

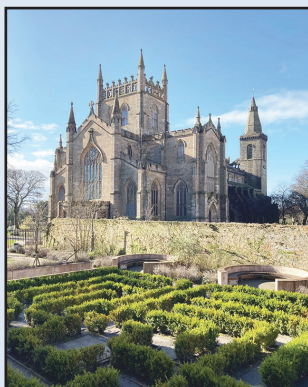


## Inside:



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# New documentary film examines child protection issues in Massachusetts



*Broken*, a film by Brooke Lewitas and Bill Lichtenstein, takes a hard look at the state's handling of at-risk children.

— Photos Courtesy of LCMedia Productions

By Joei Chan

Nearly 50 years ago in Somerville, the Jennifer Gallison case made headlines. A woman and her husband were convicted of manslaughter of their baby daughter, Jennifer Gallison, who was only two years old at the time. Eventually, their daughter passed away due to the parents' failure to provide for her, and they disposed of the daughter's body.

Their son, Edward Jr., was found in the home with bruises all over his body. Though both parents went to jail for their actions over their daughter and son, the governor at the time, Michael Dukakis, protested that more must be done for children.

Brooke Lewitas, a recent graduate from Boston University, and Bill Lichtenstein, a film producer, journalist, and president of

Continued on page 4

## Learn about and experience maple syrup production

Join The Growing Center at 22 Vinal Avenue in Somerville for their 25th annual Maple Boil Down. Fans of maple syrup will not want to miss this event on Saturday, March 2, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Rain date: March 9)

Not only will maple syrup lovers be able to taste fresh local syrup collected from the sugar maple trees from Tufts Campus, but they can learn the process of sugar mapping, witness the process of boiling sap into maple syrup, and even connect with other maple syrup lovers within the area.

At the annual public Maple Boil every March, youth and adults alike have a chance to learn about tree anatomy and physiology, experience first-hand the process of making fresh maple syrup, and, of course, enjoy tasty maple treats.



Don't miss this year's Maple Boil Down, coming up this Saturday.

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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.

The **Presidential Primary Election** is on **Tuesday, March 5**. Take steps to make sure you are prepared: Submit your “Vote by Mail” application by **February 27** at 5:00 p.m., Vote early at **City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.) through March 1. Learn more at [somerville-ma.gov/elections](https://somerville-ma.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>.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Somerville Positive Forces (SPF)** middle and high school youth will present the **2023 Middle School Student Health Survey** results in a trivia format. After the trivia, they will discuss strategies to address in breakout rooms led by local professionals. Topics include substance use, mental health, physical violence, physical health, and sexual health. Join them on **Thursday, February 29**, starting at 6:00 p.m. Zoom link here: <https://bit.ly/surveytrivia24>.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy birthday to **Eddie Nuzzo**. We hope he has a great one. *Continued on page 7*

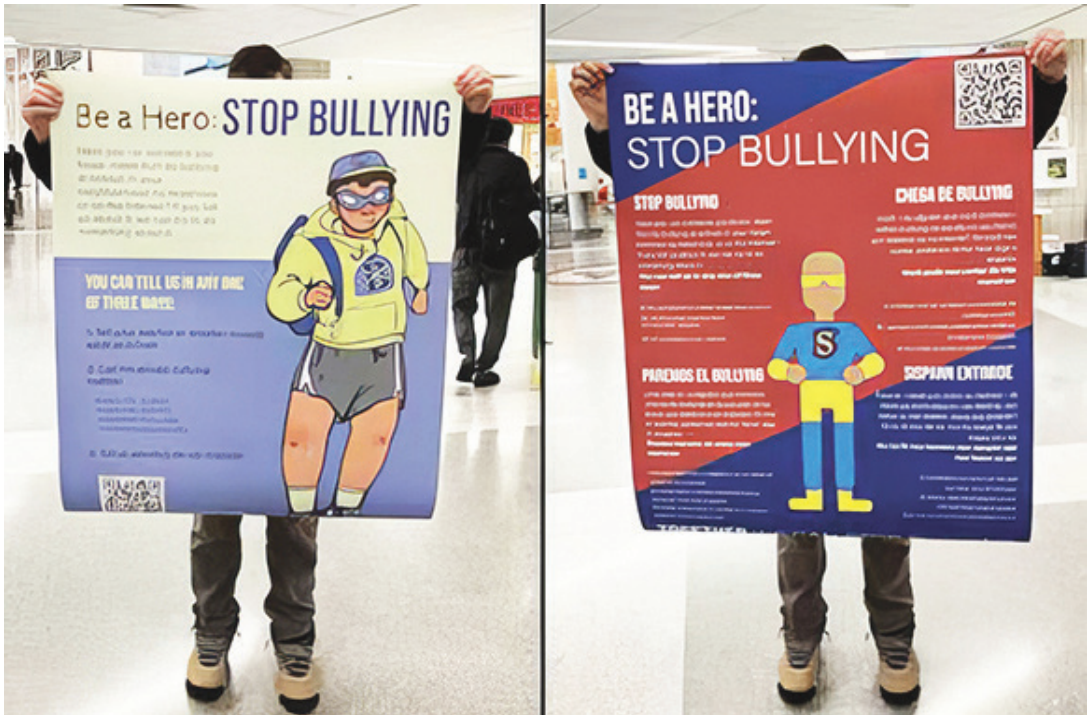
## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of February 28 – March 6 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 <b>Wednesday</b> <i>February 28</i>	Rain	57°/44°	59%	6%	SSW 20 mph
 <b>Thursday</b> <i>February 22</i>	Rain	45°/22°	33%	29%	NW 18 mph
 <b>Friday</b> <i>March 1</i>	Sunny	41°/29°	6%	4%	NW 12 mph
 <b>Saturday</b> <i>March 2</i>	Partly Cloudy	56°/37°	11%	7%	SW 11 mph
 <b>Sunday</b> <i>March 3</i>	Partly Cloudy	55°/36°	18%	12%	N 10 mph
 <b>Monday</b> <i>March 4</i>	Partly Cloudy	43°/39°	19%	10%	NE 10 mph
 <b>Tuesday</b> <i>March 5</i>	Cloudy	57°/49°	22%	16%	S 12 mph

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

## New Anti-Bullying Campaign at Somerville High School



Somerville High School students in the Graphic Communications program collaborated with members of the Student Services Department to create an exciting new anti-bullying poster campaign. There are two poster designs, both of which are available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole. The poster provides clear guidelines for reporting an incident of bullying and a QR code to the anonymous reporting form on the SPS Student Services website. Learn about the Graphic Communications program (part of the Center for Career and Technical Education at SHS) or Student Services at their respective webpages. Posters are displayed around the school.

## The Somerville Times

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Life in the

VILLE

by Jimmy Del Ponte

DQ



Last week I did a story about the Friendly’s restaurant that used to be at the corner of Cedar St. and Highland Ave. Right down the road near the corners of Cedar St. and Morrison Ave. there was a Dairy Queen. Here are folds memories of that happy place:

“It was across from Morrison. Maybe Warwick? It became Royal White Laundry I believe.” (Yes)

“The neighborhood hangout spot for us in the seventies and we drove Arnold nuts when he bought it for the Royal White laundry because we wanted the Dairy Queen to stay.”

“It was my first or second job in high school, can’t remember if Jack in the Box was first or second.”

“Yes, we would ride our bikes there in the summer. Vanilla ice cream cones dipped in chocolate or butterscotch.”

“My friends the Hazelton’s lived right next door, great people, and then it became Royal White Laundry.” (great family!)

“Lived next door to Dairy Queen and Royal White.”

“Those were great days. Football on Sunday in the DQ yard. Stick ball on Warwick St. Those were good days!”

“I used to ride there on my purple sting-ray bike (all by myself, which kids can’t do today) and get a chocolate ice cream cone for 10 cents!”

“Dilly bars were .10 cents”

“Mr. Misty floats!!!”

“We used to put our kids in a red wagon and walk to the DQ. Also, my aunt worked there in the 70’s.”

“I remember walking up cedar street to see the fireworks on the 4th and then to Dairy Queen for ice cream.”

“I lived on Josephine Ave. and use to walk there for banana splits.”



“Actually, Cedar and Warwick – my street. Mostly did not have money to spend there when younger and then later preferred the relative ‘sophistication’ of Friendly’s LOL.”

“Mister Misty brain freeze.”

Thanks to my Somerville social media friends for their quotes.

All this reminiscing has got me in the mood for a chocolate Fribble.

SCES dietitian to dispel nutrition myths over lunch

Separating nutrition facts from fiction will be the focus of lunchtime presentations at the Cambridge and Somerville Councils on Aging in March.

Organized by the Somerville-Cambridge Elder Service (SCES) Nutrition Program, “Nutrition Myths: Fact or Fiction” will be led by registered dietitian Andrea Svartstrom. In addition to a hot lunch, there will be food samples, gifts, a grocery card raffle and recipe ideas.

The presentations will take place on the following dates:

- March 12 at 11:00 a.m. at the Cambridge Citywide Senior Center (806 Mass. Ave., Cambridge).
- March 28 at 11:30 at the Holland Street Senior Center (167 Holland St., Somerville).

This event is free, but registration is required. To reserve your spot, please call 617-349-6047 by 11:00 a.m. on March 11 for the Cambridge event and by 11:00 a.m. on March 27 for the Somerville event.



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### Somerville Armory Community Meeting Series: Our Community Spaces

The city is seeking artists and community to help shape the vision of the Somerville Armory for years to come. Join the next meeting in-person, online, or asynchronously via the 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, 6:00 p.m., at Connexion, 149 Broadway, Somerville MA

Meeting III: The Armory Existing March 26. 6:00 p.m. at Somerville High School, 81 Highland Ave, Somerville MA

Meeting IV: The Armory Future April 23 6:00 p.m. at Community Baptist Church, 31 College Ave, Somerville MA

Somerville Armory Meeting Series Registration: <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/armory-community-meetings-2024/>

Learn More: <https://voice.somervillema.gov/armory-master-plan>.



# New documentary film examines child protection issues in Mass.

CONT. FROM PG 1

LCMedia Productions (formerly known as Lichtenstein Creative Media), have decided to team up to uncover the child protection, foster care, and juvenile court system in Massachusetts with their upcoming documentary, Broken.

Lewitas says that she has a “long-time interest in child protection and what happens when kids can’t live at home or when the state gets involved in caring for children,” and that’s what sparked her interest in reporting this weighty matter.

Lewitas met Lichtenstein on a Facebook group, where she posted an announcement saying that she would like to report on the child protection, foster care, and juvenile court system in Massachusetts. This sparked Lichtenstein’s interest, as he mentions that he’s “been trying to find a way to do a story about this over the years, just because the system is such a mess.” Eventually, he reached out to Lewitas, and they came up with the idea to create something together about the system.

Lichtenstein himself also had experience in covering the system. “I wrote an article in 2013 for The Huffington Post that said

that more than 100 kids in custody and care of the state in some way had died over a 3-year period,” says Lichtenstein. He feels like it was fate that Lewitas wanted to cover this issue, as he believed that there should be more reaction to the system. With this in mind, they decided that, rather than writing another article, the subject would be best covered via a documentary film, so viewers can visualize and experience it themselves.

During the creation of this documentary, Lewitas spent a lot of time speaking with families who were impacted by the foster care system and learning about their stories. “I have had the opportunity to sit in people’s kitchens and have them tell me what happened, and I think it sometimes takes that level of exposure to override a really strong stigma,” says Lewitas.

Lichtenstein and Lewitas hope that this documentary can be seen by everyone, as they believe it is a problem for society, as it is fueled by tax revenues. They believe that this is an issue that affects everyone, and they hope for a change in the system soon.



This documentary is set to release sometime later this year or early next year in 2025, though the trailer is already up online. “Our goal is to make it into festi-

val first, and then a limited theatrical release and public television. We also hope to make it useful for educational use, like social work school and law school. We

are hoping that it will create a shift in attitudes about this problem,” says Lichtenstein.

For more information, go to [brokenfilm.org](http://brokenfilm.org).



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 and follow us on X/Twitter at [@somervilletimes](https://twitter.com/somervilletimes)



# Somerville public servants ask mayor, superintendent to join ceasefire call

Fifty-five employees, staff, and other public servants of the City of Somerville and Somerville Public Schools, have formally asked for Mayor Ballantyne and Superintendent Carmona to join them in calling for a sustained ceasefire across Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, and the provision of all life-saving humanitarian aid.

The staff expressed concern for human life and for members of the Somerville community impacted by the violence. In a letter to the Mayor and Superintendent, they say:

“We believe that all human life is worth protecting. In our collective voice, we are compelled to speak out to end the cycle of violence as well as the root causes that perpetuate it. We, too, raise our voice in solidarity with members of the Somerville community and Somerville staff who are impacted by the violence abroad and the hate and violence they are experiencing in our city.” The full Letter can be found [here](#).

Additionally, the public servants are requesting Ballantyne and Carmona join them in urging Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey to call for a ceasefire. In a press conference held on President’s Day, a member of the coalition criticized the Senators for ignoring their constituents

and called on every community member, including the Mayor and Superintendent, to amplify the demand of the high majority of constituents, saying:

“Senator Warren and Senator Markey] are ignoring 70% of Americans and 4 out of every 5 Democrat, who are demanding a ceasefire since October. With the imminent attack of Rafah, the lives of over a million people are dependent on a ceasefire, including the lives of the hostages. It is our moral responsibility to help our Senators find their courage. It’s up to us, from the ground up, city staff, teachers, mayors, superintendents, cafe workers, nurses, construction workers, and all members of our communities to stand up and urge our Senators to respect the overwhelming voter demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.” Full Press Conference Statements can be read [here](#).

Somerville has in other instances committed itself to dismantling and speaking out against social injustices, even when the City’s position brings discomfort to some in the community. The letter’s signatories call attention to this history:

“Somerville condemned Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and proudly waves the Ukrainian



flag today. The City is rightfully adamant in its support of Black Lives Matter, even as some staff and residents feel ostracized. The City also publicly acknowledged the grief, trauma, and violence of Hamas’ October 7th attack. It is with these bold and courageous precedents set by the City of Somerville that we ask you to stand with us on the side of peace.”

The staff reiterated their support for human rights as a universal principle and called on the City to continue speaking out on issues of systemic injustices, particularly when the U.S. Government funds and/or promotes those injustices. As they wrote to the Mayor and Superintendent:

“We believe that human rights and equality are universal principles that apply to all people – not some. As we fight to tear down systemic injustices in Somerville, we must especially be vocal against systemic injustices that we support and fund abroad.”

Politicians in America were quick to condemn Hamas’ attacks on Israel and quick to provide Israel with billions of dollars to support its war effort. However, those same politicians have been far less eager to act to protect Palestinian civilians. At

least 30,000 Palestinians have been killed since October 7th. The coalition of public servants condemns indiscriminate attacks against any community, including the Jewish community, and they recognize the pain felt by the Palestinian community when their own cries for justice are ignored. As the staff say in their letter:

Here in Somerville, our Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim children, students, residents, and staff feel ostracized when we promote the basic principles of human rights and equality for all yet remain silent about the gross human rights violations committed against the Palestinian community. Our children are confused and angry when we choose carefully crafted language to whitewash the violence they see unfolding on their phones. They are perplexed when we rightfully condemn indiscriminate violence against the Jewish community but are silent to the indiscriminate violence experienced by the Palestinian community.”

The rise in hate and violence here in Somerville has directly impacted many members of the Somerville community; some staff admit that they and others in the city have feared for their wellbeing. The staff note

in their letter:

“There is a rise in hate, violence, antisemitism, and Islamophobia here in Somerville. Our Palestinian, Jewish, Arab, and Muslim communities are directly impacted and fear for their safety.”

Given these circumstances and the willingness of many in Somerville to tear down systemic injustices, these public employees feel everyone must do what they can to urge Massachusetts’ Federal-level elected officials to act so as to help stop the indiscriminate violence against Palestinian civilians and to promote the release of all hostages. Many more lives hang in the balance.

Requesting Mayor Ballantyne and Superintendent Carmona join their call, the public servants’ letter to the two said:

“Please stand with us to breathe hope to the dream that the Palestinian community and the Jewish community will soon live peacefully and together in their shared homeland. We urge you to stand in solidarity with our community and staff who are hurting. We invite you to use your powerful voice to promote a better world for all.”

— Somerville city workers  
ceasefire coalition





# Beacon Hill Roll Call



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Beacon Hill Roll Call can also be viewed on our website at [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)

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

*Beacon Hill Roll Call's* research shows that so far there are at least eleven bills that have been approved unanimously by the Senate in 2023 but are languishing in the House Ways and Means Committee as of February 23, 2024. With no opposition in the Senate, observers question why the bills have not yet been considered and approved by the House.

Under House rules, any individual representative can move to discharge any and all if these bills from the Ways and Means Committee. There is a 7-day waiting period prior to the House considering the motion to discharge. The discharge motion must receive a majority vote of the members present. If the measure is discharged from the committee, the committee has four days within which to report out the measure for placement on the House's agenda for action.

A bill may also be discharged from the Ways and Means Committee by any representative by filing a petition signed by a majority of the House. The bill would then be discharged seven days later and go onto the House agenda for the next session.

A state representative who spoke on the condition of anonymity told *Beacon Hill Roll Call* that some bills are sometimes held up in committee because someone in a high position of power either inside or outside the Statehouse is opposed to it. "Rank and file members have little control over the bill if a powerful person wants the measure buried," said the legislator.

An ex-state representative who wished to remain anonymous said, "Although under House rules, every representative has the power to attempt to discharge a bill, hardly any attempt is made to do this out of fear of alienating the powerful speaker, his leadership team and committee chairs."

*Beacon Hill Roll Call's* archives show that motions to discharge a bill from a committee and bring it to the full House for debate and a vote were a common practice back in the 1970s and 1980s.

*Beacon Hill Roll Call* contacted the House Speaker's office and asked why the bills are still in committee. We received this e-mail response:

"Each of those bills are currently being reviewed by the House, with a continued focus on fiscal responsibility," said Max Ratner, a spokesman for House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy). He also cited three important bills

that were approved by the House in November 2023, December 2023 and January 2024 and are in the Senate Ways and Means Committee awaiting action. Beacon Hill Roll Call will report on those bills in a future report.

Here are five of the important bills that were approved unanimously by the Senate and are currently in the House Ways and Means Committee:

## GENDER X (S 2429)

On July 27, 2023, the Senate 39-0, approved and sent to the House a bill that would allow Bay Staters to choose the gender-neutral designation "X" in lieu of "male" or "female" on their birth certificates and marriage certificates.

Another provision in the bill codifies into law a current practice that allows individuals to select "X" as their gender designation on their driver's license, learner's permit, identification card and liquor purchase identification card.

In addition, current state law requires medical documentation in order to change a gender designation on a birth certificate. The bill does away with that requirement.

Similar proposals were approved by the Senate during the 2018, 2020 and 2022 sessions but died from inaction in the House.

"People know what gender they are," said sponsor Sen. Jo Comerford (D-Northampton). "This bill affirms the ability of people to choose a non-binary gender option on state documents and forms, which would align the commonwealth with many other states that have adopted this designation ... Together, with our partners in the House, we will continue to move our commonwealth to embrace this basic human right."

"Giving people the opportunity to be who they are is a human right and one that we are proud to extend to every member of the commonwealth, regardless of how they identify," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland) who first introduced the bill in 2017. "Allowing a nonbinary option for state licenses and birth certificates is fundamental to building a society that welcomes, protects and respects all individuals ... I am as hopeful as ever that Massachusetts will be able to enshrine this change into our state laws this session and continue welcoming everyone into our commonwealth with open arms."

Although no senators voted against the bill, there was opposition from some outside groups.

Catholic Action League Executive Director C.J. Doyle called the bill a "malign, non-rational proposal" that will "require the state to affirm and give legal sanction to the

ideologically driven delusion that gender is a subjective social construct, which can be altered arbitrarily and capriciously, rather than what it is, which is an objective and immutable biological reality."

"It will make government a party to this delusion," continued Doyle. "It will confuse and falsify public records and compel government employees to participate in this falsification. It will result in discrimination in public employment against those who hold a traditional understanding of reality and will make the investigation of offenders more difficult for law enforcement. Section 4 of the bill will essentially empower government bureaucrats who administer programs for youth to proselytize the minors in their care for so-called gender transitioning."

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

Sen. Patricia Jehlen      Yes

## MAKE OBTAINING ID CARDS EASIER FOR HOMELESS PERSONS (S 2251)

On July 27, 2023, the Senate 38-0, approved and sent to the House legislation that would make it easier for homeless youth and adults to secure free state ID cards.

Supporters said that currently a person experiencing homelessness faces prohibitive fees and documentation requirements when trying to obtain an ID card. They noted that this legislation removes those barriers by eliminating fees and only requiring that applicants present documentation showing that they are currently receiving services provided by the state, a homeless service provider or another service provider. They argued that ID cards are necessary for applying for jobs, enrolling in school, interacting with law enforcement, accessing government buildings, opening financial accounts and many other basic services that many take for granted.

"When we listen to our homeless youth about the challenges they face, there is a common denominator and that is access to identification," said Sen. Robyn Kennedy (D-Worcester), the Senate sponsor of the bill. "Having proper identification is the foundation to accessing food, shelter and employment opportunities, while also breaking the cycle of poverty."

"Fees and documentation are not just barriers to identification," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). "By extension, they are barriers to getting a job, accessing healthcare and applying for services—the most basic of necessities. These barriers harm the most vulnerable people in our commonwealth and eliminating them is a compassionate step that makes the path to stability a little bit easier."

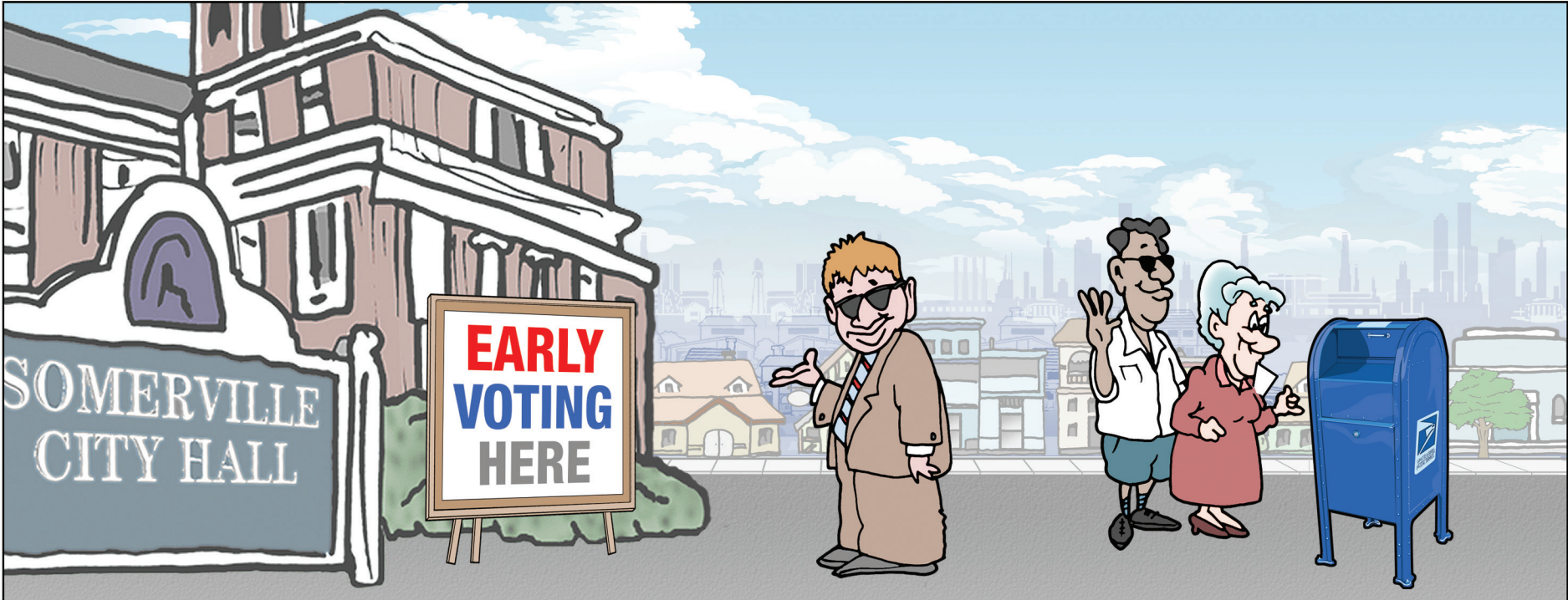
*Continued on page 16*



COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Vote early or vote by mail – just vote in the Presidential Primary.

Our View Of The Times



The Presidential Primary is just around the corner, on Tuesday March 5, and the national election is coming up a few months later. The balance of power in the country as a whole will be in play, and more than ever it seems as though so much will be at stake in that particular election cycle, no matter which side we align with.

The man or woman who assumes the role of Commander and Chief of our na-

tion 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 this year’s election, is searching our heart to determine who we feel will best fill those shoes.

It’s clear that we as voters take on a huge responsibility as we participate in the process.

If you’re opting to vote early for the Primary, the opportunity to do so exists from

now through Friday, March 1 at City Hall. Mail-in Ballots must be received by 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 5. You can go to [somervillema.gov/elections](http://somervillema.gov/elections) for more details about these voting options.

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

No matter how it all turns out, let us hope that the winner of the office 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 more trying times, and the right choice is now more important than ever.

But above all else, remember that it will be up to us to get out there and do our civic duty and vote.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Happy Birthday to Nancy Trane, we hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to Nick Kondilis, a long-time real estate agent. We hope he has a great birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as Liz Revilla Schoeneberger, Larry J Travaglione, Bill Roy, Laureen Chirichiello, Sarah Colestock Berson, Matt Smith, Barbara Neachtain, Susan Mangherini Griffin and Betsy Bragg a very happy birthday. To all those that are also celebrating this week, we wish a happy birthday.

\*\*\*\*\*

Visit CultureHouse, 64 Union Square on Friday, March 1, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. for

the WordPlay-Off. One by one, contestants will have two minutes each to make puns based on prompts they have received ahead of time (at sign up). Round two works the same way, with limited prep time. The top contestants battle it out with a head-to-head pun-off. Want to compete? Just show up! The first 10 sign ups get to compete and the earlier you show up, the more time you get with the prompts. Want to laugh? Just show up! Select audience members will be promoted to judges.

\*\*\*\*\*

Liam Mannion, proprietor of Sally O’Brien’s, and former City Councilor

Bob McWatters invite the public to celebrate Irish Heritage and hoist a pint of Guinness on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17 at Sally O’Brien’s, 335 Somerville Ave. Sally’s will be featuring an Irish fare of corned beef and cabbage, spirits, Irish music, and appearances of local and state elected officials. All are welcome to join the festivities.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Somerville Homeless Coalition’s Amazon Wish Lists are updated monthly 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 do-

nate through our wish lists, please see the link here: <https://bit.ly/SHCLinks>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Food For Free announced their newest event, Hoops for Hunger. A 3 on 3 basketball tournament. People of all genders, ages 14 and older, are welcome to create a team of 4 and square up against other supporters of Food For Free. This will be a single elimination, 16 team tournament. Teams of 4 will compete to win the ultimate prize, and the first team to 21 points will move onto the next round. Teams will be allowed 3 timeouts per game, and will adhere to traditional basketball rules monitored by a referee. Continued on page 23



FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's  
*Olio*  
#912

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. In which years did Somerville receive the All-America City Award?

2. In what year was the Somerville Theatre built?

3. What are known as "ships of the desert"?

4. The Salvador Dali Museum is located in what city?

5. What building did James Hoban design?

6. Which Gulf lies to the south of Florida?

7. From what part of the cinnamon tree do we get the spice?

8. According to the ad slogan, what day was "Prince Spaghetti Day"?

9. What was the first feature film with sound?

10. What famous country singer once lost in her own "look-alike" contest?

11. What color are the sunsets on Mars?

12. Who directed the movie *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005)?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. More Monopoly money is printed in a year than real money.
2. Space travel makes mice run in loops.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD  
ICONIC FASHION MOMENTS

- ACROSS
1. Aggressive remark

5. Pampering spot

8. Wharton degree

11. Light bulb, in comic book

12. Burn to a crisp

13. Size option

15. Cameron of "There's Something About Mary"

16. Fabled racer

17. Take care of debt (2 words)

18. He wore a white leisure suit on the dance floor

20. It can be pleasant or unpleasant

21. Buenos \_\_\_\_

22. Dove's sound

23. She wore a white dress above a subway grate

26. Get house ready for living

30. Rap sheet acr.

31. Famous fictional canine

34. Brussels org.

35. Not Astroturf

37. Take the gold

38. Certain cigarette

39. Speed of object divided by speed of sound

40. Lord's subordinate

42. Ann Patchett's novel "\_\_\_\_ Canto"

43. Made by Bayer

45. Friskily

47. Long period of time

48. Repeat, in music

50. Cough syrup balsam

52. She wore a meat dress

55. What cobbler does

56. Good's foe?

57. Muddy road grooves

59. Waltz, in France

60. White House "sub"

61. Red light action

62. Layer

63. Marching insect

64. Sports award

- DOWN
1. Ebay click

2. Miners' passage

3. Kim Kardashian exposed it on the cover of Paper in 2014

4. Harper's \_\_\_\_, famous fashion magazine, launched in 1867

5. Fossil fuel rock deposit

6. Fractions

7. Atlas stat

8. Egg salad ingredient

9. View from high-speed train?

10. High mountain

12. Uncontrollable movement disorder

13. Animal trail

14. Singer who sported a cone bra

19. Viola da Gamba, pl.

22. Pool tool

23. Molten rock

24. Southern cuisine pods

25. Civil rights org.

26. Jimmy Buffet: "You got \_\_\_\_ to the left..."

27. Many iambs

28. Iron/carbon alloy

29. Golightly of little black dress and sunglasses fame

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7			8	9	10
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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.



COMMENTARY

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

Poverty is the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S: The Poor People’s Campaign is seeking to heal this problem



By Jenny Bonham-Carter

How often do we hear this startling statistic on the news? There are 140 million poor and low-income people living in the U.S. today. This includes more than half of our children, 74 million women, 38 million Hispanic people, 23 million black people, 8 million Asian people, 2 million Native people and 66 million white people, with a disproportionate number of LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities. Although these 140 million people account for an astounding

40% of the U.S. population, their problems are not recognized by our nation’s policies, laws or legislation. As a result, 250,000 people die every year - that’s 700 people a day - from poverty and inequality. The Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival was founded by Bishop William Barber II and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis in 2017 to address these issues. Inspired by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s Poor People’s Campaign of the 1960’s, this new Poor People’s Campaign is a highly diverse umbrella movement lifting from the bottom up, bringing together many individuals and organizations nationwide, working from grassroots- to policy level to build power for change. The PPC fights the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, systemic poverty, the war economy, climate destruction and the false

narrative of religious nationalism. The PPC is calling for a Third Reconstruction Agenda to end poverty and low wages from the bottom up! The campaign has 14 demands: 1) That our politics, policies, laws and legislation center and prioritize the poor. 2) That every person has the right to work with dignity, with a federal minimum wage of at least \$15/hour, equal pay for equal work, paid family and medical leave and the right to form unions. 3) That the ultra-rich, corporations and Wall Street pay their fair share of taxes. 4) That the great wealth, resources and capacities of this nation be directed towards expanded social welfare programs that center the poor, rather than corporations and the wealthy, so we can all fare well. 5) The right to meaningfully participate in the decisions that impact our lives by expanding voting rights

and securing our democracy against extremist threats and violence. 6) Quality comprehensive healthcare for us all. 7) That everyone’s basic needs for housing, food, water and utilities are met and an end to homelessness and the criminalization of unhoused people. 8) Quality, equitable and diverse public education for all of our students from Pre-K to college and the elimination of student debt. 9) That immigrant rights are respected and protected wherever we live, move or work. 10) That the rights of indigenous people and First Nations are fully protected and respected, including the rights to their lands, resources, free exercise of religion, sovereignty, constitutional guarantees, treaty protections and other beneficial federal legislation. 11) A robust climate agenda to ensure a swift transition to a green economy. 12) That

our government prioritize peace in the world and at home, and that at least 10% of U.S. military spending is immediately redirected to the needs above. 13) That the laws, legislation, policies and budgets of this nation are based on the five key principles of the U.S. Constitution: to establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and future generations. 14) A Third Reconstruction that unites the 140 million poor and low-income people in this country to realize their political power. The Massachusetts Chapter of the Poor People’s Campaign invites you to join us. We’re in the beginning of 40 weeks of moral action when we’re taking back the mic, lifting our voices and registering our votes *Continued on page 15*

Dorothy’s Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Yego Coffee

How quickly a year has gone by! A truly much needed addition to the neighborhood, this family-owned coffee shop offers a variety of specialty coffee drinks like, latte’s, cappuccino’s, macchiato’s, cold brew, and pour overs. If you’re wanting a light bite to eat with your rich, full-bodied coffee, they have a few different types of French pastries, both sweet and savory. For those who prefer tea, you can enjoy a great cup of matcha. Kids snacks and a refrigerator full of a variety of refreshments are also available. This family-owned company by Fatuma and Francois is quite a remarkable story originating in Rwanda, stem-

ming from Francois’s father’s working on coffee bean farms for many years. Please visit [yegocoffee.com](http://yegocoffee.com) for the full story. Whole bean or ground coffee can be purchased to go. Be sure to follow Yego on Facebook and Instagram for special announcements. Until then, go visit, stay a while, and enjoy the coffee. Yego Coffee 1212 Broadway (Teele Square) Somerville, MA 02144 857-266-0977 Open every day from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. 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](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)



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

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, March 19, 2024** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov).

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tJ7r8tQU6Baopkf0jvwxQ>

Webinar ID: 880 8425 2037

TO CALL IN

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

**ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT**

DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

HP24-000001 – 382 Broadway

Applicant: Garrett Einis  
Owner: 382 Broadway LLC  
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

HP23-022084 – 9 Olive Ave

Applicant: Robert DiPierro  
Owner: Robert DiPierro  
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

HP24-000002 - 8 Montrose Court

Applicant: ThoughtCraft Architects LLC - Mark Wilson  
Owner: Rufus Roscoe LLC  
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Case documents reviewed by the HPC are available on the City website at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>. Cases may be continued to a later date; please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note:** Written comments due to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) with inquiries.

2/28/24 The Somerville Times

Crown Castle USA, Inc. is proposing to modify an existing wireless telecommunications facility, consisting of the installation of a replacement antenna to be installed at a top height of 32ft on an existing 31ft light pole located at the following site: near 124 Pearl Street, Somerville, Middlesex County, Massachusetts 02145 (42 23 8.6 N / 71 5 15.7 W). The facility is not expected to be FAA lighted. Crown Castle USA, Inc. invites comments from any interested party on the impact of the proposed action on any districts, sites, buildings, structures or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or specific reason the proposed action may have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Specific information regarding the project is available by contacting EBI Consulting, Project #008025-PR, 21 B Street, Burlington, MA 01803, or at 470.512.5385.

2/28/24 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, March 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.**, on petitions for two new licenses:

- New Billiards and Bowling License, Lucky Strike, 325 Revolution Drive, for 5 billiard tables and 8 bowling lanes.
- New Extended Operating Hours License, Lucky Strike, 325 Revolution Drive, opening Monday-Sunday until 2am for in-store service only.

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

You have two ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. Virtually through the Zoom Webinar platform. Enter this link into your internet browser any time before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tJ7r8tQU6Baopkf0jvwxQ>. You can also find this link on the City Council's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the Webinar.
2. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to [publiccomments@somervillema.gov](mailto:publiccomments@somervillema.gov), send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143, or drop them into the secure drop box outside the back door on the School Street side of City Hall. Your comments must arrive no later than 12:00 p.m. (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  
[CITYCLERK@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:CITYCLERK@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV)

2/28/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB #24-48

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

Full D4 Water Operator Services on an as-needed and on-call basis

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 21st, 2024**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **11:00 am, Friday, March 15th, 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](mailto:scastro@somervillema.gov) for more information.

Sonia Castro  
Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3407

2/28/24 The Somerville Times

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CONTACT US  
BY 12 PM MONDAY  
PHONE: 857-488-5138



CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
IFB #24-51

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

Abatement & Demolition of 24 Cross Street East

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after **Wednesday, February 28th, 2024**.

DCAMM certification in the category of Asbestos Removal and Demolition is required for this project.

**A Pre-bid Site Visit is scheduled for 11:00 AM, Monday, March 4th, 2024 at 24 Cross Street East, Somerville, MA 02145**

Sealed general bids are due at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **3:30 PM, Wednesday, March 13th, 2024**.

The Chief Procurement Officer reserves 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 [tchukhsang@somervillema.gov](mailto:tchukhsang@somervillema.gov) for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required. MA Prevailing Wage and Davis Bacon Wage rates apply. CDBG funded.

Thupten Chukhsang  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3400

2/28/24 The Somerville Times

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court

MIDDLESEX Division Docket No. MI24P0734EA

INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

Estate of: 

David	L	Vitiello
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

Also Known As: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death: 09/16/2023

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of

Petitioner Iris Haley of Somerville MA  
First Name M.I. Last Name (City/Town) (State)

[x] Iris Haley of Somerville MA  
First Name M.I. Last Name (City/Town) (State)

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve [ ] with [x] without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

2/28/24 The Somerville Times

Notice of Self Storage Sale

Please take notice Prime Storage - Somerville located at 39R Medford St., Somerville, MA 02143 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via [www.storagetreasures.com](http://www.storagetreasures.com) on **3/12/2024 at 12:00PM**. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Carl Esperance unit #318B. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

2/28/24 The Somerville Times

Legal Notices can be downloaded from our website:  
[www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)



## COMMENTARY

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

## We must protect the right to strike



**By State Representative  
Erika Uyterhoeven**

Earlier this month, Newton educators went on strike for 11 days in order to negotiate for a fair contract. This historic strike and the growing number of strikes led by educators across the state highlights why we need to protect this right for all workers. That's why I filed H.1845 with Rep. Connolly, and Sen. Rausch, which would restore the right to strike for public sector workers, not including public safety.

It's no secret that I am a proud supporter of unions and the organized labor movement. Labor justice isn't merely a political stance for me, it's personal. My mom's first job when she immigrated to the US was as a housemaid for a wealthy family in Brookline, but everything changed for her when she got her job as a flight attendant for TWA. It is thanks to the contracts her union fought vigorously for and had to go strike for, that my single mom was able to provide all of the opportunities I had growing up. I am who I am because of organized labor.

K-12 educators, like flight attendants, do labor that is considered women's work and as such, their labor is deeply underval-

ued, underpaid, and they are expected to sacrifice and do their work out of the love of their students. Yet when they stand up for themselves, they are often told they are selfish or "only doing it for the money."

Let me be clear, what Newton educators did was incredibly courageous and admirable. They put everything on the line for the most marginalized and lowest paid educators and for their most vulnerable students in need. They stood up to the crippling and often invisible violence of budget cuts, ensured the sustainability of education as a profession, and as such they will be critical to the long term struggle to save our public schools. And for all of that, it is one of the greatest honors and joys of my life to join them and any union on the picket line.

What we've seen with the rise of educators going on strike is that educators' demands are consistent and fair. There are many similarities between NTA's demands and demands of other locals including Somerville. I'll highlight two of them: significantly increase the abysmal wages for paraeducators and increase all educators' wages.

Paraeducators are most often the lowest paid workers in the bargaining unit. They care for and educate the students with the highest needs (including special education and provide 1-on-1 support). They are disproportionately women and people of color, and it is highly skilled, deeply important, and essential work. While paraeducators are

often belittled for doing "part-time" or "assistant" work, it's simply not true and nearly 80% of them have a college degree.

It is truly shameful that in most districts, paraeducators are paid a meager \$15K-\$29K per year. In one school district, the lowest step was paid \$13K a year! Following the strike in Newton, paraeducators' starting wages increased from \$28,270 to \$36,778, or a 30% increase. While this is still not a living wage in Massachusetts, it's a massive step in the right direction. You may recall that in 2020, Somerville educators also rallied for a fair contract. At the time paraeducators made a little over \$20K a year, now the starting pay is \$36K.

Educators overall are underpaid and their pay has decreased compared to their peers. Teachers make 26.4% less than equivalent college-educated workers, or 73.6 cents for every dollar earned by other professionals. What is striking is that teachers used to make 93.9 cents on the dollar in 1996, and in 1960, teachers used to earn a 14.7% premium (for women teachers only). If we truly cared about education, educators should absolutely be earning a premium for their labor, but they are not. Instead, they are economically penalized for it. Although Massachusetts fares better than the national average (with a 20% wage penalty), these aren't numbers to be proud of, especially as the cost of living in Massachusetts is much higher than most of the country.

Massachusetts has over 300

school districts and the vast majority of contracts are 3 years long, as such there are on average about 100 contracts negotiated per year. Yet the vast majority of contracts are settled without students missing any class time. What made Newton different was not about the union being uniquely overzealous or unreasonable, but has more to do with management's unwillingness to negotiate in good faith, and for stonewalling for an absurd 16 months. It's important to contextualize these demands and I think most of us can agree that these demands are what we want all workers to have.

The most salient injustice of the current law that prohibits public sector workers from going on strike is that there is a punishment for educators going on strike (or in other words, sticking to demands to be treated with dignity and respect), but there is no punishment for bad faith negotiation practices by management.

While it is true that unions like the Newton educators make the decision to go on strike, after 16 months of stalling tactics, stonewalling, and surface bargaining, they were left with no other options, especially with their contract expired for several months. It is too simplistic and plainly wrong to lay all the blame squarely on educators, but that's what this law does when only educators are fined exorbitantly by the courts or are blamed for students missing classes.

Even the judge who ruled on this case expressed concern that

escalating fines may "undermine effective and fair collective bargaining," and outlined in his ruling Commonwealth Employment Relations Board vs. Newton Teachers Association what is needed to bargain in good faith, in effect, urging the management to do so immediately.

At the end of the day, we all benefit from healthy labor-management relations but this requires good faith bargaining on both sides. Management in this case utilized unfair and costly stalling tactics, which often involves hiring expensive anti-union lawyers and communications consultants, rather than the decision-makers simply meeting with labor at the negotiation table. It was disgraceful how much management tried to weaponize the law, rather than negotiate. It is clear that educators would rather be in the classroom with their students, yet management left them no other option, so who is responsible?

Our bill addresses all of these issues by not only restoring the right to strike so that the law or fines can't be weaponized to give management an unfair advantage, but it also includes a provision that the union must engage in six months of negotiations before a legal strike can take place. This will discourage unethical stonewalling tactics by management and six months after all is a very reasonable time frame to negotiate a three year contract. It is clear that a level playing field and good faith negotiations by both parties will prevent last resort measures like going on strike.

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# Scotland through the eyes of Denise

Enjoy the scenes of Scotland Denise captured from her recent trip.  
— Photos by Denise Provost



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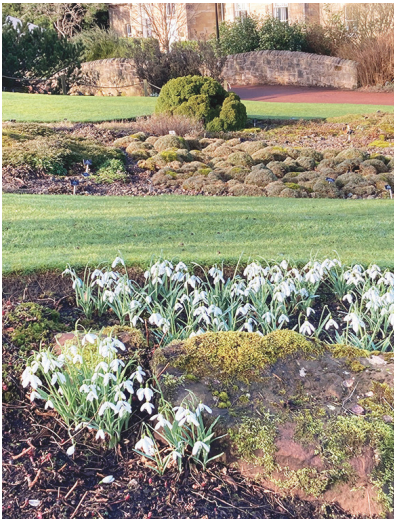
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1 Photos of Dunfermline, home of Andrew Carnegie  
2 Book shop called Gently Mad Books  
3 Arthur's Seat from St. Mark's Park  
4 Arthur's Seat in the mist, seen from a busy city street near the Scottish Parliament Building  
5 Edinburgh's Marshmallow Lady in her shop  
6 Marshmallow Lady shop  
7 St. Margaret's Abbey, Dunfermline  
8 Views of Edinburgh  
9 Royal Botanical Gardens



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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

1. 1972, 2009, and 2015

2. 1914

3. Camels

4. St. Petersburg, Florida

5. The White House

6. Gulf of Mexico

7. Inner bark

8. Wednesday

9. The Jazz Singer, 1927

10. Dolly Parton

11. Blue

12. Tim Burton



# Somerville early voting and voting by mail for Massachusetts Presidential Primary Election

The Presidential Primary election for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is Tuesday, March 5. The primary election is open to all registered voters in Somerville. Somerville voters can vote early in person or by mail.

**Vote early at City Hall from now through Friday, March 1.**

**The schedule is as of now:**

- Wednesday, February 28, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 29 8:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. (all-day and evening hours)
- Friday, March 1, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (morning only)

**How to Vote by Mail**

Ballots must be received by 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 5:

Eligible voters who submit valid applications will receive their ballot in the mail. Ballots must be completed, signed, sealed, and received by the city no later than 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5. Voters can check the status of their ballot on the state’s website.

**How to return your application and ballot:**

**Drop boxes:** Leave it in a drop box at one of the following locations:

- City Hall concourse, 93 Highland Ave.
- East Somerville Community School, across from 68 Glen St.
- In front of the Argenziano School, 290 Washington St.
- In front of the Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Ave.
- In front of the Igreja Presbiteriana De Boston Church, 212 School St.
- In front of Saint Catherine of Genoa Church parking lot, 182 Summer St.
- In front of the Armory, 191 Highland Ave.
- In front of Dilboy Post, 351 Summer St.
- In front of the Tufts Administrative Building, 167 Holland St.
- In front of the West Somerville Neighborhood School at 177 Powder House Blvd.

Ballots can also be returned directly to the Somerville Elections office located at City Hall or mailed to Somerville Elections Department, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143.

Completed applications only can be emailed to [vote@somervillema.gov](mailto:vote@somervillema.gov) or faxed to 617-625-5643. Ballots cannot be returned by email or fax. For all information about voting in Somerville, go to [somervillema.gov/elections](http://somervillema.gov/elections).



## Poverty is the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S: The Poor People’s Campaign is seeking to heal this problem

CONT. FROM PG 9

as demands. We gather to manifest the unity of love, not the division of hate. We invite all supportive individuals, organizations and faith communities to join us on Saturday, March 2nd

at 10am when we march from the Old State House to the current Statehouse at the Boston Common, where we will rally from 11am-1pm. The rally will include speeches and community singing.

On that same day and time mass gatherings of Poor People’s Campaign chapters will take place simultaneously in 31 state capitals across the country to demand the abolition of poverty in the U.S. For more information about the Massachusetts Poor People’s Campaign, go to [FaceBook@emappc](mailto:FaceBook@emappc), Instagram [@ma\\_poorpeoplescampaign](https://www.instagram.com/ma_poorpeoplescampaign) or X [@MA\\_PPC](https://twitter.com/MA_PPC). Email: [massachusetts@poorpeoplescampaign.org](mailto:massachusetts@poorpeoplescampaign.org).

Jenny Bonham-Carter is a Somerville resident and the Music and Arts Coordinator for the Massachusetts Poor People’s Campaign.

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

Facebook at [www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1](https://www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1)



Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

(A “Yes” vote is for the bill.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS (S 2491)

On October 26, 2023, the Senate 38-0, approved and sent to the House a bill that would require all prisons, homeless shelters and K-12 schools to maintain free menstrual products, including sanitary napkins, tampons and underwear liners in private and public restrooms and to make them available in a “convenient manner that does not stigmatize any persons seeking the products.”

Supporters said that according to the Massachusetts Menstrual Equity Coalition, approximately one in seven children in Massachusetts is living in poverty and struggles to pay for menstrual products. They argued that research shows that the inability to access menstrual products affects students’ class attendance.

They also noted that women facing homelessness or who are incarcerated face high barriers to access, with Massachusetts shelters reporting that menstrual products are among the least donated items. They argued that restricted access in shelters and correctional facilities means that products can be used as bargaining chips and tools of control for people in vulnerable circumstances.

“I learned about this issue from young people in Medford High School, Somerville High School and Cambridge Rindge and Latin who took leadership at the local level to make menstrual hygiene products available in their own communities,” said sponsor Sen. Pat Jehlen (D-Somerville). “This is a true grassroots movement starting with girls talking about their experiences of missing valuable class time or feeling embarrassed to access products during the school day. These conversations have already started to change the culture and have motivated us to expand this across the state.”

“Period products are not luxuries, but necessities required for people’s basic needs, health and hygiene,” said Sen. Julian Cyr (D-Truro), Senate Chair of the Committee on Public Health. “Today’s passage of the ... bill affirms that women and all menstruating people deserve access to menstrual products. An inaccessibility of period products speaks to the longstanding and persistent misogyny in our society, a bias that intersects with inequalities in housing, education, socioeconomics and beyond. By ensuring better access to these products, we support further access to essential health needs regardless of our situation in life.”

During floor debate, Cyr sarcastically commented, “I think it’s pretty obvious that if most men could menstruate, these products would be as ubiquitous and free as toilet paper.”

(A “Yes” vote is for the bill.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

HIV PREVENTION DRUGS (S 2480)

On October 26, 2023 the Senate 38-0, approved and sent to the House a bill that would allow pharmacists to prescribe, dispense and administer a short-term supply (60-days once in a two-year period) of HIV prevention drugs, known as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), to a patient without a prescription.

The bill requires pharmacists to provide counseling to the patient regarding the use of PrEP, to inform the patient’s primary care doctor that the pharmacist has prescribed the drug and to connect patients without a primary care provider with a health care provider for ongoing care and to obtain a prescription for PrEP.

Under the bill, pharmacists could only prescribe PrEP to patients who have tested negative for HIV within the past seven days, do not have HIV symptoms and are not taking medications that are not safe to use with PrEP.

Supporters say that PrEP is a life-saving medication that is nearly 100 percent effective in stopping the transmission of HIV. They note that under current law, individuals who take PrEP must make an appointment and go through their doctor, a barrier that can stand in the way for people who need the medication on short notice, cannot make an appointment or cannot access medical care.

“PrEP is a game changer in HIV prevention. Yet, while this life-saving medication reduces the risk of transmission by 99 percent, it remains inaccessible for too many,” said sponsor Public Health Care chair Sen. Julian Cyr. “Allowing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense PrEP on a short-term basis, similar to what’s already allowed for contraceptives, would significantly increase the accessibility of this essential HIV prevention tool. With greater access to PrEP we can narrow the gap in PrEP utilization among LGBTQ+ people of color. I am someone who uses PrEP and most of my gay, bisexual and queer friends rely on it too. With this legislation, we are once again putting people at the center of our public health policy. I’m thrilled it has passed the Senate.”

“When someone is ready to begin PrEP, it is crucial that they are able to [do so] as soon as possible,” said Carrie Richgels, Manager of Policy and Advocacy at Fenway Health. “At Fenway Health, we regularly work to overcome barriers that patients face due to trauma, stigma and discrimination. We know from experience that to overcome these obstacles we must meet people where they are and build trust. Trust is essential to getting people on PrEP, and a local pharmacy can provide a lower threshold of access and can be a trusted access point for those who may face discrimination in traditional healthcare settings.”

(A “Yes” vote is for the bill.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

PHARMACEUTICAL ACCESS, COSTS AND TRANSPARENCY (S 2520)

On November 15, 2023, the Senate 39-0, approved and sent to the House a bill that supporters say would make major changes and reforms to the state’s pharmaceutical system by “lowering the cost of drugs at the pharmacy counter and improving oversight of the pharmaceutical industry.”

“The Senate has made pharmaceutical cost containment and oversight a priority for a long time, and I’m proud that we’ve had the opportunity to pass this bill in three consecutive sessions, improving it as we learn more and more about the industry,” said Sen. Cindy Friedman (D-Arlington), Senate chair of the Committee on Health Care Financing. “While we are supportive of the work of the pharmaceutical industry, we also know that far too many Massachusetts residents are struggling to access lifesaving, essential medication due to outrageous and skyrocketing costs. [This legislation] will provide necessary transparency and oversight measures, so that consumers can trust that this system is putting patients and their health before profits.”

“I am pleased the Senate has passed this crucial prescription drug legislation,” said Sen. Mike Rodrigues (D-Westport), Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. “Healthcare is all about accessibility and affordability, and this reform-minded consumer focused bill will allow increased access to prescription drugs while also considerably driving down the cost of everyday medications.”

(A “Yes” vote is for the bill.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

**INCREASE FINES FOR VIOLATING HANDICAPPED PARKING (H 3261)** – The House gave initial approval to a proposal that would allow cities and towns to increase the current \$300 maximum fine for parking illegally in a parking space reserved for handicapped persons. That \$300 fine is set by the state and goes into the municipalities’ General Fund. The measure would allow cities and towns to impose an additional \$450 fine - making the total fine \$750. The additional \$450 would be placed into a specialized local account to be used for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades in the city or town where the violation occurred. The original \$300 fine would still go into the community’s General Fund.

“In my district and across the state, cities and towns through commissions on disabilities have plans to make their communities more accessible,” said sponsor Rep. Bruce Ayers (D-Quincy). “However, oftentimes a lack of funding prevents them from enacting their plans. This bill allows them to place some of the financial burden on the backs of those who violate the laws that exist to protect the rights of people with disabilities, and *Continued on page 17*



Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 16

to provide for greater opportunities of access.”

CHANGE ARCHAIC LANGUAGE REFERRING TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (H 4396) –

The House gave initial approval to a bill that would modernize written state laws to reflect the evolution of terminology relating to persons with disabilities.

Changes include replacing “handicapped persons” with “persons with disabilities,” replacing “the mentally retarded” with “persons with an intellectual disability,” replacing “retarded children” with “children with an intellectual disability” and replacing “disabled American veterans” with “American veterans with disabilities.”

Supporters said the primary objective of the bill is to identify and eliminate outdated, archaic language from the General Laws of Massachusetts and replace it with more respectful, person-first language. They noted that once the archaic language was found, they contacted the relevant state agency or office to confirm that the bill would have no unforeseen consequences, such as impacting funding or access to services.

“Modernizing state statutes to reflect the evolution of terminology relating to persons with disabilities is an essential step the commonwealth can take to reflect the respect that we should have for all residents,” said sponsor Rep. Mike Finn (D-West Springfield). “Getting the bill to this point is a result of collaboration between many executive offices, stakeholders and legislative committees. My hope is that the latest version of the bill will pass legislative scrutiny and reach the finish line this session. Working on this bill in particular has been an honor because it represents my own personal beliefs about how every individual in this commonwealth deserves to be treated with dignity.”

NOAH FERNANDES MITOCHONDRIAL AWARENESS DAY (H 4140) –

The House gave initial approval to a bill designating the Friday of the third full week of September as Noah Fernandes Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Day, in recognition of the Team Noah Foundation, whose goal is to alleviate the financial and emotional stress by providing transportation and home improvements to families with children who are affected by Mitochondrial Disease and other developmental disabilities.

“Noah Fernandes was the son of a friend, Victor Fernandes, who is a business leader in New Bedford and very involved in our community,” said sponsor Rep. Tony Cabral (D-New Bedford). “Noah was diagnosed with Melas, one of the most severe forms of Mitochondrial disease when he was five years old. For the next 10 years, Noah’s muscular and mental condition deteriorated as juvenile dementia overtook his body and left him unable to move or speak until he passed away at age 15.”

Cabral continued, “Within their grief, Victor and Noah’s mom, Christine Fernandes, launched the Team Noah

Foundation – a non-profit which helps the families of severely disabled children with conversion projects to make their homes more handicap-accessible and to help provide specialized vans, bicycles and other transportation needs. The Team Noah Foundation also was the driving force behind the Noah’s Place Playground in New Bedford which is the largest and most inclusive playground in New England. Given the great work that the Team Noah Foundation does, in the memory of Noah Fernandes, it seemed only fitting to acknowledge this and bring awareness of this disease to the state level.”

MARIJUANA AND FIRST RESPONDERS (S 48)

– The Committee on Cannabis Policy has given a favorable report and recommended passage of a measure that would require the Cannabis Control Commission and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to study and report to the Legislature on the barriers that first responders face about their legal right to use cannabis.

“As we move away from cannabis prohibition, we should ensure we do not hold on to pre-existing, bias-driven bans,” said sponsor Sen. Julian Cyr (D-Truro). “I filed [the bill] to investigate the existing barriers to first responders’ legal right to use cannabis ... The bill would also explore the effectiveness of cannabis in treating anxiety, depression, stress, PTSD and other traumas.”

DECLARE RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (S 1412) –

The Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities Committee gave a favorable report and recommended passage of legislation that would declare racism as a public health crisis and direct the Office of Health Equity to develop policies to dismantle systemic racism impacting health and establish programs focused on the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases disproportionately impacting communities of color.

FREE DIAPERS (H 149) –

Another proposal given a favorable report by the Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities Committee would create a pilot program to provide free diapers to low-income families at food pantries.

“Access to new, clean diapers is necessary to preserve our babies’ health,” says sponsor Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem). “No parent should have to resort to reusing soiled diapers due to an inability to pay or have to undergo further economic hardships to acquire diapers. This legislation puts the well-being of our infants and families where it should be, at the forefront.”

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (S 2589) –

The Education Committee gave a favorable report to and recommended passage of a measure that would require that American Sign Language (ASL) be taught in all Bay State public elementary and secondary schools to increase interactions between hearing persons and deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, as well as children with autism. Current law allows but does not require schools to teach ASL.

“I sponsored the legislation to promote greater equity and inclusion in our public school systems,” said Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow). “In recent years, it has become apparent that instruction in American Sign Language provides children with autism with increased opportunities for education and development. It is visually based, unaided and provides a mode of quick communication. American Sign Language is a language our students should get the opportunity to learn in our public school system, and it supports inclusion and involvement for all students.”

QUOTABLE QUOTE

“Nearly 70 percent of those deaths took place where we should feel safest – at home. Tragically, more than half of those deaths took place in homes without working smoke alarms. And about two-thirds of last year’s fatal fire victims were adults aged 65 or older.” — *State Fire Marshal Jon Davine on the 45 Massachusetts residents who died in fires last year.*

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 19-23, the House met for a total of 56 minutes and the Senate met for a total of 30 minutes.

Mon. Feb. 19	No House session No Senate session
Tues. Feb. 20	House 11:02 a.m. to 11:38 a.m. Senate 11:29 a.m. to 11:43 a.m.
Wed. Feb. 21	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. Feb. 22	House 11:01 a.m. to 11:21 a.m. Senate 11:15 a.m. to 11:31 a.m.
Fri. Feb. 23	No House session No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at [bob@beaconhillrollcall.com](mailto:bob@beaconhillrollcall.com)



## SENIOR CENTER 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.

**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 Borders 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. Thursday, February 29th -Holland Street Center- Italian – Alfredo's

Italian Kitchen the Ralph & Jenny Center.

**Virtual Yoga** – Friday, February 29th starting at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Class will focus on modified, low-impact moves and easy to follow pacing for an active lifestyle. Please email Michelle Deutsch at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov for the Zoom link.

**Bowling** – Wednesday, February 28th at Flatbread Company/Sacco Bowl Haven in Davis Square starting at 11:00 a.m. - Free - RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**Virtual & In Person LGBTQIA+ Exercise Class** – Thursday, February 29th at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. February 8th in person at 6:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. RSVP by calling Michelle Deutsch 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov for the Zoom link.

**Friendly Caller Program** - We have many wonderful volunteers who are waiting to give you a call. Whether you are looking to make a new friend or would just like a friendly chat to look forward to every week, this program has you covered. Call Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 to learn more about the program and to sign up.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**Stay connected via our Facebook page** – Informative, entertaining, lots of photos and updates. Visit our page at <https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCOA/>

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

**JOIN OUR MAILING LIST**

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

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

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

**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.

**Parking Update**

Thank you to Mayor Ballantyne, the Somerville City Council, and Tufts University for their work in developing a new parking plan!

Visitors to the Council on Aging now have two free parking options.

1. The handicapped spots in the 167 Holland Street front parking lot are now free for those who have a handicapped placard.

2. Council on Aging visitors now have free access to the 5 spots immediately next to the 167 Holland St. entrance. Please remember to pick up your visitors' placard at the COA reception desk.

We cannot wait to see you at our programming throughout 2024!



# Culinary Arts: the year so far!

Students in instructors David Ginivisian and Paul Piantedosi’s Culinary Arts program are having another outstanding year at Somerville High School. This is what the educators say about the 2023-2024 school year so far.

Approximately 300 ninth grade students are currently enrolled in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Exploratory program. Exploratory provides students a chance to visit each of the 14 CTE programs during 6-day rotations. If students choose to continue in CTE, Exploratory helps them decide the best program for them, based on concrete experiences and their personal goals.

When ninth graders take their turn in the Culinary Arts program rotation, they work on essential skills and expectations. This year, students successfully entered the world of culinary arts through baking, cooking, and general food service skills, all of which are essential for job seekers after graduation. Students prepared an egg and cheese sandwich for themselves and a classmate, made pizza dough, prepared and baked a pizza, breaded and pan-fried chicken fingers and onion rings, and baked homemade cookies.

Tenth grade Culinary Arts students work on fundamental skills they will develop in their last two years. These include measuring techniques, baking methods, ingredient identification, equipment identification, and knife skills.

Eleventh grade Culinary Arts students work on their OSHA certifications while learning new skills. Recently, they started to offer breakfast to staff. The Culinary Arts program has a dedicated dining room that has been open to Somerville High School staff for breakfasts and lunches, whenever possible. (The dining room is not currently open to the public.)



Continuing a long-term tradition, Culinary Arts seniors prepare and serve lunch for staff who can pick up or dine in, as schedules allow. Recently, each senior researched and produced a specialty soup recipe to serve to staff.

Student presents heritage recipe to other students in the Culinary Arts studio

Graduating seniors in Culinary Arts build upon the skills they obtained in previous years as they research, plan, and prepare for the extremely popular Heritage Recipe project. For the Heritage Recipe project, each student designs and produces a menu based on their family’s culinary heritage. Students then demonstrate how best to prepare the dish, and discuss the significance of the dish or its role in their culture. And then, the best part, these authentic ethnic menus are shared and sampled by their Culinary Arts peers and are also sold to staff in our dining room. (Above: a student in last year’s graduating class presented his well-received pasta dishes in the Haitian tradition.)

Culinary Arts continues to collaborate with community partner Groundwork Somerville (GWS). Seniors in Culinary Arts worked with GWS to put the school garden to rest in the fall by planting garlic and winterizing the garden beds’ soil. (Below: students working this fall.)

Three students work in the Ground Work Somerville garden on an overcast day. They are preparing vegetable beds for winter.

Once per month, Culinary Arts students prepare and serve meals for clients of Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services. This project offers students opportunities to work on a variety of cooking and baking skills, as well as learn about the business side of catering.

Through a grant written by one of our community partners, the program received two Flex Farm hydroponic growing units. These units should give students the ability to grow fresh herbs for use in recipes.

Staff have tapped four culinary arts students to test in order to qualify for participation in the regional SkillsUSA competition this spring.

The Culinary Arts program continues to innovate and engage its students as it prepares them for careers in several fields. Please visit the Career and Technical Education (CTE) website to learn more about the Culinary Arts program as well as the other CTE programs offered at Somerville High School.

— Chef Ginivisian, Chef Piantedosi, and R. Ronen





# Somerville families invited to start planning their summer fun at 2024 Summer Camp and Activities Fair

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is announcing that the City’s Summer Camp and Activities Fair is returning for 2024, providing families with the opportunity to learn about summer activity options available to their children and to get detailed information from program representatives about summer camps, recreational activities, and learning opportunities for children of all ages. The Fair will be held on Thursday, March 7, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the East Somerville Community School gym (50 Cross St).

Representatives from over 20 regional camps and organizations such as the Somerville YMCA, City of Somerville Recreation Department’s Somertime Program, and the Somerville Media Center, along with many others, will be in attendance. All families are welcome to attend and there will be free pizza. Language interpreters will also be available on site.

“We are thrilled to bring back the summer camp and activities fair after four years,” said Chris Hosman, SomerPromise Director for the City of Somerville. “It is as much about community building as it is about increasing access to programming. Whether you are seeking full time Summer opportunities for school-aged children or teen jobs, there is something for everyone.”

This annual event is a great way to plan an enriching Summer and help children discover new interests that may turn into lifelong passions. The 2024 Somerville Summer Activities Guide of all summer camps and programming will be available at the event. This booklet and regularly updated information can also be found on the Somerville Hub website: [somervillehub.org](http://somervillehub.org).

“The Summer Camp and Activities Fair is a wonderful reminder of how students can continue to grow and learn over the summer months,” said Ruth Santos, Director of the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC). “It’s a fun and lively event where families can meet providers face-to-face, ask questions, and find out more about the great programs available locally.”

The Summer Camp and Activities Fair is a collaborative effort between the SFLC of the Somerville Public Schools and SomerPromise. To learn more about this event, visit the Somerville Hub at [www.somervillehub.org](http://www.somervillehub.org) or contact the SomerPromise Wraparound Services Manager, Lara Versari at (617) 625-6600, x 2346 or [lversari@somervillema.gov](mailto:lversari@somervillema.gov).



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By Bobbygeorge Potaris

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*On This Day in History*  
**February 28**

1574 – On the orders of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, two Englishmen and an Irishman are burnt for heresy.

1704 – Indians attack Deerfield, Mass. killing 40 and kidnapping 100.

1916 – Haiti becomes the first U.S. protectorate.

1924 – U.S. troops are sent to Honduras to protect American interests during an election conflict.

1945 – U.S. tanks break the natural defense line west of the Rhine and cross the Erft River.

1967 – In Mississippi, 19 are indicted in the slayings of three civil rights workers.

1969 – A Los Angeles court refuses Robert Kennedy assassin Sirhan Sirhan’s request to be executed.

1971 – The male electorate in Lichtenstein refuses to give voting rights to women.

1994 – U.S. warplanes shoot down four Serb aircraft over Bosnia in the first NATO use of force in the troubled area.









OFF THE SHELF  
by Doug Holder

'John Proctor is the Villain'  
A play by Kimberly Belflower

*John Proctor is the Villain*  
A play by Kimberly Belflower  
Huntington Theatre, at the Calderwood Pavilion  
through March 10, 2024

Review By Off the Shelf Correspondent Andy Hoffman

Setting a show in a school brings up so many production problems. How do you maintain the illusion of the adults playing kids and that the teacher/student power dynamic has actual consequences? The Huntington Theatre shows how with *John Proctor is the Villain*, tightly written by Kimberly Belflower and expertly directed by Margot Bordelon.

This production takes the audience right back into high school. The actors dress and speak like teenagers and gallop awkwardly around the stage as they would in a high-school classroom. From the scrunchies on their wrists to the oddly knowing innocence, this cast has embraced their younger selves.

The young people connect to their identities through Billie Eilish, Lorde, and Taylor Swift and they erupt into fits of laughter and screaming as teens do. The young playwright went home to rural Georgia after she completed her education and used the familiar location to channel her own youth into this play. They completely brought the audience into their world, as evidenced by the spontaneous standing ovation at the final curtain.

*John Proctor is the Villain* is set in a small-town high school in rural Georgia. The two faculty members we meet – English teacher Carter Smith and guidance counselor Bailey Gallagher – both graduated from this school, which creates an insular, even protected, environment for the rest of the characters, all students. The play's subject, gender relations, makes the realism of the production even more powerful. We open in Mr. Smith's English class, doubling as



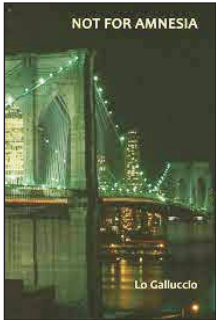
the sex-education course due to a faculty shortage. Japhet Balaban comes across as the incredibly cool and devoted teacher and he leads his students into the unit on Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. He gives his students the standard interpretation of the play, Miller's indictment of anticommunist fervor played as the Salem Witch Trials, in which John Proctor's refusal to save himself by impugning others seems heroic. The teenage girls in his class have a different point of view about John Proctor's character; the play tells us why.

Set in the recent past, the students run squarely into political reality when they want to start a school club to explore feminism, of particular interest in the wake of the #metoo movement. The guidance counselor tries to break the news that the community would likely object to their club, but Mr. Smith comes to the rescue as both the faculty sponsor and with a different name that will deflect rancor.

The community context comes into the classroom in the free-wheeling conversation among the club members, as when Beth, a high-schooler who always apologizes for her opinions and the main instigator for forming the club, confesses that she really thought of the club as a Christian feminist organization. Her classmates are as baffled by this perspective as the audience is. The church remains an

Continued on page 23

Lo Galluccio is a poet, memoirist and vocalist whose most recent publication is *Not for Amnesia* on Cervena Barva Press. This collection is composed of 15 poems she wrote in Brooklyn, NY in 1989-90 while working as night high school teacher, after a romantic break up. Lo is a Harvard graduate with a BA in Social Studies and an MFA in Creative Writing from Stonecoast's program (2019). She lived on the Lower East Side of NY for 11 years before moving back to Boston in 2001. Her first chapbook, *Hot Rain*, was released on Ibbetson St. Press, followed by a prose-poem memoir, *Sarasota VII*, on Cervena Barva Press. In 2012 her third chapbook, *Terrible Baubles*, came out on Alternating Current Press and was subsequently turned into a CD with music by pianist Eric Zinman and cellist Jane Wang. Lo served as Poet Populist of Cambridge between 2013 and 2015 and has been nominated for four Pushcart prizes. She will be featuring at I Am Books in the North End on Saturday, April 20 with Joey Nicoletti at 7:00 pm. Lo's vocal CDs can be found on Spotify and Amazon Prime and Bandcamp. She has performed at St. Mark's Church on the Bowery, the Starlight Stage in Cambridge, the Armory Cafe in Somerville and many other venues. *Not for Amnesia* is available through [www.cervena-barvapress.com](http://www.cervena-barvapress.com). She lives in Central Square, Cambridge with her kitty cat Lucy. She is currently working for Mass Poetry and studying with poet/workshop leader Tom Daley. Please write to her at [Lo.galluccio@gmail.com](mailto:Lo.galluccio@gmail.com). Reviews and selections of her work can be found at [www.logalluccio.weebly.com](http://www.logalluccio.weebly.com).



CANYON

The slick stuff in the pink jar,  
a white cat glittering eyes green,  
the black and tan bruises  
of your hands on my mind.

The lonely rub of a lover married.

The ice blue of a dead one smoking,  
a spire of light that seethes  
in spite of the seagull choking.

Black clam stranded on the sand,  
the burrowing germ of our lost plan,  
fire in the eyes of a hungry god.

the digging your mouth couldn't take.

The dream I can't quite forsake.  
A green turns yellow.  
Red of the bake.

The punch of the drunk when he sees,  
Spilling laughter in trees.  
orange of mating, yellow of pain.  
The tangles of chatter,  
feet and heart freeze.

The desert, the cactus disease,  
mourning of pink, silence of white,  
The melody of hope sinking tight,  
killing fever, damage done,

Echo, the echo, the loss  
of someone.

— Lo Galluccio

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

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



Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Team registration deadline is **April 12**. Register your team here: <https://foodfor-free.org/hoopsforhunger/>.

On **Saturday, March 2**, join the **Arts at the Armory** at 6:00 p.m. for *Get to the Gig & MassConcerts Present: This is the Kit*, the pseudonym of songwriter / banjo strummer / pinhole camera lover / Winchester UK born Paris dweller **Kate Stables**. For more information on this event and others <https://artsatthearmory.org/>.

The **Somerville Council on Aging** will be hosting *Shifting Gear: A presentation on driving from the Registry of Motor Vehicles*, **Friday, March 8**, starting at 11:00 a.m. at the **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.

**Somernova**, 29 Properzi Way, has some new and exciting events coming up. **Friday, March 1**, **The Boston Bouldering Project** is hosting a screening event for Reel Rock, the premier global platform for award-winning climbing films. The screening is the first in the New England region this year, and will also feature a small vendor village, raffle prizes, food/drink and more. Doors open at 6:30 and the screening starts at 7:30. **Sunday, March 3: Somerville Bike Kitchen**, a volunteer-run bicycle repair cooperative, is hosting the next session of its **Winter Workshops** focused on **Drivetrains**. Maintain your bike or learn more about cycling. **Tuesday, March 5: The Dojo at Somernova** is hosting **The Art of Hip-Hop Workshop** from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. Learn how to get trained on turn tables, how to write hip-hop lyrics, advice on how to start a career or hobby

in hip-hop and get connected to upcoming hip-hop shows in the area. For more information visit Somernova at <https://somernova.com/>.

The **Somerville Public Library** in partnership with **St. Mark Community Education Program** is offering a free, 10-week **U.S. Citizenship Preparation class**. The class will prepare students for the citizenship interview including the 100 civics questions, the reading and writing sections, and interview questions based on the filed N-400 application. Requirements: Basic level of English and 5 years as a U.S. permanent resident (green card holder) or 3 years, if married to a US citizen. **U.S. Citizenship Preparation Class, Saturday, March 2**, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., **Central Library**, 79 Highland Ave. For questions or help with registration, please contact: **Brigid Pigott**, Literacy/Volunteer Coordinator, [bpigott@somervillema.gov](mailto:bpigott@somervillema.gov), 617.623.5000 x.2935.

**State Representative Christine Barber’s Winter 2024 office hours** are scheduled. Stop by and share your thoughts on local affairs and legislative priorities. Office hours on **March 9**, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at **Yego Coffee**, 1212 Broadway will include **Ward 7 Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld**, **Leiran Biton**, **Ward 7 Somerville School Committee Member** and **Senator Pat Jehlen**.

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**. For more information [info@halalisa.org](mailto:info@halalisa.org).

**Mudflat** and **East Somerville Main**

**Streets** are looking for a **muralist** to uniquely design and execute a painted mural for the left side, western-facing façade of the Mudflat building at 81 Broadway. The mural dimensions will be approximately 20 feet wide x 13 feet high. East Somerville Main Streets is accepting applications for the next **East Somerville Mural**. Applications will be accepted until March 22, you can find the application and mural details here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScvEQM-dVTZ1CtprlsHRkmCRF3yUdA2irm-hoDD4oBwK9F48C6A/viewform>

**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](http://www.groundworksomerville.org).

The **Somerville Arts Council** has a call to **Somerville dancers/movers/makers/choreographers, percussionists and drummers**. Apply to participate in an international exchange called “**Exchanging Notes**,” produced by SAC and the **Harvard’s Davis Center on Georgian Studies**. Deadline: **3/18/24**. Details and application here: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/exchangingnotes/2024>.

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 **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](http://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>.

Join the **City and Somerville Public Schools** at the **Summer Camp and Activities Fair** on **Thursday, March 7**, at **East Somerville Community School Gym** (50 Cross St.) from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Get information on Somerville’s summer camps, recreational activities, and learning opportunities. Pizza and fun activities will be provided. Learn more at [somervillehub.org](http://somervillehub.org).

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](http://www.somwintermarket.org).

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

Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

offstage character throughout the play, as membership and activity there stands in for upstanding moral behavior. The play we see on the Calderwood stage unfolds like a parallel commentary on the action of *The Crucible*, as the students fumble their way to insight. Newcomer Nell, a Black student transferred from Atlanta, brings her classmates a slightly more worldly perspective.

In truth, they have plenty of worldliness among themselves. We learn early in the play that Raelynn and Lee, a couple since the fourth grade, ran into an explosive problem when Lee slept with Raelynn’s best friend Shelby, who subsequently disappeared from school for half a year. Did Shelby become pregnant? Did she have a breakdown? No one knows, especially not Raelynn, who simultane-

ously hates and misses her bestie. The action of the play accelerates to break-neck speed when Shelby returns unexpectedly. Her revelations turn the school upside down and bring the action of *The Crucible* and the action of *John Proctor is the Villain* into a duet. The exhilarating ending brings out both the best in the cast and the audience. Join the standing ovation at this exuberant performance.



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