VOL. 12 NO. 7 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024 SOMERVILLE, MASS.

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The Rat Patrol page 3



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Rafi Properties announces Sublime Systems expansion at Somernova



Sublime to add more than 23,000 square feet of pilot and R&D space to the Somerville innovation hub.

— Photo courtesy of Somernova

Rafi Properties, owner and operator of Somernova, the 7.4-acre innovation campus and community dedicated to helping people and companies iterate and grow faster, announced today that Sublime Systems (Sublime) will expand their headquarters on the campus.

Sublime, the leading developer of a fossil-fuel-free, scalable, drop-in replacement for traditional cement in concrete, will add more than 23,000 square feet of space for their 250 tons-per-year pilot facility and R&D lab to their footprint, in addition to the 6,500 square feet they currently occupy on the campus. Sublime's expansion underscores Somernova's continued status as a leading hub for the rapid growth of early-stage and venture-backed climatetech and tough tech companies in the region.

Sublime's prototyping, piloting, Continued on page 4

Deano's Pasta: A family business making fresh pasta for four generations

By Bridget Frawley

Off of Garfield Avenue in Somerville is an industrial bright red and white building featuring various murals of assorted pasta and factory machinery. 15 Garfield Ave. houses both a pasta factory where over 100 different types of dry, fresh and frozen pasta are produced each day, but also a shop open to the public to purchase pasta and sauces.

"I think people might get a little intimidated by the size of the building or the look of the building that they think it's more manufacturing or industrial," co-owner of Deano's Pasta Hala Matarazzo said. "We make everything we sell. We make all of our sauces, our pesto, all of our pastas. We make everything right there."

Deano's Pasta is co-owned by Continued on page 4



Deano's Pasta in Somerville offers up freshly made pasta and other items made from locally sourced ingredients.







Proud to be a Somerville resident

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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.

Grab your spouse, partner, roommate, bestie, sibling, or anyone you love and join in for a very special event. The Somerville Museum is open for special hours this Valentine's Day, 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m., 1 Westwood Rd. Visit the current exhibition, Museo Inmigrante, and enjoy a photoshoot with award-winning photographer, Iaritza Menjivar. They'll provide the props, background, and expertise. This Valentine's Day do something a little different, support your local museum, and share the love with professional photos. For more information visit: www.somervillemuseum.org.

Join Somerville's Anti-Displacement Task Force on Thursday, February 15, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. for a virtual night of Uplifting Youth Experiences. This is a special set of presentations from the Somerville Department of Racial and Social Justice's Youth League and students from the Harvard Kennedy School, John F. Kennedy School of Government, who will present research and perspectives on displacement and gentrification. Learn more and join the meeting at: voice.somervillema.gov/adtf.

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy birthday to Donna Alibrandi, who is celebrating this week. We hope she has a great day. Also celebrating this week is Denise Racicot-Kallis. We wish her the very best of birthdays. Happy birthday to Celia Taylor, we hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to local realtor Sammy Alves, who is celebrating this week.

The Somerville Times

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The Somerville Times is published every Wednesday

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Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of February 14 – February 20 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday February 14	Partly Cloudy	32°/21°	6%	3%	NW 18 mph
Thursday February 15	Sunny	37°/29°	9%	5%	W 9 mph
Friday February 16	Partly Cloudy	38°/22°	22%	16%	WNW 19 mph
Saturday February 17	Partly Cloudy	33°/19°	25%	17%	SW 11 mph
Sunday February 18	Partly Cloudy	38°/25°	11%	8%	NW 11 mph
Monday February 19	Partly Cloudy	41°/27°	10%	5%	WSW 9 mph
Tuesday February 20	Partly Cloudy	40°/22°	17%	11%	NNW 10 mph
	Wednesday February 14 Thursday February 15 Friday February 16 Saturday February 17 Sunday February 18 Monday February 19 Tuesday	Wednesday February 14 Partly Cloudy Thursday February 15 Sunny Friday February 16 Partly Cloudy Saturday February 17 Partly Cloudy Sunday February 18 Partly Cloudy Monday February 19 Partly Cloudy Tuesday Partly Cloudy	Wednesday February 14Partly Cloudy32°/21°Thursday February 15Sunny37°/29°Friday February 16Partly Cloudy38°/22°Saturday 	Wednesday February 14 Partly Cloudy 32°/21° 6% Thursday February 15 Sunny 37°/29° 9% Friday February 16 Partly Cloudy 38°/22° 22% Saturday February 17 Partly Cloudy 33°/19° 25% Sunday February 18 Partly Cloudy 38°/25° 11% Monday February 19 Partly Cloudy 41°/27° 10% Tuesday Partly Cloudy 40°/22° 17%	Wednesday February 14 Partly Cloudy 32°/21° 6% 3% Thursday February 15 Sunny 37°/29° 9% 5% Friday February 16 Partly Cloudy 38°/22° 22% 16% Saturday February 17 Partly Cloudy 33°/19° 25% 17% Sunday February 18 Partly Cloudy 38°/25° 11% 8% Monday February 19 Partly Cloudy 41°/27° 10% 5% Tuesday Partly Cloudy 40°/22° 17% 11%

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: Somerville community invited to help shape city's digital equity plan

Max L says:

This should be a hybrid event. Having it only on Zoom doesn't do much for digital equity.

Response to: Somerville Fire Captain Mark Matthews promoted to District Chief

Steve Keenan says:

Congratulations to DC Mathew's. Mark is a class act and a very dedicated firefighter. Congratulations also to Assistant Chief Tierney, another great guy and dedicated firefighter. Steve Keenan-SFD retired

Response to: Book review: 'Escape Artist' by Ed Ifkovic

Chaya Sarah Pollack says:

Congrats on your new career, Dennis. I enjoyed the article and am putting "Escape Artist" next on my list. Regards to you and Rona.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

Enrollment for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Students

Enroll before February 23 to give your child the best chance at getting your first choice of school.

This enrollment period is for students going in to prekindergarten and kindergarten, who will be four or five years old this fall.

Please start the enrollment process by visiting the Enrollment Office website: https://somerville. k12.ma.us/district-departments/enrollment-office.

Life in the Willes by Jimmy Del Ponte

The Rat Patrol



When I went to the Western Junior High School in 1968, there were a few classifications of people. There were the Mods, the Studs, Hippies, and the Rats had slicked

back hair, pegged pants and pointy black shoes. The rats walking around the city are four-legged ones.

Another rat was found in a person's toilet. The following comments in quotes are fellow citizens stand on the rat problem.

"Bring in hawks and owls." Wow.

"People will have to watch their cats and small dogs. And would bring in the feral cats."

"This is THE WORST I've ever seen in my 64 years in the city."

"The rats are everywhere, all the surrounding cities, not just Somerville."

"When I lived in Somerville, I used to keep 2 gallons of antifreeze in one of my trash barrels. It would kill between seven and 20 rats a week if everybody does that, they'll all be gone in a year."

"The issue is all the construction. It was a problem prior to that but all the construction - the Green Line, the High School, etc. The biggest issue is the utility work. The rats have likely been living in/ near old pipes that are being pulled out and replaced. Rats are escaping to calmer areas ... then they get there and more work takes place. It's easy to blame the mayor but it's a problem that has never been truly addressed for decades. You want to get rid of rats? Get rid of food sources. Creative trapping - rats are smart. Bait stations



may work for a few but eventually the rats ignore them."

"I totaled my husband's car trying to avoid what I thought was a cat. I freaked when I realized it was a giant rat. I screamed and hit a car. The thing was huge"

One thing that can be said about the rat problem is that it's very disgusting.

Somerville High School musicians honored



Three Somerville High School students represented SHS at the annual Massachusetts Music Educators Association - Eastern District Music Festival. After a comprehensive audition process, Kai Deshima (Piano), Anya Miller (Soprano), and Eclipse Felix (Bass) performed at Milton High School for the MMEA Eastern District Festival. In addition, Eclipse Felix has been recommended to

audition for All-State Chorus.

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Somerville Fire Captain Mark Matthews promoted to District Chief



Captain Mark Matthews was promoted to the rank of District Chief at the February 8 City Council meeting. District Chief Matthews (center) is shown at his promotion ceremony with Assistant Chief Sean Tierney and Chief Charles Breen.

— Photo courtesy of Somerville Fire Department

Deano's Pasta: a family business making fresh pasta for four generations CONT. FROM PG 1

Dean and Hala Matarazzo, and it's been in the family for four generations since 1947. Dean's grandfather started the shop in Medford, Massachusetts when he moved from Italy. The location then moved to Charlestown to increase the scale of their production, and they now call Somerville home.

"People can walk in and they can pick up a few ingredients and go home and make a restaurant quality meal at home," Hala said.

Dean and Hala partner with hundreds of restaurants, specialty stores and farmers markets across Massachusetts and parts of New Hampshire to sell their product. Hala has been involved with the business for 30 years and comes into the shop seven days a week.

Operations at the shop starts before the sun rises by loading the trucks with fresh pastas soon to be delivered to their restaurant partners. Hala and Dean do not use distributors, but instead do direct deliveries with their own staff of drivers and trucks.

Hala also delivers both frozen and fresh pasta samples to restaurants and markets, particularly in the North End.

"We do that to keep our relationships with all of our chefs and restaurants and specialty stores," Matarazzo said. "We know everybody by name and they're dealing directly with their pasta makers."

Some customers from Rhode Island, New Hampshire and surrounding areas visit the shop with coolers to stock their fridges from pasta from the shop. Dean and Hala also host events in the shop's parking lot to attract new and returning customers.

Ingredients are sourced locally, even down to the embroidery on their uniforms that were from an embroidery shop in Somerville.

Deano's Pasta and their seven sauces and pestos are currently being sold at the Somerville and Wayland Winter Farmers' Markets.

"It's the relationship that we have with our team and our



customers and our chefs, that's what makes it fun and special," Matarazzo said. "Also being able to connect with people over local, delicious pastas that we're making. It's nice connecting through food."

Visit the Deano's Pasta website at: https://deanospasta.com/.

Rafi Properties announces Sublime Systems expansion at Somernova

CONT. FROM PG 1

and quality control lab, first established in 2020 at Greentown Labs' facility within Somernova's campus, underwent rapid growth, prompting the need for additional space to scale up their production capabilities. Somernova's transformative ecosystem was able to provide Sublime access to the resources, infrastructure and flexibility needed to scale.

Working in partnership with the Somernova and Greentown Labs teams, Sublime was able to expand beyond their initial space into an additional adjacent facility on Somernova's campus in 2022. Sublime was represented by Newmark, a world leading commercial real estate firm, in their 2023 search for a new headquarters. Today's announcement marks yet another important milestone in Sublime's continued growth at Somernova.

Sublime's story is similar to many of Somernova's tough tech tenants, including Form Energy, which was also incubated at Greentown Labs.

Form Energy, a technology company developing a new class of cost-effective, multiday energy storage systems that will enable a reliable and fully renewable electric grid year-round, recently extended their 55,000-square foot lease at Somernova for four years.

Sublime's expansion, combined with the growth of Form Energy, has led to the creation of nearly 400 new jobs on the Somernova campus.

Sublime's growth aligns with the current momentum in tough tech and climate tech industries throughout Massachusetts. The Healey administration recently unveiled their priorities for an economic development plan that will be filed over the next couple of weeks. These priorities include implementing programs and resources to ensure Massachusetts continues to establish itself as an international hub for the climatetech industry. Massachusetts currently ranks second in the nation, after California, in year-over-year growth of the climate tech sector.

"After starting out at Green-

town, we wanted to continue our growth trajectory amid the innovative ecosystem we were founded in," said Leah Ellis, Co-Founder and CEO of Sublime. "Collaborating with Somernova has enabled us to seamlessly scale in our own neighborhood and maintain our access to the high-quality talent coming out of the universities surrounding Somerville."

"At Greentown Labs, we're committed to supporting early-stage climatetech startups as they move from inception to prototyping to full-scale commercialization, and we're proud to see Sublime Systems continue its growth here on Somernova's campus," said Kevin Knobloch, CEO and President of Gre-

entown Labs. "We appreciate Somernova's dedication to climatetech innovation and entrepreneurship, and its commitment to enabling Sublime's next exciting stage of development."

"Rafi Properties maintains its commitment at Somernova to fostering an environment and community that supports pathways for growth companies working to solve the world's greatest challenges," saidCollin Yip, Managing Director of Rafi Properties, Owner and Operator of Somernova. "This is a thriving ecosystem where visionary companies, such as Sublime, can coalesce to redefine the boundaries of sustainable technology for the greater good of our world."

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

The Somerville Bike Kitchen: Where you can fix a bike and meet a friend

By Emmett Biewald

The Somerville Bike Kitchen is a volunteer-run bike cooperative open to anyone with an interest in learning about their bicycle. The space is located on 15 Properzi Way in Somerville, and hosts walk-in shop nights twice a week. These open shop nights are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The SBK was founded in 2015 and has since been providing tools as well as information to people who come in looking to fix a bike.

The term "bike kitchen" is not an exclusive term to Somerville, rather it's a trend that describes a community bike workshop. This model of bike repair strays away from the typical bike shop because it is based in collaboration as opposed to a monetary transaction. The Somerville Bike Kitchen is a fantastic example of this community atmosphere as a product of cooperation. Visitors are welcome to bring their own bikes and work with staff members to conduct improvements to the bike. Instructions from staff are verbal for the most part as they promote the process of fixing your own bike.

Ace Young has been volunteering at the Bike Kitchen since 2019 and has been part of the staff since 2020. When asked about the benefit of the DIY model of bike repair, Young said "Someone could pay a shop a bunch of money, well earned money for what it's worth, to do one thing. Or they get to come here and have the experience of figuring it out themselves."

That DIY experience can really be felt by anyone who walks into the shop on a Tuesday or Thursday night. According to their website, the SBK hosts about 200 people per month during walk-in nights. Another advantage of the SBK is the level of accessibility to tools and equipment. A staff member mentioned that they have access to some machinery that cannot be found at most bike repair shops.

But where does the money come from for all of this? Currently, a large portion of their funding comes from grants and has helped propel the SBK to new heights. For a majority of its history, it was run solely on donations. An optional contribution of \$10 an hour is a welcomed but not required expense



The Somerville Bike Kitchen invite all cyclists to come and learn a few things about bike maintenance.

— Photo courtesy of Somerville Bike Kitchen

for guests at the Bike Kitchen. In terms of staff, there are no fulltime employees at the volunteer run co-op. This may slowly be starting to change. As Young puts it, "We are starting to dabble into paying some staff members for certain tasks, so we'll see how that works out."

The most striking takeaway from visiting the Bike Kitchen is the incredible community aspect. So many conversations are always occurring at once between staff members and guests at the shop. Hannah Goldberg has been involved at the Bike Kitchen for about a year and a half, and joined partly for the opportunity to meet people.

"The whole idea is that everybody is going to be learning, and we're going to learn together," Goldberg said while noting that the volunteers come from varying levels of experience. She mentioned that some had been mechanics professionally, and some had almost no experience with bikes at all. That's what so many people love about the Bike Kitchen.

Learn more at https://somervillebikekitchen.org/.

LEGAL NOTICE

VOTER REGISTRATION



LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL MARCH PRIMARY

Held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024

The deadline for in person registration is Saturday, February 24th at 5:00pm at City Hall or online by midnight Saturday, February 24, 2024

Election Department: Somerville City Hall Hours

MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY ----- 8:30 a.m. ---- 4:30 p.m. THURSDAY ----- 8:30 a.m. ---- 7:30 p.m. FRIDAY ----- 8:30 a.m. ---- 12:30 p.m.

To request a registration form

- + CALL 617-625-6600 ext. 4200 for a Mail-In Registration form
- · Download a Mail-In Registration form from the City Website and mail to the Elections Department
- · Register Online by visiting the City Website

All mail-in voter registration forms must be post-marked by 02/24/24.

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Beacon Hill Roll Call



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Beacon Hill Roll Call can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com

THE HOUSE AND SENATE: There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

This week *Beacon Hill Roll Call* reports on some of the bills that were approved by the 2023-2024 Legislature through February 9, 2024 and signed into law by Gov. Maura Healey.

Of the more than 6,400 bills that have been filed for consideration, only 108 have been approved by the Legislature and signed into law by the governor. Of those 108, 16 were bills that affect the entire state while the other 92 were either sick leave banks or other local-related measures applying to just one city or town. Sick leave banks allow public employees to voluntarily donate sick, personal or vacation days to a sick leave bank for use by a fellow worker so he or she can get paid while on medical leave.

Here are six of the important statewide-related bills signed into law including comments from legislators at the time the bill was approved.

\$56.2 BILLION FISCAL 2024 STATE BUDGET (H 4040)

House 156-2, Senate 39-0, approved a \$56.2 billion fiscal 2024 state budget for the fiscal year that began July 1, 2023. The price tag represents a \$3.8 billion increase over last year's fiscal 2023 budget.

Provisions include \$171.5 million to require public schools to provide universal free school meals to all students; \$50 million to support free community colleges; \$50 million to create Green School Works, a program to fund projects to install and maintain clean energy infrastructure at public schools; \$6.59 billion in Chapter 70 education funding for cities and towns, an increase of \$604 million over last year; \$504.5 million for the special education circuit breaker; \$181 million for MBTA capital projects; \$19.81 billion for MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program that provides health care for low-income and disabled persons; and a new law that prisons must provide free unlimited incoming and outgoing phone calls for prisoners.

Another provision would allow undocumented/illegal immigrants to qualify for the lower in-state college tuition rate if they attended high school here for at least three years and graduated or completed a GED.

"Massachusetts continues to move in a positive direction by making significant investments in this budget," said Rep. Todd Smola (R-Warren), the ranking House member of the Committee on Ways and Means. "We prioritize local funding by increasing general government aid to municipalities and double the minimum aid contribution per pupil for education." "While there were many good provisions in the budget, the final version contained policies, unrelated to the budget itself, that we could not support," said Reps. Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) and Marc Lombardo (R-Billerica) in a joint statement.

The statement continued, "Seniors, renters, small businesses and hard-working families can barely afford to make ends meet. As a result, Massachusetts continues to see one of the highest out-migrations in the country. At the same time, this budget provides a massive expansion in financial benefits for illegal immigrants. It's easier for Hollywood movie studios and multi-national corporations to get massive tax cuts than for the working-class to catch a break. The people of Massachusetts deserve better."

(A "Yes" vote is for the budget. A "No" vote is against it.)

Rep. Christine Barber Yes Rep. Mike Connolly Yes Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Yes Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

\$388.6 MILLION FISCAL 2023 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET (H 3548)

House 153-0, Senate 39-0, approved a \$388.6 million fiscal 2023 supplemental budget.

Provisions include \$65 million for free school meals; \$130 million to keep expanded nutrition assistance in place for a few more months; \$2 million for the reimbursement of SNAP benefits for victims of benefit theft; \$250,000 for a free abortion-related legal hotline; \$45 million for emergency shelter assistance; \$40 million to support affordable housing for immigrants and refugees; and \$2 million for the Boston branch of the NAACP for costs of some programs to be included in its 114th National NAACP Conference in 2023 in Boston.

Other provisions keep some pandemic-era programs, set to expire, in place including allowing restaurants to sell beer, wine and cocktails for take-out; expanding outdoor dining; and extending the authority, set to expire in a few weeks, for public bodies, agencies and commissions to hold their meetings remotely.

"This supplemental budget ensures that our commonwealth continues to support the most vulnerable among us while also building on the lessons we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). "I'm proud to say that the Legislature has proven once again that it has the courage to chart a course that leaves no place or person in the commonwealth behind." (A"Yes" vote is for the \$388.6 million supplemental budget.)

Rep. Christine Barber Yes Rep. Mike Connolly Yes Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Yes Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

\$375 MILLION FOR ROADS AND BRIDGES (S 2375)

House 157-0, Senate 38-0, approved a bill that includes authorizing \$200 million in one-time funding for the maintenance and repair of local roads and bridges in cities and towns across the state. The \$375 million package, a bond bill under which the funding would be borrowed by the state through the sale of bonds, also includes \$175 million for several transportation-related grant programs.

The programs funded by the \$175 million include the municipal small bridge program; the complete streets program; a bus transit infrastructure program; and grants for municipalities to purchase electric vehicles and the infrastructure needed to support them.

"Providing funding for critical infrastructure projects through investments in the commonwealth's public transportation, roads and bridges is one of the most important responsibilities that we have as members of the Legislature," said House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy). "I'm proud of the support for regional infrastructure that this legislation provides, and of the funding that it allocates for the purchasing of electric vehicles by transit authorities."

(A "Yes" vote is for the \$375 million package.)

Rep. Christine Barber Yes Rep. Mike Connolly Yes Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Yes Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

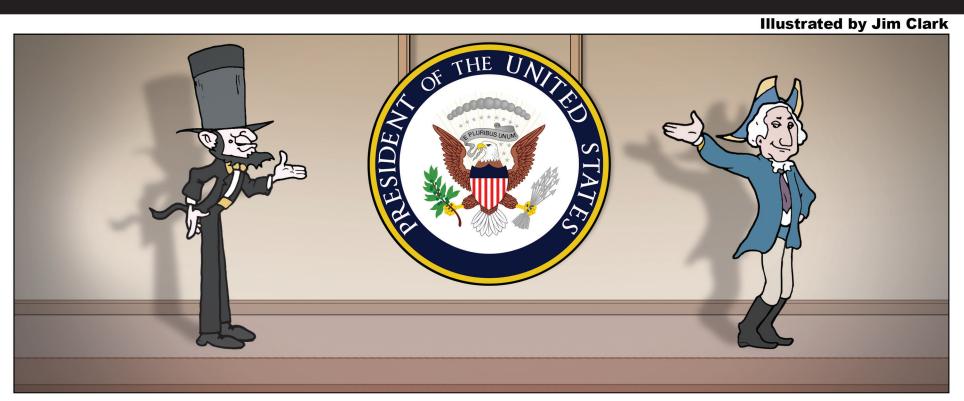
TAX RELIEF PACKAGE (H 4104)

House 155-1, Senate 38-1, approved a tax relief package that supporters say will provide \$561.3 million in tax relief in fiscal year 2024 and \$1.02 billion per year in subsequent years.

Provisions include increasing the rental deduction cap from \$3,000 to \$4,000; reducing the estate tax for all taxpayers and eliminating the tax for all estates under \$2 million by allowing a uniform credit of \$99,600; increasing the refundable tax credit for a dependent child, disabled adult or senior from \$180 to \$310 per dependent in taxable year 2023, and then to \$440 in subsequent years while eliminating the child/dependent cap; doubling the refundable senior circuit breaker tax credit from \$1,200 to \$2,400; increasing the refundable Continued on page 11

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES



President's Day is just a stone's throw away!

Our View Of The Times



The President's Day holiday puts us in mind of those great leaders who governed throughout our country's tumultuous history: The American Revolution, the Civil War, two world wars, the Great Depression, the Civil Rights movement, Vietnam, and so on.

Greatness was thrust upon certain holders of that office by events that shaped their legacies, while others are relegated to general obscurity due to a lack of conflict and controversy during their times in office. Each one's tenure in office should be regarded as equally important. In as much as big events could have elevated their place in history at a moment's notice.

The man or woman who assumes the role of Commander and Chief of our nation must be ready willing and able to rise to the occasion when called upon to do so. Each one of us, whoever we may have supported in the past, has searched our hearts to determine who we feel will best fill those shoes every time we vote.

Most of us are confident that our favored candidate will be up to the task. Others see a lack of integrity or the skills required to do the job well among those who choose to run.

Let us hope that each holder of the office in the future will rise to the occasion and realize the potential they may have to become as great as the others who have gone before them. The right choices will be as important in the future as in any other time in our nation's history.

It's not an easy job, as everyone must surely realize. Let us on this day honor those who step up to that challenge.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

We wish her a nice day. Happy birthday to a real good guy, Elio LoRusso, who is celebrating this week as well. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as Diane Hill Melanson, Valerie Fitzpatrick, Dave Ortega, Albert Piacentini, Jeannie Malone DeMase, Joelle Hochman, Dee Manuel-raposo, Barbara L. Amaral, and AnneMarie Gates a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

The Somerville Homeless Coalition's Amazon Wish Lists are updated month-

ly with the most requested items from their food pantry to meet the needs of their clients experiencing food insecurity. If you would like to learn more and donate through our wish lists, please see the link here: https://bit.ly/SHCLinks.

The Presidential Primary Election is on Tuesday, March 5. Take steps to make sure you're prepared: Register to vote by February 24. Submit your "Vote by Mail" application by February 27 at 5:00 p.m., Vote early at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) February 24 – March 1. Learn more at somervillema.gov/elections.

Artists and members of the community are needed to help shape the vision of the Somerville Armory for years to come. Join the next meeting in-person, online, or asynchronously via our online forum. Think about what the Somerville Armory could look like in 100 years. If you could be around, what would you want it to look like, feel like? Share your thoughts, February 27 at 6:00 p.m. at Connexion (149 Broadway) – hybrid is available. Visit Somervoice to register: https://voice.somervillema.gov/armory-master-plan.

Join Mayor Ballantyne in celebration of our Local Cultural Council grant

season and awards. Meet and network with the 2024 LCC grant awardees, LCC review panelists, and Arts Council staff and board. Wednesday, February 21, 6:30pm. Join in to celebrate these awardees and this community process at Warehouse XI, 11 Sanborn Court, Union Square. https://fb.me/e/8c-7woC2eY.

The Somerville community joined a community meeting on Monday, January 29, to learn more about the updated commercial area plan for Davis Square. The presentation reviewed changes to the previous draft of the Continued on page 15

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#910

- 1. What city has hosted the most Super Bowls?
- 7. What player has the most Super Bowl MVP awards?
- 2. Who was the first Black quarterback to win a Super Bowl?
- 8. Who was the first African American president of the United States?
- 3. Which Dallas Cowboy had his helmet stolen at the 1994 Super Bowl?
- 9. What was the original name of President's Day?
- 4. How many Super Bowl titles do the Manning brothers have?
- 10. Who was the only president to serve more than two terms?
- 5. What team has the most Super Bowl wins?
- 11. Which president watched the Battle of Bunker Hill from his family farm as a child?
- 6. Who manufactures the Lombardi Trophy?

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12. What is the only snake that builds a nest?

Answers on page 11

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Soulution to last week's crossword puzzle:

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The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- 1. There is only one walled city in North America.
- 2. The first email was sent by Ray Tomlinson to himself in 1971.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD U.S. PRESIDENTS

ACROSS

- 1. Falling out
- 5. Bottle top
- 8. Door fastener
- 12. Shoe emanation?
- 13. Staff note
- 14. Home to Buccaneers
- 15. Actress Spelling
- 16. Thor's father
- 17. Kidman's husband
- 18. He served two nonconsecutive presidential terms
- 20. JFK and RFK's relationship, abbr.
- 21. Foreword
- 22. J. Edgar Hoover Building org.
- 23. Pac-Man venue
- 26. Long and adventurous journey
- 30. Rudolph's Clarice, e.g.
- 31. Like life, according to some
- 34. Is it enough?
- 35. Jalisco plant
- 37. As opposed to rent
- 38. Grassy mound
- 39. Flat-top hill
- 40. W in George H. W. Bush
- 42. Nicki Minaj's genre
- 43. Reusable painting pattern
- 45. Sacred songs
- 47. Horse control
- 48. Laughing predator
- 50. Gunk
- 52. Nobel Peace Prize winning
- president
- 56. Social media button
- 57. Tangerine-grapefruit hybrid
- 58. Greek god of love
- 59. Cautious gambler
- 60. Trousers
- 61. Baltic capital
- 62. Port in Yemen
- 63. Follow ems
- 64. Not ever, poetically
- DOWN
- 1. Campus drillers
- 2. One on a pedestal
- 3. Golfer's warning



- © StatePoint Media
- 4. "Jeopardy" question, e.g.
- 5. Closet wood
- 6. ____ acid
- 7. Body between England and U.S.?
- 8. President who spent the shortest time in office
- 9. Orator's stand
- 10. Pampering establishments
- 11. J.M. Barrie's Peter
- 13. Like hot lava
- 14. Short and plump
- 19. Endow
- 22. WW2 Pres.
- 22. W W 2 Pres.
- 23. Thomas Jefferson was his VP
- 24. "Thesaurus" author
- 25. Cut it out
- 26. Sound on Old MacDonald's farm
- 27. Annov a bedfellow
- 28. "Bravo! Bravo!" e.g.

- 29. Online reviews
- 32. Delivered by a mare
- 33. Hole punching tool
- 36. a.k.a. Old Kinderhook
- 38. Danish money
- 40. Intelligent humor
- 41. Vomiting
- 44. Pressed beverage
- 46. Tap house
- 48. TV classic "_____'s Heroes'
- 49. Egg parts
- 50. Past tense of chide
- 51. Sand trap tool
- 52. Ill-mannered
- 53. Albany-Buffalo canal
- 54. Theater section
- 55. Russian ruler
- 56. #10 Down, sing.
- Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Green Team Biking Division established

In collaboration with Somerville Bike Kitchen, the Dojo @ Somernova, the Somerville Foundation, and Groundwork Somerville have a new subset of the Green Team: the Biking

Over the 2023-2024 school year, five high school students are paid to learn all about bike repair and safety, fix and earn their very own bikes, and fix other bikes to give to community members in need of transportation.

Last week, local community members donated 16 bikes to the Green Team Biking Division. While intaking the bikes, the Green Team learned from local bike experts how to evaluate bikes for their repair needs. Now, the Green Team has a list of repairs that each bike needs, and the team will be

> working on the repairs over the next few months.

Once repaired, all the bikes will be redistributed back to Somerville youth and other community members in need of transportation. Do you know a youth or community member in need of a bike? Fill out this form at: https://forms.gle/ myutCwD7jvF1DeMZ9.







Spinach and Ricotta Calzone

Calzones offer the perfect canvas for whatever flavors you desire. You can make it with cold cuts, spinach, broccoli rabe, collard greens, your favorite cheese, meatballs, and so on. It can be served as a meal with a green salad or as an appetizer. You can make ahead and serve at room temperature. The combinations are endless.

- 1 16oz package Pizza Dough
- 1 16oz package frozen Chopped Spinach, cooked and strained
- 1lb Ricotta Cheese
- 1/4 lb Genoa Salami sliced and cut into 1/2" pieces
- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil, plus 2 tea-
- 1 Large Red Onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 Teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon Sugar

1/2 Cup Pecorino Romano, grated 1/4 Teaspoon freshly grated Nutmeg 1/2 Teaspoon freshly ground Black

In a 10" sauté pan, over medium heat, add 2 tablespoons of olive oil, the sliced onion and salt. Cook down for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Lower the heat to low, add the sugar, stir and cook for an additional 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool. Preheat the oven to 400* and place the rack in the center of the oven.

Take out the dough and leave at room temperature. Cook the spinach according to the package. Let drain and cool. In a large bowl, combine the ricotta, salami, Pecorino, nutmeg and ground pepper and blend together.

Once the spinach is cool enough to handle, place it into a clean, cotton dish towel and bring the corners of the dish towel together and twist until all the liquid comes out. Place the spinach



into the cheese mixture and blend well.

Taste the filling and adjust seasoning if needed. On a lightly floured surface, roll the pizza dough into a rectangle measuring 15" long by 10" wide. Coat the sheet pan with 1 teaspoon olive oil. Place the rolled dough onto the sheet pan.

Place the ricotta filling on one half of the dough leaving 1/2" border all around the edges. Spread the mixture evenly. Pull the other half of the dough and fold over onto the other side. Crimp the edges all around to seal the calzone.

Cut between 3 and 4, 1" vents into

the top of the dough. Coat the calzone with the other teaspoon of olive oil. Place in the oven and bake until the crust is brown and set, about 50 minutes. Remove from the oven and place on a cooling rack for about 20 minutes. Slice and serve.

Serves between 4-6 people. Serve with a side of fresh salad. And yes, you can serve it with your favorite marinara

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

LEGAL NOTICES

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



SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY 30 Memorial Road Somerville, Massachusetts 02145 Telephone (617) 625-1152

Web: www.sha-web.org

The **Somerville Housing Authority** is requesting quotes from qualified Electrical Contractors to perform electrical work including installations and repairs on an as needed basis. Proposals should include an hourly rate for electrical services.

Term: 6 - 12 months

Not to exceed \$50,000.00

Quotes are subject to M.G.L c.149 sec.44A (2)(A) and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L c.149 §§26 to 27H inclusive.

Scope of work: The Contractor shall provide all labor and tools to provide the necessary work as directed for the completion of the electrical services at the SHA's various developments. The Contractor shall apply for and obtain permits and regulatory approvals as may be required. The SHA shall reimburse the contractor the amount paid. The cost shall be identified and included in the monthly invoice.

The Contractor shall be required on site within one week as scheduled by SHA.

Stock and Materials: The Contractor shall use SHA furnished fixtures and finishes unless otherwise authorized. Items purchased by the Contractor at the SHA's request shall be billed at no more than cost plus 15%. The Contractor will be required to present the original itemized invoice to the SHA. The cost shall be identified and included in the monthly invoice.

Payment Invoicing: Contractor's invoicing must be itemized to reflect contract pricing for each item.

Contractors who intend on bidding shall email Ryan Cummiskey at Ryanc@sha-web.org after 11:00AM on Wednesday, February 14th, 2024, to request a bid package.

Proposals must be received by **2:00PM on Thursday, February 29th**. Proposals can be emailed to Ryanc@sha-web.org. Please contact Ryan Cummiskey at Ryanc@sha-web.org with any questions.

2/14//24 The Somerville Times



LEGAL NOTICE

City of Somerville Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) SB-24.1

The City of Somerville, Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD)

invites sealed proposals for the USQ Community Benefits Fund Projects

Small Business Grant Programs

 $\textbf{Small Business Grant Programs}. \ Proposals \ must be for programs that assist with small business supports in the Union Square neighborhood.$

Funds for Small Business Supports programming are provided by the USQ Community Benefits Fund Projects, City funds, or other available funds generated from development impact fees.

Bid Number SB4.1

Request for Proposal packages for both programs will be posted and available for download on the City of Somerville website beginning at February 14, 2024 at

https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/assistance-businesses
Print copies available upon request to Adriana Fernandes at email

<u>EconomicDevelopment@somervillema.gov</u>

An electronic PDF file should be emailed to email address and proposal packages must be submitted no later than

February 28, 2024 @ 4:30 PM

for responses to SB24.1 to the above email address.

Please contact the City of Somerville's Workforce Development staff, by email EconomicDevelopment@somervillema.gov, for information and proposal packages.

Thomas Galligani, Acting Executive Director 617- 625-6600, x 2500

2/14/24 The Somerville Times

LEGAL NOTICE - Vehicle Sale 03/02/2024

Pro Tech Towing notice to owner. The following abandoned motor vehicle will be privately sold unless claimed:

Car information	VIN#	Last registered owner	Address
2018 Jeep Wrangler	1C4HJXFG1JW106906	Xuanrui Xu	31 Patricia Way # 3, Littleton, MA 01460

Date of Sale 03/02/2024. A 5-day notice to the Waltham Police Department Chief will be provided before sale.

Location: Pro Tech Towing, 205 Willow St. Waltham, MA, Phone: 781-894-5058

2/7/24, 2/14/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB #24-44

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

Henry Hansen Memorial Park Construction Services

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, February 14th, 2024. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville (2014) 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: 2:00 pm, Monday, March 4th, 2024. 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 for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

Sonia Castro Procurement Manager 617-625-6600 x3407

2/14/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB #24-42

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

Somerville Parks Tree Health Program

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, February 14th, 2024. 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, Wednesday, <a href="February 28th, 2024. 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 for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

Sonia Castro Procurement Manager 617-625-6600 x3407

2/14/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB #24-45

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

Spring 2024 & Fall 2024 Tree Planting and Related Services

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, February 14th, 2024. 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, Monday, March 4th, 2024. 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 Felisa Garate at $\underline{\text{fgarate@somervillema.gov}}$ for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

Felisa Garate Procurement Analyst 617-625-6600 x3407

2/14/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB #24-43

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

Installation of Three (3) Standalone Portland Loo Prefabricated Toilets

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: 02/15/2024. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: 02/29/20242:00PM EST. 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 Andrea Caruth at $\underline{acaruth@somervillema.gov}\ for more information.$

5% Bid Deposit required.

Andrea Caruth
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer
617-625-6600 x3400

2/14/24 The Somerville Times

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

The Somerville Times -

Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

Earned Income Tax Credit from 30 percent to 40 percent of the federal credit; and reducing the short-term capital gains tax rate from 12 percent to 8.5 percent.

Other provisions double the lead paint tax credit to \$3,000 for full abatement and \$1,000 for partial abatement; ensure that employer student loan payments are not treated as taxable compensation; make public transit fares, as well as ferry and regional transit passes and bike commuter expenses, eligible for the commuter expense tax deduction; increase from \$1,500 to \$2,000 the maximum that municipalities may pay seniors to do volunteer work to reduce their property taxes; raise the annual authorization for the low income housing tax credit from \$40 million to \$60 million; and allow cities and towns to adopt a local property tax exemption for affordable real estate that is rented by a person whose income is less than a certain level set by the municipality.

The measure also includes two provisions which the Mass Fiscal Alliance says will result in tax hikes. One would require Massachusetts married couples who file income tax returns jointly at the federal level to do the same at the state level. The other changes the system under Chapter 62F that requires that annual tax revenue above a certain amount collected by the state go back to the taxpayers.

Under current law, the money is returned to taxpayers based on what he or she earned and paid in taxes. The new tax package changed that and provided that each taxpayer will receive a flat rate refund, unrelated to what they earned or paid in taxes.

"This is the most significant tax relief package in a generation," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). "This legislation is going to put real dollars into the pockets of the people who need it most, including parents, seniors, young people and middle class families who are struggling to keep up with rising costs.

This bill includes a historic expansion of housing programs that will ignite affordable housing development and ease the housing crunch, as well as significant relief for families with young children. It will also make Massachusetts a more competitive place to live and work and encourages businesses to continue investing in our region."

"Back in April, I stood at the rostrum for about 13 minutes and expressed a mix of support for the many elements of this bill that will help working families and people experiencing poverty — while at the same time criticizing the elements of this bill that will benefit large corporations and the super-rich," said Rep. Mike Connolly (D-Cambridge), the only House member to vote against the package.

"From my vantage point, this bill was significantly improved through the conference committee process, and there are several elements of the bill I enthusiastically support," continued Connolly. "And yet, as I stand here today, I still cannot bring myself to support the total price tag of \$1.1 billion once fully implemented. Not after we just spent a decade working to pass the Fair Share Amendment to gain desperately needed new revenue ... A lot more needs to be done, including bigger public investments in programs, services and infrastructure — investments that could be significantly constrained by the overall cost of today's tax cut bill."

(A "Yes" vote is for the tax relief package. A "No" vote is against it.)

Rep. Christine Barber Yes Rep. Mike Connolly No Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Yes Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

FREE PHONE CALLS FOR PRISONERS (H 4051)

House 132-26, (Senate on a voice vote without a roll call vote), approved a proposal that beginning on December 1, 2023, would provide free phone calls and video calls for all prisoners in Massachusetts.

The vote was mostly along party lines with all Republicans and one Democrat voting against the bill and all other Democrats voting for it.

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

"The telephone is a lifeline for people locked in prisons and their families, but phone company profiteering and kickbacks to prisons, have made calls unaffordable," said Aaron Steinberg, Communications Director of Prisoners' Legal Services of Massachusetts. "This landmark law will allow for precious human contact between incarcerated people and their children and other loved ones. This will help families thrive and help incarcerated people succeed when they return to our communities."

"Every law abiding citizen that has a job and works 40 plus hours a week has to pay for phone calls," said Boldyga. "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." (A "Yes" vote is for the bill. A "No" vote is against it.)

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

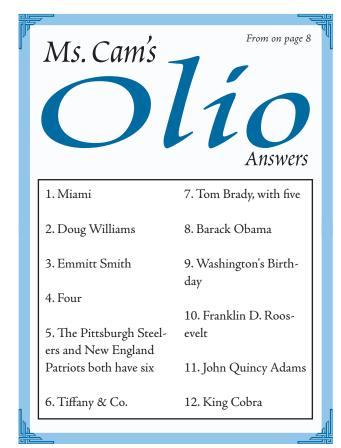
Rep. Christine Barber Yes Rep. Mike Connolly Yes Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Yes

HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK'S SESSION?

Beacon Hill Roll Call 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 legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session. During the week of February 5-9, the House met for a total of 44 minutes and the Senate met for a total of 47 minutes

Mon. Feb. 5	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:32 a.m. Senate 11:14 a.m. to 11:37 a.m.
Tues. Feb. 6	No House session No Senate session
Wed. Feb. 7	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. Feb. 8	House 11:02 a.m. to 11:14 a.m. Senate 11:11 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.
Fri. Feb. 9	No House session No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com



Agreement reached to unlock affordable housing in Union Square

This week the Union Square Neighborhood Council (USNC) and US2 signed an amendment to their Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that paves the way for the development of a 51-unit affordable housing project in Union Square.

The amendment clarifies poorly defined elements of the CBA and provides compensation for the delay in moving forward with the project in



the form of the expedited delivery of 8 units of workforce housing in US2's D3.2/D3.3 project.

The 2019 CBA the USNC negotiated with US2 called for completion of an affordable housing project on Webster and Prospect St in time for the opening of the Union Square Green Line station. The project was meant to partially address the increased demand for housing adjacent to US2's life science complex and to help mitigate the displacement of low and moderate-income residents from the area.

According to Matthias Rudolf, co-chair of the USNC, "The delay in moving forward with this project comes at a time when Union Square area escalating housing costs have forced many long-term residents to move to surrounding cities where housing costs are lower."

The signing marks an essential step towards the development of a long-promised affordable housing project. Necessitated by US2's change in the proposed process for delivering the housing, it specifies that instead of building the housing with an affordable housing developer, US2 will now purchase the land and transfer ownership to Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), a nationally known non-profit developer.

Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Portent of seasons ahead...

— Photo by Denise Provost

Boddy's Dad Jokes Corner



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On This Day in Kistory February 14

1549 - Maximilian II, brother of the Emperor Charles V, is recognized as the future king of Bohemia.

1779 - American Loyalists are defeated by Patriots at Kettle Creek, Ga.

1848 - James Polk becomes the first U.S. President to be photographed in office by Matthew Brady.

1870 - Esther Morris becomes the world's first female justice of the peace.

1876 - Rival inventors Elisha Gray and Alexander Graham Bell both apply for patents for the telephone.

1918 – Warsaw demonstrators protest the transfer of Polish territory to the Ukraine.

1920 - The League of Women Voters is formed in Chicago.

1945 - 800 Allied aircraft firebomb the German city of Dresden.

1979 - Armed guerrillas attack the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

1989 - Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini charges that Salman Rushdie's novel, The Satanic Verses, is blasphemous and calls on Muslims to kill Rushdie.

CENTER SENIOR HAPPENINGS:

Upcoming events:

Medical Equipment Program – Through the generosity of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and from the direction of Mayor Ballantyne, the Council on Aging is now able to provide Durable Medical Equipment at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60, or have a permanent disability, and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. We currently have available: Commodes, Bath Chairs, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies and Transport Wheelchairs (wheelchairs are intended for transport and are not self-propelling or self-breaking.) For additional information, or for an application, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Boston Red Sox Valentine's Day Luncheon & Dance - Tuesday, February 14th starting at 12:00 p.m. at Fenway Park. The Boston Red Sox have graciously provided us with 10 seats for their celebration! If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321. RSVPs will be accepted only on Tuesday, February 6th and Wednesday, February 7th. All RSVPs will then be entered into a raffle which will be drawn on Thursday, February 8th at 9:30 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Lucky winners will be notified by telephone on February 8th! Residents who attended last year will not be eligible this year. This event is open to Somerville residents only. Transportation cost to Fenway Park will be provided by the Somerville Council on Aging.

Musical Ventriloquist Kevin Driscoll & Friends Comedy Show – Cultural Series Event Thursday, February 15th starting at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Portuguese lunch from J&J Restaurant and performance is brought to you at no cost by Somerville Cambridge Elder Services, Multicultural Meal Program, a City of Somerville, ARPA funded program. Please reserve your spot for the event and lunch by calling Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Life Transitions: A Life Well Lived is a Life Well Planned – Friday, February 16th from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. As we age, some of the hardest conversations that we will have with loved ones will be around our care. If you find yourself looking for ways to start these conversations or to hear more about what these conversations should cover, consider this presentation. A representative from the Visiting Nurse &

Community Care will be presenting on how to guide these conversations. To RSVP, please contact Natasha Naim by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2317.

Shifting Gear: A presentation on driving from the Registry of Motor Vehicles - Friday, March 8th starting at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Have you considered giving up your license or are you having concerns about a loved one's ability to drive? The Registry of Motor Vehicles presents information about how different aspects of aging can affect your ability to drive and what to consider when thinking about stopping driving. To RSVP, please contact Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317.

Intergenerational Poetry - Monday, March 25th, April 1st & April 8th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. The Somerville Council on Aging, in collaboration with Harvard University's Poetry without Boarders course, is hosting intergenerational sessions to learn about and celebrate poetry. Over three sessions, we will be discussing and writing works of poetry. No experience with poetry is required and creative writing will be optional. To sign up please contact Natasha Naim by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov

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.

Tuesday, February 20th - Ralph & Jenny Center - Italian - Alfredo's Italian Kitchen Thursday, February 22nd - Holland Street Center – Portuguese – J&J Restaurant

Tuesday, February 27th - Ralph & Jenny Center - Chinese - Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center

Thursday, February 29th -Holland Street Center- Italian - Alfredo's Italian Kitchen the Ralph & Jenny Center.

Zumba – Wednesday, 14th at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. RSVP to Michelle Deutsch at 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov.

Tai Chi – Friday, 16th at 9:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Tai Chi is a practice that uses slow, gentle movements and postures to help improve mindfulness, balance and ease of motion. It originated as an ancient martial art from China and promotes wellness and rehabilitation. The mind-body exercise incorporates breathing techniques with fluid motion and a mediative state to boost positive energy overall. RSVP to Michelle Deutsch at 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov

Coffee & Conversation – Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center. February 26th. Grab and Go lunch available. Join us as we discuss a range of topics. No books – no test – just friendly conversation and good coffee. Please contact Maureen Bastardi at mabstardi@Somervillema.gov or 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 to RSVP. Please note we are back at the Ralph & Jenny Center.

Please note that the Somerville Council on Aging will be closed on Monday, February 19th in observance of President's Day.

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.

Bridget Seley Galway, artist/poet. Born in Marathon Florida in 1954, Galway's roots come from the 50's and 60's bohemian life style of Key West, New York's Greenwich Village and Provincetown. Her poems have also been published in Provincetown Magazine's Poetry Corner, Wilderness House Literary Review, Poetry Porch, Ibbetson Press, and Bagel with the Bards, to name a few. Her first collection



of poems and images What Moments Yield was published by Ibbetson Press, and has been included in the following permanent collections: N.Y.C Poets House, State University of Buffalo collections, Umass Amherst W.EB Du Bois Library, and the Truro Library Cape Cod. Her art has been exhibited throughout New England, and reviewed in several publications, including Artist Magazine and Cape Arts. Her paintings have been selected for the covers of Bagel with Bards, Ibbetson Press, and individual poet publications. She is currently the Arts Editor / Curator for the Wilderness House Literary Review.

Memento Vivere

In every moment there is an inkling of how to be, how to move into the next.

Sometimes with the ease of breath, as light as the white butterfly navigating through gardens.

Other times with grief present as a dead fledgling fallen from the nest.

In that moment one must remember the white butterfly.

— Bridget Seley Galway

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

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

OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

'Distractions En Route: A Dancer's Notebook and Other Stories' by Nina Rubinstein Alonso

Distractions En Route: A Dancer's Notebook and Other Stories by Nina Rubinstein Alonso (available at Ibbetson Street Press and on Amazon)

Review by Off the Shelf Correspondent Lee Varon

Nina Rubinstein Alonso's story collection *Distractions En Route: A Dancer's Notebook and Other Stories* is a marvelous collage of thirty vivid stories.

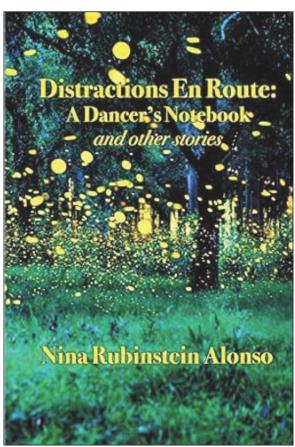
The opening two stories keenly portray a dancer's life, as in the opening story, *The Redhead Number 37*, which begins with the line: "Sixty girls lined up can't see how they look because the mirrors are draped in paper." One by one, these dancers are eliminated. The way in which women's bodies are objectified is heightened in the world of dance. We are told "Eliminations start with body cuts' noted on our file cards – torso long, hips wide, head large, feet stiff."

It is painful to learn how heartless and capricious this culling process can be. "We're trained to accept defeat with grace, maintain discipline, no bitching, no whining." Those in charge of making these decisions are depicted by Alonso with trenchant accuracy. There's Marina, drinking coffee and eating a wedge of pastry, and David, a Brit from the Royal Ballet who "pounds his cane, chain smokes ... kicks people out who annoy him." When he decides to close the dance studio he leaves with a flourish: "With parting rage he takes his cane and bashes studio mirrors, one sharp crack each, so they'll be useless to anyone else."

Although wonderfully drawn tales from ballet open *Distractions*, this is by no means a collection that primarily centers on dance. It is more about life itself; particularly male/female relationships. In addition, there is a golden thread of spiritual seeking that is woven throughout many of these stories as the protagonists seek wholeness and meaning in their lives amid their sometimes chaotic and tumultuous existence.

This juxtaposition of everyday life and spiritual connection also reminds me of the cover of *Distractions* – pinpoints of golden light on a background of a blurred and tangled forest. This spiritual seeking often takes the form of journeys to India where Alonso, with a few deft brush strokes, brings the reader into the world of meditation centers and ashrams. This spiritual journey was, for me, the heart of *Distractions*, and yet overlaying this spiritual quest is a scintillating array of stories about relationships.

These stories are not told chronologically. A story about an early marriage may appear early in the book and then again near the end. This technique mirrors



the way in which our minds often wander in and out of past and present.

Alonso is a well-established poet and this comes through in her stories. The wonderful attention to detail as, for example, in her depiction of a newlywed couple (Leah and Sam) sailing on the Chesapeake: "...watching Sam adjust the spinnaker while she tosses peanut shells overboard. They had nothing to say to each other, their silence not about the beauty of the waves, but about emotional numbness." I felt like I was watching the beginning of a movie with growing trepidation.

The denouement to this ill-fated marriage finally arrives in the story Fog – a gripping vignette rich with metaphor. Sam – arrogant and foolhardy – has insisted on a sailing trip despite oncoming fog. The couple sets out in their small sailboat with no auxiliary motor. As the sails are "luffing and flapping in the erratic wind" Sam himself remains unflappable as Leah fumes and regrets not only this voyage but the marriage, and reminisces, ruefully, about a former boyfriend whom she had dumped to marry Sam. The growing fog which turns out to be the worst in a century is an obvious metaphor for the growing muddle of their relationship.

Despite this bleakness, Alonso is gifted at finding the humorous in awkward situations. Recalling her first encounter with Sam's upper- Continued on page 15

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

plan released in 2020 and offered the opportunity for feedback from attendees. To learn more and watch the meeting go to https://www.youtube.com/user/SomervilleCityTV.

The Central Library children's room hosts board games for kids. Wednesday, February 28, at 12:30 p.m. Stop by, have fun with checkers, chess, Mancala, Scrabble, and other board games on half-day Wednesdays. (This is not an instructional session.) This program is for children. No registration required.

Do you love the Great American Songbook repertoire: Gershwin, Berlin, Ellington, Arlen, Porter? Do you want to sing challenging music with a fun group of experienced singers? The Halalisa Singers welcome enthusiastic, experienced singers in all voice parts (especially basses) for their spring concert I've Got The World on a String: Great American Songbook and Beyond at the First Parish in Arlington on Saturday, April 27. Open rehearsal auditions: Monday, February 19, 7:30 p.m. Rehearsals at Hancock Church, 1912 Mass. Ave., Lexington, MA. Go to: https://www.halalisa.org/audition to reserve your spot. For more information info@halalisa.org.

During the month of February, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) will be conducting water valve maintenance exercises in Somerville. This work may cause discolored water but is not expected to create any pressure losses. Residents and businesses that experience discolored water are asked to run their faucets until the water runs clear, which can take

up to ten minutes.

Groundwork Somerville is hiring. Seeking diverse candidates who are passionate about urban agriculture and addressing food access and insecurity issues in Somerville. Are you an experienced urban agriculture advocate who is interested in growing culturally relevant crops and sharing the abundance with the community. Find the full job description on their website www.groundworksomerville.org.

Applications are now available for an income-restricted homeownership opportunity through the city's **Inclusionary Housing Program** at **7-11 Aldersey St.** near Union Square. The unit is a three-bedroom condominium available for purchase to households making at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Applications must be submitted by **Friday, March 1**, at noon. Learn more and apply at somervillema.gov/inclusionary.

On the second Wednesday of each month, The Dojo at Somernova (15 Properzi Way, Somerville) hosts an Open-Mic Teen Night. The next openmic is coming up on Wednesday, February 14, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. and will feature fun games, food, and great music all night long. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., the Somerville Bike Kitchen, a volunteer-run bicycle repair cooperative, hosts open-shop nights. Come maintain your bike or learn more about cycling! Each month, The Dojo hosts Gaming is Not a Crime by Youth-Stream. Come build community through playing your favorite games. The event features cash prizes and pizza. The next event will be hosted on Wednesday, February 28, at 6:00 p.m. For more information visit https://somernova.com/dojo/.

The City of Somerville is hiring polling place workers for the upcoming 2024 Presidential Primary Election. Poll workers must be available on Election Day: Tuesday, March 5. The workday starts at 6:30 a.m. and ends after the polls close at 8:00 p.m., with a two-hour break. Poll workers earn \$200 for the day. Interested? To learn more, please call the Elections Office at 617-625-6600 ext. 4200.

The Somerville Community Growing Center's annual Seed Sale Fundraiser is in full swing. Once again, High Mowing Organic Seeds of Vermont is supporting this sale by donating a portion of the profits to the Growing Center. Just go to bit.ly/fcgcstore to place your order. Seeds will arrive for pick-up in early March. With this program, you get great seed-to-grow veggies, herbs and flowers. Orders close February 15.

The City of Somerville's Health and Human Services Office, and Housing Families Inc., opened an overnight warming center for the remainder of the winter 2024 season. The warming center will operate seven nights a week from 6:45 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., on the second floor of the Armory (191 Highland Ave). Guests will have access to free hot and cold meals, water, bathrooms, yoga mats, and space to sleep. Learn more at somervillema.gov/warmingcenter.

Somerville Public Schools is looking for substitute teachers. Join an amazing team of educators, earn \$150/day, and play an important role in our schools.

Learn more about job requirements and apply here: https://somerville.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=1146.

Call to artists: East Somerville Main Streets is gearing up for Carnaval 2024 and they are looking for your talent to create the perfect poster that captures the essence of the festivities. Fill out the Google form to participate: https://forms.gle/unApjMVwYagLHbRn6

Parents of children ages 3 to 8 are invited to enroll in the virtual Power of Parenting [TM] free workshops. This popular program starts on March 5 for Spanish-speakers and March 6 for English-speakers. The program runs for 12 weeks. Register at the link: http://tinyurl.com/SomervillePOP2024 Space is limited, so sign up now.

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. For a list of weekly events visit www.somwintermarket.org.

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Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

class family — Leah, from a middle-class Jewish family — sits down for dinner, fiddling with her napkin, "watching Sam to be sure which of the many forks to select for the first course." The meal unfolds as Alonso writes with exquisite detail: "Matzo balls bounce in the chicken broth and Leah cautiously pushes her spoon into the spongy stuff hoping one won't jump out of her bowl onto the gray linen tablecloth." And listening to the dinner banter: "Their words sift through her mind like salt, irritating, disconnected grains." Other relationships and a second marriage which ends in divorce, are recounted in other stories — "...a series of dismal men" which includes Josh and Hank referred to as "dullsville duo, shaggy, unappealing computer-geeks" then Kent "ginger-haired, hy-

per-chatty about nothing much." Also, along the way are deep connections – one with a man who passes away from lung cancer.

The book is replete with memorable images and phrases. Just to name a few of my favorites:

After the loss of a loved one: "The past is a pain museum whose doors never close."

"The campus is a rippling anxiety caterpillar."

On a trip to India with her lover: "Why obsess about the future, the ultimate lock box with no password? At the table, I pick up my chopsticks, try to focus on 'now."

And towards the end of the book: "Shifting directions is like a big ship turning, dealing with forces of wind and water, requiring massive energy to redirect. But it's the

self, heart-center, trying to choose without making another blunder. If we were filming there'd be a close shot of my hands gripping the rail."

The author seems far from distracted as she keenly observes the world around her and brings her cast of characters alive with realistic often edgy dialogue that sometimes reminded me of the quick repartee of a great film noir. I fell in love with many of the characters in this collection and recoiled at the crassness, narcissism, or pettiness of others. It is interesting that this book of thirty stories ends with the phrase... "no words feel big enough." I was left with the feeling that no words were big enough to capture the depth and expanse of the stories in this moving collection.

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