus is life-safety, explained Fisher. Clients receive a warm place to sleep at night, meals, bathrooms, basic supplies, transportation assistance, access to caseworkers, and referrals.

Last season, the center documented 6,227 overnight accommodations during 126 consecutive nights. The report indicates there was a 69 percent increase in documented overnight accommodations compared to the prior year. During the 2025/2026 season, the warming center housed a median average of 55 individuals per night and peaked at 67.

Demand last season "regularly exceeded the routine 45-cot configuration" with 70 percent of nights exceeding capacity, according to the report.

Fisher said that the team implemented corrective actions last season, such as increased usable space, more visible security, better interdepartmental coordination and multilingual staff.

For the 2026/2027 season, the city has hired a new security company that Fisher says is "genuine" and "caring," and will engage with the community.

Fisher's overview additionally brought up concerns from the community that had been expressed in regard to the suitability of the current location of the warming center, which is now located in a residential neighborhood at 42 Prescott Street.

At neighborhood meetings, community members raised concerns about "early line formation" that resulted in folks waiting outside for long periods of time, which he says may have resulted in increased noise at times.

Fisher explained that clients arrived early and waited outside in fear of not getting in the door. He hopes new protocols will help "mitigate those anxieties" for the unhoused population.

Other concerns included trash, smoking, concerns about comfort around playgrounds, communications from the city, public urination and defecation, and emergency vehicle activity.

Additionally, Fisher noted concerns brought up at community meetings related to emergency vehicles blocking residential driveways.

Operational improvements recommended include a new staging location, a portable restroom, additional seating, increased multimodal transportation options, maintaining multilingual staffing, consistent communication with the public, increased cleaning procedures, coordinated assistance with partners, and preparedness for extreme temperatures.

Fisher ended his presentation by emphasizing the importance of addressing behavioral issues with homeless clients instead of casting aspersions or making assumptions about groups of people.

"The large majority of the people that go to this warming center and other warming centers are really good, well-behaved folks that are just in a bad spot," said Fisher. But he added, there are always a handful of people who are "up to no good."

Following the presentation, City Council Vice President Wilfred Mbah expressed his gratitude for the coordinated effort to examine data and translate those findings into meaningful improvements before the winter season.

Mbah brought attention to the harassment cases reported by pedestrians and abutters in the area surrounding the warming center and said public safety, outreach, health support, and neighborhood coordination will address these types of concerns before they escalate.

"It's just important that we distinguish between individuals simply accessing services and specific behaviors that may constitute harassment," said Mbah.

The City Council approved a transfer of $92,795 on November 12 from the Emergency Response Stabilization Fund to the Health and Human Services Administration Special Items Account to support the operation of this season's warming center.

Health and Human Services Director Karin Carroll explained that a $410,037 grant, with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, will pay for 10 of the 16 weeks of operation for the 2026/2027 Winter Warming Center.

Public Information Officer Victoria MacGregor confirmed that Housing Families - a nonprofit organization that supports families and individuals facing homelessness or housing instability - will operate the warming center this winter.

The following funding will also support the Warming Center this season:

- $138,384 from COVID-19 small business emergency fund
- $1,939 from COVID-19 stabilization funds
- $155,768 from Free Cash

Donate to Somerville holiday gift drives at city buildings CONT. FROM PG 1

recent years. More information on these gift drives and other ways to help them can be found at toysforlocalchildren.org, somervilletoydrive.org, and via email at somervilletoydrive@gmail.com.

What to Donate:

To donate, please bring new, unwrapped toys and gifts for children as well as age-appropriate gifts for teens. Please donate only new items. Gifts are needed for all ages from infants to age 14. Gifts are especially welcome for ages 0-2 years and 8-14 years.

Where to Drop Off Gifts:

Donate at the following Somerville City buildings, libraries, and firehouses. Collection boxes will be in place through Wednesday, December 16, at 4:30 p.m.

Locations and Boxes:

Note: Boxes located inside city buildings are only accessible during normal business hours

City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Welcome Desk, 1st floor

City Hall, outside Mayor's Office, 2nd floor

Somerville Central Library, 79 Highland Avenue

Somerville West Branch Library, 40 College Avenue

Somerville East Branch Library, 115 Broadway

City Hall Annex, 50 Evergreen Street

DPW Building, One Franey Road

Council on Aging Offices, 167 Holland Street

Somerville Police Headquarters lobby, 220 Washington Street

Fire Stations:

Somerville Fire Department Headquarters, 266 Broadway

Highland Ave. Station, 265 Highland Avenue

Union Square Station, 255 Somerville Avenue

Teele Square Station, 6 Newbury Street (corner of Holland Street)

Lowell Street Station, 651 Somerville Avenue (corner of Lowell Street)

Assembly Square Station, 455 Middlesex Avenue

City holds community forum for new school on Sycamore Street

By Harry Kane

The City of Somerville is planning to build a new school at 115 Sycamore Street, which is the site of the former Winter Hill Community Innovation School building.

Community members attended a school building community forum on November 10 to learn more about the project and share their perspectives. The project is currently in the schematic design phase.

"Your participation, as we've said all along, is critical to this process as we go about designing this new school for our community," said Mayor Wilson at the community forum.

The presentation provided an overview of how the new school building, which will accommodate up to 925 students, will support the diverse learning needs of Somerville's students and incorporate a range of community priorities into the grade-level "clusters" preferred design option.

Perkins Eastman – a global design firm dedicated to the human experience - presented the preferred design option for the project, which was submitted to the state in late August.





Artist's rendering of the new school at 115 Sycamore Street. — *Photos courtesy of Perkins Eastman*

The Massachusetts School Building Authority approved the preferred schematic approach at the board meeting on October 28, explained Lisa Pecora, Project Manager at Perkins Eastman.

Pecora spoke about the project timeline and gave a design update on exterior and interior design, the building systems, as well as the site. The schematic design drawings and budget will be issued to the MSBA on February 24 for approval at their April board meeting.

"Then the referendum would need to be passed before our team can continue with the process of doing design development, construction documents, bidding, and then on to the construction of the new school," said Pecora.

The schematic design and funding phase will continue until early 2028, with an anticipated completion of construction in 2031.

Kupel's Bakery opens new location in Somerville

By Eliot Josti

Kupel's Bakery, an iconic bagel staple in Brookline since 1978, has now opened its doors at a new location in Somerville.

"Thanks to our customers, we have been recognized as being one of the best bagel shops in the Boston/Brookline area as well as countrywide," said on their website, https://www.kupelsbakery.com/.

Known for its delicious pastries, bagels, challah, and catering, Kupel's shared their excitement for a new expansion into Somerville on an Instagram post:

"After nearly 50 years in Brookline, we're excited to announce something new! Introducing Kupel's Bagels, a new neighborhood bagel café coming to Somerville. Our original Kupel's Bakery in Brookline will continue doing what it does best, while Kupel's Bagels in Somerville brings a different take on our family business to a new neighborhood, with the same delicious taste. We're looking forward to becoming part of the Somerville community!"

With an expanded menu of breakfast sandwiches, coffees, and more, the Somerville location offers the same Kupel's taste with a new experience uniqu e to the city.

Somerville residents seem ecstatic, with over 200 comments on Facebook welcoming the bakery into town.

The store opened on Monday, November 16, with a successful week of community welcoming from Somerville residents. The success even caused many of the products to be wiped out, making the store close on Sunday to prepare for the next week.

"All we can say is Thank You, Somerville! We've gotten such a warm welcome from the community, and we are so happy to be here. We've already made so many new friends this week and hope to keep making more," Kupel's shared on Instagram.

Elissa, from Elissa Surabian Art in Hudson, was also welcomed back to paint the lettering on their wall.

"I'm so excited to see @kupelsbagels open a second location in Somerville! Cheers to a new chapter and continued growth. Thanks for having me back!" she said on Instagram.



There's a new bakery in town, now that Kupel's has opened a second location in Somerville
— *Photo by Bobbie Toner*

Kupel's Bakery in Somerville is located at 54 Elm St, Somerville.

Go to https://www.kupelsbakery.com/ for mor information.

The Somerville Times

Student-athlete mentorship event inspires girls through sports

By The Times Staff

Somerville Athletics partnered with Somerville Recreation to host the 3rd Annual Somerville Girls in Sports Day. The event was also featured as part of the MIAA 2026-2027 Community Service Challenge.

The annual Sports Day was held on November 3 to connect high school student-athletes with young girls from Somerville neighborhoods for confidence-building programming through sports.

"Girls in Sports Day is an opportunity to bring our high school student-athletes together with young girls in the community and show the next generation of female athletes what's possible," said Indira Evora, Assistant Athletic Director for Somerville Public Schools.

Evora and Brooke Metivier, Teen Space Coordinator for the Parks & Recreation Department, started Girls in Sports Day three years ago, and it has grown into a successful event.

This year, 35 Somerville High School student-athletes volunteered, representing volleyball, ultimate frisbee, basketball, hockey, lacrosse, softball, and soccer teams. The volunteers taught 108 young athletes from around the Somerville community the fundamental skills by demonstrating at rotating stations.





Girls in Sports Day brought high school student-athletes together with younger girls for confidence-building activities through sports. *— Photos courtesy of Somerville Athletics*

The goal here is to build confidence, try new things, and discover a love for sports, says Evora.

High school athletes helped run and coach each of the stations, earning five volunteer hours for their time. Each younger athlete also received a certificate of completion to recognize their enthusiasm, participation, and effort throughout the day.

The yearly event provides an opportunity to connect with high school athletes, who not only serve as positive role models but also get to hone their own leadership and team-building skills throughout the experience.

"Overall, we hope every girl leaves knowing that they belong in sports," said Evora. "It's always such a special day for our community. Our high school athletes get so much out of giving back to the next generation. It's amazing to watch them get the younger girls excited about trying new sports and encouraging them toward finding something they love. It's been really rewarding to see the event grow over the past three years."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Letter to the Editor: Cobble Hill residents plea to Somerville City Council

Dear Members of the Somerville City Council,

On October 1, 2026, Somerville Redevelopment Authority arranged for Wood Partners to present their plans for the development of 90 Washington Street by December 18, 2026. There is progress from the "Best and Final Offer". It hasn't gone far enough to protect Cobble Hill's green space.

Cobble Hill residents never agreed to the city taking our beloved green space by eminent domain. The four-year dispute often feels like that sick joke: "the beatings will continue until morale improves". When SRA's own 90 Washington Street Civic Advisory Committee recommended preserving our parking and green space; they were overruled by the SRA Board.

As the Somerville Planning Department moves toward a City Council vote, it hurts that the SRA gave more weight to recovering financial losses, than to recognizing the City's extensive environmental mandates by recognizing their legal validity and preserving the existing green space.

The Cambridge Day article describes what is at stake for Cobble Hill residents. The trees that shade our grounds also provide a lively habitat for birds, rabbits and squirrels. Moreover, the green berm encapsulates undisturbed environmental toxins and buffers traffic noise from Washington treet. We applaud Councilor McLaughlin's call to preserve trees and green space. We ask that the Council work in support of his call.

Also, for your consideration, Somerville's urban forest assessment determined a citywide tree canopy of just 14.6%. In Ward 1, the same assessment puts the canopy at about 8%.

Of the four acres at 90 Washington Street, three remain empty and their use as city storage has been extended to 2028. The approximately one acre remaining is populated by a grove of 38 mature trees a berm and an adjacent open lawn. The green space is a natural buffer. It has provided shade, comfort, and natural beauty to Cobble Hill residents for more than 45 years.

Several attractive maples on a new site plan cannot begin to replace a grove that took decades to grow.

Cobble Hill residents are not alone in requesting enduring green space. On November 3, 2026, 23,168 Somerville voters said yes to Ballot Question #6, the conservation and recreation measure. It couldn't be any clearer. Somerville voters showed landslide support for conservation and recreation. The Council now has a chance to act on that support at 90 Washington Street.

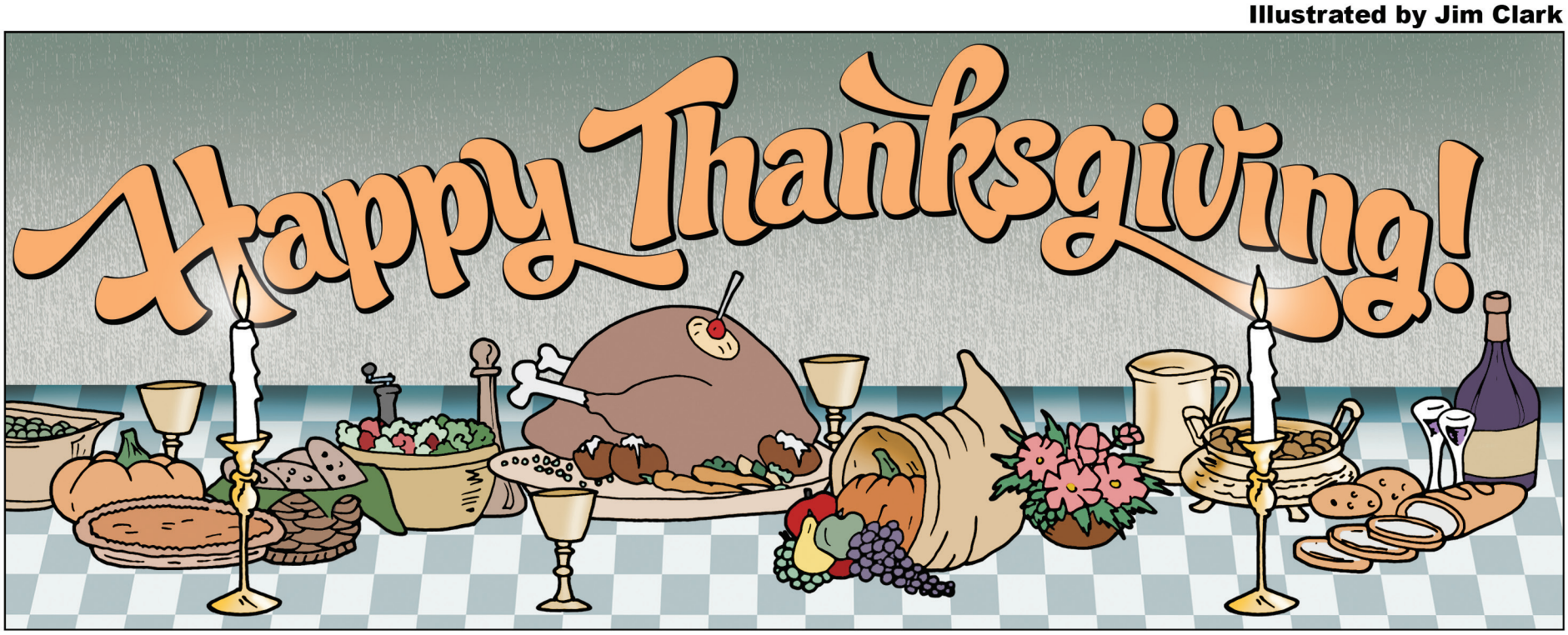
We ask the City Council to request that SRA present a plan to preserve all of Cobble Hill's green space in recognition of the City's established environmental values and its residents' environmental values. We implore you to preserve it for all who live here now and for generations who will someday call Ward 1 their home.

Respectfully,
The Residents of Cobble Hill Apartments
50, 60, 74 & 84 Washington Street,
Somerville, MA 02143

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Happy Thanksgiving to one and all!

Our View Of The Times

Giving thanks for our blessings is normally an easy thing to do. We may often get caught up in the day-to-day trappings of scratching out a living, ducking misfortune, and seeking out an oc-casional highlight to add to our mental scrapbooks. Usually, though, we come around to feeling and expressing that special sense of appreciation and gratitude that comes in moments of qui-et reflection just in time to validate ourselves as worthy recipients of such blessings.

Thanksgiving Day gives us that little nudge we sometimes need to take stock of what is most important for us and to share in the sense of appreciation that we feel amongst one another.

Of course, for those of us who may be blessed with material abundance, it is also important to help the less fortunate who may be in need as the winter holiday season unfolds. Consider giv-ing a little of your time or money to make another's life a little better, particularly during the winter months to come.

For those who may be struggling to keep it all together, remember to look at what is good in life and remain faithful that change for the better is always waiting just around the corner.

Sadly, despite most people's best intentions, many in the Native American community bemoan the occasion as glossing over the troubled relationship their ancestors had with the "new world" settlers.

Still, may this holiday provide a meeting ground for all of us. One in which we can share in the goodness of life and fellowship between us all. There's no better way to express our gratitude.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

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 **holiday season** is approaching, and there are many ways to celebrate right here in Somerville. The first celebration takes place **Thursday, December 3**, for **Christmas Tree Lighting at City Hall Concourse** (93 Highland Ave.) from 5 to 7 p.m. Rain date: December 10. Activities: Music, words, hot drinks, treats, Christmas tree lighting, children's gifts, and Santa's grand entrance on a shiny red fire truck followed by visits and photos with Santa.

****

In the giving spirit of the season, the city is collecting **toy and gift donations** at city buildings, libraries, and firehouses **through Wednesday, December 16**. If you are able and wish to donate, please bring new, unwrapped toys and gifts for children of all ages and age-appropriate gifts for teens. All gifts will be distributed to families by two local efforts: **Toys for Local Children** and the **Somerville Toy Drive**. For locations, visit the city's website https://www.somervillema.gov/

****

Special Election nomination papers are now available. In early 2027, the City of Somerville will hold a special municipal election for **Ward Councilor positions in Wards 2 and 3**. Nomination papers are now available for those interested in running for office. **Preliminary Election: Tuesday, February 2, 2027** (to be held as needed). **Municipal Election: Wednesday, March 24, 2027**. To begin the process, stop by the **Elections Department** at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) to pick up your nomination papers. Nomination papers must be picked up by 5 p.m. on **Monday, December 7**, and returned by 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 9**. For more information, visit www.somervillema.gov/elections.

****

Around Hear presents ***Odd Couple***, a free chamber music concert on **Saturday, December 5**, from 2–3:30 p.m. at the **Mystic Activity Center**, 530 Mystic Ave., Somerville. Performers **Rebecca Sullivan**, jazz vocalist, **Marji Gere**, violin and drums, and **Dan Sedgwick**, piano, will share a program that celebrates the ties that bind sun to storm, story to sonata, violin to piano, skunk to – badger? Opposites attract in a program of joyous Schubert and furious Poldowski, alongside music by female songwriters of Tin Pan Alley and, pending permission, scenes from Amy Timberlake's *Continued on page 13*

The Somerville Times

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's Olio #1048

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. Which turkey gobbles, the male or female?

2. What "gourmet" meal did Charlie Brown serve in *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*?

3. What is the proper name for a Pilgrim hat?

4. Which two pantry items are mostly commonly used to help thicken gravy?

5. What was the name of the Wampanoag sachem often called Massasoit who attended the 1621 gathering?

6. What region did the Mayflower colonists originally intend to reach?

7. Who was the governor of Plymouth Colony during the first Thanksgiving?

8. In which year did FDR's "Franksgiving" controversy reach its peak?

9. Who was the first president to officially pardon a turkey?

10. When is "Forefather's Day" celebrated in Plymouth?

11. What happened to the retired Macy's parade balloons between 1927 and 1932?

12. What did the balloons in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade replace?

Answers on page 10

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The largest scrambled eggs ever made weighed nearly 3.5 tons.

2. Flamingos can only eat with their heads upside down.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THE 2000s

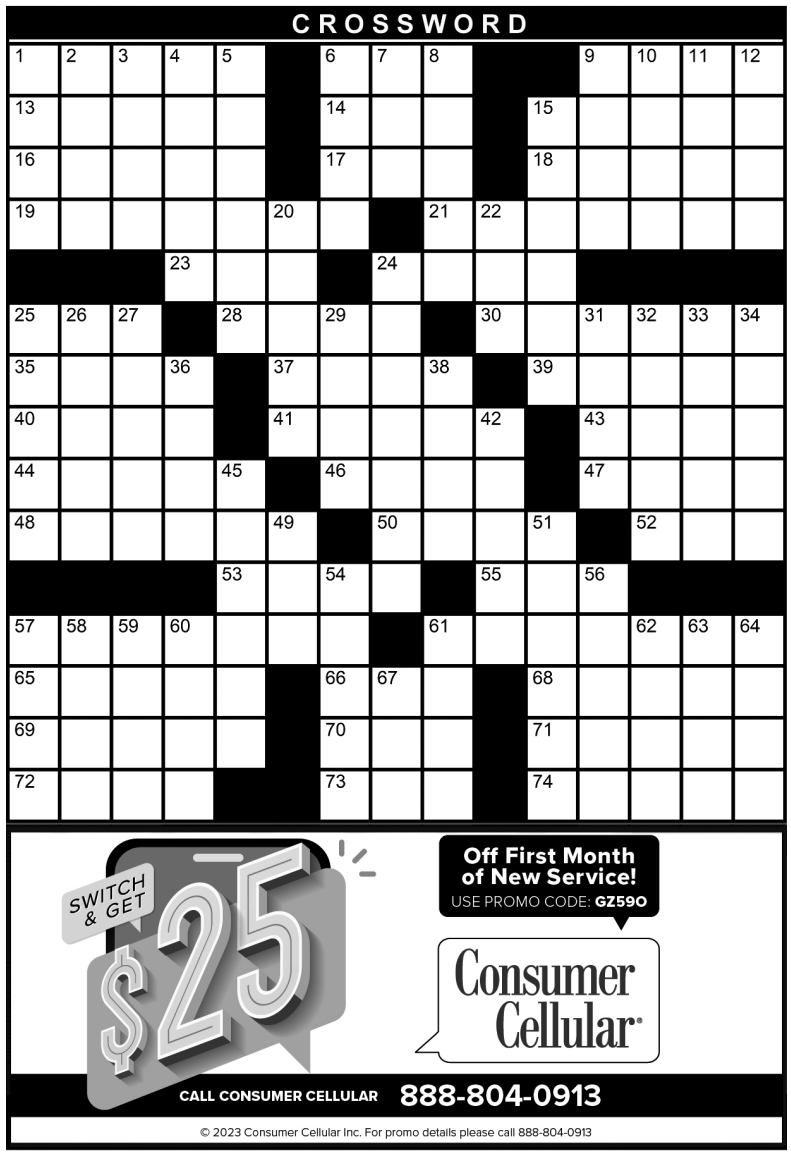
ACROSS

1. a.k.a. Manila hemp
6. Unit of electric current
9. Army dining hall
13. Channing of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes"
14. Spy org.
15. A in AV
16. Are not
17. ____-been
18. Beech tree pulp fabric
19. I in CGI
21. 2004 Indian Ocean disaster
23. Am is to I a ____ is to we
24. Chutzpah
25. Ann Patchett's "____ Canto"
28. Zohran Mamdani's branch of Islam
30. Like some breads
35. Sun beams
37. Cathedral recess
39. Fungal skin infection
40. Shrek or Fiona
41. Sasha Baron Cohen's role
43. Mr. Incredible's son
44. What scribes do
46. Awful
47. Silage holder
48. Bee's favorite drink
50. ALCS counterpart
52. ____ Tsu
53. Hoodlum
55. Not hers
57. Peter ____ of "The Lord of the Rings"
61. Social network
65. Saudi neighbor
66. Not a sweet wine
68. Sign of cancer
69. Subway coin
70. Long time
71. Mideast V.I.P.
72. Place at angle
73. Genetic info carrier, acr.
74. Pulls apart

DOWN

1. Antioxidants-rich smoothie berry
2. Yeasty foam
3. ____ 51
4. "Come on, shake your body, baby, do the ____"
5. Modifies
6. Hurting
7. Jukebox musical "Mamma ____!"
8. Fusilli, e.g.
9. Unstable particle
10. Tropical tuberous root
11. Thailand, once
12. Solo, pl.
15. Protective necklace
20. Substance abuse treatment inst.
22. *"Rocky Balboa" writer and director
24. Stove burner (2 words)
25. "The Da Vinci Code" author
26. High wave
27. Chicago opera house
29. Revolutionary music-playing device
31. Helps
32. Type of mail
33. All-electric Roadster manufacturer
34. Popular search engine, with !
36. Badger's den
38. "My Name Is ____"
42. Related to technology
45. Dines at home
49. Greek R
51. Train's "Hey, Soul ____"
54. Six feet where?
56. Sea foam
57. Scribbles down
58. In a frenzy
59. "Short Skirt/Long Jacket" band
60. "I ____ it!"
61. Mimicking bird
62. End of prayer
63. College girl, old-fashioned
64. Mistakes
67. Anchorman a.k.a. ____ Burgundy

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.



© StatePoint Media

Soulution to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

Brickbottom Artists Association Open Studios event brings an abundance of creativity

By Keith Foster

Last weekend, the art studios on Joy Street celebrated the many artists of Somerville at the annual Brickbottom Arts District Open Studios. Now in its 39th year, the Brickbottom Arts District opens its doors and lets the public in. Wander through maze-like corridors with painters, sculptors, photographers, and makers helping share Somerville's art scene and experience where art actually happens.

The open studios took place in the Loov, Triangle Gallery, Brick Bottom Artist Building, and Joy Street Studios, which seemed endless, with galleries and mazes of art, but everything was made with such thought and creativity.

There were events and workshops as well, which included Live life drawings, Printmaking, and the support chatbot genius, which, oddly enough, led people through a gratitude practice designed to protect your closest relationships. In addition, Japanese drumming and a band, The Wildflower Trio.

John Kelly was a volunteer. He was checking people in and helping visitors navigate. He emphasized that he is not an artist but tries to support the arts community whenever possible.

Rachel Jayne's was showcasing her charcoal art. Her work as an engineer informed abstract artwork, inspired by visuals observed at different length scales, and she was introduced to charcoal in childhood by her mother, who worked in graphic design. Charcoal remains her "safe space and home."

Bonnie Chen and Emily Friedlander's Works. are decorative cakes with messages that are also container tins for storage; they add fun phrases to them. The inspiration originated when Emily made a fancy non-edible cake prop from Spackle for her friend's short film, leading to a year of making cakes. They explore the cake as a symbol of special-occasion celebration and the idea of celebrating small things, "all of which can be a party if you want it to be," according to them.



Bonnie Chen and Emily Freelander with their "cakes with messages." — *Photos by Keith Foster*



Bonnie Chen and Emily Freelander with their "cakes with messages."

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle Feathers #368

This article first appeared in the September 14, 2016, edition of The Somerville Times.

A College Town

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

A college is a school of higher learning that grants a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts or Science or both, while a university offers an even higher level of education with teaching and research facilities and awards Master's and Doctoral Degrees.



Massachusetts is home to 114 colleges and universities of higher education with 54 being located within the Route 128 belt. More than most cities, Somerville has certainly had a claim to be called a college town or a university city. She is nestled between three of the most prestigious universities in the country: Tufts University, Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Tufts University owes its name to a Somerville citizen, Charles Tufts, who donated one hundred acres of his Walnut Hill land. His vision was to put a light on its crown, which he did in the form of the college. This was the same year, 1852, that Somerville High School first opened its doors, and the Franklin Institute in Union Square's Franklin Hall began their lecture series.



Harvard is the oldest and most prestigious school of higher learning in America. John Winthrop, the first Governor of Massachusetts was in office when the college had its first commencement in 1642. This was two hundred years before the birth of Somerville. His nephew, George Downing, was part of that first class and Downing Street in London is named after him. Winthrop was a resident owner of Somerville's Ten Hills Estate and fought for Harvard's formation. He presided over its Board of Overseers during its first twelve years and helped to keep the school afloat by acquiring state funds and *Continued on page 11*

LEGAL NOTICES

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
8 BONAIR STREET
SOMERVILLE, MA 02145
REBID #S2027-06

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

A 2026 or Newer Hybrid Refrigerated Box Truck With Power Tailgate for the Somerville Public Schools Food Service Department

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after November 17, 2026.

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **2 p.m., Tuesday, December 8, 2026** at the Finance Office Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof, waive any minor informality in the Bid process and to award the Contract that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville School Department.

Robert A. Berretta
Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE
CITY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

There will be a public hearing at a regular meeting of the **Somerville City Council** on **Thursday, December 10, 2026, at 7:00 PM**, on the Order of President Lance L. Davis, to convey the Fiscal Year 2027-2031 Captial Investment Plan.

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_ETEDZ3BXRqaXQbr40v48VA

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

4. 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.

COURTNEY HENDERSON
CITY CLERK

11/18/26, 11/25/26 The Somerville Times

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www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, December 2, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GDaXDKpwQB6Wok2YIn7O2w

TO CALL IN

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

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

64 Hooker Ave	Jared Gardiner proposes to convert an existing nonconforming rear projecting porch into habitable space in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Section 6 finding.
599 Somerville Ave	599 Somerville Ventures LLC is requesting relief of ground story entrance spacing Per SZO 4.1.9.d., which requires a Variance.
199 Elm Street	Mapu Development LLC seeks relief from SZO 4.2.8.c. for number of stories, which requires a Variance.
199 Elm Street	Mapu Development LLC seeks relief from SZO 4.2.8.c. for building height, which requires a Variance.
199 Elm Street	Mapu Development LLC seeks relief from SZO 4.2.8.d. for the density factor for number of residential units, which requires a Variance.
2 Quincy St	Stefanov Architects Inc. is requesting relief of minimum lot width for an Apartment Building per SZO 3.2.10.a, which requires a Variance.
2 Quincy St	Stefanov Architects Inc. is requesting relief of ground story elevation requirements per SZO 3.2.10.c., which requires a Variance.
2 Quincy St	Stefanov Architects Inc. is requesting relief of setback requirements per 3.2.10.b, which requires a Variance.

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

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PHONE: 857-488-5138

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville City Council's **Land Use Committee** and the **Somerville Planning Board** will hold a joint public hearing on **Thursday, December 3rd, 2026** at 6:30 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

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

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

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

- Councilor Scott requesting an amendment to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to establish the Upzoning Overlay (UO) District at Davis Square, Porter Square, and Ball Square.36 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 12.1.2 regarding affordable dwelling units.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.4.6, 3.1.13, 3.2.12, 4.1.10, 4.2.10, 4.3.10, 4.4.10, 5.1.11, 6.1.8, 6.2.9, 6.3.8, 6.4.11, and 6.5.8 of the Zoning Ordinance to simplify regulation of building components.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.1.1, 2.4.3, 2.4.4, 4.1.14, 4.2.14, 4.3.14, 4.4.14, 5.1.15, and 6.2.13 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow greater adoption of sustainable development elements.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.1.1, 2.3.1, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.6, 3.1.6, 3.2.6, 9.2.11, 9.2.13, 9.2.14, 10.2.1, 10.2.2, and 14.1.5 of the Zoning Ordinance to simplify regulation of accessory structures.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.1.16, 3.2.15, 4.1.13, 4.2.13, 4.3.13, 4.4.13, 5.1.14, 6.1.11, 6.2.12, 6.3.11, 6.4.14, 6.5.11, 8.2.4, 9.1.1, 9.2.8, and 9.2.9 of the Zoning Ordinance to amend use tables and standards.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.1.5, 3.2.5, 6.3.5, 6.4.6, 7.3.5, 8.3.6, 10.10.3, 15.2.1, 15.3.2, 15.7.2 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to streamline the jurisdiction of review boards.

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

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

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Ms. Cam's **Olio** *Answers*

From on page 8

1. Male
2. Buttered toast, popcorn, pretzels and jelly beans
3. A capotai
4. Flour and cornstarch
5. Ousamequin
6. The Hudson River area
7. William Bradford
8. 1939, when President Roosevelt moved Thanksgiving to November 23
9. George H.W. Bush made the official pardon ceremony a tradition in 1989
10. December 22
11. Released into the sky after the parade
12. live animals from the Central Park Zoo

LEGAL NOTICES

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City of Somerville
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, December 15, 2026**, at 6:45pm through Zoom.

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

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-yXpD97rRViRdgtOvmU38g

TO CALL IN

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

The Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following pursuant to 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.

Determinations of Preferably Preserved (STEP 2 IN THE DEMO REVIEW PROCESS)

13-15 Thorndike Street Applicant: Creative Properties- Leon Navickas
Owner: ASCP, LLC
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

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

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Somerville Highlanders celebrate victory with first-ever win of Globe Scholastic Award

By Harry Kane

Somerville High School received praise this year from The Boston Globe for the 2025/2026 school year, winning its first-ever Dalton Division 1 Globe Scholastic Award.

The Highlanders won 64.64 percent of their games across 22 varsity programs, finishing 215-116-7 in regular season play.

At the School Committee meeting on November 16, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Rubén Carmona thanked the athletic department for their determination.

"This was the result of years of investment in youth and middle school athletics and the commitment of the community to support our students beyond the classroom," said Carmona.

For the past 54 years, The Globe Scholastic Awards honor Eastern Massachusetts high schools and base awards on the regular-season winning percentage. The Dalton Division 1 covers schools with 1,400 or more students.

Somerville Athletic Director Stanly Vieira said receiving the award was an honor. "It's very special. Means a lot," he said. The credit, he added, goes to the staff, the coaches, and the student-athletes.

"It represents years of dedication to developing young athletes through our city's youth and middle school programs," said Vieira.



Highlander Football Captain Peter Maher, with fellow student-athletes, at a recent School Committee meeting.

Peter Maher, Senior Football Captain for Somerville High School, said the award is a reflection of the community's strength. "Over the past few years, the coaches and the players have been putting a lot of work into creating a very welcoming community that accepts anyone."

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

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

tolls from the Charlestown Ferry. It is often said that other than Cambridge, more Harvard alumni live in Somerville than anywhere else.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has graduated many of America's engineering elite since the school's beginning at the close of the Civil War. Somerville's William "Willy" Nickerson was one of them. A metallurgist by trade, his most notable creation was the Gillette Safety Razor. He became the company's most important employee and its Vice President. He was a generous benefactor to Boston University and became one of its trustees. The university's Nickerson Field is named in his honor.

Conwell Street, Conwell Avenue and the former Conwell School were named after a Somerville father and son. Both were editors of the Somerville Journal. Russell, the father, is best known for being the founder and first president of Philadelphia's Temple University. Leon, his son, was the nineteenth mayor of Somerville.

Somerville brothers, Myron and Edmund Fisher, created Fisher College at Winter Hill in 1903. Union Square's Boynton Yards business owner, John Boynton, founded Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1865.

The Davis Square subway is Somerville's key to opening doors to dozens of additional schools of higher education. She is shaped like an eagle, and her nest is feathered with knowledge from all degrees.



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:
https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times
Share with your friends and neighbors!
Let's keep local news alive, together.
And to advertise in The Times, call **857-488-5138**

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

Bobby's Dad Jokes Corner
By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why was the Thanksgiving dinner so expensive?
It had 24 carrots.

The "Original"
All Types Vent Cleaning
Restaurant Hood Cleaning
Dryer Vent/ HVAC Cleaning
Power Washing
Licensed and Insured in Massachusetts
We travel all over Massachusetts
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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Mysterious blonde… — *Photo by Denise Provost*

On This Day in History
November 25

1914 – Field Marshal Fredrich von Hindenburg calls off the Lodz offensive.

1918 – Chile and Peru sever relations.

1921 – Hirohito becomes regent of Japan.

1923 – Transatlantic broadcasting from England to America commences.

1947 – The Big Four meet to discuss the German and European economy.

1955 – The Interstate Commerce Commission bans segregation in interstate travel.

1963 – The body of President John F. Kennedy is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

1986 – Fawn Hall smuggles important documents out of Oliver North's office.

1987 – Typhoon Nina sticks the Philippines with 165 mph winds and a devastating storm surge and causes over 1,030 deaths.

1992 – Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia votes to partition the country into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, beginning Jan. 1, 1993.

2008 – Sri Lanka is hit by Cyclone Nisha, bringing the highest rainfall the area had seen in 9 decades; 15 people die, 90,000 are left homeless.

Nomination papers now available for Somerville Special Election

In early 2027, the City of Somerville will hold a special municipal election for Ward Councilor positions in Wards 2 and 3, and nomination papers are now available for pickup at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) until Monday, December 7 at 5 p.m. To get on the ballot, candidates must obtain at least 50 signatures from residents in their ward and return them to the Elections Department by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 9. Ward 2 consists of South Union Square, Perry and Lincoln Park neighborhoods, and more. Ward 3 consists of North Union Square, Prospect Hill, Spring Hill, Central Hill, and more. Unsure which ward you live in? Use the MySomerville address lookup tool (somervillema.gov/mysomerville). If more than two candidates run within a single ward, a special preliminary election will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 2027.

The special general municipal election will be held on Wednesday, March 24.

For more information and all election information, visit somervillema.gov/elections.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

hilarious and tender children's novel ***Skunk and Badger***.

****

The **City of Somerville** is gathering information about how students get to and from school each year in its annual school **Travel Survey**. Your responses help the city understand how school travel patterns change over time and inform future safety improvements and infrastructure projects, including the new **Sycamore Street school**. Survey results will also be shared with the community. It takes less than five minutes to complete the survey: https://cityofsomerville.jotform.com/262735069493871.

****

Illuminations 2026 applications are now open. Illuminations is a month-long lights extravaganza where you can take self-guided tours using our handy-dandy online map, featuring the brightest holiday displays around Somerville. Whether you live in a house, a triple-decker, or an apartment, or run a local business, you can be part of the map. Apply by **Thursday, December 10** at 11:59 p.m.: www.somervilleartscouncil.org/illuminations.

****

The city is offering **free COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics** at locations across the city this fall to help community members protect their health. The next clinic is on **Tuesday, December 1**, at **Central Library** (79 Highland Ave.) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. This clinic is for ages 6 months and up. Appointments are strongly encouraged. Visit somervillema.gov/vaccines for the full clinic schedule or contact 311 (617-666-3311) for more information and to make an appointment.

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Somerville-made **Taza Mexican Style Chocolate Classic Collection** is among Massachusetts' three candidates for **GreenerFriday's 2026 Holiday Gift Awards**. They invite the public to discover 150 candidates across all 50 U.S. states and vote. There will be one global winner and one winner per state; no winners have been selected. The public vote is separate from editorial evaluation. Voting closes **December 20** at 11:59 p.m. Explore Massachusetts and vote: https://greenerfriday.com/.

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On **Wednesday, December 9**, join **Somerville Public Library** for ***Until Help Arrives with Somerville Emergency Management***, happening at the **Central Library**, 79 Highland Ave, and learn how to help keep our community safe. Then, on **Thursday, December 10**, come to the **East Branch**, 115 Broadway, for some **Chair Yoga**. For more information, visit https://somervillepubliclibrary.org/.

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The final week for **residential yard waste collection** in 2026 will be **Monday through Friday, December 7–11**. Place yard waste curbside for pickup on your scheduled trash collection day. After December 11, yard waste may be brought to the **DPW yard** (1 Franey Rd.) on weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. or between 1 and 3:30 p.m. To learn more, please visit somerville-ma.gov/trash.

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Teens earn, and neighbors stay safe. Somerville's **Snow Shoveling program** is back for the 2026/27 season, providing a paid opportunity for youth to assist local seniors and homeowners with disabilities by clearing snow after a storm. Teens and homeowners are paired for the season. After each storm, the homeowner will contact their assigned youth to request shoveling services. Somerville teens ages 14 to 19 are invited to apply. Looking for snow shoveling services? Get the application online or contact **Debra Higgins** at dhiggins@somervillema.gov for assistance. Learn more https://www.somervillema.gov/news/somerville-homeowners-youth-invited-apply-snow-shoveling-program.

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Thinking about **Pre-K or Kindergarten** for your child? Explore **Somerville Public Schools**. There are a couple of great opportunities to get a firsthand look at our SPS Pre-K–Grade 8 schools. Families are invited to drop in for a school tour on any of the following dates: **Thursday, December 3 – 9, 10**, 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. **Wednesday, January 13** – 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30 p.m. **Tuesday, January 26** – 9, 10, 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. Visit the **Enrollment Office webpage** for more information: https://somervillepublicschools.org/enrollment.

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Take part in the **Somerville Recreation Kickoff Fair** on **Saturday, January 9**. They're bringing the fun with an afternoon full of activities, entertainment, and opportunities to connect with your community. Meet their staff, try out some of their programs, and play. Bounce houses, face painting, a magician, and music. Visit tables of local businesses and our vendors. Discover upcoming programs, events, and activities. **Somerville High School**, 81 Highland Ave., 1 – 4 p.m. Free activities for all ages.

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2026 Davis Sq. Farmers Market, closing date will be **November 25**, 12 – 6 p.m., Day and Herbert St., Somerville. This market has more than two dozen Massachusetts farmers and food producers selling fresh produce, meats, baked goods, ready-to-eat meals, and other local products. It's held **weekly on Wednesday** in the **municipal parking lot next to Davis Square Plaza**, across from **American Flatbread**. Stop by and support your local food system at davissquarefarmersmarket.org.

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The **Somerville Winter Farmers Market**, 191 Highland Ave, will not be open **this Saturday, November 28**. It will be back **next Saturday, December 5**. To learn more and for a complete listing of vendors, weekly specials, and live entertainment, please visit www.somwintermarket.org.

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

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

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



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder



Emily (Pineau) Lacey is a poet, writer, and medical editor, living in Danvers, Massachusetts. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Pine Manor College. Her debut chapbook *No Need To Speak* (Ibbetson Street Press, 2013) won The Aurorean's Chapbook Choice Award in 2013. Her poetry has appeared in *Glimpse, The Bluebird Word, The Raven's Perch, Evening Street Review, Medical Literary Messenger*, and other journals

Death and Glitter Glue

She takes the cap off the silver tube,
will I die when I turn five?
she asks, I blink hard
and she squeezes all the glitter glue in a cup of water,
an experiment she says,
dipping a paintbrush in, swirl, swirl,
swirl.

No, of course not, why?
She swipes the paintbrush across paper,
wet globs of red in front of us.
Because I'll be old. And old people go to heaven.
What is heaven?
Words pop out of my mouth,
something about angels and clouds
and how we are more than just our bodies,
how we rise out of them.
She presses her hands
into a fresh mound of green glitter.

I circle back to angels,

fill the room
with thoughts of angels.

She wants to know about cats,
do they go to heaven too?
Her eyes water
thinking about her orange tabby

up so high in the clouds

a place she will never reach him,

the soul she first crawled to,
desperate for fistfuls of fur.

I remind her he is still here,
Let's sit with him, I say.
She holds up her glitter hands, I better wash them, she says,
or else we'll have a glitter cat—
she giggles, leaning over the sink, imagining all the ways
she could make the world sparkle.

— *Emily (Pineau) Lacey*

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

Somerville Writer Rachel Dines: A Kid at Heart



Ever since she first laid her hands on a keyboard, R.A. Dines has been fascinated with the intersection of art and technology. Dines spent the first two decades of her career in big tech and startups and is now in the second chapter of her career as a full-time author and creative. These days, you can find her reading, writing, coding, and 3D printing with her family in Somerville, MA. I caught up with her, and she generously agreed to this interview.

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

Rachel Dines: Somerville is an amazing place to live when you're a creative because there are so many other people here who are full-time or part-time creatives. I've met author friends at the dog park, fellow parents at the Somerville public schools, and via Somerville Arts and Culture events. I love that this city has so many working artists across every medium. It's really inspiring and feels like a true creative community. I'm working on a new picture book about Fluff, and I'm looking to partner with a Somerville artist for the project.

DH: You are fascinated by the interaction of technology and art. With all this talk of AI, do you think technology will take the human element out of art?

RD: I believe that generative AI has no place in the creative arts. Art should be an inherently human act. It's made by humans, for humans. Outside of generative AI, I think technology and art can complement each other beautifully. For example, I've been making digital art for more than 20 years. I started in Microsoft Paint, moved on to creating animations in Macromedia (later Adobe) Flash, and these days, I design 3D models for my printer.

DH: Why did you leave high tech to be a writer?

RD: I've wanted to be an author since I was a little kid. When I graduated from college, I went and got a "real job" because that's what you're supposed to do, right? For 20 years, I worked first in tech research, then in big tech and startups. I truly enjoyed the work. I was good at it and found it rewarding. But after two back-to-back high-growth startups that had successful exits, I was exhausted. I needed to take a break, and I decided to pursue my dream of being an author. It's been almost two years since I worked in a regular 9-5 job, and I can't imagine ever going back.

DH: You wrote a sci-fi book for kids, *How I Hacked the Moon*. How hard is it to write a book that appeals to the sensibility of a kid? Have you retained your child-like wonder?

RD: I've always related extremely well to kids. I think if I hadn't gone into high tech, I might have been well suited to be a teacher (a MUCH harder job). I have vivid memories of what it was like to be a pre-teen, and I harnessed that. Plus talking to my friends' kids who were the right age, I was able to tap into this mindset. I really never grew up. I'm a kid at heart who gets really excited about the latest nerdy thing.

My second book, *With a Robot* *Continued on page 15*

Somerville to host arts community gathering on December 8

Community members are invited to attend an Arts Community Gathering on Tuesday, December 8, at Warehouse XI (11 Sanborn Ct.) from 6 to 8 p.m.

Hosted by Mayor Jake Wilson and Somerville Arts & Culture, the event will reflect on arts efforts from the past year and share how the City is preparing for the future.

Enjoy light bites from Nibble Kitchen during an opening reception and a poetry reading from Somerville Cultural Ambassador, Fin Leary. Hear from the mayor and new Arts & Culture Director, Lydia Warren, PhD, and meet new members of the Arts and Culture Board.

Learn about feedback from the summer Arts Listening Tour and get updates on the Somerville Creative Space Trust. Celebrate 2026 milestones like the Diamond Factory pop-up art gallery. To close, the event will break to allow for one-on-one and small group conversations with the Mayor, City staff, and community members.

To learn more and provide an optional RSVP, visit: somervilleartscouncil.org/events/arts-gathering. RSVP is not required but is appreciated.



Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

Army at My Back, was published on November 6. It's the sequel to *How I Hacked the Moon*. I'm pleased to say it's already hit the Amazon Hot New Releases list (Number three!) for its genre.

DH: Who do you count as your major influences from the world of sci-fi fiction?

RD: I'm heavily influenced by many of the classic Sci-Fi authors like Robert Heinlein and Kurt Vonnegut. I like to think I have the tech prediction abilities of a William Gibson (I did conceive of my series about AI data centers on the moon more than ten years ago, and it looks like it's coming true soon). I also take a lot of inspiration from Neal Stephenson, Martha Wells, Becky Chambers, and Scott Reintgen. I have secret Easter Eggs referencing all of these authors hiding in my books.

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