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## Wilson Transition Committee details process, progress, and next steps



Mayor Wilson and his transition team are currently mapping out the future plans of the administration  
— Photo by Bobbie Toner

The Transition Committee for Mayor Jake Wilson outlined the process and early successes of its work since November, highlighting a broad community engagement effort, 18 policy subcommittees, and an ongoing synthesis that will culminate in a public report in early March. At that time, the Transition Committee will also publish the policy committees' work online to provide a transparent view of deliberations and recommendations.

To maintain clarity and trust with the public, the Transition Committee emphasized that the forthcoming compilation of committee materials represents the views of the committee members, not the Wilson Administration. The Transition Committee is separately preparing its own summary and will use the committee materials, combined with extensive community input, to help

*Continued on page 4*

## 'Many Paths' at Brickbottom Gallery

Brickbottom Gallery will open its doors to the artist members of Fountain Street Gallery. In "Many Paths," an exhibition of painting, photography, and mixed media, sixteen artists introduce their work to the Brickbottom Gallery community. The partnership of two community-based arts organizations (Brickbottom Gallery and Fountain Street) unites artists and audiences, encouraging everyone involved to broaden their perspectives.

On view: January 23 – February 22.

Opening reception: Saturday, January 24, 1 – 3 p.m.

Artists were encouraged to present artwork that reflects their personal journey, shaped by their unique perspectives and lived experiences. The exhibition celebrates each artist's creative journey as the source of their art, and aims to highlight the finest examples of current work while fostering meaningful dialogue among the collective efforts.

Curated by Vicki McKenna.



The "Many Paths" exhibit opens to the public on Friday, January 23, at Brickbottom Gallery.



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

**Holly Simione**, recently a candidate for City Council At Large, is said to be “seriously considering” a campaign for **State Representative** to replace **Christine Barber**, who is giving up her seat to run for retiring **Senator Patricia Jehlen**. Simione brings more than 30 years of experience in healthcare systems, disability rights, public finance, and policy implementation. Former Chair of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council has been fielding calls from friends and supporters urging her to run for the seat. She expects to make a formal announcement soon.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Arts Council** invites the public to celebrate its **2025 Artists of the Month**. Meet the artists, learn about their work, and celebrate creativity in Somerville. Join them on **January 21**, 6:30 p.m. at **Connexion** (149 Broadway). Light refreshments served. And be sure to nominate your favorite Somerville artist, info at: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/aotm/>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Happy birthday this week to the following: A big happy birthday to our own **Dorothy DiMarzo**, who gives us all those delicious recipes every other week in our paper. We wish her the very best of birthdays this week. Another local who is celebrating this week is **Maria Nella Nunes**. We wish her the very best. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Bob Crowley LeBlanc**, **Evelyn Moreno Moreno**, **Roy Moulton**, **Linda LoPresti**, **Eddie Hardy**, **James Casazza**, and **Kai Su**, a very happy birthday. *Continued on page 7*

## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of January 21 – January 27 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
<b>Wednesday</b> January 21	Cloudy	28°/27°	4%	2%	SW 10 mph
<b>Thursday</b> January 22	Partly Cloudy	46°/25°	17%	12%	WSW 14 mph
<b>Friday</b> January 23	Partly Cloudy	32°/4°	3%	1%	W 14 mph
<b>Saturday</b> January 24	Sunny	13°/2°	1%	1%	NW 12 mph
<b>Sunday</b> January 25	Rain	15°/11°	52%	43%	N 10 mph
<b>Monday</b> January 26	Cloudy	20°/10°	23%	16%	NW 12 mph
<b>Tuesday</b> January 27	Partly Cloudy	27°/10°	15%	9%	SW 13 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: *New Somerville public health vending machines attract steady use*

**Snow** says:

I'm glad Somerville is demonstrating that we care about the needs of the most vulnerable – even at a time when the national government is showing they actively hate those who are 'other'.

**Robin** says:

This is why I'm proud to live in Somerville!!

*Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments*

## The Somerville Times

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## Somerville Police issue overdose warning

SPD is investigating five overdoses that occurred over the weekend, with three being fatal. This spike in overdoses could indicate the presence of a “bad batch” being distributed locally.

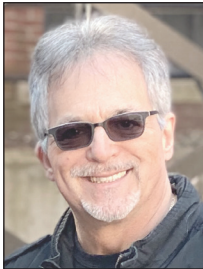
### Please remember to take precautions:

- + Call 911 immediately if you suspect an overdose.
- + Access free fentanyl test strip kits and Narcan available at Somerville Public Libraries ([somer-villepubliclibrary.org](http://somer-villepubliclibrary.org)) and also from 24/7 health vending machines located outside the West Branch Library (40 College Ave) and Project Soup (165 Broadway).
- + Find local recovery services and supports by visiting Somerville Hub at [somervillehub.org](http://somervillehub.org) (search on Recovery).

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

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

# The ski trip



The story of our ski trip is one of my favorite memories of my time at Somerville high school. The following story takes place in 1970 when I was a junior.

With army surplus duffel bags bulging with Budweiser and Ripple wine, me and two friends snuck aboard the bus heading for a Somerville high school ski trip in New Hampshire. We were caught by the teachers and thrown off the bus. My buddies Richard and Linda and me started to hitch hike.

In no time we were on the side of the north bound lane of route 93. Considering me and Richie had very long hair and all three of us dressed like the hippies that we were, it was surprising that we got rides. But we did get rides and one guy even treated us to a pizza at a restaurant near the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border. We finished our snacks and headed back out to the highway and stuck our thumbs out again on

our merry way.

We knew that on Monday we would get in trouble with the teachers that took us off the bus but we were determined to have a good time in ski country. We were excited about being there but we had no intentions of skiing. We made it up there and managed to book a hotel room where we put all our stuff. We stopped to have a couple of cocktails. I remember breaking open a box of Cheez-Its while we planned our next move. We were anxious to continue our adventures in North Conway, New Hampshire.

If my memory serves me correctly the hotel was the Iron Mountain Lodge or something that sounds a lot like that. We were enjoying our New Hampshire adventure as we waited for our friends in the ski club to arrive. We couldn't believe that we made it there hitch hiking before the bus.

We were the epitome of hippies. Long hair and bell bottoms. We weren't really the ski club type. We were members of a student group called the Committee of Concerned Students or the CCS. We even had an underground newspaper called the



Inside Agitator. We were the ones who organized the walkouts for the dress code and the no heat demonstration. I can't forget the look on the teacher advisors face when he caught the three of us hiding in the back of the bus.

It was now about 9:00 p.m. We had settled into our lavish hotel room. It was a small room with one double bed. After exploring the hotel grounds, we sat on the steps. We were there for about half an hour

before we saw the ski club bus pulling up. The teacher advisors got off the bus first. When they saw that the very same three kids that were thrown off the bus about three hours earlier, forming a welcoming committee, their jaws dropped. They were flabbergasted.

One of my favorite high school memories is the day we beat the bus to the ski trip. A priceless memory of the good old days.

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## Kennedy School No. 1 at Boston Debate League



For the second time in a row, the Kennedy Middle School Debate Team was the top school at the Boston Debate League Tournament. These results are a testament to the hard work put forth by debaters and Coach Aine Blanchard. The Kennedy team will move on to the next mid-dle school tournament in early February at Boston Latin Academy.

## Money Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

**Q: How common is it for taxpayers to leave money on the table during tax season?**

**A:** Very! Each year, billions of dollars go unclaimed—either because people don't file a return or fail to claim credits or refunds owed to them. Here are five of the most significant ways this happens:

### 1. Not Filing a Tax Return

Each year, millions of eligible taxpayers miss out on money simply by not filing a return—often because they think they aren't required to. But refunds are never issued automatically; to receive anything back, you must file.

This includes powerful refundable credits like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)—now worth up to \$8,046 for families with three or more children—even if no tax is owed.

### 2. Missing the Earned Income Tax Credit

Millions of eligible workers don't claim the EITC due to confusion over eligibility—especially part-time workers, single adults, or people with nontraditional family setups. This credit can be worth:

- Up to \$4,328 (one child)
- Up to \$7,152 (two children)
- Up to \$8,046 (three or more children)

### 3. Not Claiming Education Credits

The American Opportunity Credit (up to \$2,500) and Lifetime Learning Credit (up to \$2,000) are often missed by adult learners, parents, or community college students unaware they qualify.

### 4. Forgetting to Claim Refunds from Prior Years

You have up to 3 years to file a return and claim a refund for missed credits. After that, the refund is lost permanently.

### 5. Skipping the Saver's Credit

Taxpayers who contribute to retirement accounts (like a traditional IRA or 401(k))

and fall under certain income limits may qualify for a Saver's Credit—worth up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 for couples)—but many don't claim it.

**Bottom line:** Filing taxes isn't just about paying—it's also about getting money back. If you skipped filing in the past or weren't sure you qualified for certain credits, it might be worth another look.

### Any questions? I'd be happy to help.

I'm Vincent Hicks, CPA, based in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Reach out at [vhicksconnect@gmail.com](mailto:vhicksconnect@gmail.com) or (859) 553-0788.

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



## Wilson Transition Committee details process, progress, and next steps

CONT. FROM PG 1

shape potential actions for the first phase of governing for the Wilson Administration.

“From day one, we set out to listen hard and organize fast,” said Joe Curtatone, Chair of the Transition Steering Committee. “The policy committees brought serious expertise and lived experience to the table, and thousands of touchpoints with residents gave us a clear picture of what's working and what must improve. Posting the committee work publicly, alongside a summary produced by the Transition Committee, is how we earn trust and move quickly.”

Immediately after being elected, Mayor-elect Wilson assembled a transition team of experienced leaders from government, business, labor, philanthropy, and

the nonprofit sector to help the incoming administration “hit the ground running.” In November, the team launched a plan to engage stakeholders, experts, and residents to assess current operations and identify opportunities for improvement and near-term action.

Over the past two months, the transition's 18 policy subcommittees met regularly, each chaired or co-chaired and supported by transition staff and interns, to gather facts, compare experiences, and shape practical recommendations. More than 150 members took part, selected for both subject-matter expertise and lived experience, and united by a shared commitment to Somerville's future. Every committee produced a thoughtful document that includes an analysis of what's working,

what needs improvement, and where the city can seize opportunities, which will be published online for public review. In parallel, a multilingual Community Engagement Survey drew 700+ responses; weekly roll-ups of that feedback were provided to committee members so community input directly informed their deliberations.

In early March, the Transition Committee will publish the policy committee materials online for full public visibility. “This has been a disciplined and transparent transition,” said Brenna Broderick, Transition Committee Chief of Staff. “We heard from hundreds of neighbors, gathered the best ideas from our 18 committees, and set up a clear process so the Administration can convert input into clear deliverables. Publishing the commit-

tees' work, clearly labeled as their views, alongside an administration summary is the right way to respect contributors and keep the public informed.”

At the same time, the Transition Committee will be releasing a concise summary report that translates public input and committee findings into key themes, what's working well, what can be expanded, and potential actions. “This process has been about listening and learning from the community,” said Mayor Jake Wilson. “We are grateful to every resident who weighed in and to every policy committee member who gave their time and expertise. By posting the committee work and publishing a summary from the Transition Committee, we're giving the public a way to help shape the future of Somerville.”

## Enrollment for Fall 2026 now open at Somerville High School

Somerville High School (SHS) and Somerville Public Schools invite all interested community members to visit during one of three Open House events on February 11 and February 12. Staff will provide an overview presentation on the state of the art facility before students lead community members on a walking tour of the building. Tours will be held on Wednesday, February 11, from 8:15 to 10:00 a.m., and on Thursday, February 12, during two sessions: 8:15 – 10:00 a.m. and 12:45 – 2:15 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, tours will be rescheduled for February 24, with times to be determined.

Parking is limited around the school and it is recommended that attendees plan extra time to park or use alternative means of transportation.

Located at 81 Highland Avenue, Somerville High School serves approximately 1400 students, with 73% of graduates going on to attend two- or four-year colleges. The recently rebuilt and renovated school offers a rigorous academic environment, including college preparatory and Advanced Placement courses.

Students also benefit from dynamic learning and activity spaces, such as a three-level dining mezzanine, a dedicated robotics room, FabLab, music and dance practice spaces, a full theater and auditorium, a college-size lecture hall, vocational studios and workshops, a culinary arts kitchen and dining room, and a full library with a makerspace.

The SPS Enrollment Office staff is available to answer questions and support families who are unable to access online services and/or families needing additional support, including multilingual assistance. Families may also make an appointment with the Enrollment Office by emailing [enrollment@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:enrollment@k12.somerville.ma.us) or calling 617-629-5670. The Enrollment Office is located at 167 Holland Street.

For more complete information and office hours, please visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/enrollment](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/enrollment).

# New Somerville Public Health Vending Machines attract steady use

Free condoms at 2 a.m.? Narcan on a Sunday? Winter gloves when the temperature drops and everything's closed? In Somerville, there's now a vending machine for that—and in the first eight weeks, residents obtained nearly 1,000 items from two 24/7 public health kiosks, with many items dispensed after regular business hours when most resources are locked up for the night.

In November, the Somerville Health and Human Services Department installed Somerville's first-ever Public Health Vending Machines, free public health resource kiosks that provide 24/7 access to health, hygiene, and harm-reduction supplies with minimal barriers.

Located outside the West Branch Library in Davis Square and Project Soup in East Somerville, the kiosks are designed to meet people where they are—whether that's before work, after hours, or in the middle of winter weather—without cost getting in the way.

In the first eight weeks, the kiosks dispensed 940 items, with use split about evenly between the two locations. Nota-

bly, 39% of items were dispensed outside normal business hours, underscoring the value of round-the-clock access.

"In Somerville, we want it to be easier, not harder, to take care of yourself and your family," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "These kiosks are already doing what we hoped: giving people quick, free access to everyday essentials and life-saving supplies, including at night and on weekends when many resources are closed. It's a simple idea with real impact."

Early high-demand items include bathing wipes, emergency blankets, safer sex kits, winter hats, gloves and socks, wound care kits, baby wipes, hygiene kits, Narcan, and pregnancy tests. Also currently stocked are reproductive health products, menstrual products (tampons, pads, and menstrual cups), diapers, sharps containers, and additional overdose prevention tools including fentanyl test strips and xylazine test strips.

"These vending machines are meeting some critical needs that are often overlooked or not talked about. For one, peri-

od poverty is a real issue: roughly one out of five people who menstruate struggles to afford period products. I'm proud that by dispensing menstrual and reproductive products that Somerville is acknowledging the needs of women's bodies and all who menstruate," said At-Large Councilor Kristen Strezo, who championed the kiosks and the inclusion of period, reproductive, and diaper products.

The city expects the mix of supplies to continue shifting based on seasonal needs and community feedback. After an item is dispensed, the kiosks provide users the option to anonymously answer demographic questions. Responses are entirely voluntary and will help the city better understand who is being served and how to tailor supplies to community needs over time.

## Kiosk Locations

- West Branch Library (Davis Square), 40 College Avenue, Somerville
- Project Soup (East Somerville), 165 Broadway, Somerville

## About the Public Health Vending Machines



This initiative is funded in part by Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services, and powered by RIZE Massachusetts Foundation. For questions about the kiosks, please email [tlos@somervillema.gov](mailto:tlos@somervillema.gov), contact 311, or visit [somervillema.gov/healthkiosk](http://somervillema.gov/healthkiosk).

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## An Act ensuring law enforcement identification for public safety

On Monday, January 12, Senator Patricia D. Jehlen filed An Act ensuring law enforcement identification for public safety. The bill bans the use of masks by all law enforcement officers in the state, including federal officers, while performing their duties. The bill was drafted as a response to growing concerns about activities of federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. It takes a step to protect Massachusetts residents from the use of law enforcement officers as secret, unaccountable police.

Senator Jehlen said, "The killing of Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis demonstrates again the reckless and escalating

threat to public safety of armed, masked ICE officers. Many of our constituents are asking us to take action to limit ICE activities." The bill known as the No Secret Police Act ensures that officers may not wear a mask or personal disguise while working. Masks and personal disguises are defined as any covering that obscures the face of an officer and renders them unidentifiable, or any clothing that conceals an officer's status as an officer, including concealing their issued badge.

Any officer that fails to comply would be subject to a \$1000 fine. Massachusetts officers that violate the mask ban would also face the potential revocation of their certi-

fication by the POST Commission.

There are exceptions to the ban, such as necessary masking needs due to disability or other health conditions. Other exceptions include tactical operations, undercover assignments and masks designed to protect against exposure to harmful substances like smoke during a state of emergency as declared by the Governor.

This bill does not interrupt the core responsibilities or work of ICE. It aims to ensure that members of the public are able to identify officers working on official duties, for the public's safety.

— Office of Senator Patricia D. Jehlen



State Senator Patricia D. Jehlen.

## Senate passes senior property tax deferral improvements

The Senate last week passed Senator Jehlen's bill, An Act relative to senior property tax deferral, to expand eligibility for the Senior Tax Deferral program by raising the income limit and by lowering eligibility to seven years of state residency.

The bill also gives a respectful amount of time to grieving families of people who have taken advantage of the Senior Tax Deferral, allowing heirs more time to pay the deferred taxes. It delays an increase in the interest rate for deferred taxes until a year after the taxpayer's death, and delays the date of potential foreclosure

"Property tax deferral can help older adults stay in their homes," said Senator Jehlen. "It allows older adult homeowners

to defer all or part of their property tax bill, which is paid back to the municipality with interest when the property is sold. It can be a better alternative to reverse mortgages, especially if the municipality sets the interest rate lower than the 8 per cent cap. It is underutilized, with fewer than 1000 people in the state using it. This legislation will remove barriers. But because it is a local option law, many cities and towns can do more to adopt it, lower interest rates, raise income limits, and especially to inform residents."

Jehlen singled out Winchester, where the Council on Aging first brought the program to her attention, and where 20 residents are deferring property taxes,

more than the total in the three cities she represents. She noted that all communities in her district have reduced interest rates below the maximum and increased income limits above the minimum. Somerville has an income limit of \$86,000 and a 2.5% interest rate. However, only 7 homeowners have utilized it in the last 2 years.

Jen Benson, Massachusetts State Director at AARP, said, "We know that property taxes can be burdensome for many older homeowners. We appreciate the Massachusetts Senate taking action to help mitigate financial pressures so our older residents can stay in their homes and communities and continue to age with dignity."

Rosa Bentley, President of Massachu-

setts Senior Action, said, "Seniors across the Commonwealth have called for relief from rising property taxes that threaten their economic security and ability to age in their homes and communities. S.2901 addresses critical issues in the property tax deferral process that have

prevented many from using this option. These changes will reduce barriers to this valuable program and meet a critical need in relief efforts. We look forward to further action to expand relief for those burdened and to enable revenue streams that support that expansion."

Senators approved the legislation 37-0. Having been passed by the Senate, the bill heads to the House for further consideration.

### Somerville 2026 Excise Tax Bills Arriving in January

Residents should please note that motor vehicle excise tax bills for 2026 are being sent one month earlier this year. Bills will issue on January 26, 2026, and are due February 25, 2026.

Somerville residents who own a vehicle with a valid Massachusetts license plate are responsible for paying their excise tax bill each year. Payments can be made:

- Online via the link on the city's website at [somervillema.gov/payonline](http://somervillema.gov/payonline)
- In-person at the Collector's office at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.). Valid ID required if you do not bring the bill with you when making payment in person.
- Via mail using the provided envelope.
- Or by check, which can be dropped off in the stainless-steel payments box outside the front entrance of City Hall.

Regularly check your mailbox to avoid missing payment deadlines. Payment is required even if a physical bill is not received. To request a duplicate copy, please contact the treasury department to have a duplicate bill mailed, or "self-authenticate" online and pay via the city's website at [somervillema.gov/payonline](http://somervillema.gov/payonline).

For more information, contact the Tax Collector's office at [Treasury@somervillema.gov](mailto:Treasury@somervillema.gov) or call (617) 625-6600 x-3500. For general information on how to make a payment, contact 311 at 617-666-3311 or via chat/app/email/etc. at [somervillema.gov/311](http://somervillema.gov/311).

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# COMMENTARY

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Remember, it's ODD side parking this season during snow emergencies.

## Our View Of The Times



As we get into the snowy months of winter, it's good for all of us to make sure we understand what the odd-even rules are and where we stand this season.

Here is a reminder of what the city's snow parking rules and guidelines are for the 25/26 winter season:

During snow emergencies this winter, residents must park on the ODD side of the road only, unless otherwise posted.

Once a snow emergency has been declared, residents have four hours to move vehicles to the correct side of the street or into a designated municipal parking lot.

Vehicles not moved during this window of time may be ticketed (\$100 fine) and towed (\$100 fine assessed by the tow company for the tow).

Vehicles parked within 20 feet of any intersection may be ticketed and towed.

For a list of designated municipal parking lots available for snow emergency parking, visit [www.somervillema.gov/snow](http://www.somervillema.gov/snow). Residents are encouraged to sign up for phone, email, and text alerts by visiting [www.somervillema.gov/alerts](http://www.somervillema.gov/alerts).

Also, parking is no longer allowed in school parking lots during snow emergencies. Four hours after a snow emergency is called, gates to school parking lots will be

closed and locked until the emergency is lifted.

More info can be found online at [www.somervillema.gov/snow](http://www.somervillema.gov/snow), or download the city's 311 app in iTunes or Google Play, by searching "311Somerville."

Be safe and be legal. If we all cooperate and keep these simple rules and guidelines in mind, we can get through the season unscathed and happy.

### Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

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The City of Somerville opened an **overnight Winter Warming Center** during the coldest months of the year to provide a safe, warm place to sleep for our residents experiencing homelessness. Open 5 p.m. – 7:30 a.m. daily, 12/8/2025 – 4/12/2026. For questions about the Warming Center, call 311. If you need assistance getting to the Warming Center or after-hours assistance, please call (339) 242-4744. Email [warmingcenter@somervillema.gov](mailto:warmingcenter@somervillema.gov). The Cummings Build-

ing, 42 Prescott St, Somerville.

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**Collage from the Collection** is back this **Friday, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.** at the **Somerville Museum**, and there are just a few spaces left. Dig through images of old Somerville, art magazines, books, and programs from our collection and reinvent them in a collage. Dig through images of old Somerville, art magazines, books, and programs from our collection and reinvent them in a collage. Take home a piece of the museum when you create a collage from their collections. Join in for this special Friday add-on event. There will be one limited time slot for you to craft

for an hour and a half: 5:30-7 p.m. Limited seats are available, so bring a friend or meet someone new. Recommended for teens and up; younger children can participate with an adult to use scissors. Somerville Museum, 1 Westwood Road, Somerville, MA 02143 <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>.

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Join the **Somerville Homeless Coalition** for a night of local love at **The Crystal Ballroom** featuring some of Somerville's best. Their **2026 Spring into Action** celebration on **March 26** brings together local flavors and fantastic live music from **West of Willow** and **The Loomers**. Be part of it

and celebrate their community with them. Save the date; tickets drop in February. For support or additional information, please contact [mconlan@shcinc.org](mailto:mconlan@shcinc.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Winter Hill Community Innovation School PTA** is hosting a **Cutest Critter Contest**, a fun fundraising event for their school. Submit your pet's photo with a \$20 donation and give them a shot at awesome prizes: **1st place:** A free exam by a local veterinarian, as well as six months' worth of preventative. **2nd place:** A pet gift basket tailored to your pet, worth over \$50. **3rd place:** A gift card to **Scratches and Boops**

*Continued on page 15*

# FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

# Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1006

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What famous boycott did Martin Luther King Jr. help orchestrate?                              | 7. The hit <i>Into The Groove</i> came from which movie starring Madonna?             |
| 2. Where did Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his "I Have a Dream" speech?                         | 8. What worldwide ban was introduced in 1990 to try and save the elephant population? |
| 3. What method did Dr. King promote for achieving civil rights?                                  | 9. Who had a 60s No. 1 hit with <i>Honey</i> ?  |
| 4. What is the name of Martin Luther King Jr.'s most famous letter, written from jail?           | 10. What movie featured "cameos" by JFK, LBJ and George Wallace?                      |
| 5. What is Patriots QB Drake Maye viral nickname?  | 11. Who played Sid Vicious, Lee Harvey Oswald, Count Dracula and Beethoven in movies? |
| 6. Led Zeppelin issued a press release on December 4, 1980 announcing their breakup due to what? | 12. Sonny the Cuckoo Bird is the mascot for what chocolaty cereal?                    |

Answers on page 12

## The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- Americans spend about 2.5 days a year looking for lost items.
- "Go" is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.

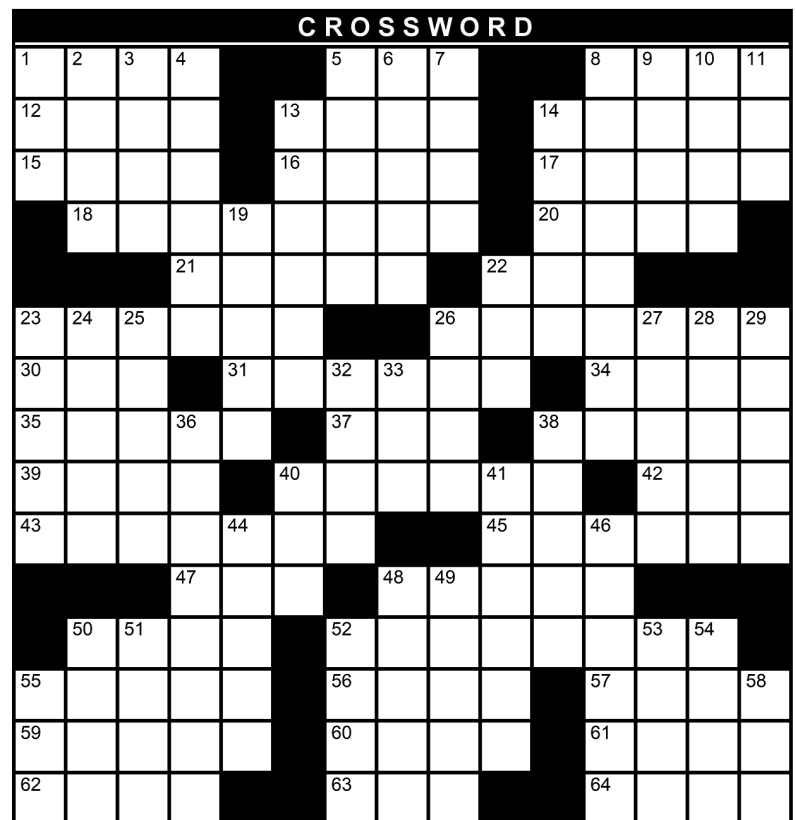
### STATEPOINT CROSSWORD SUPER BOWL

#### ACROSS

- Pakistani attire
- Research location
- Partridge's fruit tree
- Grid follower
- \_\_\_\_ Upshaw, multiple Super Bowl winner
- Canada's national tree
- Like Homer Simpson's head
- Allege
- Agenda entries
- Adding a rushing player
- Aphrodite's lover
- Not host
- Tire meas.
- Composure under strain
- More distant
- Thompson of "Some Kind of Wonderful"
- Ubiquitous deciduous tree
- Genealogical plant
- Poetic feet
- Dream time, acr.
- The Romanovs, e.g.
- Song for solo voice
- Dishevel, as in hair
- Clever humor
- \*SoFi \_\_\_\_, Super Bowl LXI venue
- Last year's Super Bowl winners
- Web robot
- Tesla Roadster with Starman location
- a.k.a. podagra
- The only NFL team with perfect season
- Plant-based laxative
- Symphony member
- "No \_\_\_\_ for you!"
- No gains without them
- Retired, abbr.
- Field worker
- Bohemian
- Not Miss or Ms
- Poker amount

#### DOWN

- Bro to bro
- Speedy steed
- Chuck Berry's "\_\_\_\_ Over Beethoven"
- Rainbow color
- Santa Clara's \_\_\_\_ Stadium, Super Bowl LX venue
- Beside, archaic
- Titanic's frozen enemy
- Team with most Super Bowl appearances
- Fencing weapon
- Charitable contributions
- Hi-\_\_\_\_
- Garden shelter
- Unhealthy atmosphere
- Little hills
- P in m.p.g.
- Mark Twain to Samuel Clemens
- Lively
- Vampire of Greek mythology
- One of two teams to win while hosting Super Bowl
- Long fishing line
- Like haunted house
- What the defense does?
- High school dressy affair
- Romanian money



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### Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- Super Bowl LX halftime show headliner (2 words)
  - Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young: "\_\_\_\_ Your Children"
  - Egyptian boy king, for short
  - Long jump
  - I to Greeks, pl.
  - Rob Marshall's 2005 movie "Memoirs of a \_\_\_\_"
  - On the wagon
  - Land parcels
  - Shoulder pads and cleats
  - "Put a lid \_\_\_\_!"
  - College dwelling
  - High part of day
  - Edible fat
  - Facial site
  - Charlie Puth and Brandi Carlile, \_\_\_\_ game stars
- Solution in the next edition of *The Somerville Times*.

# The Center for Arts at the Armory Welcomes Bart Reidy to its Board of Directors

The Center for Arts at the Armory (CAA) is delighted to announce the appointment of Bart Reidy to its Board of Directors. Bart Reidy is a nonprofit strategist and senior advancement executive with more than 25 years of experience guiding major arts organizations through periods of growth, transition, and strategic planning.

Reidy spent 16 years at the Boston Symphony Orchestra, holding several senior roles including Chief Strategy Officer. He led the BSO's Beyond Measure and Tanglewood Forever campaigns. Previously, he

served in key leadership positions at the Tony Award-winning Williamstown Theatre Festival. Since 2017, Bart has advised performing arts organizations nationwide and recently served as founding principal of Arrow Street Arts in Harvard Square.

Bart Reidy joins Hathalee Higgs (President), Neil Berman (Treasurer), Ruth Faris (Clerk), Ivan Abarca and Amanda Klein as members of CAA's Board of Directors.

The Center for Arts at the Armory is located at 191 Highland



Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143. To learn more please visit their website, [artsatthearmory.org](http://artsatthearmory.org).

## The Community Gospel Choir is looking for new members



Do you love to sing? You are invited to join the Community Gospel Choir and sing in their free Gospel Music Concert, which will be held on Sunday, February 22, 3 – 5 p.m., at the Somerville Community Baptist Church in Davis Square (the concert is in honor of Black History Month).

Singers of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to join the Choir. The only requirements are that you love to sing and you want to sing Gospel music. All songs will be taught. Rehearsals led by Choir director Stacie Clayton will be held on Sundays, January 25, February 1, February 8, and February 15, from 12:30 to 2:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary at the Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Avenue, two blocks from Davis Square.

If you want to join the Choir and participate in the concert, just show up at the rehearsals, let Stacie know you are there, and be ready to sing! For more information, see [www.ILoveSCBC.org](http://www.ILoveSCBC.org).

Visit us online at [www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)

## The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



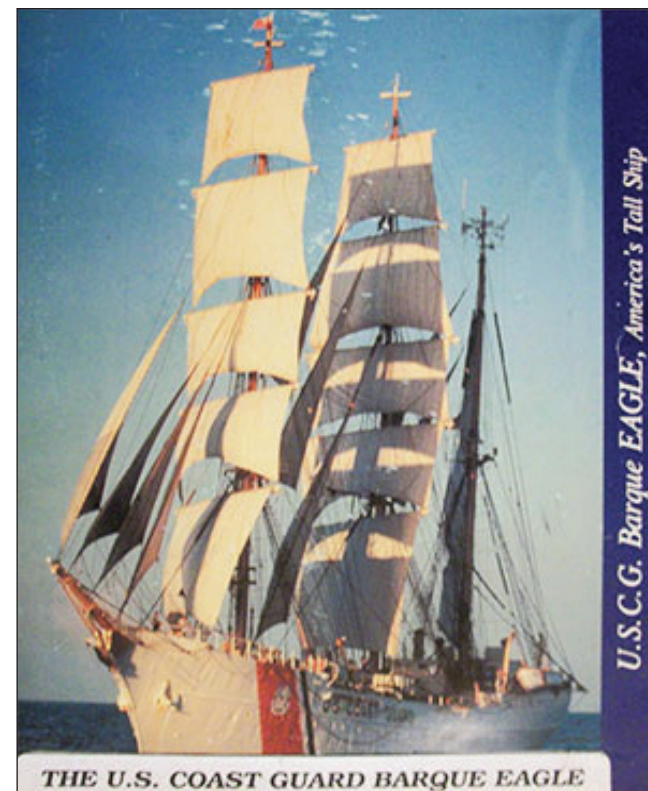
### Eagle feathers #346

This article first appeared in the March 19, 2014, edition of *The Somerville Times*.

### Seven Hills to Seven Seas

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

“From the seven hills to the seven seas” would be an appropriate description of the lives of thousands of Somerville men and women throughout the years. Long ago, the city’s location was a high-tide island called “Charlestown Beyond the Neck.” Its watery perimeter was made up of the Mystic River to the north, the Alewife Brook to the west, Tannery Brook and Miller’s River to the south, and the Charles River with its millponds, to the east.



Since 1631, when the first Governor of Massachusetts, Governor John Winthrop, built the first Massachusetts ship, *The Blessing of the Bay*, Somerville citizens have had the taste of salt water in their veins. The earlier nautical lore of this area runs deep, from Viking landings six hundred years before Columbus, to Captain Kidd stories of treasure said to be hidden somewhere along Somerville’s Mystic River shore. Even earlier, ancient mariners wrote about their western voyages to our northeast coast, describing the shores where the fish were so abundant that the mariners could almost walk from boat to boat on the back of fins.



But Somerville has a more factual, nautical timeline. In the spring of 1774, the British attacked the Powder House from the sea, “the Mystic River. Eight months later, in 1775, the British marched on to Lexington via Cambridge and Somerville from the sea,” the *Continued on page 15*

## LEGAL NOTICES

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

**SUMMONS (Family Law) CITACION (Derecho familiar) NOTICE TO RESPONDENT (Name): AVISO AL DEMANDADO (Nombre): ILYA ANTONYUK**

Petitioner's name is: (Nombre del demandante): GLORIA LAM

You have 30 calendar days after this *Summons* and *Petition* are served on you to file a *Response* (form FL-120) at the court and have a COPY served on the petitioner. A letter, phone call, or court appearance will not protect you.

If you do not file your *Response* on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage or domestic partnership, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs.

For legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Get help finding a lawyer at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp)), at the California Legal Services website ([www.lawhelpca.org](http://www.lawhelpca.org)), or by contacting your local county bar association.

Tiene 30 días de calendario después de haber recibido la entrega legal de esta Citación y Petición para presentar una Respuesta (formulario FL-120) ante la corte y efectuar la entrega legal de una copia al demandante. Una carta o llamada telefónica o una audiencia de la corte no basta para protegerlo.

Si no presenta su Respuesta a tiempo, la corte puede dar órdenes que afecten su matrimonio o pareja de hecho, sus bienes y la custodia de sus hijos. La corte también le puede ordenar que pague manutención, y honorarios y costos legales. Para asesoramiento legal, póngase en contacto de inmediato con un abogado. Puede obtener información para encontrar un abogado en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)), en el sitio web de los Servicios Legales de California ([www.lawhelpca.org](http://www.lawhelpca.org)) o poniéndose en contacto con el colegio de abogados de su condado.

**NOTICE—RESTRAINING ORDERS ARE ON PAGE 2:**

These restraining orders are effective against both spouses or domestic partners until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. They are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

**A VISO—LAS ORDENES DE RESTRICCIÓN SE ENCUENTRAN EN LA PAGINA 2:** Las órdenes de restricción están en vigencia en cuanto a ambos cónyuges o miembros de la pareja de hecho hasta que se despida la petición. Se emita un fallo o la corte de otras órdenes. Cualquier agenda del orden público que haya recibido o visto una copia de estas órdenes puede hacerlas acatar en cualquier lugar de California.

**FEE WAIVER:** If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. The court may order you to pay back all or part of the fees and costs that the court waived for you or (the other party).

**EXENCION DE CUOTAS:** Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario un formulario de exención de cuotas. La corte puede ordenar que usted pague, ya sea en parte o por completo, las cuotas y costos de la corte previamente exentos a petición de usted o de la otra parte.

The name and address of the court are (El nombre y dirección de la corte son): **LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT 42011 4th STREET WEST, LANCASTER, CA 93534** The name, address, and telephone number of the petitioner's attorney, or the petitioner without an attorney, are: (El nombre, dirección y número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante si no tiene abogado, son): **JOHN C. BIGLER, CFLS, 1037 WEST AVENUE N, SUITE 201, PALMDALE, CA 93551 (661) 947-8499**  
Date (fecha): 07/28/2025 Clerk, by (Secretaria, por): David W. Slayton Sofia Martinez, Deputy (Asistente)

Page 1 of 2

**STANDARD FAMILY LAW RESTRAINING ORDERS**

Starting immediately, you and your spouse or domestic partner are restrained from:

1. removing the minor children of the parties from the state or applying for a new or replacement passport for those minor children without the prior written consent of the other party or an order of the court;
2. cashing, borrowing against, canceling, transferring, disposing of, or changing the beneficiaries of any insurance or other coverage, including life, health, automobile, and disability, held for the benefit of the parties and their minor children;
3. transferring, encumbering, hypothecating, concealing, or in any way disposing of any property, real or personal, whether community, quasi-community, or separate, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court, except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life; and
4. creating a nonprobate transfer or modifying a nonprobate transfer in a manner that affects the disposition of property subject to the transfer, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court. Before revocation of a nonprobate transfer can take effect or a right of survivorship to property can be eliminated, notice of the change must be filed and served on the other party.

You must notify each other of any proposed extraordinary expenditures at least five business days prior to incurring these extraordinary expenditures and account to the court for all extraordinary expenditures made after these restraining orders are effective. However, you may use community property, quasi-community property, or your own separate property to pay an attorney to help you or to pay court costs.

**NOTICE-ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH**

**INSURANCE:** Do you or someone in your household need affordable health insurance? If so, you should apply for Covered California. Covered California can help reduce the cost you pay towards high quality affordable health care. For more information, visit [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com). Or call Covered California at 1-800-300-1506.

**WARNING—IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

California law provides that, for purposes of division of property upon dissolution of a marriage or domestic partnership or upon legal separation, property acquired by the parties during marriage or domestic partnership in joint form is presumed to be community property. If either party to this action should die before the jointly held community property is divided, the language in the deed that characterizes how title is held (i.e., joint tenancy, tenants in common, or community property) will be controlling, and not the community property presumption. You should consult your attorney if you want the community property presumption to be written into the recorded title to the property.

**ORDENES DE RESTRICCIÓN ESTÁNDAR DE DERECHO FAMILIAR**

**En forma inmediata, listed y su cónyuge o pareja de hecho tienen prohibido:**

1. llevarse del estado de California a los hijos menores de las partes, o solicitar un pasaporte nuevo o de repuesto para los hijos menores, sin el consentimiento por escrito de la otra parte o sin una orden de la corte;
2. cobrar, pedir prestado, cancelar, transferir, deshacerse o cambiar el nombre de los beneficiarios de cualquier seguro u otro tipo de cobertura, como de vida, salud, vehículo y discapacidad, que tenga como beneficiario(s) a las partes y su(s) hijo(s) menor(es);
3. transferir, gravar, hipotecar, ocultar o deshacerse de cualquier manera de cualquier propiedad, inmueble o personal, ya sea comunitaria, cuasicomunitaria o separada, sin el consentimiento escrito de la otra parte o una orden de la corte, excepto en el curso habitual de actividades personales y comerciales o para satisfacer las necesidades de la vida; y
4. crear o modificar una transferencia no testamentaria de manera que afecte la asignación de una propiedad sujeta a transferencia, sin el consentimiento por escrito de la otra parte o una orden de la corte. Antes de que se pueda eliminar la revocación de una transferencia no testamentaria, se debe presentar ante la corte un aviso del cambio y hacer una entrega legal de dicho aviso a la otra parte.

Cada parte tiene que notificar a la otra sobre cualquier gasto extraordinario propuesto por lo menos cinco días hábiles antes de realizarlo, y rendir cuenta a la corte de todos los gastos extraordinarios realizados después de que estas órdenes de restricción hayan entrado en vigencia. No obstante, puede usar propiedad comunitaria, cuasicomunitaria o suya separada para pagar a un abogado que lo ayude o para pagar los costos de la corte.

**AVISO—ACCESO A SEGURO DE SALUD MAS ECONOMICO:**

¿Necesita seguro de salud a un costo asequible, ya sea para usted o alguien en su hogar? Si es así, puede presentar una solicitud con Covered California. Covered California lo puede ayudar a reducir el costo que paga por seguro de salud asequible y de alta calidad.

Para obtener más información, visite [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com). O llame a Covered California al 1-800-300-0213.

**ADVERTENCIA—INFORMACION IMPORTANTE**

De acuerdo a la ley de California, las propiedades adquiridas por las partes durante su matrimonio o pareja de hecho en forma conjunta se consideran propiedad comunitaria para fines de la división de bienes que ocurre cuando se produce una disolución o separación legal del matrimonio o pareja de hecho. Si cualquiera de las partes de este caso llega a fallecer antes de que se divida la propiedad comunitaria de tenencia conjunta, el destino de la misma quedará determinado por las cláusulas de la escritura correspondiente que describen su tenencia (por ej., tenencia conjunta, tenencia en común o propiedad comunitaria) y no por la presunción de propiedad comunitaria. Si quiere que la presunción comunitaria quede registrada en la escritura de la propiedad, debería consultar con un abogado.

Page 2 of 2

# LEGAL NOTICES

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

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, February 3, 2026**, at 6:45pm through Zoom.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_fZaGmRfSPu4QkqUCOmXlg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fZaGmRfSPu4QkqUCOmXlg)

**TO CALL IN**

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

The Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following pursuant to the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

**DETERMINATIONS OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED (STEP 2 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)**

**28 Vinal Avenue** Applicant: 28 Vinal LLC  
Owner: 28 Vinal LLC  
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation Commission at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov).

1/21/26 The Somerville Times



**ADVERTISEMENT  
REQUEST FOR DESIGN SERVICES (RFS)**

The Somerville Housing Authority, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed proposals from registered Engineering/Architecture firms to provide professional design and construction administration services to replace the existing storm doors (123 total) at our Brady Towers and Highland Garden developments located in Somerville, MA 02143.

A briefing and site inspection is scheduled for **10:00 AM on Friday, January 23rd, 2026**, at the Brady Towers elderly facility located at 252 Medford Street, Somerville, MA 02143.

Response to this RFS must be submitted no later than **11:00 Friday, January 30th, 2026**.

The RFS may be obtained after **8:00AM on Wednesday, January 14th, 2026**, by contacting [ryan@sha-web.org](mailto:ryan@sha-web.org) or by phone at 617-625-1152 Ext.331.

Questions must be sent in writing to [ryan@sha-web.org](mailto:ryan@sha-web.org) no later than Tuesday, January 27th, 2026.

1/14/26, 1/21/26 The Somerville Times



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

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, February 4, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Pi68lIeyQ\\_Sy0ExpMeLJQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Pi68lIeyQ_Sy0ExpMeLJQ)

**TO CALL IN**

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

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

**12 Linden Street** Yang Ge seeks relief from SZO 3.2.18.a.ii. to add a second curb cut on a front lot line in the Urban Residence (UR) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>.

Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov).

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB 26-36**

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

**Portable Restrooms for Seasonal Locations & Special Events**

The IFB 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, January 21, 2026**. Sealed bids 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, February 5, 2026**.

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

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

**Felisa Gárate  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3406**

1/21/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
REBID IFB 26-13**

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

**Vector Truck Repairs, Services, and Parts**

The IFB 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: **Tuesday, January 20, 2026**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **1:00 pm, Wednesday, February 4, 2026**.

The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor informality in the IFB process, and accept the bid(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  
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer  
617-625-6600 x3400**

1/21/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
RFP #26-31**

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

**Acquisition of Property by Lease for a Nibble Shared Community Kitchen in Union Square**

The City of Somerville, acting through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department invites sealed proposals for a lease of commercial space for approximately 450 sq. ft. located in the Union Square neighborhood for use as a shared kitchen as part of the Somerville Art's Council's "Nibble" program. The acquisition by lease is subject to certain conditions set forth in the Request for Proposals (RFP).

The RFP and specifications may be obtained online at [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com), <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Friday, December 19, 2025**. Sealed proposals will be received at the above office until: **Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:00PM**. 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 contact Felisa Gárate at [fgarate@somervillema.gov](mailto:fgarate@somervillema.gov) for more information.


**Felisa Gárate  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3406**

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**Somerville Fair Housing Commission**  
*Question of the week*

**Q: Did Martin Luther King play a role in promoting Fair Housing?**

**A:** Yes. Read about the Chicago Freedom Movement, which advocated for “open housing” – the right for Black Americans to buy homes anywhere they wish.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago\\_Freedom\\_Movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_Freedom_Movement)

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

# Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Patchwork leaves... — Photo by Denise Provost


From page 8

Ms. Cam's

# Olio

Answers

1. The Montgomery Bus Boycott	drummer John Bonham
2. The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.	7. <i>Desperately Seeking Susan</i>
3. Nonviolent protest	8. Ivory trading
4. "Letter from Birmingham Jail"	9. Bobby Goldsboro
5. Drake "Drake Maye" Maye	10. <i>Forrest Gump</i>
6. The death of their	11. Gary Oldman
	12. Cocoa Puffs

**BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER** 

By Bobbygeorge Potaris

Why was the football stadium so hot?  
Because all the fans left.

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

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

*On This Day in History*

**January 21**

1189 – Philip Augustus, Henry II of England and Frederick Barbarossa assemble the troops for the Third Crusade.

1648 – In Maryland, the first woman lawyer in the colonies, Margaret Brent, is denied a vote in the Maryland Assembly.

1785 – Chippewa, Delaware, Ottawa and Wyandot Indians sign the treaty of Fort McIntosh, ceding present-day Ohio to the United States.

1793 – The French King Louis XVI is guillotined for treason.

1921 – J.D. Rockefeller pledges \$1 million for the relief of Europe's destitute.

1941 – The United States lifts the ban on selling arms to the Soviet Union.

1968 – In Vietnam, the Siege of Khe Sanh begins.

1976 – Leonid Brezhnev and Henry Kissinger meet to discuss Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT).

1977 – President Carter urges 65 degrees as the maximum heat in homes to ease the energy crisis.

# Book review: 'The Angsana Tree Mystery' by Ovidia Yu

By Dennis Fischman

When we read a contemporary mystery set in a place we know, in a culture that's familiar to us, it's easier to see the clues sticking out from the weave of the story. We know what's usual and expected. When something is unusual, or unexpected—when it doesn't fit—it makes us wonder.

For me, the delight of reading historical mysteries set in faraway lands is the extra step it takes to notice what's out of place. To pick up the clues, I have to learn what's normal back then and over there. It's a painless and enjoyable way of expanding my knowledge, less like a schoolbook and more like making a friend.

The Su Lin mysteries [1] by Ovidia Yu offer that kind of pleasure. All of them take place in Singapore, a place I knew nothing about before starting the series. I now appreciate the richness of a local culture where Chinese, Indonesian, Indian, and English people all rubbed shoulders. The books

are set in the fraught period before and after WW II, so invasion by Japan and, later, decolonization by the UK are also part of the story.

At the center is our title character, Chen Su Lin. The lame granddaughter of a rich, powerful grandmother—her own parents are long dead—Su Lin must struggle against overbearing relatives and societal prejudices. She is bright and perceptive, and sometimes (like Blanche in Barbara Neely's Blanche White series [2]) she uses her subordinate position to find out what the official investigators cannot.

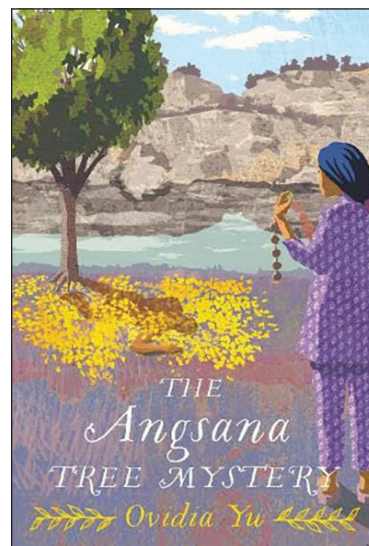
Over the eight books in the series I have read so far, Su Lin has progressed from a teenage assistant in the office of British policeman Inspector Thomas Le Froy to a mature young woman who has solved mysteries on her own. There is also a growing romance between the two, based in good part on mutual appreciation of each other's brains and bravery.

In *The Angsana Tree Mystery* [3], an obnoxious auditor has

come from Britain to investigate Le Froy (who has been put in charge of the Public Health Service Bureau and its funds). Does this interloper have anything to do with the murder of a foreman at the quarry run by the Pang family, a clan that's sometimes friendly with the Chens (Su Lin's family) and sometimes their business rivals? He arrives just as Su Lin finds the daughter of that family standing by the dead man, with blood on her hands. Coincidence?

Also, who is dealing in opium: the Pang family, the Chen family, or somebody else? Who is trying to put the blame for either the murder or the opium, or both, on other people? Will Su Lin's best friend, Parshanti Shankar, really get married to her fiancé, Dr. Leask, or has his fast-talking, dissolute cousin been sent from England to prevent that? And will Su Lin and Le Froy finally overcome the prejudices on both sides of the divide to get married themselves?

I won't spoil any of these mysteries: please read the book for your-



"The Angsana Tree Mystery" by Ovidia Yu. Constable, 2024.



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

self! I particularly liked the way this book demonstrated that people are not always what they seem, and also that people can change for the better. To see that, you might want to go back to the first in the series, *The Frangipani Tree Mystery* [4], and follow Su Lin from there. (Yes, all the books are named after trees that don't grow where we live, which gives you another thing to find out about, and

that's another pleasure.)

**Links:**

- [1] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/207701-su-lin>
- [2] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/53114-blanche-white>
- [3] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/203759052-the-angsana-tree-mystery>
- [4] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/34838331-the-frangipani-tree-mystery>

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## OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## J.D. Scrimgeour: a poet in High Street Park

Recently, I caught up with the poet J.D. Scrimgeour, the current poet laureate of Salem, Ma. He has a new collection of poetry/prose out, *Poet in High Street Park: Prose & Poetry for Modern Salem* (Loom Press).

According to his website: "*Poet in High Street Park* is a love song to Salem, Massachusetts, by a writer who has grounded himself in the everyday realities of living in the city for the past 30 years, from playgrounds to classrooms to ballfields. It is testimony that, beneath the Halloween hoo-ha and the historical tours crowding the sidewalks, people live here. Finding the universal in the local, this book asks who we are and who we want to be."

**Doug Holder:** Do you feel your book has the same sensibility as William Carlos Williams' *Paterson*? Were you inspired by it?

**J.D. Scrimgeour:** Smart question! I actually wrote a Masters Thesis on *Paterson*, and so I'm sure that it influenced my book. The life that Williams lived inspired me as much as *Paterson* itself. Williams, while having cosmopolitan interests in art and literature, remained attached to a place. He worked among the people of that place, and he accepted that he wasn't writing about a major metropolitan area. *Paterson*, in its own way, mixed prose and poetry (in fact, that's what my thesis was about), and my book includes different genres, too. Another important influence was Langston Hughes and his book-length poem on Harlem, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*. I used it as the model for the poetic sequence, *Montage of Brick and Water*, which opens the book's first section. Both Williams and Hughes respect the everyday people of their cities. I hope my work does that as well.

**DH:** This book of poetry is like a love affair or marriage that has glaring flaws, and ugly/beauty, but in spite of it all, it is embraced and cherished.

**J.D.S:** Interesting. I think of the whole book as a kind of answer to the oven bird's question in Frost's poem: *what to make of a diminished thing*? Salem will never be a center of commerce and civilization, as it once was. When I moved here, it felt like a backwater. It still does, but it has experienced a renaissance in the past two decades. I hope my book traces some of that movement in the city's life, and in my feelings toward it.

**DH:** Why did you make High Street Park in Salem the focal point of many of your poems?

**J.D.S:** High Street Park is a little grassless park tucked behind the homeless shelter in Salem, two blocks from my house. I took my sons there when they were little, and I still go there, some 25 years later, to shoot baskets every now and then. It's where I have met several different types of people, had plenty of encounters, and witnessed some moving

# Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Poet Wendy Drexler writes: "My new collection, *Harvest of What Remains*, will be published at the beginning of February by Lily Poetry Review Books. My book navigates my experience as a caregiver for my husband, who has Alzheimer's."

### SITTING WITH MY HUSBAND ON A BENCH IN FRONT OF CLAY POND

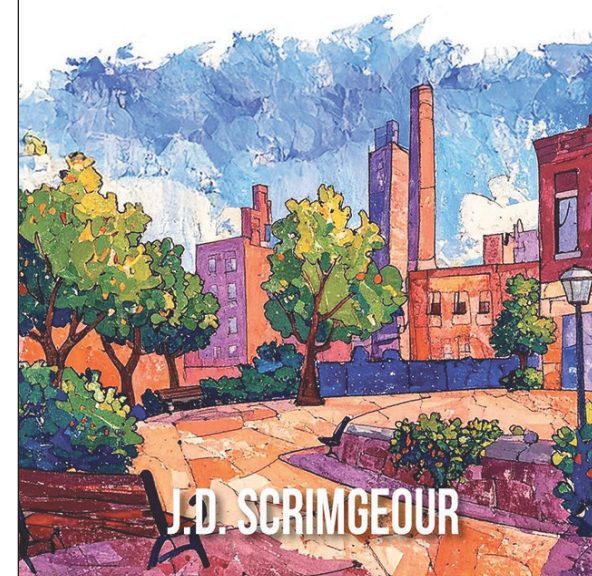
a not-so-beautiful pond, but I like the way the leaves form an arch over the water, the sun slanting through, making them glow, and on the far side of the pond we see a swan my husband refers to as "a white fish," which makes me think more about the solitary swan we'd passed earlier who was sitting on the bank—the way she was grooming herself so conscientiously—this is her work, after all—corkscrewing her limber and endless neck under her, nipping one feather, then another, and then I began to listen to some water sounds on my meditation app as I looked at the moiré patterns the wind was making on the actual water, and the wind was just the wind, but cool on the edges with a slightly warm core from the warm day, and yes, the earth is probably dying, and on the radio today I heard the Colorado River is running out of water and can maybe be saved if people would only eat one less hamburger each week, which shouldn't be a big deal but is, and I don't eat hamburger anymore and live nowhere near Colorado as I once did. And I don't know how many more walks like this we will have together, these our most ordinary walks, and I'm trying to hold this space as something sacred, even with a dozen or more cigarette butts littering the ground under my feet and a lasso of fish wire dangling from a branch, and if the wire gets into the pond it will likely strangle a great blue heron or some fish, which are likely already done for (a signpost says, "This water may have been contaminated with chemicals")—which pisses me off—was it or wasn't it, and who is minding this water anyway? Water that nevertheless looks serene and beautiful under the setting sun. We start walking home when I notice that the swan we'd seen earlier is now gliding toward the swan on the far side. And I name the one swan acceptance and the other swan grief.

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

Doug Holder, 25 School St.; Somerville, MA 02143. [dougholder@post.harvard.edu](mailto:dougholder@post.harvard.edu)

## POET IN HIGH STREET PARK

PROSE & POETRY FOR MODERN SALEM



acts of kindness, from a group of young teens putting a baby bird back in its nest to a group of twenty-somethings playing basketball to entertain their wheelchair-bound friend. It's a humble place, and not particularly beautiful, but it has come to represent community to me.

**DH:** In the poem *Family*, you personify Lynn, Peabody, Salem, and Beverly. There is a hierarchy among the "families" as you would find in any family or families. Do you think this hierarchy is still true? Or was it ever really true? Is, for instance, Lynn the city of sin, and so on?

**J.D.S:** I wrote that poem over 20 years ago. It was inspired by Aloysius Bertrand's prose poem *The Five Fingers of the Hand*, which is a kind of grotesque, and that probably explains the rather unflattering image of all the cities in it. As for hierarchy, yes, the piece suggests there are class differences among the cities, but, really, it's more about the imaginative relationship between them, and how they view themselves.

At the risk of not answering your question, rereading the piece, I'm most intrigued by the weirdness of the Salem description (a senile grandmother who speaks no English and supposedly strangles babies in the night), which seems a mysterious comment on Salem's unique history.

**DH:** There is a beautifully written piece about Bingo played by seniors in Salem. You didn't take the banal game at face value. It proves that anything as humble as this game has layers of *Continued on page 15*

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

**Pet Boutique Shop.** Not entering a pet? No problem, you can vote for your favorite furry pals for just \$1.50 per vote. Voting ends on PuppyBowl Sunday, February 8. For more info or to donate, visit: <https://givebutter.com/CfLdZn>.

Does your family speak **more than one language at home?** Check out one of two workshops about Bilingualism and early language acquisition in children raised in multilingual families. Presented by **Tufts University Associate Professor Calvin Gidney**. **January 22, 7 – 8:30 p.m.**, in English. **January 27, 7 – 8:30 p.m.**, in Spanish. Register [tinyurl.com/yc7ff8az](https://tinyurl.com/yc7ff8az).

Registration for **Somerville Open Studios 2026** is open **through February 15**. If you want to apply for financial aid, the deadline is **Sunday, January 18**. The event is **Saturday and Sunday, May 2 – 3**. Visit their website for registration details <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org/web/join>.

Attend the **inaugural SomerWrites event** on **Tuesday, January 27**, at 7:00 p.m. at **Portico Brewing**, featuring an open mic and guest talk with **Somerville Poet Laureate Lloyd Schwartz**, and moderated by **Somerville Arts Council Board Member Sarah Beckmann**. These events are free and open to all, no matter your genre or background. Whether you have academic experience in a writing field or are simply curious to learn more about different types of writing, this space is an opportunity for you to share your work and/or network with local artists. Contact Sarah ([beckmann.sarah12@gmail.com](mailto:beckmann.sarah12@gmail.com)) to add your name to the open mic list or to become a featured guest during one of these events.

Apply today for **Creative Space at Somerville's Armory**. All creative disciplines are encouraged to apply for open spaces **now through March 11**. The city

is now accepting **Requests for Proposals (RFPs)** from arts and creative enterprises interested in leasing space at the city-owned Armory at 191 Highland Ave. Full details on eligibility, available spaces, lease terms, evaluation criteria, and how to submit a proposal are available on the **Armory Master Plan SomerVoice page**, which will serve as the primary hub for this process: [www.voice.somervillema.gov/armory-master-plan](http://www.voice.somervillema.gov/armory-master-plan).

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

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

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Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

Charles River." And one year later, in 1776, Somerville's forts bombarded Boston, helping to drive the British back into the sea and away from the New England coast.

Somerville's sailors have fought in every war from the Revolution through to Desert Storm. They served in all capacities of Navy-yard workers, from building ships,

sailing them, and fighting from their decks. At sea, they held all ranks from Seaman to Admiral in the Navy and from Private to General in the Marines. During World War II, Somerville petitioned Congress to name one of the new Naval cruisers after her. The reasoning was simple. According to population, more Somerville sons and

daughters were serving in the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps than any other city in the country. No cruiser was ever named after Somerville, but the Navy honored her citizenry by christening the following ships:

U.S.S. Marguerite Le Hand – F.D.R.'s secretary from Orchard Street

U.S.S. Charles Tufts – Tufts University's founder from Tufts Street

U.S.S. Daniel Waters – Captain in Washington's Navy from Bow Street

U.S.S. John Winthrop – First Governor of MA from Ten Hills

U.S.S. Thomas G. Kelley – Vietnam Medal of Honor Recipient

Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

meaning. This is indeed, an example of the examined life. **J.D.S:** Thank you. That actually came from an exercise I gave my students in a nonfiction class, and which I tried myself: Go to a place you've never been and write about it. Two elderly Polish sisters, neighbors of mine, took me there. That piece makes me think of how many things in my book have disappeared: the coal-burning power plant, the Salem State library where my office was, the senior center, the sisters.

**DH:** There is a lot of history in your work. How much research was involved?

**J.D.S:** The two historical essays, one about the Great Salem Fire and one about the Peabody sisters, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Horace Mann, were both written when I had the time granted by a sabbatical to really devote myself to reading about them, and they involved a fair amount of research. There really wasn't a lot of scholarship about the fire that destroyed a third of the city back in 1914, so I found myself reading contemporaneous reports about the fire and its aftermath. The poems certainly were informed by tidbits of Salem History, too, and the short story at the end of the book,

"Prospect," involved interviewing someone who played baseball in the Dominican Republic and learning about that experience as a way to acknowledge Salem's Dominican population.

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putting those books away so they can check them out again seem a lost, wasted life, remember your walk to and from school through the downtown that's still your downtown and the way your students wrap their arms around your leg when they see you on the street and how the older ones from years before— even, sometimes, the boys— hug you in Market Basket or at the Halloween Parade and pronounce your name wrong, like they used to, Mizgerald, Mizgerald! and then tell you what books they've been reading.

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