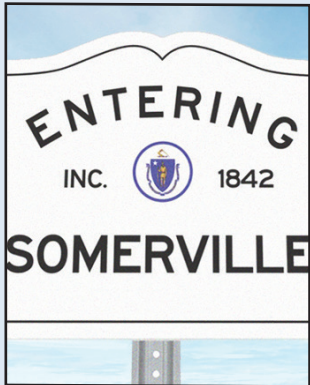




Inside:



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Somerville Police investigating residential break-ins and burglaries



Police would like to speak with the individual pictured here concerning the recent spate of burglaries and break-ins in the city.
— Photos courtesy of the Somerville Police Department

By The Times Staff

The Somerville Police Department is actively investigating several recent residential break-ins and burglaries.

Since February 3, there have been seven residential break-ins reported in the east end of the city. These incidents occurred in close proximity to one another. In five of these cases, residents were home at the time of the break-in. Arrests have been made in connection with some of these incidents; however, additional break-ins have occurred since those arrests, and the investigation remains ongoing.

Additionally, two residential breaking and entering incidents were reported in Ward 6. Residents are not known to have been home at the time of those break-ins.
Continued on page 4

A night of comedy at The Rockwell, and reflections from host Alexa Albanese

By Matthias Gat

Alexa Albanese hosts "Truth, Jest, and the American Way," a comedy show inspired by "SNL's Weekend Update." A panel of comedians and journalists followed, discussing the way journalism and comedy act as a means of delivering the truth.

A journalist's civic duty is to inform the public, and do so in an accessible and effective way. Unfortunately, in recent years, many Americans have turned away from traditional sources of news. According to a 2025 study from the Pew Research Center, 86% of American adults use digital devices to get their news; moreover, around 21% of those often use social media for news [1].

"We are trying to expose the
Continued on page 4



Comedian and journalist, Alexa Albanese, kicks off the night by introducing herself to the audience at The Rockwell in Davis Sq.
— Photos by Matthias Gat

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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.

To honor **Black History Month**, the **City of Somerville** is hosting free public programming throughout February designed to create space for reflection, learning, and community – including a wellness workshop, film screening, and a fireside chat with Somerville’s **U.S. Representative Ayanna Pressley**. Programming is led by Somerville’s **Department of Racial and Social Justice**, in partnership with local partners. For questions about any of the City of Somerville’s Black History Month events or to learn more about the specifics of each event, please contact RSJ at rsj@somervillema.gov or visit somervillema.gov/rsj.

Virtually join the **Small Business Office Hours, Thursdays** from 4:00-5:00 p.m. Join in to talk to city staff from **Economic Development, Licensing, and ISD** to discuss any questions regarding permits, licenses, or your business. Attendees will be held in a waiting room and admitted to speak with staff in order of when they joined the call. This week’s session will take place on **Thursday, February 19**. Use this link to join: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86006892005?pwd=U2xsT2JvQmdTMmpoY-2dtTk10SXNYZz09>.

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy Birthday to Ball Square resident, **Kyle P.** We wish him the very best year to come. Happy birthday to **Sean Fitzgerald**, who is celebrating this week. We wish Sean a great day. Happy *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of February 18 – February 24 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday February 18	Rain	40°/25°	78%	61%	NW 6 mph
Thursday February 19	Sunny	39°/26°	7%	4%	NE 7 mph
Friday February 20	Snow	37°/29°	93%	84%	S 9 mph
Saturday February 21	Snow	34°/20°	33%	17%	NE 10 mph
Sunday February 22	Snow	34°/27°	50%	39%	NE 11 mph
Monday February 23	Snow	32°/21°	77%	51%	N 20 mph
Tuesday February 24	Partly Cloudy	30°/10°	5%	2%	WNW 13 mph

NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

Criminal search warrants executed in East Somerville



The Somerville Police Department, working with local, state, and federal partners, executed criminal search warrants in East Somerville last week. Law enforcement was able to remove dangerous illicit drugs and illegal firearms from our community. This was a criminal investigation, and was not related to immigration enforcement in any way. DEA has reported that two enforcement operations at locations in Somerville and Lowell resulted in the seizure of tens of thousands of counterfeit pills containing fentanyl and meth, 30 lbs. of crystal meth, and three handguns. This continues to be an active and ongoing investigation.

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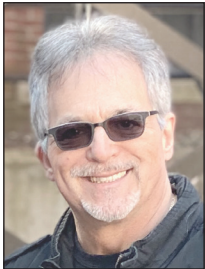
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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.

A look back



This story was part of one that I did a few years ago.

As you all may know by now, I love reminiscing about Somerville in the old days, especially with my Facebook friends.

Not the 1900's, but the 1960's through the 1980's. The dates may not all be correct, but that's what comes with the aging process – a process I love as long as it continues for as long as humanly and coherently possible.

Today I am going to spend a fictitious day traveling through the Somerville of my youth. Again, chronologically, I may be off, but in my mind, there are no dates, just memories. I can't help but once again go back for a visit to my favorite long-gone spots. Are you with me?

My day starts off with a hankering for a submarine sandwich. Where should I go? My two favorites are Bella Meos, in Powder House Square, and Toddi's (pronounced Toddies) in Ball Square.

At Toddi's, you get to listen to the fast-paced, quick witted wise cracks of Toddi himself. That is like dinner and a show! Or maybe I should pop in Harold's Luncheonette at the corner of Rogers and Broadway. There's a show going on there also. The Anna show! I always get a warning when I go in there because I travel with a pack of St. Clements hooligans. But Butch keeps us in line. They have a wicked cool jukebox and a killer BLT.

Then maybe I'll head up to Teele Square to Duke's 5 & 10, and then Steen's Bakery for some great bread. Almost forgot to pick up that prescription for dad at Furbush and Shute Drugstore.

In the winter, we have to hit Harold's for hot chocolate after freezing our butts off skating on the frozen-over Trum Field. After all, Dunkin' Donuts isn't in Magoun Square yet.

Davis Square has tons of restaurants that cater to just about every taste, style, and preference. Back in the day, my favorite was The Venice Cafe, I'm pretty sure it's where Orleans is now (unless Orleans is gone and another restaurant snuck in



without me knowing). I have mentioned The Venice many times in this column. Maybe it's because I never want its memory to fade away.

or Izzy's on the corner of School Street? You never know who you will bump into in there. I wonder if he is any relation to Joe Izzy down on Glen Street?

Shall we stop by Joe's Spa on Bow Street

I want to check out *Continued on page 15*

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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Why Did I Get a 1099—and What Does It Really Mean?

A: It may be because of a rule the IRS uses for non-paycheck income.

Originally, 1099 forms were created to capture investment income like bank interest (1099-INT) or dividends (1099-DIV). But over time, 1099s have expanded to cover nearly every type of income the IRS wants to track:

- **1099-NEC:** Payments to freelancers, gig workers, or contractors
- **1099-K:** Platforms like PayPal, Venmo, Etsy, and StubHub
- **1099-R / 1099-C:** Retirement distributions, canceled debt

• **1099-G / 1099-S:** Government payments or real estate sale proceeds

• **1099-MISC:** Rent, prizes, or catch-all income

And even with recent tax law changes aimed at reducing over-reporting, many platforms still issue 1099-Ks—especially for gig work, business activity, or frequent sales.

What It Doesn't Mean: That the Whole Amount Is Automatically Taxable

Whether you're:

- Driving for Instacart,
- Selling items on eBay, or
- Reselling Taylor Swift tickets on SeatGeek...

...you may have deductible costs (like mileage or the original purchase price of

the item sold).

You only owe tax on the net gain—but you must file to explain it.

If you don't file, the IRS may assume the full amount is taxable and bill you for it!

Bottom Line

Getting a 1099 doesn't mean you did something wrong.

But it does mean the IRS is aware of the income and expects you to respond.

File your return—even if it's late—and tell the full story.

That's how you avoid tax surprises and stay in control.

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



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

Somerville Police investigating residential break-ins and burglaries

CONT. FROM PG 1

Police urge all residents to remain vigilant and take proactive steps to protect their homes and neighborhoods.

Safety Tips:

- Always lock your doors and windows, even when you are home.
- Do not buzz in individuals you do not

know in multi-family buildings.

• Leave lights on when you are away to make your home appear occupied.

• Consider installing motion-sensor lighting or security cameras.

• Report any suspicious activity immediately by calling 911.

Your awareness and cooperation are essential in helping keep our community safe. If you see something, say something.

As part of the ongoing investigation, investigators are seeking to speak with the individual shown in the photos on

page 1, who may have information related to these incidents. If you recognize this individual, please contact the Somerville Police Department at 617-625-1600 ext. 7250 or email Detective Courtney Reece at creece@police.somerville.ma.us.

A night of comedy at The Rockwell, and reflections from host Alexa Albanese

CONT. FROM PG 1

truth," Silvia Foster-Frau says, "but one of the flaws of (modern) journalism is that the way we try and deliver the news isn't accessible." Frau is a Nieman fellow at Harvard and an investigative journalist for the Washington Post. She was joined by other journalists and comedians on a panel that was a part of Alexa Albanese's show, "Truth, Jest, and the American Way."

In 2019, Albanese began her comedy career. Even with the COVID-19 pandemic, she continued performing on online comedy specials. She recently received a master's in journalism from the Harvard Extension School.

Other people on the panel included Matt Shearer, a reporter for WBZ news-radio, Simone Iglesias, a Nieman fellow and political and economic reporter for Bloomberg, Daniel Strauss, another Nieman fellow and political reporter, and Nick A. Zaino III, a Boston Globe contributor and creator for the Boston Comedy Radio.

The panel focused on the state of American journalism and how comedy plays a role in shaping the political landscape.

With the increase in adults who turn to alternative information sources, more responsibility is put on public figures, especially those with big followings. Strauss worries that these responsibilities are being deflected, especially by those who started as comedians or entertainers, but transitioned into hosting podcasts.

"(Podcasters) will weigh in on politics in ways that commentators and news analysts would," Strauss says, "and then say or do something ignorant but then try to hide behind their label as a comedian to dodge responsibility."

This concern is not unfounded, as there are multiple instances of public figures pushing harmful rhetoric, if not full-on misinformation. A notable incident involves Joe Rogan, the host of the "The Joe

Rogan Experience," and questionable comments regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Comments that were, no less, heard by his millions of listeners.

"When you have an audience that large, you have a civic duty to pursue the truth," Strauss adds.

Still, there is no doubt that comedy does play as an effective means of communication, especially when it comes to current events.

Frau says that comedy and journalism parallel one another in the sense that the best of both "always reveal a truth."

The following Friday, Albanese gave some of her own insights on comedy, journalism, and the overlap of the two.

Albanese says she made a conscious effort not to mention Trump by name in her comedy during Biden's term. She noticed that comedy shows like SNL or late-night hosts "normalized" Trump as a public figure.

"He became a character," she says, "I felt like we were in a chaotic cycle of presenting him as a threat, but also entertaining."

She argues that the constant normalization by the media contributed to Trump's re-election, as it allowed him to remain relevant even when he was no longer in power.

Still, echoing Frau's comments from the panel, Albanese believes there is still a place for comedy to be used as an effective form of news distribution.

"Comedy has that gift of putting the comedian in a vulnerable position, and because comedy is a vulnerable experience, it lets the audience's guard down," Albanese explains, "this is why people can feel comfortable accepting information in that way."

Link:

[1] <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/news-platform-fact-sheet/#news-consumption-across-all-platforms>

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

New housing proposal for Davis Square under scrutiny



By The Times Staff

Developer Copper Mill has filed for a Chapter 40B permit to construct a 26-story, 502-unit apartment high-rise at the corner of Elm and Grove Streets, with 25% of the units designated as affordable housing.

The proposed development has stirred up a great deal of interest, along with many concerns from residents. Somerville residents and business owners are asking questions and voicing their points of view.

The City of Somerville's Somerville Planning Department has divided our city into official Neighborhoods (https://data.somervillema.gov/GIS-Data/Neighborhoods/n5md-vqta/about_data). But whatever assigned neighborhood you live

in, most feel that they have a stake in Davis Square.

Developer Copper Mill has asked for state and city approval of its plan to build their tower in Davis Square, with 500 apartments, and no parking (<https://coppermill.com/>).

A local organization, Davis Square Neighborhood Council (DSNC), has started to talk about Copper Mill's plan in its public meetings and online here: <https://sites.google.com/view/DavisSquareNC>.

The DSNC invites the public to join the listserv and take part, or at least see who's talking. The Times will be re-printing some of these messages. We will use only the initials of those commenting and not use their full names in their messages, but

you can see their full names on the listserv site. This is the first installment of comments, with others to come in subsequent editions of The Times.

Recent comments include these from DSNC Secretary Zev Pogrebin:

"Copper Mill's plans provide no resident parking for this development. Some residents believe that the people who rent these apartments will not own cars. There's also debate about whether Copper Mill needs to provide visitor parking, with strong opinions on both sides.

"I don't think a 500-unit building needs visitor parking. Visitors do not necessarily need to park on-site. When I have friends visiting me from car-dependent suburbs or other regions with their car, I typically recommend them to park at Alewife and

take the T, which generally saves them a lot of hassle and time. There is also plenty of paid parking in the area that they can avail themselves of, or they can also use ride-hailing services. I'm not saying that this is a one-size-fits-all problem, but the answer is that there are many ways to get to Davis Square, of which only one is driving your personal vehicle to an on-site parking space within your destination.

"Regarding cleaning staff, home health aids, service workers, and the like, I think that these people will typically be coming into the square at daytime/week-day hours. When I walk around Davis Square, I notice that parking demand is relatively limited and a glut of parking spaces are empty during weekdays." — Z.P., Feb.10, 2026.

Somerville earns AAA bond rating for fourth consecutive year

The City of Somerville has once again earned the highest possible long-term bond rating, AAA, from S&P Global Ratings, marking the fourth consecutive year the city has received the top rating.

The AAA rating reflects S&P's confidence in Somerville's financial management, long-term planning, and ability to balance strong public investment with fiscal discipline. The rating helps lower borrowing costs for the city, saving taxpayer dollars as Somerville invests in core services and critical infrastructure.

"This rating affects what we can get done, and what it costs," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "When we earn top credit, we borrow for less. That means more dollars go into streets, schools, and city buildings, not interest, and we can keep delivering without passing unnecessary costs on to

residents.

What the AAA rating means for residents

The AAA bond rating allows Somerville to borrow at the lowest available interest rates, reducing the cost of major public investments, including:

- School construction and renovations
- Street, sidewalk, and transportation improvements
- Affordable housing initiatives
- Climate resilience and stormwater infrastructure
- Public facilities such as fire stations, parks, and playgrounds

Lower borrowing costs mean more of every dollar goes toward projects residents rely on, not interest payments.

Why S&P gave Somerville another AAA

S&P highlighted several key strengths behind the City's continued top-tier rating, including:

- A large and growing property tax base supported by regional demand for housing and commercial space
- Consistently positive financial performance, with revenues continuing to outpace expenditures due to fiscally conservative budgeting
- Strong reserves and liquidity, exceeding those of most similarly rated municipalities
- Disciplined long-range planning, including preparation for rising costs and economic uncertainty
- A clear plan to manage long-term obligations, including fully funding pension liabilities by 2033 and maintaining a well-capitalized OPEB (Other Post-Em-

ployment Benefits) trust

"This rating tells residents one simple thing: Somerville is well-run and financially stable," added Mayor Wilson. "We're delivering daily services, planning for the long term, and making smart investments without overextending. That means we can fix roads, modernize schools, and build a stronger city, while stretching our tax dollars."

S&P also noted Somerville's proactive management approach, stable outlook, and ability to maintain balanced operations even amid slower revenue growth and rising cost pressures.

The city's FY26 budget totals \$380 million, reflecting a measured increase consistent with recent years and aligned with maintaining core services while managing costs responsibly.

Council on Aging's Valentine's Day Luncheon

The Somerville Council on Aging hosted a Valentine's Day Luncheon at Dilboy Post on Tuesday, February 10. Attendees enjoyed lunch, along with entertainment by Chris Carter, who played fingerstyle guitar arrangements of songs by The Beatles, Elvis, U2, Blondie, etc.

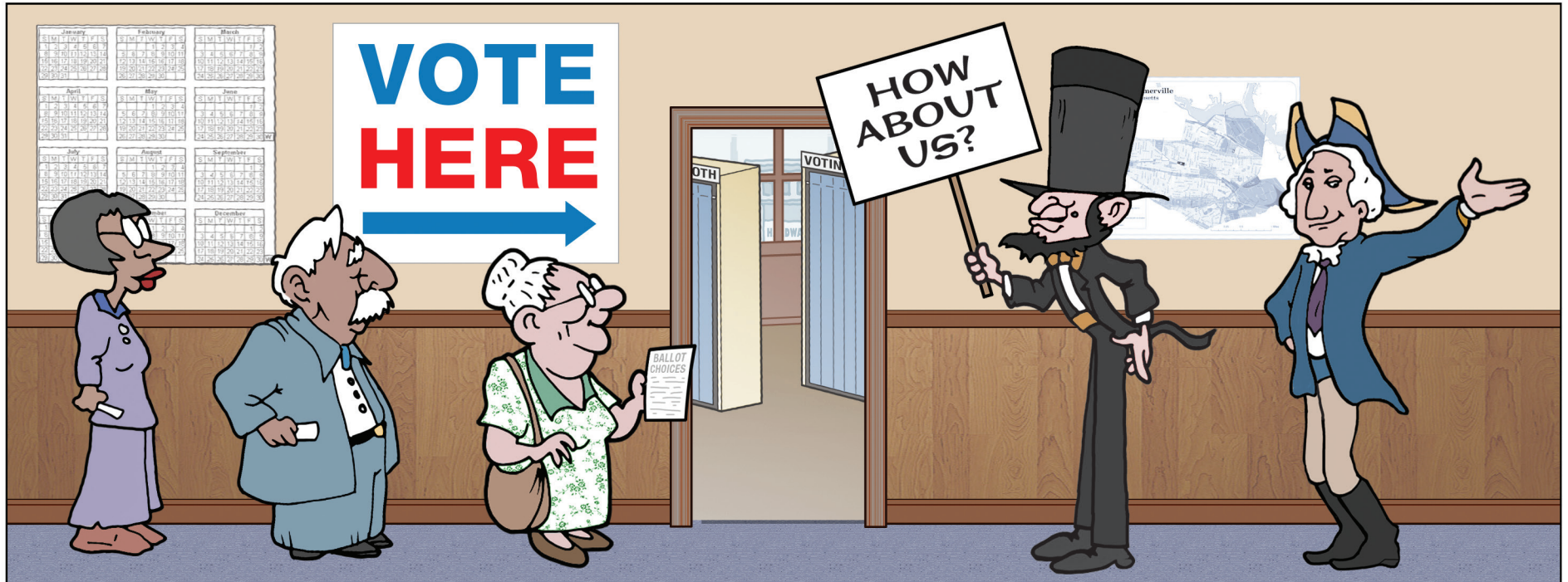
— Photos by Claudia Ferro



COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



It's the voters who choose great presidents.

Our View Of The Times



The Presidents Day holiday puts us in mind of those great leaders who governed us throughout our country's tumultuous history: The American Revolution, the Civil War, two world wars, the Great Depression, the Civil Rights movement, 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, seeing that great events could have elevated their place in history at the drop of a hatpin.

The man or woman who assumes the role of Commander-in-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 be supporting in the next presidential election, should search our hearts to determine who we feel will best fill those shoes.

Most of us seem to be very confident that our favored candidate is up to the task in any given presidential election. Others bemoan a lack of integrity or skills required to do the job well among those who are running.

However it turns out next time around, let us hope that the next president will rise to the occasion and realize the potential they may have to become as great as others who have gone before them.

We are facing trying times in many ways, and the right choice will be more important than ever.

Let's all search our hearts and minds and make sure we choose the best of the best.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

birthday to **Christine Resmini**. We hope she has a great day as well. Happy birthday to a great guy, **Eamon Fee**, who celebrates this week. Happy birthday to **Celia Taylor**. We hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to local realtor **Sammy Alves**, who is celebrating this week. We wish her a nice day. A big happy Birthday to **Lauren Daddio**. We wish her a very special birthday. Happy birthday to a good guy, **Elio LoRusso**, who is celebrating this week as well. Happy Birthday to **Rod Kreimeyer**. We hope Rod has a great day. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Jeannie Malone DeMase**, **Joelle Hochman**, **Dee Manuel-Raposo**, **Bar-**

bara L Amaral, **Sheila Borges-Foley**, **Jason Rabin**, **David Tiger Williams**, **Wayne Fournier**, **Ann Bourque**, and **Las Carolinas** a very happy birthday. To all those who are also celebrating this week, we wish a happy birthday.

The **Department of Health and Human Services** and the **Department of Agriculture** unveiled a new inverted food pyramid that prioritizes protein and full-fat dairy, while putting whole grains at the bottom. This month, the **Somerville Council on Aging** will be looking at the new guidelines so that you can make the best possible choices for your health and

wellness for the upcoming new year. Nutrition at **Ralph and Jenny** (Council on Aging) 9 New Washington St., **Monday, February 23, 12:30 p.m.**, **Holland Street Center**, 167 Holland St. February 25, 10 – 10:45 a.m.

Join **Nibble Kitchen's** first-ever **Paint Night** in partnership with local **Haitian Chef Maritza Jules** and **Haitian artist Marc Elie Mordan**. To kick off the evening, Marc will share insights into his personal artistic style and the unique characteristics that define a traditional Haitian landscape. Whether you're a seasoned artist or picking up a brush for

the first time, you'll be guided through a step-by-step process – starting with broad brushstrokes to build your background before layering on the vibrant details that make your piece pop. No painting experience or equipment is required. As you create, Chef Maritza will keep you inspired with a feast of authentic Haitian flavors, including crispy fried pork belly (griot), savory plantain fritters, and refreshing coconut mocktails. Nibble Kitchen at **Bow Market**, **Sunday, March 1, 4 – 6:30 p.m.** Get tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1979368941788?aff=oddtcreator>.

Continued on page 13

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1010

- Which president is featured on the silver dollar?
- Who is the youngest president elected to the office?
- Who assumed the presidency after Abraham Lincoln's assassination in 1865?
- Who was president when the British set fire to the White House in 1814?
- "Lady Bird" was the nickname for the wife of which president?
- How many rooms are in the White House?
- Which U.S. president had a one-lane bowling alley built in the White House?
- Which country has won the most gold medals in Winter Olympics history?
- Which famous musician was born on February 6, 1945?
- Which famous abolitionist's birthday is in February?
- What's the most stolen grocery item?
- The lyric "I wish I was special" is from what 1992 Radiohead song?

Answers on page 11

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- A giraffe can clean its ears with its 21-inch tongue.
- The King of Hearts is the only king with no mustache.

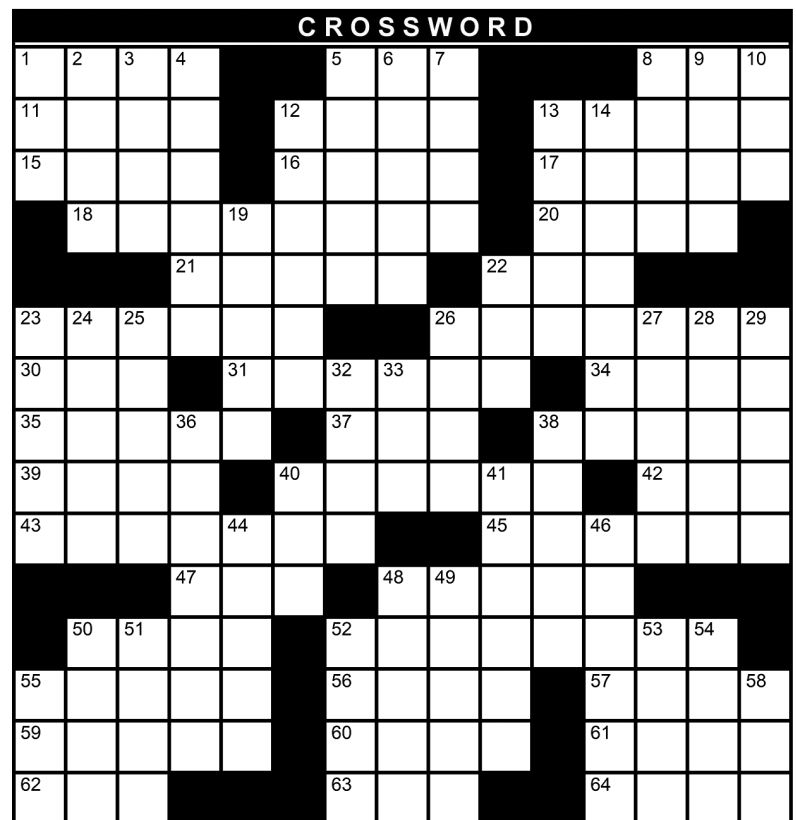
STATEPOINT CROSSWORD WORLD EXPLORERS

ACROSS

- UPS competitor
- "The One I Love" band
- Prior to, pref.
- Gin flavor
- ___ wig or ___ winkle
- Command to Fido
- ___ Grey of tea fame
- Policemen's surprise
- Brunch offering
- Explorer Amerigo's last name
- Rock opera version of "La Boheme"
- Gossipmonger, in Yiddish
- Ballet step
- Henry the Navigator's title
- Chicken pox pimples
- Poetic "even"
- Demosthenes or Cicero
- "The ___ on the Floss"
- Stories "from the Crypt"
- Rank above maj.
- Sore spot
- "Happily ___ after"
- Familiar routine
- "Wow!"
- Retina, pl.
- Explorer Shackleton's first name
- New on the block?
- Barbara Eden's TV character
- Rumple
- First one to circumnavigate globe, almost
- Lewis' or Clark's vessel
- Fictional giant
- Plaintiff
- Shrovetide dish
- Zig or zag
- Dunking cookie
- "___ and the City"
- "C' ___ la vie!"
- Backgammon predecessor

DOWN

- Take drugs
- Bohemian, e.g.
- Skin opening
- Short for self-synchronous



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- Don't just stand there!
- "Fear of Flying" author Jong
- Skirt length
- Part of a hammer
- Wholly engrossed
- Obtain, but just barely
- Gardening tool
- Junk yard stuff
- "Dr. Livingstone, I ___?"
- Fictional cowboy Bill
- One better than bogey
- J.M. Barrie's Pan
- Plunder
- Geographical feature named for Ponce de Leon
- Inspiration for hide-and-seek game
- City in Belgium
- North Pole workers
- Winter driving hazard
- Homesteader's purchase, sing.
- Likewise
- Possibly America's first European Leif ___
- Jeopardy
- Horse poker
- Tooth cover
- One born to Japanese immigrants
- Willie of country music fame
- Dashboard windows
- Type of heron
- Gender checkbox
- Windows alternative
- Change address
- Mystique
- Not ever, poetically
- TV network
- "Maggie May" singer

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Community Gospel Choir offers songs of hope



"I'm hopeful that people will leave this year's concert feeling hope," says Stacie Clayton, founder and director of the annual Community Gospel Choir concerts, which have been held in honor of Black History Month almost every February since 2005. The Choir is made up of community members of all races and backgrounds, from Somerville, Medford, and neighboring towns.

Clayton explains, "Given the instability that our country is now experiencing, the theme of this year's gospel concert is 'Trouble Don't Last.' I want this concert to be a voice of hope that comes from knowing that what we are now going through is a cyclical part of our growing pains as a nation, to help us recognize that we need each other as a community, and to fortify us to work harder for our growth as a nation."

This year's Community Gospel Choir Concert will take place on Sunday, February 22, at 3 p.m. at the Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Avenue, two blocks from Davis Square. The concert is free, family-friendly, and will appeal to all ages. The singers will be accompanied by an ensemble of professional jazz musicians, and the concert will be emceed by Medford's former Poet Laureate, Terry E. Carter. For more information, see www.ilovescbc.org.

Need help affording food? Call Project Bread's toll-free Food Source Hotline

When food costs compete with heating bills and rent, many Massachusetts families are facing impossible choices. The uncertainty around nutrition policy changes makes the situation even more challenging. If you or your family need help accessing food, call Project Bread's toll-free FoodSource Hotline today at 1-800-645-8333.

The FoodSource Hotline connects residents to resources right now. Trained counselors help with applications for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), share resources on the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), connect families to free meals for children, and locate emergency food programs like community meals and food pantries. The hotline also provides referrals to other federal nutrition programs, like Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Whether you're a college student, a senior, or a family facing hardship, the FoodSource Hotline provides confidential, free support. The hotline is recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Call Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. or Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for support, available in more than 180 languages.

Get Help Now: If you are struggling with food insecurity, call 1-800-645-8333. Visit projectbread.org for more information and resources in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole.

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



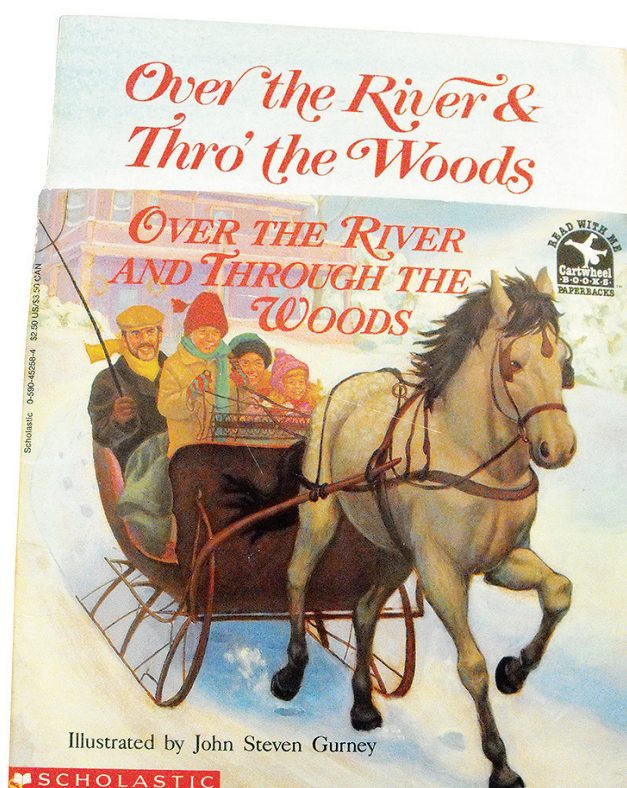
Eagle feathers #348

This article first appeared in the November 27, 2013, edition of *The Somerville Times*.

Sleds and sleighs

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Boston Street on Prospect Hill is aptly named. From the top of the street on a winter day, it looks like you could coast down her elevation and not stop until you crossed the Charles and continued on into Boston. From this spot, your line of sight to the Prudential Building is dead on.



Somerville is known as a city of hills and, as you go back in time, her hills and parks were enjoyed during the winter months by many a generation. Sledding or coasting was so popular that the city would close off motor vehicle access to many streets for the sole purpose of sledding and winter enjoyment.

What do you do today when the snow falls deep? For many, just jump into your 4-wheel drive and go. But not too many years ago, the sled was the answer. The stories go back to the revolution and beyond. Colonel Henry Knox used over 40 sleds to carry captured cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Somerville and Dorchester forts. This caused the evacuation of the British from Boston. The Somerville/Medford region has many romantic accounts about sledding. For over 160 years, Tufts students found escape from their studies in coasting down the sides of Walnut Hill.

In the Thanksgiving poem *Over the River and Through the Woods*, the river refers to the Mystic, and the trip through the woods on the Medford/Somerville line was made by horse-drawn sleigh. The song *Jingle Bells*, composed by James Pierpont in Medford Square, was originally called *One Horse Open Sleigh*. He wrote it after

Continued on page 11

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Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.149 Over \$150K

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the HVAC Controls Replacement Phase 2 - Capen Court at Capen Court (667-1) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **C.A. CROWLEY ENGINEERING, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to:
Removal and replacement of the existing control valves, actuators for all control valves serving existing fan coil units and replacement of all thermostats as noted on the plans with new on the 3rd and 4th floors as well as in other select areas.

The work is estimated to cost **\$160,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 03/02/2026 at 12:00PM EST for general bids.
Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, **HVAC**, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

General Bids will be received until **05 March 2026 at 2:00PM EST** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled
Date and Time: 02/24/2026 at 10:00AM EST

Address: 1 Capen Court, Somerville, MA 02144
Instructions: Contractors shall meet at the site in the main lobby.

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

Nashoba Blue Inc.
433 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-1167

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



Advertisement

The Somerville Housing Authority is seeking competitive sealed Bids, for SHA Invitation for Bid (IFB) # P-TRASH022026, for the Rendering of Municipal Solid and Recycled Waste for Multiple State and Federally funded properties at Various Locations in Somerville Massachusetts, in accordance with the specifications prepared by the SHA Purchasing Department.

The Term is for Three (3) years with two (2) 1-Year options at the SHA's sole option

Bids will be received until **March 4, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.**

IFB Documents will be available for download on SHA's web site <https://www.sha-web.org/bids.aspx> by **2:00 p.m., February 18, 2026**. Addendum/s if any, will be added to the same site. It shall be the bidder's responsibility to include addendums in returned Bid documents.

A Non-Mandatory site visit will be held on **February 23, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.** Please register with Anthony Crespo at Tonyc@sha-web.org if you plan to attend. All interested parties will meet at Somerville Housing Authority, Administration Building, 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145.

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.149 \$50K to \$150K

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Rooftop Exhaust Fans - Weston Manor at Weston Manor (31-7) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **NORIAN/SIANI ENGINEERING, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to:
Replace 14 rooftop bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans in place. Provide adapter curbs and extensions to raise the exhaust fans above the roof. Clean the exhaust ductwork from the roof to the basement. Connect to existing circuits.

The work is estimated to cost **\$65,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 02/27/2026 at 2:00PM EST for general bids.
Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General Bids will be received until **04 March 2026 at 2:00PM EST** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled
Date and Time: 02/25/2026 at 9:00AM EST Address: 15 Weston Avenue, Somerville, MA 02145
Instructions: Meet at the front door. A representative of Somerville Housing Authority and the engineer will be present at this visit.

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

Nashoba Blue Inc. 433 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-1167

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB #26-49

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

FY26 Veterans Cemetery & City Monuments Preservation Project

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at 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 **Wednesday, February 18, 2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **3:00PM Wednesday, March 4, 2026**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Felisa Garate at fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required. Massachusetts Prevailing Wages apply.

Felisa Garate
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3406

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, March 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_7E4P2_EeSWaY3RmPnKC1jg

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 Historic Significance (STEP 1 IN THE DEMO REVIEW PROCESS)

141-143 Walnut Street Applicant: Peter Quinn Architects
Owner: Walnut Street 141 Development LLC
The Applicant seeks to demolish an accessory 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.

2/11/26, 2/18/26 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, March 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_ssh8E3rxSxeNSbxPs55f5w

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:

17 Hudson Street Denise Provost seeks an Administrative Appeal of the Building Official's issuance of Building Permits B25-000072 and B25-000077.

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.

2/18/26 The Somerville Times

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**City of Somerville
PLANNING BOARD**

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Planning Board (PB)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, March 5, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. 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_A6Lnf0UQBy4GJDhIBtx20

TO CALL IN

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

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

360 Foley Street Assembly Row Hotel LLC proposes a major amendment to the Updated Block 5 Design Guidelines and existing PUD (PB 2006-59) in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District (ASMD).

360 Foley Street Assembly Row Hotel LLC proposes a major amendment to a previously issued SPSR-A (PB2014-34) in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District (ASMD).

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

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

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB #26-50**

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

Somerville Police Station Parking Control Gates

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's [BidExpress](http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress) page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, February 18th, 2026**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Thursday, March 5th, 2026**. 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.

5% Bid deposit required. Massachusetts Prevailing Wages apply.

Please email Logan Carroll Lcarroll@somervillema.gov for more information.

**Logan Carroll
Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3407**

2/18/26 The Somerville Times

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**SOMERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EQUITY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

There will be a Public Hearing before the City Council's Committee on Housing, Community Development and Equity on **Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 6:00 PM**, regarding a public hearing:

That this City Council hold a public hearing on the petition submitted by 52 registered voters regarding Out of the Blue Community Arts Space at Arts at the Armory, pursuant to Section 2-11 of the City Charter.

This meeting will be held in the Committee Room, on the 2nd Floor of City Hall, and by remote participation, using the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the Committee Room, 2nd Floor City Hall.
2. To attend remotely, enter the link exactly as it appears below into your internet browser. You will then be asked to register for the meeting.
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rjzBvbbT6-hojl7a7YR_w
3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

**KIMBERLY M. WELLS
CITY CLERK**

2/18/26 The Somerville Times



**SOMERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
LICENSES AND PERMITS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

There will be a Public Hearing before the City Council's Committee on Licenses and Permits on **Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 6:00 PM**, on a petition for a New Used Car Dealer.

New Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, USA Auto Hub, 61 Prospect Street, 15 vehicles outside, Mon-Fri: 9am-7pm, Sat: 9am-3pm, Sun: closed.

This meeting will be held by remote participation, using the Zoom Webinar platform.

You have two ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. To attend and be heard, enter the link exactly as it appears below into your internet browser. You will then be asked to register for the meeting.
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_m9iH0Tk4SNe542zv5X2vGg
2. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

**KIMBERLY M. WELLS
CITY CLERK**

2/18/26 The Somerville Times

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

observing the sleigh races between Medford and Malden Squares.

Even the Somerville Fire Department, as late as the early 1940s, reverted to the use of sleds (also known as pungs) to get to fires during serious snowstorms and blizzards. This was needed because resources were severely depleted during the war effort.



Davis Square's Rosebud Diner arrived in Somerville in 1941, the same year that Orson Welles' Citizen Kane, the #1 greatest movie of all time according to most sources, won the Academy Award for Best Picture. The movie opens

and closes, focusing on a sled called Rosebud, namesake of the Rosebud Diner in Davis Square. The diner is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is often the subject of many paintings and photographs.

In 1982, dozens of trunks holding many sleds utilized during the expeditions of the famous Admiral Richard Byrd were uncovered in a Somerville warehouse. On Thanksgiving Day, 1929, Byrd and his crew flew over the Antarctic South Pole. More notably, four years earlier, in 1925, Byrd and his co-pilot made history as the first humans to fly over the North Pole. We all know deep down that perhaps the most important sled of all is that one which is drawn by eight tiny reindeer. Who knows, perhaps Byrd got a glimpse of it during his fateful journey.

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Ms. Cam's *From on page 8*
Olio
Answers

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Dwight D. Eisenhower | 7. Richard Nixon |
| 2. John F. Kennedy | 8. Norway |
| 3. Andrew Johnson | 9. Bob Marley |
| 4. James Madison | 10. Frederick Douglass, February 14, 1818 |
| 5. Lyndon B. Johnson | 11. Cheese |
| 6. 132 rooms | 12. Creep |



Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: My boyfriend and I want to move in together. Can a landlord refuse to rent to us because we're not married?

A: Happy Valentine's Day, and congratulations on taking such a big step together! "Marital status" is a protected class under the Fair Housing laws. Except if you are looking to rent an apartment in a two-family house that the landlord lives in, they cannot discriminate against you because you're not married. And that goes for same-sex or opposite-sex couples, or (in Somerville) polyamorous units.

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

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

To donate visit:

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

Share with your friends and neighbors!
Let's keep local news alive, together.

And to advertise in **The Times**, call **857-488-5138**

Want to write local Somerville stories?

Call **857-488-5138**

and speak to the **Assignment Editor**

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



In what state was George Washington born?
Naked and crying, just like the rest of us.

The "Original"
All Types Vent Cleaning
Restaurant Hood Cleaning
Dryer Vent/ HVAC Cleaning
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Bobbie Toner
857-488-5138

**Somerville through
the eyes of Denise**



More fun on the way?... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

February 18

- 1478 – George, the Duke of Clarence, who had opposed his brother Edward IV, is murdered in the Tower of London.
- 1688 – Quakers in Germantown, Pa. adopt the first antislavery resolution in America.
- 1861 – Jefferson F. Davis is inaugurated as the Confederacy's provisional president.
- 1885 – The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain is published.
- 1907 – 600,000 tons of grain are sent to Russia to relieve the famine there.
- 1943 – German General Erwin Rommel takes three towns in Tunisia, North Africa.
- 1945 – U.S. Marines storm ashore at Iwo Jima.
- 1962 – Robert F. Kennedy says that U.S. troops will stay in Vietnam until Communism is defeated.
- 1967 – The National Art Gallery in Washington agrees to buy a Da Vinci for a record \$5 million.
- 1974 – Randolph Hearst is to give \$2 million in free food for the poor in order to open talks for his daughter Patty.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

On **Thursday, February 19**, starting at 10:30 a.m. at the **Holland Street Center**, the **Veterans Department**, along with the **Council on Aging**, will be hosting **Sgt. Daniel M. Clark**, known as “The Singing Trooper.” He is a veteran (USMC) and a retired Massachusetts State Trooper. This is much more than a concert. As our nation approaches its 250th birthday, Sgt. Clark is weaving a story of our nation through stories and song. Lunch will be served following the performance. Please reserve your spot by calling **Debby Hignins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Liam Mannion and **Bob McWatters** invite the public to join them on **St Patrick’s Day, March 17**, at **Sally O’Brien’s**, 335 Somerville Ave., in celebrating Irish heritage with music, corned beef cabbage, and a pint of Guinness. At Sally O’Brien’s on St Patrick’s Day, there will be plenty of laughter, libations, and many special guests coming by throughout the day to join in the festivities.

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 **through April 12**. 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. The Cummings Building, 42 Prescott St.

Are you a musician, artist, or creative? Do you care about art/music space? Go to the free **Making Space for Art community meeting** on **March 2** at **Warehouse XI**, Somerville. Learn about what Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville have worked on regionally to protect the space we have and potentially create more. Free w/RSVP: <https://bit.ly/makingspaceforart>.

The **2026 Maple Boil Down** will be held on **Saturday, March 7**, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Weather Date: Saturday, March 14), **Somerville Community Center**, 22 Vinal Ave. Each February, a team of volunteers taps a swath of maple trees on the Tufts campus, collecting gallons of sap over a number of weeks. At the Maple

Boil Down, they’ll boil it down into real 100% hyper-local maple syrup. Youth and adults alike will have a chance to learn about tree anatomy and physiology and experience the process of making fresh maple syrup first-hand.

A reminder that the deadline for **Christmas tree pick-up** is **Friday, February 20**. Trees can be placed directly on the sidewalk on your regular trash day after removing all decorations. Do not put trees in a plastic bag. Any trees not collected by then must be removed and held until yard waste collection resumes in mid-April.

Kennedy School Playground public community meeting will be held on **February 26**, 6:30 p.m. **City staff** invites you to attend a virtual community meeting for the **Kennedy School Playground Renovations project**. This session will share a preferred design, solicit the community’s input on the design, and discuss the schedule. A recording of the meeting will be posted afterward so residents who cannot attend can still share their feedback. Visit the **Somervoice Posting** for information about requesting interpretation and ADA access: <https://voice.somervillema.gov/kennedy-school-playground-renovation>

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.

When you apply for **Somerville’s Inclusionary Rental Program**, you’ll now apply just once and will be placed on the waitlist for units at many properties. The application will close on **March 2**, and after that, it will not be available for 1 to 2 years. So, the time to apply is now. Applicants can apply online at somervillewaitlist.org or in-person at the **City Hall Annex** (50 Evergreen Ave.) during regular busi-

ness hours. If you have any questions or need help with your application, please get in touch with them by emailing inclusionary@somervillema.gov or calling them at (617) 625-6600 x2566.

East Somerville Main Streets is inviting artists to apply to create the official **Carnaval poster**. This is a chance to showcase your creativity and help shape the visual identity of one of East Somerville’s most beloved community events. Don’t miss the opportunity to have your art featured and celebrated across the neighborhood. The deadline to apply is **February 20**. Apply now, visit: eastsomervillemainstreets.org/carnaval2026.

Participate in a **Community Forum About the New School Building**. The city is planning a new building at 115 Sycamore Street and is looking for input from the community. Don’t miss the **Community Forum** on **March 3** from 6 to 8 p.m. at **Somerville High School’s Highlander Forum**, 81 Highland Ave. This event will be an opportunity for all community members to learn about the project and provide feedback. Somerville is currently applying for funding from the **Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)** to help finance the project. Find information about the MSBA funding application process, schedule, and project updates on the **City of Somerville’s new school page**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/newschool>.

Low-income households may be eligible to receive help with winter heating costs through the **Home Energy Assistance Program**. This program serves **residents of Somerville and Cambridge**. Participants receive assistance with their heating costs **between November 1 and April 30**. Learn more about the program, check if you qualify, and apply for assistance today at somerville-ma.gov/heatingassistance.

Take steps to protect yourself and loved ones against **COVID-19, the flu, and other illnesses** this winter. Somerville’s **Health and Human Services Department** is hosting **free vaccine clinics** at locations across the city. For more information, visit: <https://www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations>. Next clinic will be

Thursday, March 12, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., **Council on Aging**, 167 Holland Street.

The **Community Gospel Choir** will present a free **Gospel Concert** in honor of **Black History Month** on **Sunday, February 22**, 3 to 5 p.m., at the **Somerville Community Baptist Church**, 31 College Avenue, near Davis Square. This is a family-friendly event, and all are welcome. For more information, see www.ILoveSCBC.org.

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. Upcoming dates to learn more about the Armory lease RFP, connect with others, and receive hands-on support as you prepare your proposal.

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. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Poet Wendy Drexler harvests what remains

Recently, I caught up with my fellow New England Poetry Advisory Board Member Wendy Drexler to talk about her new collection of poetry, *Harvest of What Remains*.

From her publisher: In *Harvest of What Remains*, Wendy Drexler navigates her intense journey as primary caregiver for her husband as Alzheimer's wraps its great arms around them, irrevocably altering their relationship in ways that call upon depths of grief and survival strategies of dissimulation as well as the imperative to sow seeds of love and compassion.

Doug Holder: No doubt, Alzheimer's is a devastating disease. But even in life's most dire circumstances, we can find beauty, maybe ugly beauty ... in the situation. Your thoughts?

Wendy Drexler: Yes, Alzheimer's is indeed devastating and ugly, but there are many beautiful moments with a loved one. Perhaps the most beautiful gift has been my growing capacity for tenderness and compassion. For example, when we were getting haircuts together, and I was helping my husband put on his coat, a woman in the salon came over and asked if she could "step into the middle of this love." When you are so important to someone, when you are "his person," you play a very sacred role in their life, and while it's a very demanding role, there are definitely blessings to be found that are deep and beautiful.

DH: This may be a strange question. Could there be a sense of discovery in the disease? We all eventually go back to our childlike state. The question is, since your husband was slowly losing his memory, and you reintroduced him to things, was there a sense of wonderment for him?

WD: Yes, definitely. Alzheimer's silver lining has been – at least for me, as I can't speak for my husband – that as his memory fades, rendering the past a jumble, and the future disappears in vagueness, he lives increasingly in the aspirational present, making connections with nearly everyone he sees, stopping to



chat with strangers, complimenting someone on her bright sweater, enriching their lives and well as mine. Time is no longer a rush to accomplish anything. It's a very Buddhist insight: "Nowhere to go. Nothing to do. Present moment. Wonderful moment."

DH: You capture a moment in the poem *In the Kitchen*, watching your husband's confusion as he tries to navigate around it. I imagine each day is a string of banal events that lead up to oblivion. It's sort of like watching a dour Beckett play, each day wondering what the *Endgame* will be.

WD: Actually, cognitive decline is so incremental, and the day's challenges are so great that it takes your full attention and energy to be a caregiver. I rarely think of the endgame. Especially in the last year or two before my husband went into memory care, my days were consumed in a state of nearly constant vigilance to keep him clothed, fed, safe, and as happy as possible. And I had, and greatly needed, a lot of help from a wonderful caregiver. *Continued on page 15*

Lyrical
SOMERVILLE
edited by Doug Holder

Karen Klein, Associate Professor Emerita, Brandeis University, English/American Literature. Humanities, Women's Studies faculty, retired after 37 years of teaching. After retirement, her energies were focused on creative activities: contemporary modern dance performances; haiku & contemporary lyric publications: first full-length lyric poetry *This Close* (Ibbetson Press, 2022); chapbook *Embodied* (Finishing Line Press, 2025); *Circularity* (Toronto, 2025) Scott Ponemone, linocuts; Karen Klein, haiku. Currently working on poems for a book about growing up in Fargo, North Dakota.



grammar

I.

not punctuation not a black dot
signifying the end of a sentence or multiple ellipses

but a duration beginning set timer long short end
this periodicity does not appear on your desktop or

corporate calendar presence felt marking time
in female bodies monthly measurement

tidal blood flow set by our reproductive fate
the moon is our model our shining guide our jailer

private yet universal meanings for late missed
at sixteen I have a boyfriend am late and scared

telling mom leads to the gynecologist's office
where I bleed

mom and my surprised relief she says
if you had been it would have killed your father

What does my father have to do with it?

II.

years marked with lunar memories
gut cramps double over moods circle the moon
and spin

plans made unmade welcome times when missed
a new future ungrammatical times when missed
what future

I was mother of three then late
raging waiting praying waiting

wanting to reject the lunar contract
unbidden at birth

not mine to reject or accept
all the eggs already in my infant ovaries

my powerlessness my moonbody's power
which will eventually cease

How then will my body measure time's flow?

— Karen Klein

A look back CONT. FROM PG 3

the newest 45 records at Bernie's in Porter Square. I also need a few of those little plastic things to put in the holes. I'm pretty sure Bernie's brother runs the record shop in Davis Square. Are there any new guitars in Butler's Music Store? I'm saving up for a new one!

I hate waiting in lines, except at Steve's Ice Cream in Davis. That was before frozen yogurt and fat-free this and that. If we gained weight, we waddled down to Bradlees. I feel

like one of those pickles in the big barrel at DiNitto's Market on the corner of Somerville Avenue and Merriam Street.

I am heading back home, which means I will be walking through Davis Square. I have a choice of places to eat supper. There's Frascat's, Speedy Pizza, Ming Toy, The Waldorf, or The Pine Tree Diner.

I have said it before, and I will say it again. I still picture the old stores exactly where

they used to be. I still think of myself as a 15-year-old, full of energy and adventure.

My nuttiest stunt was performed in Davis Square on a stingray bike. I drove my bike in the front door of Woolworth's. I then sped through the aisles, dodging customers and clerks. I bounced down the small stairs near the pet section and exited out the rear door on Herbert Street. My friends thought I was quite the man. I'll

never forget the look on Mary's face. You remember her, don't you? She had jet black hair and bright red lipstick, and worked there for as long as it was open. I later worked at "Woolies" in the stockroom and behind the luncheonette counter.

Somerville keeps changing and getting better. For me, I enjoy the updates, but still dwell in the past, with a smile and a chuckle.

Poet Wendy Drexler harvests what remains CONT. FROM PG 14

And there are different stages of the disease, and in his case, an earlier stage of anger and frustration at feeling controlled, which was extremely difficult. No one likes to lose autonomy, and yet one neurological aspect of the disease, stemming from changes in the brain, is that someone with Alzheimer's is not aware of their own decline. This is called anosognosia. I found that it was a constant challenge learning to respond at each stage of the disease, to learn not to argue, to accept that I could not control or stop the progression, to develop greater patience, along with skills such as the telling "fiblets," and to feel satisfaction when I handled an exchange successfully. So life has definitely not been banal. In the acknowledgments in my new book, I write, "While I fervently wish you had never developed Alzheimer's, the other side of having to endure it has been my ever-deepening compassion--in that, you have been my teacher."

DH: In your poem *At Hansen Farm* you freely engage your senses with nature and the sweet pleasures of ice cream. Has your experience with your husband helped you to seize the moment or savor the moment more than you previously have?

WD: I think I've been inclined toward trying to savor the moment for some time, and of course, writing poetry is a kind of paying attention. Trying to savor moments with my husband is a practice in lowering my expectations, for example, taking a deep breath when he hasn't taken a shower, that he's only half-shaved, because we are on our way to a family gathering and he's just said, "It's so wonderful to see you!" I have to constantly remind myself of his limitations, of my tendency to become impatient and to have too many expectations, and to try to appreciate his pleasure at seeing me and our being together.

DH: Has writing this collection been cathartic for you?

WD: Definitely. The poems in this collection have been written nearly simultaneously to the events as they've taken place, in the heat of the moment. Writing these poems has enabled me to reflect on my experiences and process my emotions; to legitimize my anger, grief, and fear; and to find greater compassion for myself and for my husband. I have a number of poems I call *Reconstructed Sapphic Fragments*, in which I've taken fragments of poems by Sappho, translated by Ann Carson, and written around the fragments. Then I erase the first poem to create a second poem, an erasure of the fragment poem. Both the reconstructed fragments and erasures have surprised me in that I seem to be offering myself advice and consola-

tion. For example, in *Reconstructed Sapphic Fragment 83*, I write, "Carry me, oh tide, let me try to give thanks." That's the advice and consolation part. And in the erasure of this poem, the distillation is "night again turns time to tanks," a surprising image I would never have found if not through erasure.

I've also really enjoyed my creative collaboration with Cambridge visual artist Connie Saems, whose drawings and cover art grace the book. To see my words transformed into letter drawings is inspiring and takes the poems to another level of richness and meaning.

DH: Is poetry a sort of caregiver for you?

WD: Definitely, that's a beautiful insight!

DH: Why should we read this book?

WD: To quote Rosalynn Carter, "There are only four kinds of people in the world, those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will become caregivers, and those who will need caregivers." Caregiving touches everyone's life. I hope this book will be a source of solace and greater understanding for those who've already shared this journey and will provide insight to those who have not yet experienced the challenges and rewards of caring for a loved one.

How to Make Even a Little of It Slow Down

At the hot pot restaurant, we dip kabocha squash, sweet as candy, into miso broth. Lotus root dense as meat. I scald my tongue, trying to eat too quickly. That impatience again. These days,

I can't listen to any more sad stories. Thank goodness on the Nature show the endangered pangolin on the island of Taiwan made it into the protected forest and found a mate

before the end of the breeding season. That the adorable African bush baby, abandoned by his pregnant mother, escaped the snake and the hostile bush babies and was able

to travel six miles in five days to the outskirts of Praetoria where a friendly pack of bush babies welcomed him, and suburbanites had laid out bananas on platforms linked

by ropes strung between trees. The bush babies mashed bananas all over their happy faces and gamboled among

the ropes and trees. At the restaurant, I grab the clam you are about to eat raw and toss it into the hot broth. I have to watch out for you all the time now. You couldn't hear my conversation with D and G across the table. So sweet

how you start talking to our waitress instead, teaching her *muchas gracias* and *buenos dias*, asking her for a placemat to write down sentences so she can talk with Latino kitchen staff

and customers. How to say *La comida está muy magnifico!*

Quieres un poco de cerveza? She tells us she's from Laos and she squats right next to you beside our booth.

She smiles a lot. Let's say I've never seen a waitress stop to talk to a customer for so long. Let's say we need more hope, more bush babies who find new families and new homes.

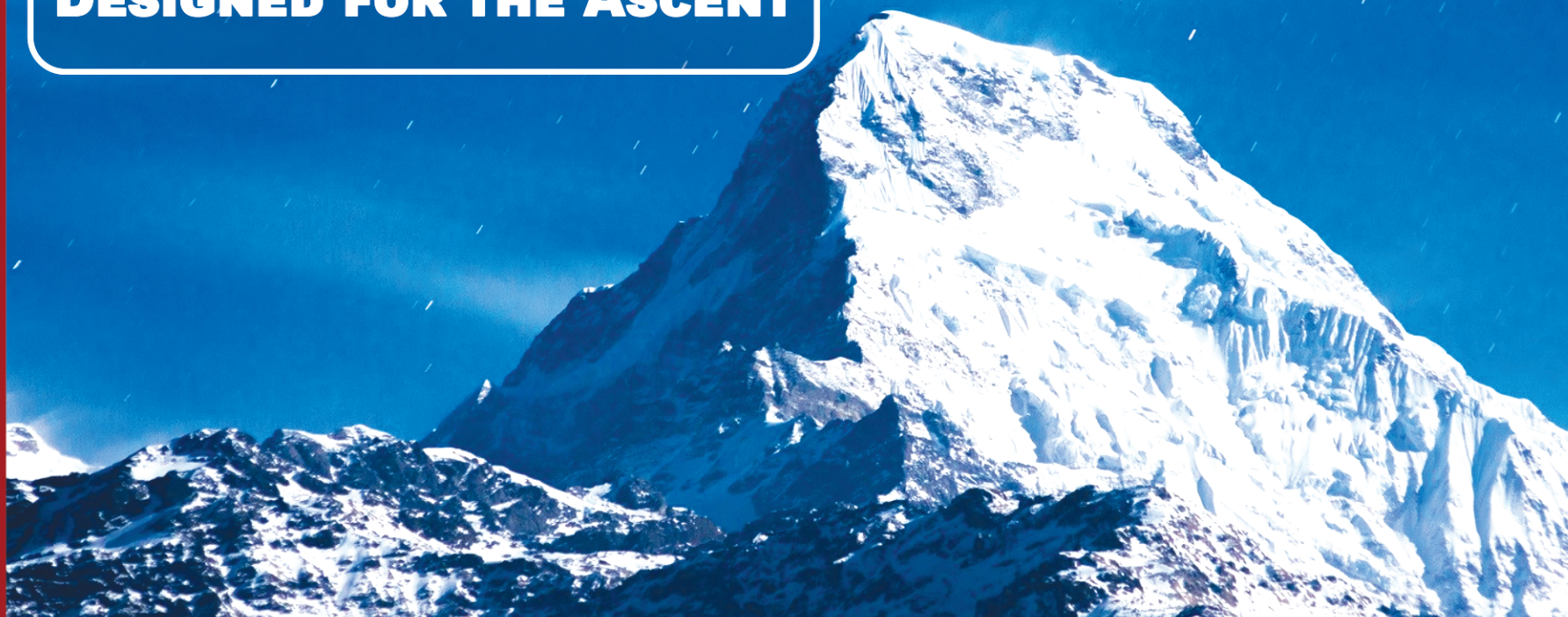
More protected forests. More treetops and more mashing our happy faces with kabocha squash. Let's slow it down over a meal. Let's savor the lotus root and the bok choy

and the wrinkled cabbage leaves we'll learn to let cool long enough we won't burn our tongues.

— First published on *Autumn Sky Poetry Daily*

Wendy Drexler is a recipient of a 2022 artist fellowship from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Her fourth collection, *Harvest of What Remains* received honorable mention for the Paul Nemser Prize and will be published in February 2026 by Lily Poetry Review Books. Her poems have appeared in *Barrow Street*, *J Journal*, *Mid-American Review*, *Nimrod*, *Pangyrus*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Sun*, and *The Threepenny Review*, among others. She was awarded the 2025 E.E. Cummings prize from the New England Poetry Club. A recipient of the Juror's Prize for Art on the Trails, Southborough, MA, in 2021, Wendy served as poet in residence at New Mission High School in Hyde Park, MA, from 2018-2023, as programming co-chair for the New England Poetry Club from 2016-2024. She currently serves on the Club's advisory board. Her website is wendydrexlerpoetry.com.

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