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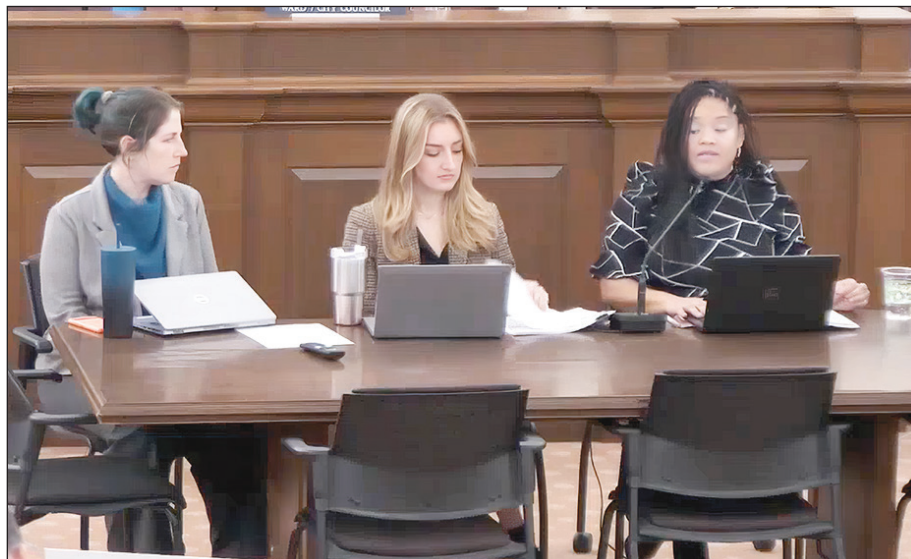


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## Public Safety for All Survey preliminary findings presented to City Council



The Somerville City Council was updated on the preliminary results of the Safety for All Survey at their most recent meeting

By Jim Clark

At the latest regular meeting of the Somerville City Council on Thursday, November 21, the Director of the Department of Racial and Social Justice (DRSJ), Denise Molina Capers, reviewed the findings and gave a broad overview of the department's Public Safety for All survey, touching on several areas.

The Director noted that this survey was one of the most representative surveys undertaken in the city and had a total of 1,296 responses. The surveying period ran from September 2022 to March 2023. A community outreach strategy was developed intentionally focused on vulnerable populations which are most impacted by social injustices.

Outreach for the survey was *Continued on page 4*

## Illuminations 2023 right around the corner

Celebrate the artistry and creativity of residents and businesses that transform their spaces and yards with lights, ornaments, and shrines of devotion and fantasy as the Illuminations 2023 tours kick off in December, hosted by the Somerville Arts Council (SAC).

This year Illuminations includes both self-guided tours and a bike tour led by the Somerville Bike Advisory Committee. They are not doing trolley tours for several reasons, namely the price of trolley rental has become very expensive, which would hike ticket prices considerably. It is felt that the way to make this event as inclusive as possible is to have it be free.

Whether you're a home decorator, or tour goer, here's how to take part:

To put your address on the map: Just add your address to the interactive map. *Continued on page 4*



The 2023 edition of the Illuminations tour begin on December 9.

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Visit the **Blue: The Celebration of a Color** exhibit at the **Somerville Museum** this Saturday for the closing reception at One Westwood Rd. The exhibit showcases paintings, photography, installation, fashion, and video works of local artists who incorporate blue in their studio practice. For more information visit [www.somerville-museum.org](http://www.somerville-museum.org). **Closing reception, December 2, 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

\*\*\*\*\*

As the holiday gift shopping season intensifies, it's important to remember that **our local merchants** are depending on us all to do our best to shop local. With the challenges they have dealt with over the past couple of years, let's help them to get back to business and be here for years to come.

\*\*\*\*\*

On **Friday, December 1**, at 6:00 p.m., visit the opening of **Mudflat's annual holiday exhibition and sale of functional and sculptural clay** by 96 Mudflat artists, faculty and students. Purchase unique handmade pottery for holiday gifts or for your own home. Come get first looks at the sale and enjoy light refreshments while you shop. Support Mudflat by making a \$15 donation at our Friday evening reception and choose a handmade cup to drink your refreshments. Take a chance on the pottery raffle of over 50 beautiful pieces to benefit Mudflat's scholarship funds. If you can't make the opening, other sale hours are Saturday, December 2, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Sunday, December 3, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m., Monday – Thursday, December 4 – 7, 12:00 – 9:00 p.m., *Continued on page 7*

# The Somerville Times

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## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of November 29 – December 5 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 <b>Wednesday</b> November 29	Partly Cloudy	40°/29°	1%	0%	W 12 mph
 <b>Thursday</b> November 30	Sunny	47°/35°	3%	1%	SW 10 mph
 <b>Friday</b> December 1	Rain	49°/39°	45%	36%	SW 9 mph
 <b>Saturday</b> December 2	Rain	46°/32°	29%	17%	NW 10 mph
 <b>Sunday</b> December 3	Rain	45°/34°	37%	21%	NE 9 mph
 <b>Monday</b> December 4	Rain	48°/39°	49%	38%	NE 10 mph
 <b>Tuesday</b> December 5	Rain	46°/33°	43%	32%	SW 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: Somernova

granger says:

I didn't hear a strong case against the parking. You seem to have an ax to grind with cars in general.

What is the actual parking demand for the property? I imagine this has been studied, and if not, it should be. There will presumably be high-quality jobs and higher-earning residents, both of which correlate with demand for car trips and car ownership. It is unrealistic to expect all or even most future tenants will ride bikes or walk. I'm not thrilled either about the prospect of 5,000 more trips along Somerville Ave (the road is a traffic nightmare already, although it could partly be fixed by improvements to the lights). But the worst thing we can do is go forward with a project while pretending that additional demand doesn't exist. It will only make things worse. Just shooting from the hip: Put in a Union branch stop at Dane St. The green line messed up by putting the T stop too far on the other side of Union to be usable by half of the area. Ask the developer to chip in money, match it with City of Somerville, and see what the MBTA says.

### Response to: No parking

Joyce McCann says:

Hi Jimmy, I love reading your stories they bring back a lot of memories. The city and the state are biting the hands that feed them and so many more. The more they push out cars the less MONEY they will be getting. Think about all the fees, taxes, insurance and maintenance we pay to have a car. Say goodbye to that revenue. Are they going to start charging people to park their bikes and requiring a license to ride one? I like bikes, I want a new ebike but let's face the reality that not everyone is able or wants to ride a bike or can walk long distances. This does seem very able-ist. And don't get me started on Davis Square, all I can say is we were lied to back when Assembly was 1st being built. Davis was going to reap the benefits of that additional tax revenue. We were supposed to get new sidewalks new streets, new infrastructure, IT WAS GOING TO BE SO GREAT!. Davis Square is a dump.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

Life in the



by Jimmy Del Ponte

# Oreo



Around September of 2020 I got a phone call from my son. He told me an elderly man had passed away in a nursing home and there was no one to take his senior cat. The 18-year-old tabby was suddenly homeless.

Having had to say painful goodbyes to two dear pets, I had made up my mind not to get another pet. But my son sold me on taking Oreo into my home. I'm glad I did. Oreo took no time getting comfortable in our house. He also found his favorite perch on my lap. He was a very good-natured cat. I looked forward to coming home because I knew my pal

would be waiting to share the recliner. And boy did Oreo love his treats. We became fast friends. Two peas in a pod. A couple of seniors enjoying life.

I noticed Oreo wasn't eating and he quickly got sick. I kept him comfortable and brought him over to his water bowl. He was drinking but still not eating. His illness was swift. Oreo let out his last two meows and passed peacefully on my lap. The place he loved.

It's pretty lonely around here without Oreo. He was a good old pal. I'll carefully place his ashes alongside our dog Cosmo and our other cat Oscar.

Will I rescue another cat? It's too early to tell. Perhaps. But until that time this old house will be filled with memories of a handsome old boy named Oreo.



## Donate to local holiday gift drives at city buildings

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne has announced the city's annual support of local holiday gift and toy donation drives. In the giving spirit of the season, the city is placing toy and gift donation boxes at City buildings, libraries, and firehouses through Friday, December 22. Donated gifts will support two community gift drives for families in need of presents for children and teens this holiday season.

If you are able and wish to donate, please bring toys and gifts for children of all ages and age-appropriate gifts, clothes, and winter boots for teens. All gifts should be new and unwrapped. All gifts will be distributed to families by two local organizations: Toys for Local Children and the MAMA's Mutual Aid Medford and Somerville. More information on their gift drives and oth-

er ways to help support the drives can be found at [mutualaidmamas.com](https://mutualaidmamas.com) and [toysforlocalchildren.org](https://toysforlocalchildren.org).

"Our community is fortunate to have such committed local organizations run by caring volunteers working to help families have a festive holiday season. I also want to give a big shout out to DPW, our Department of Public Works, which sets up our donation boxes and manages gift collection from all our city gift drop-off sites every year – all while also doing the work to decorate the City with lights and greenery to celebrate the season and supporting logistics for our holiday events. And thank you in advance to all who are able and willing to donate to these thoughtful drives for gifts, toys, clothes, and winter boots for our local youths," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne.



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Look for the Donation Boxes at these city buildings, libraries, and firehouses:

- City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Welcome Desk, 1st floor, and Mayor's Office, 2nd floor
- Somerville Central Library, 79 Highland Avenue
- Somerville East Library, 115 Broadway
- Somerville West Branch Library, 40 College Avenue
- City Hall Annex, 50 Evergreen Street
- Dept. of Public Works (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)

Please donate by Friday, December 22.

## BLUE: closing reception this Saturday

Join the Somerville Museum Saturday, December 2, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., as they celebrate the close of a wonderful exhibition by Martha Friend. This is your last chance to check out BLUE for yourself.

Martha Friend, local curator and collector of all things blue, fell in love with the color early on in her life. As a result she's spent years building "Sapphire City," an art installation outside her home on Highland Avenue in Somerville, which many in the area would recognize as an unofficial community landmark. Her work has garnered media attention and her vision for this exhibition is translated through artworks by local artists, installations of found objects, music, and creative workshops.

Friend invites visitors to explore the many different meanings and uses of blue and leave with a newfound appreciation for the color's history and influence on art and culture.

Please check out their website for confirmation of Museum's open hours: [www.somervilmuseum.org](http://www.somervilmuseum.org)

Admission: \$5; active museum members and visitors 12 years of age and under are free

Parking: Please note that there is no dedicated parking at the Somerville Museum.

For more information and how to get to the Museum visit: <https://www.somervilmuseum.org/gettinghere>

Accessibility: The Somerville Museum is now handicapped accessible. The ADA entrance can be found on the ground level at 1 Westwood Road.



— Photo by Iaritza Menjivar.

## Public Safety for All Survey preliminary findings presented to City Council

CONT. FROM PG 1

begun in September 2022. It was promoted at ward meetings, community meetings, farmers markets and other city events.

According to Molina Capers, the survey consisted of three separate sections: safety, encounters with police, and perceptions of police. Canvassing, door-knocking, emails, text messages, robo-calls, and one-on-one interviews were also conducted, as well as on social media.

Nine city departments worked with the DRSJ, along with 36 community partners, and 23 focus groups were conducted reaching 144 constituents.

A prepared presentation was presented at the Council meeting, reviewing various finding from the survey.

Councilor At-Large Willie Burnley, Jr. commented that the structure of the presentation did not deal with how to improve safety, nor provide alternatives to policing and he asked if all of the comments would be shared. Director Molina Capers replied that they may be added as an appendix. Councilor Burnley asked why data for disabled and LGBTQIA people was combined for some areas and not others and was told

that the reason this was done was because of the number of respondents.

Councilor At-Large Charlotte Kelly asked when the open data platform would be available to the public and SomerStat Director Anna Gartsman replied that it is available now. Director Gartsman noted that open comments have been excluded to protect identities.

Councilor Kelly also commented about the survey being open to people who worked in the city, and she inquired about various datasets that might extrapolate particular groups. She was told

that analysis is possible at various levels and could be provided upon request.

To collect the survey data, focus groups were held and collaboration was conducted with the Office of Immigrant Affairs and multiple community organizations.

Ward 5 Councilor Beatriz Gomez Mouakad emphasized finding ways to reach out to non-English speaking people.

With regard to improvements to the Police Department, Director Molina Capers stated that it was important to report the differences by race so the

voices of those most impacted could be heard.

Ward 6 Councilor Lance Davis commented that it wasn't clear how the data supports the perceptions and Director Molina Capers replied that part of the answer is history, and that people of color are most impacted because some areas need to be patrolled more than others due to higher crime.

Director Molina Capers closed by saying that the full report would be available in early 2024 and that the task force would appreciate feedback from the Councilors.

## Illuminations 2023 right around the corner

CONT. FROM PG 1

Once it is approved, you'll be able to see your home or business on the map.

To participate as a tour goer: the map will be available on the SAC website for you to start to plan your routes, however, keep in mind, they will continue to add addresses until December 8, so hold your excitement until then.

### Illuminations Dates:

December 8: deadline to be added to the interactive map

December 9 through early January 2024: Self-guided tours using the Somerville's official online

### Illuminations Map

December 16: Illuminations Bike Tour, starting at Somerville High School main entrance at 5:45 p.m., departure at 6:00 p.m. Rain date is December 17.

Registration and map here: <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/event/illuminations/>

More info: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/illumination-stour>

Stay updated on social media:  
FB: [facebook.com/SomervilleArts/](https://facebook.com/SomervilleArts/); Instagram: @SomervilleArtsCouncil



# Transgender Day of Remembrance in Somerville:

## 'We are equally as human as you are'

By Olivia LeDuc

Last Monday, a small crowd gathered at the front of Somerville High School in a ceremony to mark the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance, honoring the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people lost to violence each year.

Somerville's ceremony, and others like it nationwide, are held each Nov. 20 to remember the lives of those who have been killed because of their identities.

"It is more than disheartening to confront the harsh realities that members of our transgender community have been subjected to violence," Mayor Katjana Ballantyne said at the ceremony. "Somerville is unwavering in its commitment to remain a safe and welcoming community for all people who call our city home."

At least 26 trans and gender non-conforming people were killed in the U.S. in 2023, according to the Human Rights Campaign. As in most years, the victims in these cases were primarily trans women of color.

"I so long for a world where transgender people are safe and this hatred doesn't exist," said Izzy Starr, the city's LGBTQ+ services coordinator. "I am scared for my community that more of our loved ones will be stolen from us."

Mayor Ballantyne and Starr both called attention to the locality of the day's international observance. Rita Hester, a Black transgender woman, was found murdered in her Allston apartment in 1998 – a case that has yet to be solved. Hester's death spurred the first Transgender Day of Remembrance in 1999.

Such crimes in Massachusetts were all too familiar for transgender people in the state. In No-

vember 1995, three years prior to Hester's death, Chanelle Pickett was strangled to death in Waverlytown. A Massachusetts jury acquitted William Palmer for the murder of Pickett, a Black transgender woman.

"They were young women just getting started in life. They had hopes, dreams and a lifetime of contributions," Mayor Ballantyne said. "It breaks my heart to have to say both of these women should still be here now."

*"We must  
challenge prejudice  
and discrimination  
at every turn"*

Of the 26 victims recognized by the Human Rights Campaign, approximately 88% were people of color, 54% were Black women, and 50% were misgendered or incorrectly named by police or the press after their death. The organization, in addition to data revealed in the Trans Murder Monitoring report, said the true number of deaths is likely higher, as not all cases of violent deaths are reported.

"While I do not know them personally, I recognize them," Starr, who identifies as transgender and non-binary, said of all victims of anti-transgender violence. "I carry them with me in my heart."

Starr read aloud to the crowd the names and lives that were taken by violence this year, followed by a moment of silence to reflect on the victims.

Among those in attendance at the ceremony were community members and activists for LGBTQ+ youth in Massachusetts.



Mayor Katjana Ballantyne addressed the gathering at Somerville's Transgender Day of Remembrance.

— Photo courtesy of Somerville GovTV

Evan Sung, a transgender person who lives in Somerville, was one such person. As the marketing coordinator for the Boston Alliance of LGBTQ+ Youth (BAGLY), an organization committed to providing support and services for LGBTQ+ youth, Sung said they attended the ceremony to show others there is community and aid, if needed, in the area.

Sung, who recently came out as transgender, said they were touched by the community support and shared space to memorialize those who have been lost to violence.

"It's always nice to find a community where I can," Sung said. "One life lost is too many."

"We are equally as human as you are. We have interests, hobbies, parents, siblings and loved ones," Sung continued.

In the U.S., there have been a record-breaking 500 and counting pieces of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation introduced in state houses across the country this

year, more than each of the previous five years, Mayor Ballantyne pointed out. 85 of these bills have been passed.

"Anti-LGBTQ+ violence and rhetoric in this country can prevent you from feeling like you truly belong in your community," Mayor Ballantyne said. "But we cannot allow this to happen. We must challenge prejudice and discrimination at every turn."

"From people who claim to represent our best interests as their constituents who, time and time again, use their power to push policies that criminalize our rights," Starr said.

Mayor Ballantyne encouraged LGBTQ+ community members to speak more about what they want to see for initiatives and resources to serve the city better.

At the end of the ceremony, clinical youth specialist Hallo-ry Mogren invited crowd members to engage in an art activity to create community and express some of the difficult emotions they may have been

feeling. Participants wrote their emotions on stones and placed them in a jar meant to hold the weight.

On the same table, there were additional jars of the names of those known to be taken by anti-transgender violence this year.

Jake Wilson, Somerville City Councilor At-Large, placed stones in the jar. For Wilson, this year's ceremony was another he made a point of attending to show support for victims and his transgender friends and loved ones.

In a time when other parts of the country are not as welcoming to transgender people and other LGBTQ+ members, Wilson said he is grateful for belonging to a community where identities are recognized and celebrated.

"It's nice to be in a community that supports our transgender friends and neighbors. I'm appreciative of moments like this that we are in Somerville," Wilson said.

# Beacon Hill Roll Call



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**THE HOUSE AND SENATE:** *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local senators' votes from recent sessions. There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

## CREATE COMMISSION TO EXAMINE CURRENT EMERGENCY SHELTER SYSTEM (S 5250)

Senate 39-0, approved an amendment creating a bipartisan commission to study and make recommendations by March 1, 2024 on the financial impact and sustainability of the state's current emergency shelter system and the various supports that are currently offered to individuals and families.

"Our state's emergency shelter program was simply never meant to handle the number of individuals that it is housing today and we need to take a hard look at the financial stability of our emergency housing assistance program, and the impact it is having on our municipalities and commonwealth as a whole," said amendment sponsor Sen. John Velis (D-Westfield). "Otherwise, we will soon be faced with some very difficult decisions on other funding priorities that we value so much. In the absence of federal action, we need to have an honest conversation about these growing costs and what our off-ramp, if any, is going to be."

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen      Yes

## REQUIRE PRICING DATA (S 2499)

Senate 38-0, approved an amendment to a section of a drug price reform bill.

A section of the bill gives the state's Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA's) the option to fine pharmaceutical companies up to \$2,000 per week if they do not submit drug pricing data by a certain deadline. The amendment would require CHIA to fine the companies.

"For far too long, the pharmaceutical industry has exploited taxpayers, patients and the government through insidious lobbying tactics that have prevented any meaningful price control for decades," said amendment sponsor Sen. Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford). "The industry has fought every common-sense cost-saving policy I have sponsored for over 20 years, ranging from bulk purchasing to simple price transparency."

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen      Yes

## ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

**2024 BALLOT QUESTION** – Campaigns to put questions on the November 2024 ballot had until November 22 to collect and file with local city and towns clerks the 74,574 signatures necessary to take the next step toward getting their proposals on the November 2024 ballot.

The next step is for supporters to file the signatures, following certification by local officials, with the secretary of state's office by Dec. 6. The proposal would then be sent to the Legislature and if not approved by the Legislature by May 1, 2024, proponents must gather another 12,429 signatures and file them with local officials by June 19, 2024, and then the secretary of state's office by July 3, 2024, in order for the question to appear on the November 2024 ballot.

Several proposals seem poised to get the 74,574 signatures although nothing is official yet. The proposed laws include ones to change the rights and benefits for on-demand drivers like Uber and Lyft; permit the state auditor's office to audit the Legislature; increase over five years the minimum wage for tipped workers to the same as the general minimum wage; legalize some psychedelic substances including psilocybin and psilocyn found in mushrooms to treat mental health disorders including major depressive disorder and substance abuse; remove the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exam as a high school graduation requirement and instead require students to complete coursework certified by the student's district as demonstrating mastery of the competencies contained in the state academic standards in math, science and technology and English

## FREE PHONE CALLS FOR PRISONERS (S 4502)

– Gov. Maura Healey signed into law a bill that beginning on December 1, 2023, will provide free phone calls and video calls for all prisoners in Massachusetts.

Currently there is no legal requirement for free phone calls in correctional facilities. Each facility contracts separately for telephone service.

"Ensuring that individuals in state and county prisons can keep in contact with their loved ones is key to enhancing rehabilitation, reducing recidivism and improving community safety," Healey said. "I'm proud to sign this important legislation."

"Providing free phone calls in Massachusetts prisons and jails has been a longstanding priority of mine and I am thrilled to see the commonwealth recognize the importance of keeping families connected by codifying this reform into law," said Sen. Cindy Creem (D-Newton). "By eliminating these excessive fees, we are helping families during an already traumatizing period of separation, im-

proving public safety outcomes by reducing recidivism, and ultimately ending a regressive and outdated policy."

At the time the Legislature approved the bill on November 8, Rep. Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) who opposed the measure said, "Every law abiding citizen that has a job and works 40 plus hours a week has to pay for phone calls. Why are criminals entitled to free phone calls? It's completely ridiculous and absurd that Democrats are giving free anything to criminals. Criminals and their families should be paying for their phone calls, not taxpayers."

## DWARFISM AWARENESS DAY (H 3044)

– On November 20, the House gave initial approval to a bill that would make October 25th Dwarfism Awareness Day in the Bay State. The legislation would not apply until October 25, 2024 since October 25, 2023 has already come and gone.

Despite repeated requests from Beacon Hill Roll Call, sponsor Rep. Jim Hawkins (D-Attleboro) failed to respond to requests asking him to comment on his proposal.

In the 2021-2022 session, the bill was approved by the House but died in the Senate. At that time, Hawkins, a retired teacher from Attleboro High School, said he filed the measure after a request by former student Vicki Ziniti who has dwarfism.

"She has organized an advocacy group of people with dwarfism and asked me about the possibility for 'National Dwarfism Day' in the commonwealth," said Hawkins. Since graduating, Vicki has gotten her teaching certification and is a classroom teacher so you know we were excited to file this legislation and advocate for its passage."

Supporters say that around the world people with dwarfism face social and physical barriers. They note that October 25 was chosen as the day for Dwarfism Awareness Day because it was the birthday of Billy Barty who was an American actor who had dwarfism, and in 1957 set up Little People of America—an organization that supports people with dwarfism as well as raising awareness about the issue.

## DOXING (S 1116, H 1707 and S 971)

– The Judiciary Committee held a hearing on several bills that would make doxing illegal in Massachusetts. One of the measures defines doxing as "the knowing disclosure of personal identifying information of a person without that person's consent that is intended to cause stalking, physical harm to person, or serious property damage, or to cause the person about whom the information pertains to reasonably fear for the physical safety of themselves or a close relation."

*Continued on page 11*

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Somerville joins together to usher in the holiday season.

Our View Of The Times



The City of Somerville is certainly one classic example of strong, good-hearted people having the capacity to set aside fundamental ideological differences for the sake of securing the community and celebrating all that it has to offer in style.

With the holiday season soon upon us, events such as the city's Holiday lighting and Menorah Lighting in celebration of Hanukkah – on December 7 and 10 re-

spectively on the City Hall Concourse – symbolically serve as a reminder that we are indeed a cohesive community, with our common hopes, fears, ambitions and objectives.

Looking into the joyful face of a child filled with wonder as the lights are brightened fills us with a sense of resolve that we will persevere and protect our own. That the most important thing we can do as re-

sponsible citizens is to make certain that our future is safe and secure as we launch into the future.

Later in the month, we can look forward to similar seasonal traditions such as the Somerville Arts Council's Illuminations Tours beginning on December 9, when some of the city's most spectacular displays of holiday lights are admired by appreciative crowds

We certainly love our holiday season anyway, but in times that are sometimes challenging in many respects, we tend to become a little more appreciative of our traditions and the stabilizing force they provide us.

In many ways, this year's observances are no different than others before it. We come together to share a common spirit of kindness and generosity. As it should be.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Friday, December 8, 12:00 – 8:00 p.m., Saturday, December 9, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 10, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to **Jason Fucile**. We wish Jason the very best birthday. Happy Birthday to **Peter Forcellese**. We wish him a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to **Lisa Hastings**, celebrating her birthday this week. Happy birthday to **Peter Blaikie**, who is also celebrating this week. We hope he enjoys his birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Joseph Di Pietro**, **Nancy Robinson**

**Faulkner**, **Linda Chaille Nixon**, **Dorothy Dervishian O'Malley**, **Lee Owen Grassia**, **Deb Feeley** and **Karen Fay** a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

\*\*\*\*\*

A celebration of Union Square sparkle, discovery, and delight that is sure to jumpstart your holiday shopping and get you exploring all that the Square has to offer. Make your way to **Union Square** in Somerville on **Saturday, December 2**, from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. (rain date December 3) for the **9th Annual Holiday**

**Stroll**. Revel in this festive neighborhood tradition and enter to win cash prizes by conquering the **Elfie Selfie** and Stroll the Square Challenges while enjoying unique eats and rad retail around the Square. Participating businesses are sure to make the Square shine with the return of the splendid **Storefront Decoration Contest**. And don't forget about the incredible inflatables on the **Festivus Trail**. Dozens of locally-owned businesses await with all you need to stuff your stockings, deck your halls, make your tastebuds celebrate, and more. Bundle up and come on down to unwrap Union Square in all its wintry wonderment.

\*\*\*\*\*

Do you have 1-2 hours to help out with the **Somerville Community Growing Center's Wreath Project** this week? **This Thursday**, they need volunteers between 12:00 and 8:00 p.m. for Wreath Assembly and Pickup at Connexion. For more information visit: <https://www.thegrowingcenter.org/get-involved>

\*\*\*\*\*

Join **The Somerville Flea** this **Sunday** for their annual **Holiday Market**. Find two floors and over 30 vendors of vintage and artisan wonders. Shop local and keep it in the community. Find that perfect gift that you never even *Continued on page 22*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#900

1. On what day in 1913 did the Ford Motor Company introduce the first moving assembly line?

2. When is Rosa Parks Day?

3. When is Santa's List Day?

4. How many seconds does it takes for food to reach your stomach?

5. Which farmyard animal is the most intelligent?

6. When was the first email sent?

7. How many domino tiles are there in the

standard dominoes set?

8. Which company's slogan is "You're in good hands"?

9. Who won the first season of *American Idol*?

10. What is the national summer sport of Canada?

11. Paul Newman took an ad in a newspaper to discourage audiences from watching what movie on TV?

12. What does a dendrologist study?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The inventor of Pringles is buried in a Pringles can.

2. Sweat doesn't smell bad.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

MATH 101

- ACROSS
1. Loaded up

6. Tube in old TV

9. Pouches

13. Tequila source

14. Stick in water

15. Jig's French cousin

16. TV's "\_\_\_\_ Secretary"

17. Money in Myanmar

18. Photoshop maker

19. Result of multiplication

21. Whole number

23. Say 2+2 is 5, e.g.

24. Arctic floater

25. Dashboard acronym

28. Fountain serving

30. Spanky or Alfalfa

35. Short for "hurry up"

37. Live bait

39. Turn upside down

40. Cassette contents

41. Retire from military, for short

43. Jason's vessel

44. Sicker

46. "Sight for \_\_\_\_ eyes"

47. Puppy cry

48. Denver option, at a diner

50. Apartment

52. Green turtle's domain

53. Final

55. Personal trainer's place of employment

57. Venn \_\_\_\_

61. Point in 2.5

65. Barrel racing meet

66. Gobbled up

68. On the rocks (2 words)

69. Fields Medal to a mathematician, e.g.

70. Sports official, for short

71. 8 of something

72. Like Gulf Stream

73. Big bang maker

74. Required things

- DOWN
1. "I lift my \_\_\_\_ beside the golden door"

2. Petri dish gel

3. Carpenter's groove

4. Dodge, as in tax bill

5. Takes exception to

6. Native Egyptian, in Roman times

7. Line with one endpoint

8. Path in the woods

9. Left or right, e.g.

10. Awestruck

11. Three-dimensional figure with 6 square faces

12. Palm reader, e.g.

15. Cake with filling

20. Three people?

22. Neither here \_\_\_\_ there

24. Subcontract (2 words)

25. 1:2, e.g.

26. Sacred song

27. Canada's favorite tree?

29. "Nobody \_\_\_\_ It Better"

31. Fix a cat

32. First discovered asteroid

33. \*Measured in degrees

34. Parkinson's disease drug

36. Banana remnant

38. Between dawn and noon

42. Brown shade

45. Retread, past tense

49. Non-alcoholic brew

51. Rockefeller or Bezos

54. Like today's phone

56. Kind of pie

57. No-win situation

58. Wisconsin neighbor

59. Jewish month of Purim

60. Disease-causing organism

61. Clever

62. Indoor allergy cause

63. Crushed it, as in a test

64. "\_\_\_\_ Make a Deal"

67. X

59. "Peggy \_\_\_\_ Got Married"

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34. Parkinson's disease drug

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61. Clever

62. Indoor allergy cause

63. Crushed it, as in a test

64. "\_\_\_\_ Make a Deal"

67. X

59. "Peggy \_\_\_\_ Got Married"
- Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Soulution to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

# Somerville resident launches \$16K donation match challenge for 16 years of mentoring

Somerville resident Kristen Erikson was matched with her first mentee or "Little," Wild, in 2007. Then 23-years-old and seven-years-old respectively, the mentoring duo grew up together in many ways as they navigated the successes and challenges of family, school, friendships, and career together.

Despite now living 1,000 miles apart and her Little aging out of the program, Erikson remains a steadfast figure in Wild's life as she mentors her third Little through Big Brothers Big Sisters programming. To celebrate her 16 years of mentorship, Erikson is holding a donation challenge from December 16 through December 31 in which she will match up to \$16,000 in financial contributions to support BBB-SEM's year-round one-to-one youth mentoring programs.

"When I entered the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, I knew I would be helping to shape a child's life but what I didn't bargain for was how much my mentee would change mine," says Erikson. "As a mentor, you serve as a consistent presence and listening ear. You can expose children to things they may not otherwise see or experience, and they can expose you to things you might fly under your radar.

As a mentor, not only do you see your mentee blossom, but they remind you to not always take life so seriously, and they return your support in ways you can't anticipate. Today, my first mentee is a college graduate of my grad school alma mater. Now an adult, not only is she my friend, but she is also family."

This will be the first Thanksgiving Erikson and Wild haven't spent with each other in several years. Throughout the course of their mentoring relationship, they've attended movies, the ballet, and photo exhibits, they've tried different foods and restaurants, they filled out scholarship applications, and they've celebrat-



Big Sister Kristen Erikson with her "Little," Wild.

ed holidays and birthdays.

Following in her Big's footsteps, Wild even graduated college from Erikson's graduate school alma mater. Most importantly, however, they've stuck together through the good times and the challenging times, supporting each other every step of the way.

"One evening when I was having a challenging moment with my own family, I called Wild to tell her I wasn't up for hanging out; however, with my birthday just around the corner she insisted I come over," says Erikson. "Upon arrival, she gave me my gift, a song about all the things we'd done together as a match that she would not have been able to do without me in her life.

This heart-felt gift reminded me that you cannot change the family that you are born into, but you can create a new family through connecting with others. This song was to the tune of "Gangnam Style" showing my Little's flare for adding silliness to even the most touching moment. We have both gained so much from this experience together, showing the true power of mentorship."

After Wild aged out of the

program, Erikson has since been matched with two additional mentees. It has been six months since she was first introduced to her current Little, Joi'elle. The duo recently made chocolate chip cookies from scratch that were such a hit that her 11-year-old mentee proudly brought them to school the next day to share with her classmates. Erikson looks forward to introducing Wild to Joi'elle when she comes to visit next year.

"Not every match continues as long or as deep as Kristen and Wild, but many do," says BBBSEM President and CEO Mark O'Donnell, a former two-time Big Brother. "No matter how society shifts, children will always need guidance from caring adult mentors which is why we work to ensure our matches stay connected."

In its 75 years, the largest Big Brothers Big Sisters affiliate in New England has supported more than 25,000 youth. To donate to Erikson's fundraising challenge and support BBB-SEM's year-round one-to-one youth mentoring programs, visit: <https://support.emassbig.org/campaign/kristen-and-wilds-16-year-match>.

## The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #293

### Four Score and Two

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Eighty- two years ago, on December 7, 1941, America was suddenly launched into a two-front war with Japan and Germany that would change our country and the world forever.

Early on that Sunday morning, Japanese aircraft crippled Battleship Row at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. This was the eight-battleship pride of the American Navy's Pacific Fleet.



While over 350 warplanes were striking our Naval and Army installations, Japanese envoys were in Washington ostensibly engaging in peace talks. The riveting reality of this and the attack horrified our nation.



President Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed the event for evermore as a "Day of Infamy," while on December 8th the American Congress declared war on the Empire of Japan. On December 9th, Congress also declared war on Germany.

Suddenly, America had to retool from her peaceful pursuits into an all-out war industry. Businesses and factories turned to war production overnight. Like every city and town across the country, Somerville's war-time industry exploded. Workloads intensified to three shifts, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Working men and woman from all over New England and Northern New York came to aid in greater Boston's shipyards and factories. A roof over their head, a warm meal, a place to sleep between work shifts and victory was all they wanted.



Continued on page 18

## LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)

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

**THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.**  
INTERIM 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 19, 2023** 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 107 of the Acts of 2022, 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](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov).

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Registration URL:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_Y7lcyG6cQUmshk2mfwKfNA](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_Y7lcyG6cQUmshk2mfwKfNA)

Webinar ID: 846 0190 5121

**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****HP23-000060 – 56 Bow Street**

Applicant: Ashley Blum

Owner: Same as Applicant

The Applicant seeks to install an AC unit on the side of the property.

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](mailto: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](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) with inquiries.

11/29/23 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB #24-30**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, Invites Sealed Bids For:

**Printing and Mailing of Water Bills**

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, November 29th, 2023**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Tuesday, December 19th, 2023**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Sonia Castro [scastro@somervillema.gov](mailto:scastro@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Sonia Castro**  
Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3407

11/29/23 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 7, 2023**, at 6:00pm through GoToWebinar.

Pursuant to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available by using the registration link once the meeting has concluded.

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_MwblzEnpQcQ-Fjr3hlLrg](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_MwblzEnpQcQ-Fjr3hlLrg)  
Webinar ID: 857-269-499

**TO CALL IN**

Phone number: 1 (415) 930-5321  
Access code: 851 8488 4625

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

**2-4 Alpine Street** 2-4 Alpine Somerville, LLC proposes to develop a four (4)-story General building and establish a Household Living use in the Mid-Rise 4 zoning (MR4) district, which requires Site Plan Approval and one (1) Special Permit for the Household Living use.

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 mail to Planning & Zoning Division, 3rd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143; or by email to [planning@somervillema.gov](mailto:planning@somervillema.gov).

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP# 24-25**

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

**Citywide Electrification and Networked Geothermal Planning**

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Monday, November 27, 2023**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **3:00 pm, Thursday, December 14, 2023**.

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

Please email [jremy@somervillema.gov](mailto:jremy@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Jordan Remy**  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3400

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

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

**PROJECT:** 20 – 23 Cummings Street

**LOCATION:** 20 – 23 Cummings Street, Somerville, MA 02145

**PROPOSER:** Greystar Development East, LLC

The undersigned is submitting an Environmental Notification Form ("ENF") to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs on or before November 30th, 2023

This will initiate review of the above project pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act ("MEPA," M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62L). Copies of the ENF may be obtained from: Michael Karasik at [mkarasik@vnb.com](mailto:mkarasik@vnb.com) or 617.607.2936

Electronic copies of the ENF are also being sent to the Conservation Commission and Planning Boards of the City of Somerville, and a hard copy has been made available for public viewing at the Somerville Public Library.

The Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs will publish notice of the ENF in the MEPA Environmental Monitor, receive public comments on the project, and then decide if an Environmental Impact Report is required. A site visit and/or remote consultation session on the project may also be scheduled. All persons wishing to comment on the project, or to be notified of a site visit and/or remote consultation session, should email [MEPA@mass.gov](mailto:MEPA@mass.gov) or the MEPA analyst listed in the Environmental Monitor. Requests for language translation or other accommodations should be directed to the same email address. Mail correspondence should be directed to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900, Boston, Massachusetts 02114, Attention: MEPA Office, referencing the above project.

By: VHB

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

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

**Small Business Program Administrator**

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Monday, November 27, 2023**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Thursday, December 14, 2023**.

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

Please email [jremy@somervillema.gov](mailto:jremy@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Jordan Remy**  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3400

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**Notice of Self Storage Sale**

Please take notice Prime Storage - Somerville located at 39R Medford St., Somerville, MA 02143 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via [www.storagetreasures.com](http://www.storagetreasures.com) on **12/13/2023 at 12:00PM**. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Mariah Jordan unit #0171; Marki Lockery Gaffey unit #0791; Carl Esperance unit #318B; Cleston Jose Nunes/Orion Builders INC. unit #368MZ. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

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**[www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)**

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP# 24-07

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

Marketing for Somerville Businesses and Squares

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Monday, November 27, 2023**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Thursday, December 14, 2023**.

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

Please email [jremy@somervillema.gov](mailto:jremy@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Jordan Remy**  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3400

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
KATJANA BALLANTYNE  
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 7, 2023** at 6:30 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

REGISTER ONLINE

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_6eB-FjICR5mp2eAxyFebwA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6eB-FjICR5mp2eAxyFebwA)

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

- Councilor Pineda Neufeld proposes amending Section 7.2.7 of the Zoning Ordinances to add Shared Workspace & Arts Education to Table 7.2.7 Permitted Uses.
- Charles Zammuto requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 563-565 Broadway from Urban Residence (UR) to Mid-Rise 4 (MR4).

Zoning amendments may be viewed online by searching the Somerville City Council's [online meeting calendar](#) for the address or item number.

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. Persons unable to attend the hearing may provide comments by email to the Planning Board at [planning@somervillema.gov](mailto:planning@somervillema.gov) and the City Council at [publiccomments@somervillema.gov](mailto:publiccomments@somervillema.gov) no later than 12 Noon the day of the Hearing to ensure they are conveyed to the Committee.

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Bobbie Toner: 857-488-5138

Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

“We are living in a time when a truly alarming amount of hate is being directed at individuals and marginalized groups of people, including identity-based bigotry,” said the sponsor of S 1116 Sen. Becca Rausch (D-Needham). “That hatred can manifest as dangerous doxing, publishing someone’s personally identifying information without their consent and with malicious intent. [The bill] establishing a right to freedom from doxing, would explicitly declare doxing to be unlawful and provide recourse for doxing through either a private cause of action or civil suit filed by the attorney general.”

“My commitment to the well-being and safety of the commonwealth is one of my top priorities,” said Rep. Tram Nguyen (D-Andover), the sponsor of H 1707. “In an era where technology connects us, it’s important to provide protections against doxing so that no one lives in fear of harassment, stalking, or harm. This bill will advance our shared responsibility to establish a safer and more respectful digital community for all.”

“I believe that everyone has a fundamental right to privacy online, which is why I filed legislation to protect individuals against incidents of doxing,” said Sen. Barry Finegold (D-Andover), the sponsor of S 971. “Ensuring privacy for all residents within the commonwealth, especially those most vulnerable to this malicious action, continues to be one of my legislative priorities.”

**BAN PHISHING AND TRACKING (H 1573)** – The Judiciary Committee hearing also included legislation that would outlaw the practice of phishing, which involves using fraudulent e-mail solicitations in an attempt to obtain an individual’s personal information, including computer passwords, bank account and credit card numbers. The bill would establish the punishment for phishing as a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or up to a 2.5 year jail sentence.

“Phishing scams are evolving daily, morphing into more complex schemes intended to defraud a wide range of targets, from individual residents of the commonwealth to large financial service institutions,” said sponsor Rep. Brad Jones (R-North Reading). “As these phishing attempts become more sophisticated, it is imperative that we continue to modernize our laws to combat and prevent these types of scams to protect the public.”

The committee’s agenda also included a bill filed by Jones that would prohibit the use of motor vehicle tracking devices without the consent of the vehicle’s owner. The provisions of this bill would not apply to systems installed by the manufacturer of a motor vehicle, car rental businesses or insurance companies with the vehicle owner’s consent.

“Motor vehicle tracking devices provide a useful tool for law enforcement, parents and legal guardians of children who are minors, and business owners tracking company vehicles, and those uses would continue to be allowed

under this bill,” said Jones. “The real purpose of this bill is to promote public safety by preventing individuals from using these devices to engage in predatory activities such as stalking.”

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Through the creation of readiness plans on college campuses, we are ensuring that more people will have safe and effective options for reproductive health care. Schools can and should use this toolkit to evaluate and improve their capacity to provide sexual and reproductive health services. Every student in Massachusetts deserves thoughtful and comprehensive support when making decisions about their own health.” — Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll announcing the launch of the Medication Abortion Toolkit for Public Colleges and Universities. The toolkit is designed to assist Massachusetts’ public colleges and universities in preparing medication abortion readiness plans to provide, or make referrals for, medication abortion on college campuses in accordance with new Massachusetts law.

“Work authorization is key to helping new arrivals get jobs that will help them support their families, move out of emergency shelter into more stable housing options, and fill critical workforce needs across our economy. We’re proud that the first week of this clinic has proven to be such a success, with more than 1,000 people served.” — Gov. Maura Healey announcing that her administration assisted some 1,200 work-eligible migrants staying in emergency family shelters with obtaining work authorizations in the first week of its Work Authorization Legal Clinic in partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

“Quick Temp repeatedly denied their employees a prevailing wage and other benefits guaranteed to them by law. As we approach the holiday season, these issues of wage theft become even more pressing to resolve. My office will continue to hold accountable those who violate our wage and hour laws and do so in partnership with our unions and trades.” — Attorney General Andrea Campbell announcing a series of citations against Quick Temp., Inc., totaling \$1,392,665, in restitution and civil fines for violations including failure to pay a prevailing wage, failure to pay minimum wage, failure to pay overtime, non-payment of wages and failure to accrue earned sick leave.

“Gov. Healey and Statehouse politicians need to realize they cannot tax their way out of their spending problem. These high tax policies do nothing but make Massachusetts an unaffordable place to live, retire and do business in.” — Paul Craney, spokesman for the Mass Fiscal Alliance commenting on the Tax Foundation’s new report that ranks Massachusetts as in fifth in the most state and local tax collections per capita in each state as of fiscal year fiscal year 2021, the most recent year for which full state-by-state data are available.

Continued on page 17

# 27th Annual Gobble Gobble Road Race

Presented by the Somerville Road Runners, the 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 race details, visit <https://srr.org/gobble>.

Top ten finishers:

PLACE	NAME	TIME
1	Lowell Hensgen	19:33
2	Jonas Hampton	19:40
3	Jonathan Phillips	19:43
4	Brian Harvey	19:53
5	Matt Mixdorf	20:48
6	Ryan Irwin	21:03
7	Jack Ruske	21:18
8	Amelia Keyser-Gibson	21:23
9	John Jantz	21:33
10	Jorge Buendia	21:45





Photos by Bobbie Toner



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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

1. December 1

2. December 1

3. December 4

4. 4-6 seconds

5. Pigs

6. 1971

7. 28 tiles

8. Allstate

9. Kelly Clarkson

10. Lacrosse

11. The Silver Chalice

12. Trees and shrubs

# Mosaic panels designed by Somerville artist installed on the Charles River Greenway

The New England Mosaic Society (NEMS) collaborated with the staff of the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation to design and create three large panels (42" x 68") installed adjacent to the museum entrance on the Greenway.

The designs explore the positive and negative impacts of industrialization on the Charles River and the surrounding landscape over the last four centuries. The final project was a gift from NEMS to the museum and includes the work of over 100 sets of volunteer hands: skilled mosaic artisans, craftspeople, and community members.

The mosaics are installed on the walls of the Francis Cabot Lowell Mill where the museum is housed, a National Historic Landmark and the first fully-integrated textile mill in the world. The designs reflect historical research and conversation between NEMS and the Charles River Museum from 2022-2023. Thirty-five NEMS members from across New England crafted individual animals, trees, rocks, hills and building structures using their own materials, and mailed them to the project coordinator.

NEMS also organized three community tiling sessions during

which members of the public, from small children to elders, helped to tile the skies, the rivers and the fields with glass and ceramic tiles. In community centers, senior facilities, and the Charles River Museum, more than 100 people participated in the project.

NEMS volunteers then combined all of the individual components, grouted the sections, and cleaned the panels (for hours!) to make them shine.

The mosaics were installed on November 2 as a gift from the New England Mosaic Society to the Charles River Museum. The project was supported in part by the Waltham Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Somerville artist Emily Bhargava, who coordinated the project, explained, "Nothing makes me happier than using art to tell a story in a public place. As we grapple with climate change and consider how to be good stewards of the land, it's important to consider the local history that has played a part in bringing us to where we are today. Technology and innovation always come with a complex combination of risks and benefits.

The mosaics highlight the

beauty of the river while also raising questions about the role of technology in our lives and in our environment." She added, "It took a huge amount of coordination to turn these ideas into reality but seeing them on the wall of the Museum and knowing how many people will pass them each year makes it all worthwhile"

Jamie Tessler, a NEMS contributor and member of the project design team shared, "We know that the built environment influences the economic and ecological aspects of a community for centuries. The communities that surround the mill, along with the river health and landscape diversity efforts, are never static; they are always evolving.

We also hope that the beauty of these collaborative artworks help to make meaning of these intersections, and that community members continue to learn more about this unique landscape, draw inspiration from the industrial legacy, and further the ecological restoration we see today.

The design:

Panel #1 represents the pre-industrial period of the 1600s. The animals and plants in and around the river are native to New England, and local Native American



More than 100 participants volunteered to contribute to the creation of the new murals installed at the Charles River Greenway.

textile patterns are incorporated into the hills. The river is pristine.

Panel #2 portrays the height of the mill operation in the 1800's when industrialization had altered the environment, the health of the river, and the experience of workers and residents. The patterns in the hills change, and fields are woven by a mechanized loom. On the left you can see a cut-away of a mill that used the river's water to power its machinery. There are fewer plants and animals, and the river and sky are changed by industrial waste and pollution.

Panel #3 represents the current, post-industrial environment with both the detritus of

former pollution and habitat destruction, and the authentic efforts of sanitation and environmental conservation. Ecologists lobby for environmental cleanup. There is manufacturing debris in the hills (including parts from Waltham watches!), and invasive non-native species. You'll notice that the soil beneath the cabin is filled with sewage pipes and freshwater delivery systems, representing the built infrastructure that continues to serve us, with the canoe representing an upsurge in river recreation. Two protest signs symbolize strong public interest and political will funneled toward environmental stewardship of the river.



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.

The Police Staffing Study



By Chris Dwan

The Department of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ) [1] will present the Police Department Staffing and Operations Analysis [2] to the City Council this coming Thursday (November 30) at a “committee of the whole” of the Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters (CAPM) committee, chaired by Judy Pineda Neufeld.

The Curtatone and Ballantyne administrations have run this process at a belligerently slow pace and with a level of secrecy that makes any claims of urgency, or transparency (and thus accountability) laughable. As recently as this week, the law department claimed that the final staffing study is “not yet in the City’s possession,” nearly two years after the consultants were hired and with the City Council already scheduled to see it on Thursday.

It’s frustrating but typical. The Northampton Shoestring [3] recently published an article [4] calling out Somerville for “so far put[ting] the most effort into pushing back against The Shoestring’s public records requests, initially failing to even respond until The Shoestring appealed to the state.”

That certainly aligns with my experience.

While I am frustrated with both the lack of transparency and the lack of progress, I want to be clear: *I very much want RSJ to succeed.* I hope that RSJ will grow into an influential department that is able to live up to its stated goals of inclusion, equity, and justice. I am committed to that success and I will not be content merely to blame somebody for the failure.

That commitment is why I have chosen to go into substantial, perhaps excessive, detail about the history of this report below. It is also why I plan to make my way up Central Hill on Thursday evening to witness the next steps, though I am certain that they will be frustratingly cautious and incremental.

We owe it to ourselves to pay attention, to think deeply, and to try to understand the situation clearly as we make choices about police and policing in our city. Whether or not you choose to read the rest of this post (it’s a lot), I hope to see you at City Hall on Thursday and in the conversations to follow.

The Long Form

The journey to get to this report has been somewhere between one year (the last time we got an update), two years (when the consultants were hired), and three and a half years (when we started this chapter of our conversation about policing). Several important decisions have been waiting on the recommendations that are supposed to emerge on Thursday, including the long-term size and makeup of the police force, and whether / how to

1.2 Proposal Schedule

Key dates for this Request for Proposals:	
RFP Issued	12/09/21
Deadline for Submitting Questions to RFP	12/14/21 by 2PM EST
Proposals Due	12/23/21 by 2PM EST
Anticipated Contract Award	01/06/22
Est. Contract Commencement Date	01/15/22
Est. Project Start Date	01/15/22
Est. Project End Date	5/22/2022
Est. Contract Completion Date	08/31/22

<b>Responses must be delivered by 12/23/21 by 2PM EST to:</b>	City of Somerville Procurement & Contracting Services Attn: Andrea Caruth 93 Highland Avenue Somerville, MA 02143
---	---

create a layer of civilian oversight on the department.

CAPM is an interesting choice to host this presentation. Given the history and subject matter, it would have been appropriate to discuss this in Finance (chaired by Jake Wilson), Public Health and Public Safety (Charlotte Kelly), Legislative Matters (Lance Davis), or even Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families, and Vulnerable Populations (Beatriz Gomez Mouakad).

One reason to send it to CAPM is Councilor Gomez Mouakad’s request in October of 2022: “That the Director of Racial and Social Justice provide an update on the Police Staffing Report,” [5] which has been waiting for a response in that committee for nearly a year.

Mouakad’s item was last discussed on December 1, 2022. The minutes report that: “Liaison Carrillo said that RSJ had provided the consultant with the last piece of data needed for analysis,

and they are now waiting for the results of analysis. The Administration is hoping to have that work finished by winter of 2023, which will generate a final report to guide the community engagement process. Councilor Kelly commented that the Administration said at the beginning of 2022 that the staffing study would be done in May and it has been pushed back multiple times, and asked what is the ongoing cause of delay. Ms. Carrillo said that she would get an answer.”

So far as I know, we never received that answer and the community engagement is already well underway.

That’s the one year story. We’ve been waiting a year for an update. How about the two years we’ve been waiting for work product from the consultants?

A year before Councilor Gomez Mouakad’s request, in October of 2021, Councilors Scott and Ewen-Campen asked for an “update [to] this Council on the status of the Police Staffing Study which was included in the FY2022 budget and estimated to take 2–4 months.” [6] Two months after that request, just weeks before Mayor Curtatone left office, the city issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) on December 9, 2021. Proposals were due two weeks later, the an-

ticipated contract award date was Jan 15, 2022, and the project was slated to end on May 22, 2022.

That schedule was always wildly optimistic and everybody has to have known it.

A press release [7] on March 8 of 2022 announced that we had hired Raftelis Financial Consultants [8] (just two months behind schedule). Mayor Ballantyne’s triumphant report on her first 100 days in office [9] featured the hiring again just a week later.

After that, the updates stop cold. Those two press releases are still the only results when I search for “Raftelis” on the city’s main web page.

Our auditing department’s “open checkbook” [10] shows that Somerville has written five checks to Raftelis for a total of \$48,500 — with the last payment no later than June of this year, so they got paid for something, it’s just not clear what.

The five payments made to Raftelis between July 2021 and June 2023 total \$48,500

It’s hard to avoid the impression of a slow-roll.

The 2021 request by Councilors Scott and Ewen-Campen sparked healthy discussion at three separate meetings of the Finance

RAFTELIS FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS INC		\$19,675.00
7356	RAFTELIS FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS INC	\$7,450.00
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RAFTELIS FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS INC		\$28,825.00
7913	RAFTELIS FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS INC	\$7,862.50
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The five payments made to Raftelis between July 2021 and June 2023 total \$48,500.

Continued on page 17

The Police Staffing Study

CONT. FROM PG 16

committee until Chair Wilson shut it down, marking the item as “work complete” – presumably on the basis that the consultant had been hired and thus the status update provided.

That’s the two year story. Two years, \$48,500, and (according to legal) no report final enough to be responsive to a records request. For me, though, the proper context for this report stretches back three and a half years, to June of 2020.

It was the first year of COVID and the video of George Floyd’s murder on May 25 had sparked national outrage. The agenda for the council meeting on June 11, their sixth fully remote session, included not less than 18 items related to policing. Nine Councilors, including then Councilor Ballantyne, sponsored a resolution calling on the Council to “create a Police Commission and a Community Police Review Agency.” Notably, the resolution didn’t request action by the Mayor, but rather the Council itself. The council could still choose to act unilaterally. I hope that they do if the administration continues this secretive foot dragging.

The Council also approved a resolution that evening “supporting the Just Us Somerville organization of local residents of color and consider[ing] their demands regarding policing,” and received a petition signed by an unprecedented 3,000 residents on the topic of “redistributing police funding.”

The resolution demanding a Police Commission and Review Agency was discussed at seven separate Legislative Matters meetings over the next year. The minutes track our community grappling with how to even talk about the crisis. It’s a good read, and also a bit of a harrowing history of those troubled times.

Chair Davis eventually laid the resolution, to create a police commission and oversight body, on the table in May 2021. He did not mark it “work complete,” so it remains in Legislative Matters. The minutes from the final discussion say: “*Councilors Ewen-Campen and Scott met with the City Council’s Policy Analyst, Community Outreach Coordinator and the Director of Racial and Social Justice to begin*



A Black Lives Matter shirt on the Make Way For Ducklings sculpture in the Public Gardens in June, 2020.

- discussions on how to move this matter forward.”
- Thursday’s big reveal might be thought of as a next step in that conversation, just two and a half years later.
- For all that, as I said up top: I remain a committed optimist, at least over the long term. I hope that we can use whatever we learn on Thursday to advance our shared goal of making Somerville safer, more equitable, and more just for all.
- Links:**
- [1] <https://www.somervillema.gov/rsj>
- [2] <https://somervillema.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6420951&GUID=3AF9867E-FD83-47C3-AC6B-220004DDE389&Options=&Search=>
- [3] <https://theshoestring.org/>
- [4] <https://theshoestring.org/2023/11/14/police-state-wide-are-keeping-their-weapons-inventories-secret/>
- [5] <https://somervillema.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5896923&GUID=6E3A8908-1FA1-4F30-B8F4-52B3BDA63A1C&Options=&Search=>
- [6] [https://somervillemacityma.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail\\_LegislativeFile.aspx?ID=27507](https://somervillemacityma.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegislativeFile.aspx?ID=27507)
- [7] <https://www.somervillema.gov/news/somervilles-racial-and-social-justice-department-launches-police-staffing-and-operations>
- [8] <https://www.raftelis.com/>
- [9] <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/mayor-katjana-ballantyne-first-100-day-agenda-somerville-progress-all>
- [10] <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/>

Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 11

<b>HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK’S SESSION?</b>			
<i>Beacon Hill Roll Call</i> tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature’s job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legisla-		tion that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions. During the week of November 20-24, the House and Senate both met for a total of 30 minutes each.	
	Mon. Nov. 20	House 11:01 a.m. to 11:24 a.m. Senate 11:05 a.m. to 11:25 a.m.	Wed. Mon. 22 House 11:00 a.m. to 11:07 a.m. Senate 11:15 a.m. to 11:25 a.m.
	Tues. Nov. 21	No House session No Senate session	Thurs. Nov. 23 No House session No Senate session
			Fri. Nov. 24 No House session No Senate session
			<i>Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com</i>

Tufts University Department of Music Presents 'Klenèngan Manasuka'

The Tufts University Department of Music presents “Klenèngan Manasuka” in the Fisher Performance Room at the Granoff Music Center on Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 7:00 pm. Gamelan Laras Tentrem and the Tufts gamelan ensemble, Rinengga Sih Tentrem, present an evening of Javanese gamelan with special guest artists I.M. Harjito and Heni Savitri. Barry Drummond, director. This event will be livestreamed at [go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream](https://go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream)

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts’ Medford/Somerville campus.

For more information, please visit [go.tufts.edu/musiccevents](https://go.tufts.edu/musiccevents) or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.



## SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS:

**Upcoming events:****Open Enrollment runs to December 7th.**

Medicare recipients can change their health insurance plans for January 1, 2024. While having the freedom to change your health insurance plan can save you money, there are many health insurance plans and companies to choose from. You don't have to make the decision alone, the Somerville Council on Aging has SHINE Counseling available in person, over the phone, or on Zoom to assist you with comparing what health insurance options are available for you. You can call Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 or Molly Pagliuca at ext. 2318 to book an appointment.

**COA Holiday Luncheon** – Thursday, December 14th – 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Dilboy Post located at 351 Summer Street. \$10 per person. Please reserve your spot by calling Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

**Joel Light & Dan Moore-Cultural Series Event** – Thursday, November 30th starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Holland Street Center. Seasonal Holiday songs, Broadway tunes and familiar singalongs performed by Joel Light and Dan More with live piano music. Lunch and performance is brought to you at no cost by the Somerville Cambridge Elder Services Multicultural Meal Program, a City of Somerville, ARPA funded program. Please reserve your spot by calling Debby Higgins at 617-615-6600, ext. 2321.

**Multicultural Meals Program** – Congratulations to Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) who was the recent recipient of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding from the City of Somerville. SCES will use this funding to provide free, hot, lunches to Somerville's older adults at both the Holland Street Center and the Ralph and Jenny Senior Centers through June of 2024. Multicultural lunches will be catered by Somerville businesses and will be served at noon, following BINGO or Special Programming.

**Thursday, November 30th** - Holland Street Center: Italian - Alfredo's Italian Kitchen.

All are welcome! Registration is required as space is limited. Please call Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321. Grab and Go lunches are still available.

**Game Hour** – Mondays from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center. Please join us as we play a wide variety of board and card games. RSVP to Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 or email Maureen at mbastardi@somervillema.gov.

**Coffee & Conversation** – Mondays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Ralph & Jenny Center. Join us as we discuss a range of topics. No books – no test – just friendly conversation. Please contact Maureen Bastardi at mabastardi@Somervillema.gov or 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 to RSVP.

**Bowling** - Flatbread Company/Sacco Bowl Haven in Davis Square. Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. – Free - RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov

**General Exercise Classes at the Holland Street Center** – Every Monday at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Every Wednesday at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. RSVP by calling Michelle Deutsch 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov.

**Virtual Exercise, Strength and Balance**— Mondays with John at 1:00 p.m. Instructor, John Pecchia, will be leading a class geared towards gaining strength and stability through balance exercises. Please email John Pecchia at jrpecchia@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

**Virtual Yoga** – Every Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. Please email Michelle Deutsch at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov for the Zoom link.

**Virtual LGBTQIA+ Exercise Class** – Thursdays, November 2nd, 16th & 30th at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. November 9th in person. RSVP by calling Michelle Deutsch 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov for Zoom link.

**Walking Club** – Every Thursday, November 30th at 9:00 a.m. Meets at the Holland Street Center. Weather permitting. RSVP by calling Michelle Deutsch 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov

**Friendly Caller Program** - Looking for a way to practice social distancing but remain connected to other people? Look no further than the Somerville Council on Aging's Friendly Phone Caller program. We have many wonderful volunteers who are waiting to give you

a call. Whether you are looking to make a new friend or would just like a friendly chat to look forward to every week, this program has you covered. Call Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 to learn more about the program and to sign up.

**SOCIAL MEDIA****Stay connected via our Facebook page -**

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

**Follow the Somerville Council on Aging on Instagram** – You can find us under the Instagram handle: somervillecouncilonaging If you have any questions or need help following us, contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or email at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**JOIN OUR MAILING LIST**

If you would like to receive a virtual copy of our monthly newsletter, please contact Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 or email Maureen Bastardi at mbastardi@somervillema.gov. If you would like to become part of our Google Group, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**The Council on Aging's Senior Transportation Program**

The COA is offering free taxi rides to Somerville residents over the age of 60. Rides are available to go to the grocery store, farmer's market, and pharmacy in Somerville and routine medical appointments in the surrounding communities. To best accommodate the needs of everyone in the city and to maximize the use of our funding, we will be capping the number of rides per week. To ensure the health and welfare of every resident of Somerville, exemptions will be made for chemotherapy and radiation appointments. To find out more information or to schedule your ride, please call Connie Lorenti at 617-625-6600 ext. 2319. All rides must be booked two business days in advance. This program is funded through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funding.

**Historical Fact** CONT. FROM PG 9

Somerville housed its share. In some of our homes, brass hammock hooks still adorn many of their hallways and large closets. Exhausting times were experienced and rationing

sacrifices were made by all. In 1942, the city was too preoccupied in the war effort to celebrate its own 100th birthday. Somerville's factories, foundries, and mills were gearing

up to produce universal tanks, glider airplanes and army trench helmets for example. In 1943 her own mayor, the Honorable John M. Lynch, resigned to join the service to become a

Naval officer.

Pearl Harbor Day is memorialized not only in Hawaii but across the globe with white crosses arranged row on row in military cemeteries. It was because of

the Pearl Harbor treachery that our nation's greatest and now fading generation dug in and saved America and the world. It is a day that will remain in infamy. God bless them!



# Somerville Public School students learn about a musician each month



Kennedy grade 2 students learning about Bobby McFerrin in Ms. Ward’s music class. — Photo by Catherine Ward

Each month, Somerville Public School students learn about a Musician of the Month. Music teachers across the district collaborate to select the musicians for the year, choosing musicians who are musical role models for students of all cultural, ethnic, and gender identities. The goal is to inspire all students to be life-long, active music makers. You can read more about Musician of the Month here: <https://musicianofthemonthproject.com/>

November’s Musician of the Month is Bobby McFerrin, a singer/songwriter known for his vocal techniques and improvisation. You can listen to Bobby McFerrin using this playlist. Revisit the playlist as it is updated throughout the year to include each new musician of the month for the 2023–2024 school year.

# Somerville through the eyes of Denise



4:30 p.m., and the sun prepares to set... — Photo by Denise Provost

**BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER**  
By Bobbygeorge Potaris

Why did the computer catch cold?  
It left a window open.

## On This Day in History

### November 29

1760 – Major Roger Rogers takes possession of Detroit on behalf of Britain.

1812 – The last elements of Napoleon Bonaparte’s Grand Armee retreats across the Beresina River in Russia.

1903 – An Inquiry into the U.S. Postal Service demonstrates the government has lost millions in fraud.

1929 – Commander Richard Byrd makes the first flight over the South Pole.

1948 – The popular children’s television show, *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*, premieres.

1949 – The United States announces it will conduct atomic tests at Eniwetok Atoll in the Pacific.

1961 – NASA launches a chimpanzee named Enos into Earth orbit.

1963 – President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints Chief Justice Earl Warren head of a commission to investigate the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

1972 – Atari announces the release of Pong, the first commercially successful video game.

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

knew existed. **Sunday, December 3** and **17, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Kick off the holiday season with the **City of Somerville on Thursday, December 7, at 5:00 p.m. at the Holiday Lighting on the City Hall Concourse.** Enjoy live entertainment, a meet-and-greet with **Santa Claus** in the **Somerville High School Cafeteria**, and light refreshments. All children who attend will receive a special gift from Santa. Santa Claus will be escorted by the **Somerville Fire and Police Departments** making his grand entrance atop a shiny red fire truck.

\*\*\*\*\*

Join the **City of Somerville on Sunday, December 10**, for a ceremonial **Menorah Lighting** event on the **City Hall Concourse** (93 Highland Ave.) beginning at 5:00 p.m. A program of traditional songs and sing-alongs will be performed, special gifts will be available for children, and light refreshments will be served. The Menorah will be lit each night of Hanukkah.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Public Library** will host **Asian Art Series: When the Tiger Smoked a Pipe: The Art of Korea** on **Sunday, December 10, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.** on Zoom. Spend your Sunday afternoon learning about the arts of Asia from experts at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. Each session will focus on a unique topic from this vast, diverse, and ever evolving continent. Korean stories of long ago begin “When the tiger smoked a pipe...” Explore the varied and fascinating art that Koreans have produced for thousands of years. Renowned throughout Asia for their ceramics and textiles, Korea also has created, adapted, and refined a broad spectrum of art forms. Today Korea is one of the leaders in contemporary art production. To register visit [www.somervillepubliclibrary.org](http://www.somervillepubliclibrary.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Fuel Assistance Program**, also known as the **Home Energy Assistance Program**, helps low-income households pay their winter heating bills **between November 1 and April 30**. Renters and homeowners in Somerville are eligible to apply if they meet federal income guidelines. Learn more at [somervillema.gov/heatingassistance](http://somervillema.gov/heatingassistance).

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Museum** is hiring. Are you interested in history? Do you like planning community events and working with volunteers? This might be the role for you. They have recently received funding for a new position, **Historic Events Manager**. Check out their website for more information: <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/historic-events-manager>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tickets on sale now for **Urban Waggle** on **Thursday, November 30, 6:00 p.m.**, at **Arts at the Armory**. Urban Waggle is a live storytelling event in support of the mission and programs at the **Urban Bee Lab**, a registered non-profit organization. They choose to amplify voices from the Greater Boston area that may not otherwise be heard. Audience members will leave feeling inspired, entertained, and more connected to one another through the uniquely human art of storytelling. More info here: <https://urbanbeelab.org/urbanwaggle>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Is your **teen** looking to make some **extra money**? The city's **Snow Shoveling Program** is hiring youth to assist shoveling seniors and homeowners with disabilities out after snowstorms this winter. 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 welcome to apply. Learn more and apply at [somervillema.gov/shoveling](http://somervillema.gov/shoveling). Looking for snow shoveling services? Contact **Debby Higgins** at [dhiggins@somervillema.gov](mailto:dhiggins@somervillema.gov).

\*\*\*\*\*

Last month the **Somerville Council on Aging** launched a **community survey** in partnership with **UMASS Boston** to better understand **the needs of Somerville residents age 60+** to improve programs and services provided. The survey is now open until **Friday, December 1**. Take the survey online, over the phone, or print and submit a paper copy. Learn more at [somervillema.gov/coa](http://somervillema.gov/coa).

\*\*\*\*\*

On **December 5**, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m., the **Central Library** will host a **DIY Holiday Gifts crafting session** for kids, tweens, and teens. Bring your family to decorate mason jars and make your own handcrafted gift for a loved one.

\*\*\*\*\*

Take steps to **protect yourself and loved**

**ones** against **COVID-19**. Somerville's **Health and Human Services Department** is hosting a series of **COVID-19 booster (Moderna) vaccine clinics** in **November and throughout December** at locations across the city. Vaccines are available for community members age 6 months and older. Register for a vaccine clinic at [somerville-ma.gov/vaccines](http://somerville-ma.gov/vaccines).

\*\*\*\*\*

Experience the bursts of colorful hues in the **Somerville Arts Council's** latest exhibit, **Art in Bloom: Works by Alison Drasner**, at the **Inside-Out Gallery** in the CVS window in Davis Square. As a designer and painter to stalwart community member, Alison Drasner is an active participant in the local cultural art scene in Somerville. To learn more about Alison go to [somervilleartscouncil.org/insideout/drasner](http://somervilleartscouncil.org/insideout/drasner).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Open Enrollment** began on October 15 and **runs to December 7**. Medicare recipients can change their **health insurance plans for January 1, 2024**. While having the freedom to change your health insurance plan can save you money, there are many health insurance plans and companies to choose from. You don't have to make the decision alone, the **Somerville Council on Aging** has **SHINE Counseling** available in person, over the phone, or on Zoom to assist you with comparing what health insurance options are available for you. You can call **Natasha Naim** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 or **Molly Pagliuca** at ext. 2318 to book an appointment.

\*\*\*\*\*

**East Somerville Main Streets' Cozy Holiday Market** invites you to savor a warm drink while exploring a variety of artisans, materials, and charming supplies to prepare for the winter ahead. Gather with friends, family, and even bring your pets to relish in the cozy atmosphere. Unearth that festive, ugly sweater from the back of your closet and capture memorable moments with Santa. Embrace the joy of the season and have fun at our cozy market. **Friday, December 8, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m., 15 Garfield Ave., Somerville.**

\*\*\*\*\*

In preparation for the cold months ahead, the **Somerville Homeless Coalition** is in urgent need of **winter clothing and apparel** to keep their clients warm and safe. Donations of socks, hats, jackets, hand warmers, sweatpants, and more will go a long way towards keeping the

most vulnerable clients protected against the unpredictable New England weather. All donations can be dropped off at their **Engagement Center** located at 1 Davis Square, Somerville **between Monday and Friday** from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., closed each day from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. for lunch. Help keep our neighbors safe this winter.

\*\*\*\*\*

Call for new **Nibble** culinary entrepreneurs for **Winter 2024 workshop series**. Application deadline: **December 18**. For more information and to fill out an application, go to: <https://nibblesomerville.com/culinary-entrepreneurship>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Help keep our waterways clean in your neighborhood by joining **Somerville's Adopt-a-Drain program**. A storm drain clear of leaves, trash or other debris allows water to flow into the catch basin sump and can prevent flooding. When you adopt a drain (or drains), you commit to caring for a local storm drain of your choice by checking on it before and after heavy rain, wind, or snow. Bonus perk: you can also give it a name. Claim your drain at [somerville.mysticdrains.org](http://somerville.mysticdrains.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Somerville Public Schools Winter Sports registration** is now open for both middle grades and high school athletes. Learn more and register for middle grades sports: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/mgathletics>. Learn more and register for high school sports: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/teams>.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Center for the Arts at the Armory** offers a **weekly winter market** with 71+ local food vendors with the best locally grown and regionally produced foods, including fresh produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, tamales, pastries, chocolate, skincare products, and more. The market accepts SNAP/EBT and HIP benefits. They also offer a \$15 SNAP match to customers each week. Visit the **Somerville Winter Farmers Market** on **Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., 191 Highland Ave. Through April 6**, except 12/30. For a list of weekly events visit [www.som-wintermarket.org](http://www.som-wintermarket.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

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# OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## 'The Last Day' by Krikor Hohannesian

*The Last Day*  
by Krikor Hohannesian  
Cervena Barva Press, 2023

—Review by Lee Varon

Der Hohannesian's latest book, published by Cervena Barva Press, is a tribute to the human spirit.

Many of the poems in this moving collection refer to the Armenian genocide. The poet reminds us, "the 'Armenian Question,' is more than a question. Der Hohannesian, himself an Armenian American, calls it what it is – "hatred's euphemism." The poet makes it clear that those who suffered through this terrible time are still with us: "it is their blood/ that courses the deltas of our veins," and "...blood carries memories downstream."

These memories sometimes come quite close to home, as when, "They killed a Turkish consul in Union Square." These dark memories are always with the poet. Even years from the initial massacres, when the perpetrators are hunted down all over the world – Vienna, Paris, Somerville – the poet admits he feels "a frisson/ of satisfaction, an ephemeral vengeance."

I often write about dark subjects and I always wonder if such subjects will invariably depress the reader. Der Hohannesian offers insight into this question.

In these meticulously crafted poems full of gorgeous imagery, this gifted poet brings us a book that speaks to our shared humanity and offers a way to deal with darkness through the transcendent beauty of art itself.

Many of the poems in the collection are about loss and death – whether of the poet's family members as in *Saying Goodbye* a moving poem about the death of the poet's father: "He, the artist, who graced me/ with a love of the aesthetic. Whatever/ his failings, this was no small thing."

Or a small animal's life suddenly cut off by a bird of prey: "Of a sudden serrated wings slice/ the night air on a glide path, / a graceful swoop toward dawn's promise/ some creature, unwitting, living its last night."

There is the slower, unrelenting loss caused by illness as in *Shrinkage* which speaks of a friend brought low by Parkinson's disease. And there is sudden loss as in *The Day Approaching*, which describes a friend's sudden terminal prognosis: "As sudden as a summer squall/ the prognosis eclipses the sun, / a cloud of surety/ that your days/ will never again be the same. // "Of a sudden, life is rudely finite..."

Even the demise of those he barely knows, touch the poet deeply – a workman who suddenly falls to



his death while sandblasting brick on a church: "I stare up, watch the swallows and wrens." We feel the suddenness of this event in such lyrical lines as: "the bells toll three, the birds/ whoosh off the plangent peal."

In the face of sickness, old age, and death, the poet's wry humor perseveres. In *Small Deaths* he writes, "...I watch the insults/ pile up and give them names, / like 'Arthur' for arthritis, 'Nolan' / for no language as I search/ for a lost word, 'Stenny' for stenosis/ when my legs don't work quite right. / All this we might call aging, / these losses one by one, / or we might call them small deaths."

Still, despite these losses the poet, imagining next year's crocuses, vows "I shall dig holes for plantings nonetheless."

In the final poem, *To the Author of My Epitaph*, I feel as if the poet speaks directly to us asking the question, we all grapple with: "How long does the spirit linger/ like dust motes dancing/in cones of sunlight/ before it is all forgotten?"

Although these ultimate questions remain, we are fortunate that we have poets like Der Hohannesian to illuminate us as we navigate life's mysteries.

Lee Varon is a social worker and writer. Her children's book: "My Brother is Not a Monster: A Story of Addiction and Recovery" was published in 2021. She is co-editor of "Spare Change News Poems: An Anthology by Homeless People and Those Touched by Homelessness."

# Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Laurie Kuntz's books are: *That Infinite Roar*, Gyroscope Press, *Talking Me Off The Roof*, Kelsay Books, *The Moon Over My Mother's House*, Finishing Line Press, *Simple Gestures*, Texas Review Press, *Women at the Onsen*, Blue Light Press, and *Somewhere in the Telling*, Melan Press. *Simple Gestures*, won Texas Review's Chapbook Contest, and *Women at the Onsen* won Blue Light Press's Chapbook Contest. She's been nominated for three Pushcart Prizes and two Best of the Net Prizes. Her work has been published in *Gyroscope Review*, *Roanoke Review*, *Third Wednesday*, *One Art*, *Sheila Na Gig*, and other journals. More at: <https://lauriekuntz.myportfolio.com/home-1>



### Shelter in Place

The air is rife with sirens  
and an entire city  
is told to shelter in place  
a place called home,  
which unravels in all of its definitions.

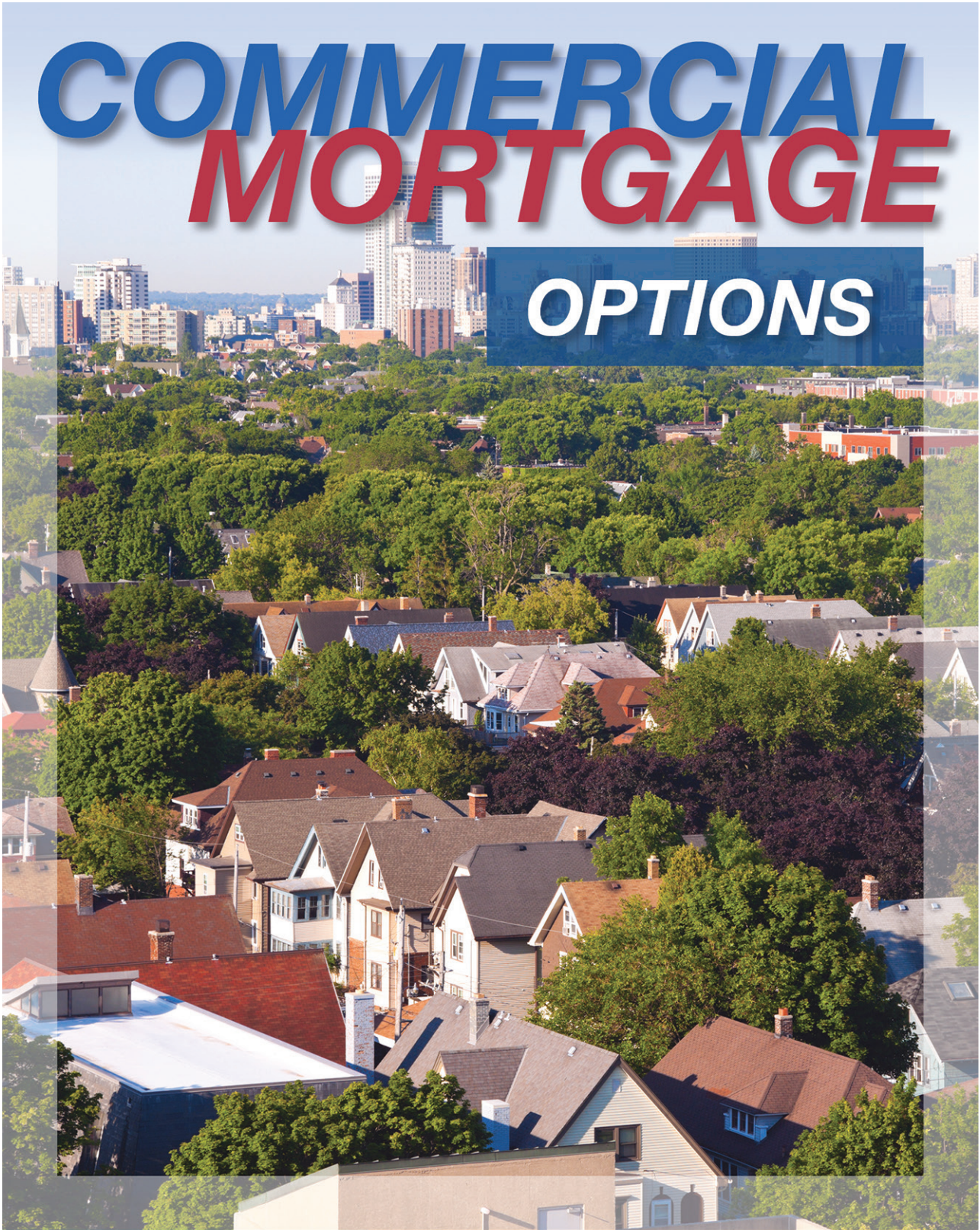
Harbor, haven, sanctum,  
lose meaning as one looks for safety,  
which is buried with hope  
for any kind of humanity,  
which has left the building  
along with those garnered wishes  
to find ourselves tracing a map,  
which avoids those rugged routes  
that lead to madness and violence.

We can only sketch the way  
toward a mother's loving cry  
directions home to a simple hug—  
that kind of shelter.

— Laurie Kuntz

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