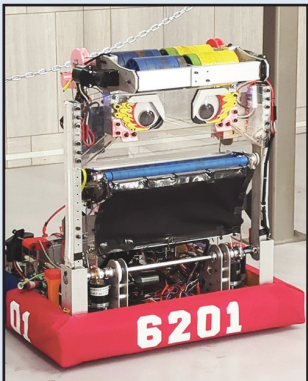




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City considers removal of requirements for building unnecessary parking spaces



The Somerville City Council will be working with city staff to establish a plan for removing mandatory parking space requirements.

By Jim Clark

At the latest meeting of the Somerville City Council on Thursday, March 14, a resolution was put forward by Ward Three City Councilor and Council President Ben Ewen-Campen and City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr. that the Administration collaborate with the Council to draft a zoning ordinance to remove the requirement to build unnecessary new parking spaces.

Ewen-Campen led off the discussion by explaining the purpose of the resolution saying, "Any time we bring up the words 'minimum parking requirements' it's an incredibly hot-button issue and it is also an issue that is easy to be misunderstood and to misconstrue what we are actually discussing. And I would actually argue that this

Continued on page 4

GLOWBALL: A Rave in Support of Arts at the Armory

GLOWBALL will transform the Armory Performance Hall into an immersive Glow-in-the-Dark Rave created by DJ Saucy Lady with hypnotic visuals, ambient lighting, and pop-up performances, all in support of The Center for Arts at the Armory.

GLOWBALL is an anti-gala, and a coming out party for the newly upgraded Performance Hall. There will be no speeches, formal presentations or auction. They are calling on the community to celebrate with them, and to support The Center for Arts at the Armory in the process.

They will be honoring the following Somerville-affiliated awardees at GLOWBALL – Outstanding Artist: Marcus Santos, Community Arts Advocate: Joe Lynch and Lifetime Achievement Award: Lynn Gervens (Mudflat).

The honorees will be regaled

Continued on page 4



The GLOWBALL event supporting the Arts at the Armory will feature awards honoring Marcus Santos, Joe Lynch and Lynn Gervens.

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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.








Cambridge Mothers Out Front, along with 350 MA-Cambridge/Somerville and the First Parish of Cambridge UU Environmental Justice Team, is hosting a public forum on March 20 about transitioning off gas to heat our buildings, including a presentation about networked geothermal energy, an innovative solution that is gaining momentum, and an update from Mass. Representative Steven Owens about state legislation currently in process. Wednesday, March 20, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., First Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist, 1446 Mass. Ave., Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA.

On Saturday, March 23, from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., visit the Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave, for the Oddball Foundation Music and Poetry Open Mic. Come on out with your music, words, and Yah-Yahs to this open mic hosted by North Shore Favorite singer/songwriter Lisa Haley, and author/musician Timothy Gager. For more info visit <https://artsatthearmory.org>. This is a free event sponsored by the Oddball Foundation, dedicated to social change on the individual, interpersonal, and international levels using art and the written word to promote mental health education, fight for social justice, and cultivate an inclusive artistic community.

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy birthday to Rachael Hart-Adams. We wish her the very best *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of March 20 – March 26 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 Wednesday March 20	Rain	47°/29°	50%	23%	W 14 mph
 Thursday March 21	Partly Cloudy	40°/25°	1%	0%	NW 15 mph
 Friday March 22	Partly Cloudy	43°/30°	16%	10%	NW 16 mph
 Saturday March 23	Rain	40°/30°	63%	51%	NE 13 mph
 Sunday March 24	Partly Cloudy	42°/31°	22%	13%	N 13 mph
 Monday March 25	Partly Cloudy	44°/34°	21%	12%	NE 16 mph
 Tuesday March 26	Rain	45°/40°	44%	37%	NE 13 mph

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

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: St. Patrick's Day Recipes

Adam A says:

I Wanted to share we made the Colcannon along with the Irish soda bread yesterday with our slow cooked corned beef (trying to get away from plastics, couldn't find a silicone bag large enough to hold the corned beef) Both recipes were amazing! Thank you for sharing them here, the Colcannon will be a staple in our house from now on.

Dorothy DiMarzo says:

I'm so happy you tried and liked the recipes! Depending on how large the silicone bags are, you may be able to cut the corned beef in half to fit if you decide to try it in the future. It really comes out great using SV. However the slow cooker works just fine. Thank you for your feedback.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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El Sistema Afterschool Music Instruction Program Registration

Students in grades 3-8 are invited to enroll in this innovative afterschool instrument instruction program for the 2024–2025 school year. Students can choose to play violin, cello, or a woodwind or brass instrument. The program runs in the East Somerville Community School. Learn more and find the application forms on the El Sistema webpage: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-departments/music-and-theatre-arts/el-sistema>

This program is run by Somerville Public Schools and it is fee-based. Need-based financial aid is available.

Life in the  by Jimmy Del Ponte

Florida or bust



This is a tale of two mischievous and bored Somerville kids back in the late 70's.

The year was 1979 and the month was January. I was working at a foreign auto dealership delivering parts. I bought an old Toyota with a bad motor for pretty cheap money and a mechanic friend of mine rebuilt the entire engine. It was a 1972 Toyota Corolla with a manual transmission.

My friend Jay was a cabbie and we met for a Saturday lunch. We were always hatching little schemes and devious plans but a Florida trip was never mentioned. Sunday came and went as we were spending a boring day in Somerville. I picked up Jay early in Monday before work. But I never made it to work and neither did he. It seems we both looked at each other and blurted out, "let's go to Florida." It was the height of spring break and we were going to attend.

I called my boss at the car dealership and told him I was quitting and so did Jay.

The next step was trying to come up with some money. I had a few bucks stashed away. Jays mother gave us a jar of change.

We filled the gas tank and headed for interstate 95 south. We were on our way.

I had been doing the driving because Jay didn't know how to drive a standard stick. Then we had the bright idea to switch while driving. So, on busy 95 south we switched drivers. He came over to the driver's seat and I slid over to the passenger side. It was pretty dangerous but we swapped places without even slowing down.

We decided to drive through the night. We stopped at Daytona beach. We drove the car on the beach and it was so cool that we recorded the experience on a portable tape recorder. For years afterwards we would listen to the tape and laugh our butts off. God knows where it is now.

We met a girl named Hillary who brought us home to meet her parents. Two bearded longhaired hippies. We



enjoyed a few delicious meals there and made some friends.

The seats in a Corolla go all the way down so we slept in the car.

We had a lot of fun partying with the Spring break people. We hung out on the beach all day while keeping an eye on our finances.

We managed to save enough money for gas.

For at least 20 years there has been a bottle of Hawaiian Tropic tanning oil in our medicine cabinet. The smell reminds of laying on a Florida beach without a care in the world. I loved Florida so much that I moved there in 1986.

Somerville Community Preservation Act Program seeks input for future projects

The Somerville Community Preservation Committee is inviting residents to participate in shaping the future of their neighborhoods by providing input on potential projects to be funded by the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in the coming year. CPA in Somerville has a history of supporting a diverse range of initiatives, including rehabilitating playgrounds and schoolyards, making historic public buildings safe and handicapped accessible,

building affordable housing, and supporting rental assistance.

CPA is a grant funding program that aims to address the needs and priorities of the community. Before launching the next funding round the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is actively seeking input from the Somerville community to identify the greatest needs and priorities in the upcoming year. Are there historic buildings that would benefit from

repairs? Outdoor community space or recreation needs? How can CPA funds help to advance equity in Somerville? The CPC wants to hear from you.

Residents are encouraged to participate in a virtual public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, March 27, at 6:30 p.m., where they can share their ideas and suggestions directly with the Community Preservation Committee. Additionally, residents can contribute their input by taking a survey available at www.somervillema.gov/cpa.

The Community Preservation Committee will also be tabling at locations throughout Somerville to share more about the types of work the CPA can support. Current locations include:

Thursday, March 21, 4:00 – 6:00

p.m., Somerville Central Library (79 Highland Ave)

Saturday, March 30, 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Somerville Winter Market (191 Highland Ave)

Additionally, the CPC is planning to table at local farmer's markets and Somerstreets events throughout the late summer and fall. Community members interested in inviting the committee to discuss potential funding opportunities with their organization are encouraged to email Roberta Cameron, Preservation Act Manager, at rcameron@somervillema.gov or calling 617-625-6600 Ext. 2528

For more information about the Somerville Community Preservation Act program and how to get involved, please visit www.somervillema.gov/cpa.



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and speak to the Assignment Editor

City considers removal of requirements for building unnecessary parking spaces CONT. FROM PG 1

conversation is, at least for me, has been very counter-intuitive."

Ewen-Campen went on to explain that he received many calls concerning the proposed change in zoning rules. "News reporters asking me why I am trying to get rid of a bunch of parking," he said. "I just want to be incredibly clear from the get-go here what this proposal does and mean and what Councilor Burnley and I are proposing."

Ewen-Campen continued, "No one in Greater Boston needs us to tell you that we have incredibly bad traffic. We have some of the worst traffic in the entire country. And one of the prime reasons we have such bad traffic is because historically we have allowed or even encouraged large developers – in particular large commercial developers – like in Kendall Square, like in large commercial areas in Boston – to build enormous parking garages. And this creates a major incentive for the people who work at these buildings to live in the suburbs and drive to work every morning and drive back every afternoon. And in fact they're being basically subsidized to do so."

The Councilor referred to a *Boston Globe Spotlight* series that recommended the removal of mandatory parking minimums. He reminded the Council of the many developments – such as Boynton Yards, Somernova and others – where hundreds or even thousands of parking spaces were proposed to be built.

"I think all of us know intuitively, and definitely through data, we cannot handle this many new cars in the community," Ewen-Campen said.

It was then pointed out that the current zoning in large parts

of the city set very high and completely arbitrary requirements to build minimum amounts of parking, whether or not it is needed.

"The city is actually forcing these large commercial developments to over-build parking that is unneeded," Ewen-Campen said.

Councilor Burnley concurred with what was said earlier and added, "Our city, for a long time, has been pushing on several different urgent areas of concern, including affordability in housing, including climate goals, including making sure that our roads are safe, and that they are not overrun by cars – particularly by people who cut through Somerville to get to somewhere else."

Burnley stated that parking minimums sit at the nexus of all of the mentioned city goals. "By removing the mandatory regulation that developers – including our neighbors who have homes, who may want to do renovations – by removing those requirements, we are freeing up people to make decisions that work best for the projects they have. Whether that is deciding that instead of adding two more parking spaces they can add two more units. Whether that is deciding that we can have green space where a parking lot would ostensibly go. This allows us and our community partners to have more freedom in deciding the direction of how Somerville will shape up."

Ward 5 community member Devin Matté addressed the Council, speaking in favor of the proposed zoning change saying, "Parking minimums, I think, are terrible for Somerville in so many ways, and I applaud the Council for taking up the chance to get rid of them citywide. I've been task-

ing and advocating in various different ways in the past few years around parking minimums."

Matté stated that part of why he feels so strongly about the issue is that there is much data and many studies indicating that parking minimums hurt communities that implement them. "They hurt us in terms of housing costs," he continued. "A single parking space in a parking garage can cost as much as \$50,000. And that \$50,000 is not simply swallowed by the company that is building that garage, it is passed on to the people that live there or work there, either in the form of additional rent they have to pay. Or in the form of having to pay for that parking day over day out until that garage starts making a profit."

Matté shared that studies have shown that adding a parking garage to an apartment complex can reduce the overall number of housing units being built by as much as 25 percent.

"When we have a housing crisis in our city we shouldn't be allocating more of our valuable land to cars instead of people," said Matté. "It's also bad for the environment. Parking, by its nature, is pavement that is impervious, contributing to flooding and other climate issues. It also locks in and encourages people to drive, when if there wasn't an opportunity to park there they might have used other options."

The city's Director of Mobility Brad Rawson then addressed the Council on the matter at hand, stating that Mayor Ballantyne and the city staff support the resolution. "As you have noted, Somerville's adopted policy plan has included Climate Forward, SomerVision, Vision Zero and

other official policy plans, direct the city to reduce vehicle miles traveled. We know that parking supply is the major influence on driving behavior. The science is in. Somerville's 2019 citywide Zoning Overhaul as has been noted, did include many progressive tools to begin right-sizing motor vehicle parking in new development."

Rawson indicated that the ordinances helped them permit several zero-parking apartment buildings and many other parking-light residential commercial projects.

"We have requirements to unbundle parking from leases," Rawson said. "This is a well-established best practice that gives consumers more choice in how they spend their money in a tight housing market and reduces incentives to drive."

Rawson conceded that the 2019 Zoning Overhaul did retain some legacy language that can create confusion, inefficiency and unintended consequences. "I will note that even in these cases where our current regulations are not as progressive as we would wish, city staff still invests immense time to reduce parking and right-size it in proposed projects. These case-by-case efforts have several downsides. One is that they create uncertainty and risk for the development community, which adds time and cost and acts as a drag on housing production. Second is that it slows down case review and constrains the development pipeline."

Rawson expressed enthusiasm for the work ahead in working with the Council on bringing the proposed changes to fruition.

Ward 2 Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott, in atten-

dance of the meeting remotely, expressed his support of the resolution.

Likewise, Ward 6 Councilor Lance L. Davis indicated his support in moving the issue forward after inquiring about the procedural processes to follow.

Ward 1 Councilor Matthew McLaughlin pointed out that no minimum parking requirements exist through transit areas and suggested that the existing language could be altered to apply citywide.

"I've been trying to get a lot of zoning changes done, with mixed support from the city," McLaughlin said. "Definitely not a public proclamation of support like I've seen tonight. And that's been processed to death. So, I'm a little concerned as well when I hear 'process' – that we need to staff up and do these things. As far as I know, all it requires is just a few word changes."

McLaughlin emphasized that he does support the proposal but also hopes that the city will get more involved in the other zoning policies that he has taken up.

Councilor At Large Jake Wilson also spoke in favor of the resolution.

Councilor At Large Kristen Strezio asked about what disability consultants were called in concerning the proposed zoning changes, as well as how these changes might impact seniors in the community.

In wrapping up, Councilor Ewen-Campen reminded the Council that the conversation was just beginning and that the matter would move on through committees for further study. The resolution was approved by the Council and the matter will move forward accordingly.

GLOWBALL: A Rave in Support of Arts at the Armory CONT. FROM PG 1

while seated on stage with their friends, and also pick the winners of the Best Glow-in-the-Dark Outfit Contest, which all guests are encouraged to enter. GLOWBALL tickets include coupons for beverages and bites,

plus glow in the dark accessories for guests to don.

Can't make it to GLOWBALL but still want to support Arts at the Armory and have them gift a ticket to a local artist or cultural worker? As with all GLOW-

BALL tickets, they will send you a thank you note and receipt stating that 80% of your ticket purchase is a donation to The Center for Arts at the Armory.

They are counting on the community to come out for what

promises to be Somerville's most illuminating party of the year in support of advancing our mission to provide an inclusive and accessible venue that creates opportunities for artists and cultural workers, brings diverse audiences

together, enriches and transforms lives, and promotes the creative economy. Center for Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave., Friday, April 26, 7:00 – 11:00 p.m. For tickets and more information visit <https://artsatthearmory.org/>.

Improvements highlighted at block party on Glen and Otis Streets

By **Joel Chan**

On Saturday, March 16, the City of Somerville, partnered with CultureHouse and Neighborways Design, threw a block party at the East Somerville Community School to show and educate those in attendance the safety improvements for Glen and Otis Streets.

At the block party, attendees were informed through various info-graphics displays which showcased the proposed interventions, design options for signs (which included the brand color),

and also mural themes for some public art around to be placed around Somerville.

Glen and Otis Streets have been selected as high priority for the neighborhood installations, as there are schools nearby, with high usage from children and elderly citizens alike. People are also known to ride their bikes, walk, and roll alongside Glen and Otis Streets.

The ultimate goal is to create a Neighborway on Glen Street in East Somerville between Tufts Street and Broadway, and on Otis Street alongside Mc-

Grath Highway.

A few other goals include increased biking as the primary mode of transportation, and by 2040, they aim for an 80% decrease in carbon emissions. They also hope that these Neighborways will increase safety for everyone, as the slower speeds will top out at 20 mph, and connect schools, homes, businesses, and popular destinations by using signs, mountable barriers, and pavement markings.

The installations should be up during the spring or summer of 2024.



Join the Somerville Redevelopment Authority Board

Are you passionate about contributing to the redevelopment and revitalization of Somerville's neighborhoods? Consider applying for a position on the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA) Board. The SRA is currently seeking applications for one open board position. The application deadline is April 15, 2024.

About the Somerville Redevelopment Authority

The SRA is dedicated to enhancing the livability and prosperity of various areas within the city through the implementation of urban renewal. This transformative process focuses on redeveloping underused or substandard areas, guided by community outreach, presenting a vision for redevelopment, and, when necessary, justifying the use of eminent domain – a governmental action where private property is acquired for public use, with fair compensation and support for existing tenants or residents.

Current Projects

The SRA is actively engaged in urban renewal plans in Union Square and Winter Hill, with an ongoing demonstration project plan at 90 Washington Street. The Authority regularly evaluates the suitability of urban renewal in other areas.

Responsibilities and Commitment

SRA members are expected to attend monthly board meetings lasting approximately 90 minutes, ten to twelve months a year. Meetings involve discussions on the progress of urban renewal projects and voting on related matters. Members may also be required to attend special sessions. Preparation for each meeting typically involves reviewing materials (1-3 additional hours).

Membership terms last for five years, and members must reside in Somerville. Compensation: \$318/month

Why Join the Somerville Redevelopment Authority Board?

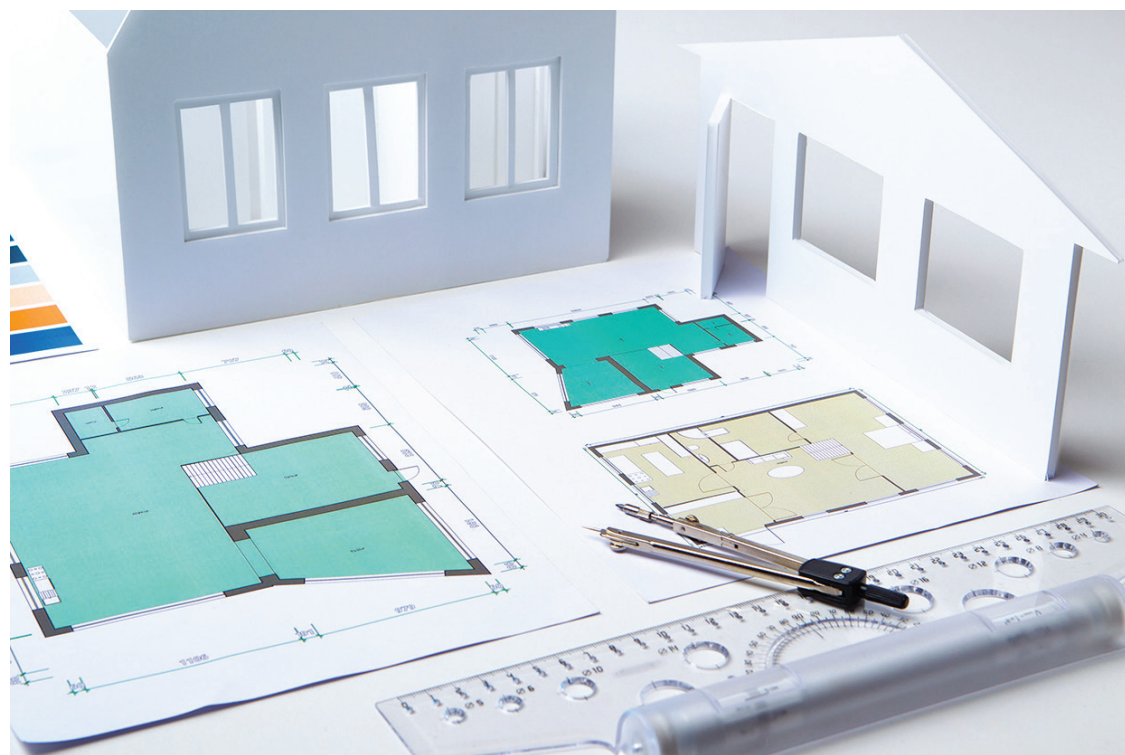
Becoming an SRA board member provides a unique opportunity to influence the direction of neighborhood redevelopment in Somerville. It allows you to contribute to a transparent and well-justified redevelopment process.

Application Details

To apply, submit a resume and a statement of interest explaining why you wish to serve on the SRA. Application materials can be provided via email to Ben Demers at bdemers@somervillema.gov, by mail to 93 Highland Avenue, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02143, or by phone at (617) 625-6600 x 2537.

The application review process involves City staff and the City's Appointments Advisory Committee (AAC). Successful applicants will be interviewed by the AAC, which will then recommend two candidates to the mayor's office for a final decision. The selected candidate must be approved by the Somerville City Council.

For questions about the application process, contact Ben Demers at bdemers@somervillema.gov or (617) 625-6600 x 2537.



Beacon Hill Roll Call



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

THE HOUSE AND SENATE: *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local senators' votes on roll calls from the week of March 11-15. There were no roll calls in the House last week.

EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE CHANGES (S 2697)

Senate 40-0, approved and sent to the House a bill aimed at making early education and care money more accessible and affordable for young families across the Bay State. The bill would make high-cost state grants for early education and care providers permanent; increase the income threshold to make more families eligible for childcare subsidies; and establish recommended salary and benefit guidelines for early childhood teachers commensurate with K-12 public school teachers.

Under current law subsidies are limited to households whose incomes equal up to 50 percent of the state median income, or \$73,000. The bill would raise the eligibility threshold to 85 percent of the state median income, or \$124,000 for a family of four.

"Access to high-quality, affordable early education and childcare is essential for the healthy development of young children, as well as for the economic well-being of working families and employers in the commonwealth," said Sen. Jason Lewis (D-Winchester), lead sponsor and Senate Chair of the Committee on Education. "With the passage today of the Early Ed Act, Massachusetts is demonstrating national leadership in addressing the broken early education and childcare system in our country."

"From my first day in the Senate, I have been pushing for expanded access to early education and increasing staff salaries to ensure educators can earn a good living," said Sen. Sal DiDomenico (D-Everett). "This critical legislation will drastically expand access to affordable, high-quality, early education and childcare and deliver significantly better pay and benefits for early educators. I am proud to support this bill which helps move our state one step closer to guaranteeing every child will receive world-class education from childhood through adulthood. We must get this bill over the finish line and keep our state a livable and welcoming home for families of all incomes."

"An equitable and competitive commonwealth is one in which every child and family has access to affordable quality early education," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). "At the same time, we must recognize the incredible work of the providers who are shaping the minds and hearts of our earliest learners. Today I'm proud that the Massachusetts Senate is once again taking action to lower costs for families, open up more opportunities for children, increase pay for our early educators and make

support for providers permanent so they can keep their doors open and thrive for years to come.

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

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

CONSIDER TAX CREDIT FOR COMPANIES THAT PROVIDE EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE (S 2697)

Senate 7-32, rejected an amendment that would require a study which would make recommendations on employer-supported early education and care benefits, to include possible creation of a tax credit for employers that provide these early education and care benefits to their employees.

Amendment supporters said this amendment does not create a tax credit but simply requires a study of the possibility of one. They said that all options should be looked into and put on the table in order to help support employers that provide childcare.

"The bill already includes a new competitive grant program to incentivize employers to invest in additional early education and care slots for their employees," responded Sen. Jason Lewis who opposed the amendment. "Furthermore, a federal tax credit has been available to employers since 2001 and has proven ineffective in expanding access to affordable early education and care for workers."

GOP Minority Leader Sen. Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester), the sponsor of the amendment, did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call to comment on his amendment and its rejection.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment that would include the possibility of tax credits in the study. A "No" vote is against the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

GOV. MAURA HEALEY MOVES TO PARDON MISDEMEANOR MARIJUANA POSSESSION

– Gov. Healey has issued an executive order that would pardon misdemeanor marijuana possession convictions that occurred in Massachusetts before March 14, 2024. If approved by the Governor's Council at its upcoming March 27 meeting, the pardons will apply to hundreds of thousands of people who were convicted of the offense which is no longer an offense. The Bay State decriminalized marijuana possession in 2008 and then legalized it on a ballot questions in 2016.

In October 2022, President Biden issued a presidential proclamation that pardoned many federal and D.C. offenses for simple marijuana possession. In December 2023, he expanded that pardon to include more offenses and issued a call for governors to take action to pardon marijuana convictions in their states.

"Nobody should face barriers to getting a job, housing or an education because of an old misdemeanor marijuana conviction that they would not be charged for today," said Healey. "We're taking this nation-leading action as part of our commitment to using the clemency process to advance fairness and equity in our criminal justice system. We're grateful for President Biden's leadership on this at the federal level and proud to answer his call to take action in the states."

"Marijuana laws have significantly changed over the past decade, and it's essential that our criminal justice system adjusts with them," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. "Gov. Healey's proposed pardon represents an important step toward righting historic wrongs, particularly around our country's misguided War on Drugs. We thank the Governor's Council for their careful consideration of this recommendation and look forward to continuing our progress to make Massachusetts a more fair and equitable home for all."

"Because of this pardon recommendation, many people in Massachusetts may get a second chance," said Carol Rose, Executive Director of the ACLU of Massachusetts. "It means people will no longer be punished for behavior that is now legal in our state, and will face fewer barriers to housing, jobs, education, student loans, and stability. We thank Gov. Healey for her leadership on this life-changing issue."

BAN EMPLOYERS FROM ASKING FOR CREDIT REPORTS (H 1434)

The House approved and sent to the Senate legislation that would prohibit employers from obtaining the credit reports of existing or potential employees except in certain circumstances including hiring for a position that requires national security clearance; a position for which a person is required by federal or state law to obtain a consumer report; and some executive or managerial positions at a financial institution.

The [bill] reduces barriers to employment by limiting the use of personal credit reports in the hiring process," said sponsor former Duxbury representative Josh Cutler who is now Gov. Maura Healey's Undersecretary of Apprenticeship, Work-based Learning and Policy in the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. "Credit scores were never intended to be used for employment purposes and pre-employment credit

Continued on page 15

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Spring is springing in Somerville.

Our View Of The Times



After the long chilling days of winter, it's nice to know that springtime has officially arrived. We anxiously await the final thaw and balmy days ahead.

One of the finer benefits of New England living is standing witness to the massive explosion of nature's rebirth and renewal, seemingly amplified here. Grass, trees, wildlife and flowers all seem to go forth and multiply at an astounding rate,

as if on cue to the call for "Action!"

How nice it will be to stroll through a park and feed a few squirrels. To replant a garden plot and watch as life springs forth. Or to take the family on a weekend getaway to the beach or mountains.

The seasonal cycle brings its highs and lows. Its pleasures and its challenges. We evolved as creatures in sync with that cycle, so we know how to adapt and make

the most out of each day on the calendar. Still, most of us would surely confess to a few choice dates to name as our favorites, if pushed to 'fess up.

How about a family picnic, or a bit of sunbathing at the beach? There'll be camping, hiking and bird watching opportunities galore. All it takes is a little gumption and a modicum of fore-planning and off you go!

As much as so many of us love our winter scenery, sports, etc., there is so much to be said for being able to step out one's front door without danger of slipping and busting a hip. Not to mention the simple pleasure of soaking up some sun and taking in fine fragrance of life anew.

We've really got it made, so let's get out there and start loving us some spring. It won't last forever, so hop to it!

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

of birthdays, celebrating with her great family. Happy birthday to **MaryLynn McWatters O'Malley**. We hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to great guy and lifelong resident, **Ed Bean**. We wish him the best. We wish all of our Facebook friends such as **Dottie Poudrier** a very special day, and another special person, **Karen Michelle**, we hope she has a great birthday, along with **Neil Gillis Sr., Alexander Levering Kern, Carla Hunter Gates, Shirley Benoit McMenimen, Michael Cirrone, Muhammad Mitchell Wilks, Paul Carafotes, Roy Bertocchi, Rosalee Zammuto, Linda Sirignano, Larry J Travaglione** and **Rhonda An-**

nette a very happy birthday. To all those that are also celebrating this week, we wish them a happy birthday.

Join **Groundwork Somerville** and **city staff** at **South St. Farm** (138 South St.) on **Sunday, March 24**, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to learn about **3(+)** **bin composting**. Understand the basics of rodent-proof compost systems, and then work with other volunteers to update the compost system on South St. Farm. No registration is required for this event.

The annual **Ras na hEireann 5K road race** is back. It is the most genuine Irish

race this side of the Atlantic. A celebration of spring in Somerville. This race was born in Ireland and named in honor of its famous sister race, the **Ras na hEireann International Cross Country** held in Termonfechin, County Louth, Republic of Ireland. The **Ras na hEireann U.S.A. 5Km** is open to all, from beginners to international stars (registration is now closed). The race kicks off at 11:00 a.m., **Sunday, March 24**, go by and cheer on the runners and see some of their very creative outfits. For more information and to register visit <https://www.theraceofireland.com/>

4GoodVibes, 483 Somerville Ave, will be closing their Somerville location on **March 25** after 7 years in Somerville. Until then they will hold a storewide "moving" sale at the Somerville shop, after that, you can visit them online and at their Medford and Kingston locations.

Lyndell's Sean Collier Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser will be held **April 12 - 15**. Raffle tickets are available at \$5.00 each. First Prize - 2 Red Sox Tickets Game TBA, Second Prize - \$200.00 Lyndell's Gift Card, Third Prize - \$100.00 Lyndell's Gift Card, Fourth Prize - \$50.00 Lyndell's *Continued on page 19*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#915

- In Sweden and Finland, what do children dress up as for Easter?
- What insect is known for its "singing" during spring and summer evenings?
- Which flowering plant is famous for its trumpet-shaped flowers and is associated with Easter?
- What spring festival, also known as the "Festival of Colors," is celebrated mainly in India and Nepal?
- What is the name of the traditional Japanese art of folding paper into various shapes?
- Which fruit is known as a symbol of hospitality?
- What does Cinco De Mayo commemorate?
- What type of race is the Tour de France?
- What is the name of the traditional Japanese art of cultivating miniature trees?
- Which famous waterfall is located on the border of the United States and Canada?
- In soccer, what body part can't touch the ball?
- What team owns the longest winning streak in NBA history?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- A Greek-Canadian man invented the "Hawaiian" pizza.
- Antarctica is the largest unclaimed territory on Earth.

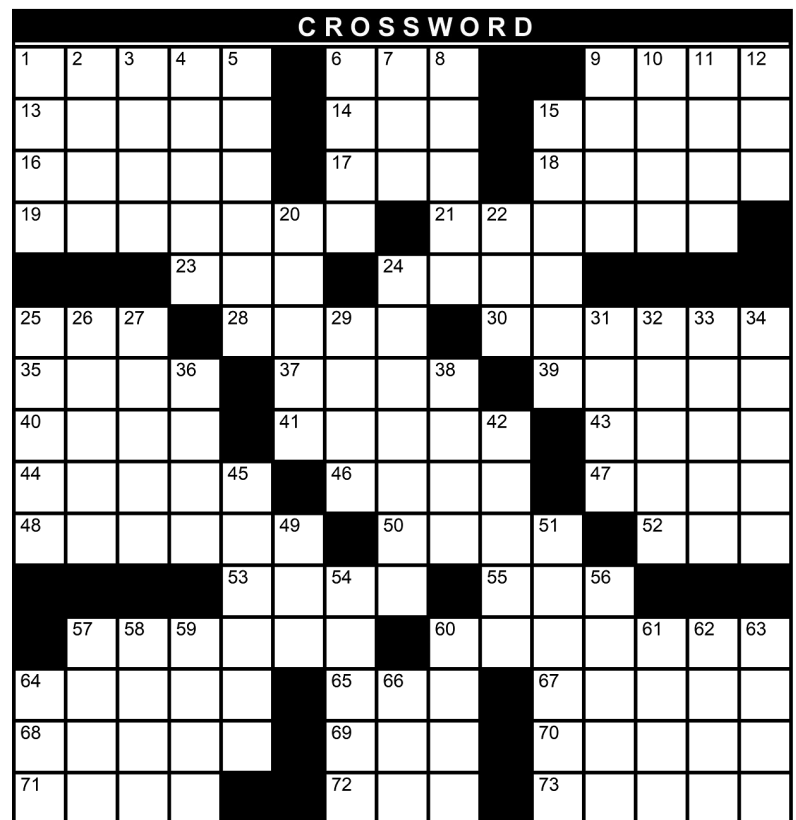
STATEPOINT CROSSWORD FINISH THE LYRICS

ACROSS

- Swell up
- Pendulum's path
- Type of salmon
- Steve Miller Band: "I want to fly like an _____"
- Simon & Garfunkel, e.g.
- Popular winter boot brand
- Ohio city
- Lodge
- Squirrel away
- Glenn Frey: "The pressure's high just to stay alive 'cause _____ is on"
- John Travolta in "Grease": "I got _____, they're multipl'in"
- Automated teller
- Clarified butter
- Bad-mouth, slangily
- Stag
- Tartans
- "I'm _____ you!"
- Commiss
- Monocot's alternative
- Road's edge
- Living room centerpiece?
- Prefix meaning "left"
- Deadly snake
- Sasquatch's cousin
- Court petitioner
- Blood infection
- Indian flatbread
- Opposite of post-
- Sound of impact
- Duran Duran: "Her name is _____, and she dances on the sand"
- The Beatles: "Take a sad song and make it _____"
- Elvis: "We're caught in a trap, I can't _____"
- Relating to a mode
- Scrooge's exclamation
- Memory failure
- Bouquet thrower
- Number of candles on a cake
- Musketeers' weapons
- Picnic invaders
- "Just kidding!"
- Did, archaic

DOWN

- The Go-Go's: "They got the _____"
- 100,000, in India
- Cameron Diaz' Fiona, e.g.



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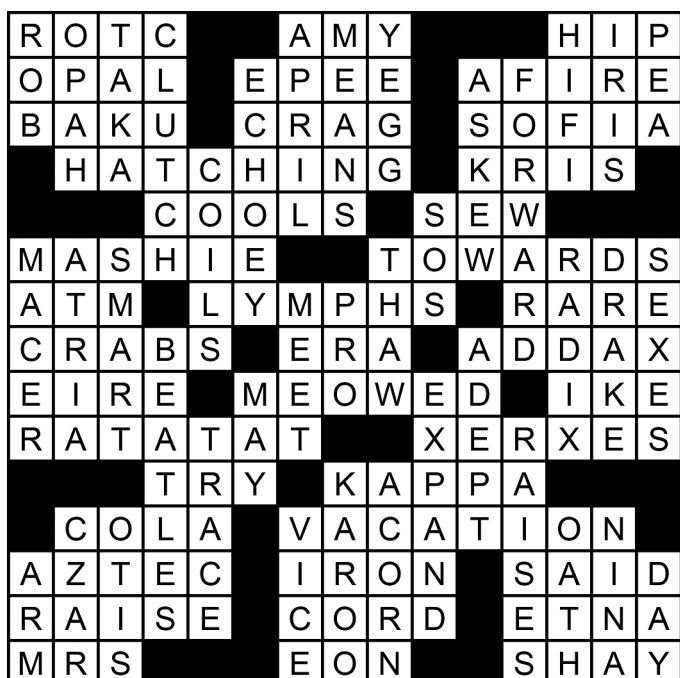
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- Hula dancer's hello
- These are held to be true
- Miners' passage
- Tainted Love: "Once I ran to you, now I _____"
- "Lord of the Flies" shell
- Like the other side of the pillow?
- Certain kind of exam
- Not his
- Antiquated
- Protection from a sword
- To death, in French (2 words)
- _____ B vaccine
- Manna from heaven
- Bon Jovi: "Tommy used to work on the _____"
- Habituate
- Spaghetti _____
- Don McLean: "Drove my chevy to the _____"
- Pains
- Frost over (2 words)
- Capital of Delaware
- Tennessee Ernie Ford: "I owe my soul to the company _____"
- Geishas' sashes
- "_____ good example"
- Royal topper
- _____ -tattle
- Pronoun
- Refused to act, archaic
- City-related
- Giraffe's striped-legged cousin
- Bruce Springsteen: "Tramps like us, baby we were _____ to run"
- Change a manuscript
- Small amounts
- Make sharper
- Newspaper piece
- Applications
- Midterm, e.g.
- Wharton degree, acr.
- Back then

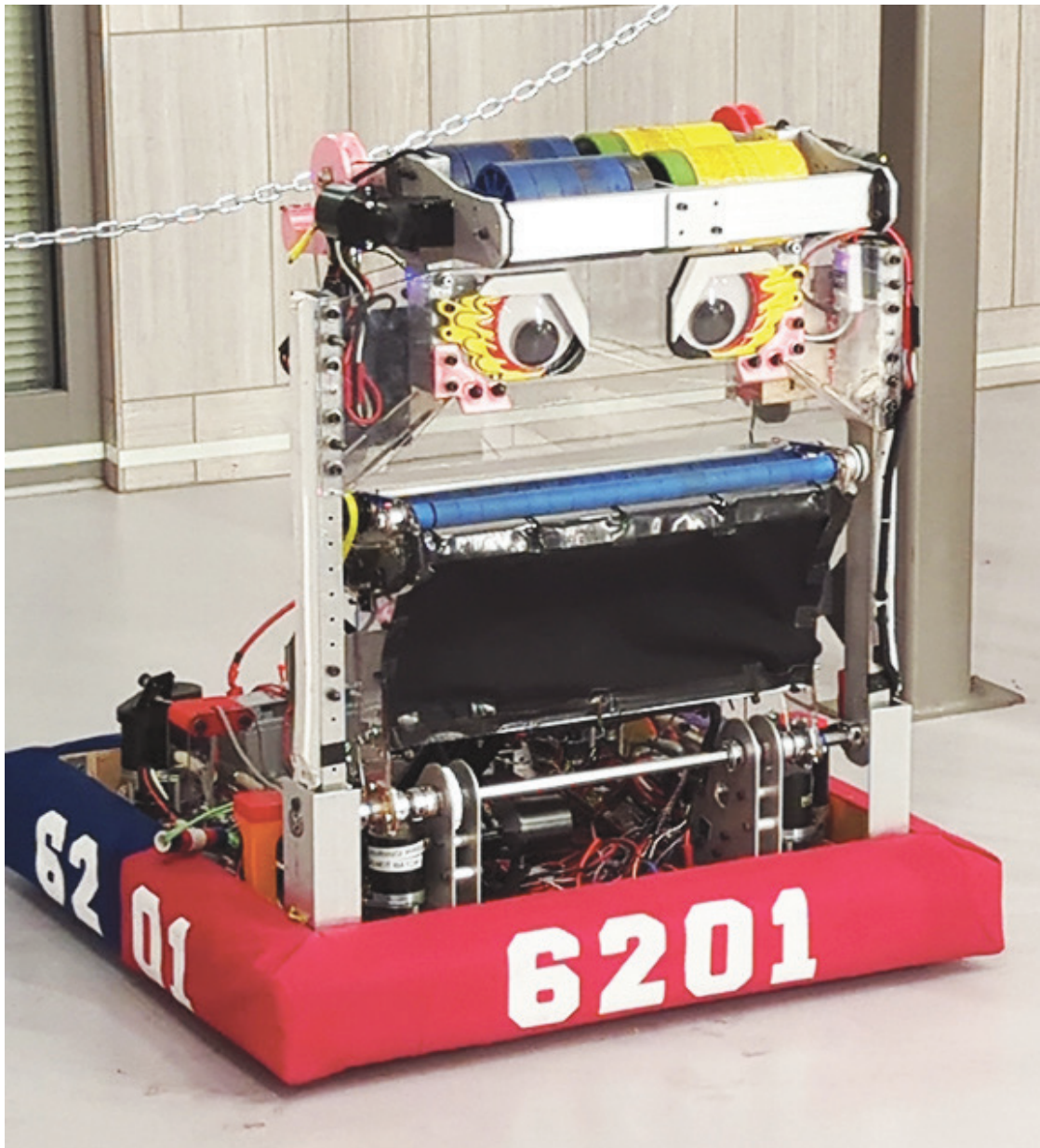
Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



Somernova campus happenings

Somerville's Team FRC6201, The Highlanders, celebrated their annual Hoodie Day on the Somernova campus last Thursday, March 14, to kick off the robotics season. The FRC6201 Highlanders have been sponsored by Somernova since 2020.



Be sure to visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #300

Boynton Yards

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Somerville broke away from Charlestown in 1842. This was the same year that the Bunker Hill Monument was capped off and completed. It was also the year that the John P. Squire Company was founded. It was the first packing company established in the city.



Through the coming years along with the North Packing and Provision Company, the New England Dressed Meat and Wool Company and the Boynton Packing Company these became "the big four." Their presence caused many spinoff companies to be born in the Union Square area which made Somerville the meat packing capital of New England. They specialized in beef, pork and lamb products. She was known as the Chicago of the east.

Of these, the name Boynton still reminds us of Somerville's early industries. The livestock arrived by rail at the Boynton Yards, was processed and the resulting product was marketed worldwide.



John Boynton was a humble and little-known man who until he was thirty worked on his father's farm in Mason, New Hampshire. He then set up his own small business in Templeton, Massachusetts. His product was tin and his tinware carts became popular throughout Worcester County and New England. It is said that he was thoroughly devoted to his business affairs and gave less thought to other matters. *Continued on page 23*

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**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, April 2, 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.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RoksoaYTLsNI890Vpv8jA

Webinar ID: 847 0427 2532

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)

HP24-000010 – 36 Munroe Street

Applicant: Jilong Liu
Owner: 36 Munroe Street LLC
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing original or early replacement windows.

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 to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note:** Written comments due to historic@somervillema.gov **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email historic@somervillema.gov with inquiries.

3/13/24, 3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB # 24-59**

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

Athletic Field Maintenance

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, March 20, 2024**. Sealed bids will be received at the above office until: **1:00 pm, Thursday, April 4, 2024**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

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

**Felisa Garate
Procurement Analyst
617-625-6600 x3406**

3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.30 §39M Over \$50K**

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Domestic Water and Fire Service - 114 Highland Avenue at 114 Highland Avenue in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **GCG ASSOCIATES, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to: Installation of a new 6" CLDI Domestic Water Service, new 6" CLDI Fire Service, two Tapping Sleeve Gate Valves, Cut and Cap existing 6" Service, site restoration.

The work is estimated to cost **\$226,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 03/29/2024 at 11:00AM EDT for general bids. Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.30§39M and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

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

General Bids will be received until **04 April 2024 on 11:00AM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

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

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

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: None

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

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

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**City of Somerville
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L.c.131§40, the SOMERVILLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION will hold a Public Meeting on Tuesday, March 26th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. to review the Notice of Intent submitted by Weston & Sampson on behalf of the Applicant, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to improve Draw Seven Park with updated site amenities and utilities, pedestrian connectivity to the neighborhood, universal accessibility, and multigenerational features. As part of the improvement plan, the project will also address flooding issues associated with the river systems through the development of a flood barrier, as well as the creation of a living shoreline, to mitigate chronic riverbank erosion along the park's eastern side. This project will also serve to increase community access with the goal of connecting to the rest of the Mystic River Reservation greenway.

Copies of the application can be viewed at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA. Contact Malik Drayton, Conservation Agent, at 617-625-6600 x2514, or send an email to mdrayton@somervillema.gov for more information.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, **this public meeting will be conducted via remote participation.**

**TO USE A COMPUTER
Webinar ID
813 6634 4901**

**Registration URL
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81366344901?pwd=dHd6QnhRSzG0zMm1Wl29rNHg5c1lRdz09>**

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, April 3, 2024**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to planning@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_V-H0YPJvTn6KdMU8_D7cQ
Webinar ID: 833 1055 0859

TO CALL IN

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

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

- 10 Perry Street** Artisan Builders seeks to further extend the existing nonconformity for the required rear setback in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) district, which requires a Special Permit Finding.
- 2 Union Square** Bill Proia seeks an administrative appeal of the Building Official's failure to act in response to a request for written interpretation.
- 1 McGrath Hwy** Somerbridge Hotel, LLC seeks to extend the validity of the Hardship Variance (P&Z 23-032) for six (6) months.

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

Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to planning@somervillema.gov.

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**NOTICE OF INITIAL SITE INVESTIGATION AND
TIER I CLASSIFICATION
Multi-Family Residence**

**13A Greene Street, Somerville, MA 02143
RELEASE TRACKING NUMBER 3-38019**

A release of oil and/or hazardous materials has occurred at this location, which is a disposal site as defined by M.G.L. c. 21E, § 2 and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, 310 CMR 40.0000. To evaluate the release, a Phase I Initial Site Investigation was performed pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0480. As a result of this investigation, the site has been classified as Tier I pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0500. On March 13, 2024, Essex Realty Trust, filed a Tier I Classification Submittal with the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). To obtain more information on this disposal site, please contact William Kenney, Licensed Site Professional (LSP), at River Hawk Environmental, LLC, 511 West Grove Street, Suite 301, Middleborough, MA 02346, (781) 536-4639. The Tier I Classification Submittal and the disposal site file can be reviewed at MassDEP, 150 Presidential Way, Woburn, MA 01801; Main Phone: (978) 694-3200. Additional public involvement opportunities are available under 310 CMR 40.1403(9) and 310 CMR 40.1404.

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Notice of Self Storage Sale

Please take notice Prime Storage - Somerville located at 39R Medford St., Somerville, MA 02143 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.storage-treasures.com on **4/9/2024** at 12:00PM. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Jules Paulynice unit #1282. 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.

3/20/24 The Somerville Times

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**NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS (NOI/RRF)**

Date of Publication: March 20, 2024
Responsible Entities City of Somerville
Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and
Community Development
93 Highland Avenue, 3rd floor,
Somerville, MA 02143
Tel: 617-625-6600, x. 2565

This combined notice is intended to satisfy two separate, but related, procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Somerville (The City), acting by and through the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD).

On or about **April 3, 2024** The City will submit a request to the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Boston Regional Office, for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake a project known as the demolition of 24 Cross St. E, Somerville, MA, for the purpose of removing a blighted vacant structure that is a hazard to the persons in the surrounding community. Total demolition costs, including soft costs, is estimated at \$403,000. The City's share is estimated at \$403,000 of federal funding.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City, via HUD sanctioned Environmental Review, determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 is not required. An Environmental Review Record (ERR) documenting the environmental determinations for this project is on file at OSPCD, 3rd floor, City Hall, 93 Highland Ave. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at 3rd Floor, City Hall, 93 Highland Ave. and may be examined and/or copied Monday-Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Thursday from 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.; and Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to The City at the address given above. All comments received by the end of the business day on April 3, 2024 will be considered by The City prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City certifies to HUD/Boston that Alan Inacio, in his capacity as Director of Finance and Community Development and Certifying Officer of the City of Somerville, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD/Boston's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows The City to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

(The City and DHCD are referred to generically in this paragraph as "RE", which stands for "Responsible Entity".)
HUD/Boston will accept objections to its release of funds and The City's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officers of The City; (b) the The City has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, or incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD/Boston; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to: HUD/Office of Community Planning & Development, Thomas P. O'Neil Jr. Federal Building, 10 Causeway Street, 5th floor, Boston, MA 02222-1092. Potential objectors should contact HUD/Boston (617-994-8200) to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Alan Inacio, Director of Finance and Community Development, OSPCD
3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.30 §39M Over \$50K**

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Concrete Walkway Site Improvements (Phase 2) at State Aided Development: Mystic River (200-2) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **GCG ASSOCIATES, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to: Removal and reconstruction of concrete walkways, handicap ramps and railings, curbing, installation of stamped bituminous asphalt and all other work as specified throughout the development.

The work is estimated to cost **\$375,000.00**.

All Bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 03/22/2024 at 9:00AM EDT for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.30§39M and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L.c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

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

General Bids will be received until **28 March 2024** on **11:00AM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

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

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

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: None

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:
Somerville Housing Authority
Concrete Walkway Site Improvements (Phase 2)
Project #274137

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

3/13/24, 3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**City of Somerville, Massachusetts
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR**

Contact: Roberta Cameron, Community Preservation Act Manager
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 5, 2024

SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE TO HOLD A VIRTUAL COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN HEARING
Plan establishes the annual funding priorities for Community Preservation Act program

The Somerville Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is holding their annual Community Preservation Plan public hearing on **Wednesday, March 27** at 6:30 p.m. The Community Preservation Plan establishes the annual funding priorities and allocates money to the three categories that Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds can support.

Please join the CPA Public Hearing from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_xWRhpDA10-yd18zqhS39Dw
You can also dial in using your phone. United States: +1 646 931 3860
Webinar ID: 850 6884 3681

Interested persons may provide comments to the Community Preservation Committee at the hearing and by submitting written comments by **Friday, March 31st** by email to rcameron@somervillema.gov. You can also share your ideas by taking the Community Preservation Committee survey at www.somervillema.gov/cpa.

For more information on the CPA and how to apply for CPA funds, visit the City's [website at www.somervillema.gov/cpa](http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa).

with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Adrienne Pomeroy, at 617-625-6600 x2059 or ada@somervillema.gov.

3/13/24, 3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #24-60**

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

Central Broadway Water Main Upgrades – Round 2

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **03/20/2024**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **3:00PM EST on 04/10/2024**. 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 contact Thupten Chukhatsang at tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required. 100% Performance and Payments Bonds required of awarded contractor. MA Prevailing Wages Apply.

**Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400**

3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #24-53**

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

West Somerville Sewer and Stormwater Improvements

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **03/14/2024**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **04/11/2024; 1:00PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please contact PCS Department at acaruth@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid deposit required.

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

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB 24-58**

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

Plumbing Repairs at Dilboy Pool

The IFB package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, March 20, 2024**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **1:00 pm, Wednesday, April 3, 2024**.

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

Please email jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

Jordan Remy
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

3/20/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB #24-56**

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

Removal and Disposal of Street Sweeping Debris

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, March 20th, 2024**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 PM, Wednesday, April 3rd, 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 scastr@somervillema.gov for more information.

Sonia Castro
Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3407

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**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 27, 2024 at 6:00 PM**, on a petition for a New Used Car License.

New Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Ravelo's Auto Sales, 61 Washington St, for 0 vehicles inside and 1 vehicles outside, Mon-Fri: 8am-6pm, Sat: 8am-2pm, Sun: closed.

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

You have two ways to be heard at this meeting:

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

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

KIMBERLY M. WELLS
CITY CLERK

3/20/24 The Somerville Times

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

Book review: 'Blanche Passes Go' by Barbara Neely

By Dennis Fischman

If you are not a private eye or a police detective, who are you, and why are you investigating a murder? That's a key question many mystery authors must answer for us, the readers, before they can beckon us into the story.

In the Blanche White series [1] by Barbara Neely [2], the answers are unusual. Blanche, de-

spite her name, is a Black woman who makes her living by keeping house or catering for wealthy people, mostly white people. She is an outsider on the inside, a person who can be invisible as she goes about her tasks, yet someone perfectly placed to find out all the things that her employers want to keep secret.

Why does she investigate? That answer varies from one book to the next. In her first appearance (*Blanche on the Lam* [3], 1992), it's because she is in a strange town, she is a suspect herself, and she must find the real murderer to prove her innocence. You will find quite a few series with amateur detectives use that plot device somewhere along the way.

There's a more unusual motivation in *Blanche Passes Go* [4]. As the title implies, the game goes to a different level in this fourth (and sadly) final installment of Blanche White. The murder mystery is there, real, revealing, shocking, and sad – but

it's not the crux of the story. The center of this book is Blanche coming to terms with having been raped by a white man in her hometown years ago and not having reported it.

Blanche investigates a current murder where he is a suspect, "determined not to let him get away with another crime ... nor is she willing to let his money-hungry sister marry a sweet, mentally-challenged man for his wealth" (as the publisher says). Blanche's personal history and her work catering to people give her a unique perspective on what academics were calling "race, class, and gender" a sort of unholy trinity, when this series was being written at the close of the 20th century.

Like other readers, I am sorry that my fellow Pittsburgh native Barbara Neely never completed more books, although I am sure her time spent on activism was just as productive. (Neely designed and directed the first community-based cor-

rections facility for women in Pennsylvania, directed a branch of the YWCA, and headed a consultant firm for non-profits.) I'm glad the Mystery Writers of America created a scholarship program in her name [5] for Black crime fiction writers – one for an already published author [6], and another for someone getting started in publishing [7].

You might want to read those award winners. You will certainly want to read the Blanche White series, starting at the beginning, for well-written mysteries and for Blanche's incisive wit.

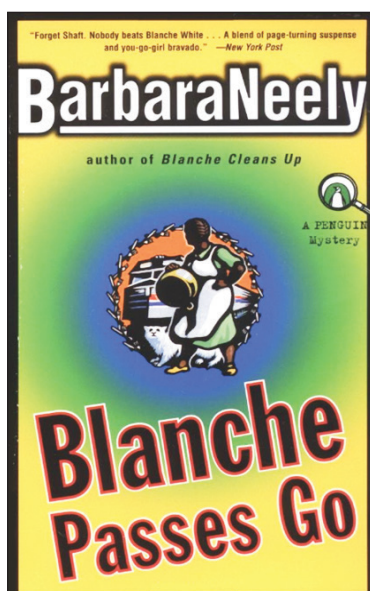
Links:

- [1] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/53114-blanche-white>
- [2] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/92194.Barbara_Neely
- [3] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23269388-blanche-on-the-lam>
- [4] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25792221-blanche-passes-go>

[5] <https://mysterywriters.org/mystery-writers-of-america-announces-barbara-neely-grant-recipients/>

[6] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/7306179.Necole_Ryse

[7] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/48728204-the-big-crescendo?ref=nav_sb_ss_1_13



Blanche Passes Go by Barbara Neely
Penguin Books, 2001, 336 pages



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

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.

Another Jew for Ceasefire

By Christopher Spicer

March 8.

Yellow tulips for International Women's Day were distributed to participants after thirty-five had gathered in Somerville at Davis Square to mourn the indiscriminate killing in Gaza. Alan Jehlen, attending the protest on Friday said "Ceasefire is the only way to be human."

"Already 1 percent of the population is dead," Sen. Pat Jehlen said. "That's thirty million Americans. 700 in Somerville. Or five people on our street."

"I'm so appalled," said Nancy Murray, Cambridge resident who worked for the ACLU. She has visited all the refugee camps including Jabalia recalling the 2,000 lb. bomb Israel dropped there. The death toll was dramatized by a reading of names and ages of Palestinian victims. "The names we just read included several families," remarked Amina, a student wearing a Kafiya and black mask who asked for her identity to remain private. "The death toll shows that Israel does not discriminate against age, does not discriminate against gender."

Murray has made twelve visits to Palestine since her first in 1988 after the first Intifada and once walked the width of Gaza with Dr. Mona al Farrar. "People often don't know that Gaza is 25 miles long and four to six miles wide."

Alan Jehlen, who has relatives in Israel including an uncle living in a religious kibbutz, spoke at City Hall giving testimony in favor of the ceasefire resolution.

His uncle once responded to a riot of Jews against Arabs saying 'it was a pogrom,' when that word still referred exclusively to mean the mass killing of Jews.

Nancy Murray, also a member of Water Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine commented on death exacted by bombing and starvation, having destroyed an already limited supply of goods. "There was no drinkable water" Murray explained, regarding perilous conditions she observed during the seventeen-year blockade. "500 trucks a day would bring bottled water. Now there's no water. People are drinking sea water today. The most alarming thing is it is deliberate. 1,000 trucks are blocked at the al-Rafa border. Israel confiscated 1,000 water filters that Britain had bought."

Generation after Generation Until Total Liberation—a sign Murray introduced me to a woman with Mediterranean blue eyes. She wore a red keffiyeh and red blazer and red boots. "I am Palestinian," began Somerville resident Hilary Rantisi. Born in Ramallah, she carries her father's memoir of her family's eviction in 1948 from Lydda., a strategically important city. "It has a train track and a very important airport that now the Israelis use." Her father, Auden Rantisi, was just twelve at the time. "We lost our home, all our belongings. My grandfather had the key to our home," explaining what has become a symbol used by many artists of the right of return. Sadly it too has been lost.

"It says Free Gaza," Hilary Rantisi explained of a banner that



was held toward College Avenue in Davis square. "The colors red and white represent the Palestinian Flag—That's why I'm wearing red. The shape of a watermelon is an image seen in many protest signs because there was a period of time when those who flew the flag would be jailed or shot. The artists used the melon as a way to subvert the rule creatively."

No Peace on Stolen Land—a chant

"What can you do? Everything I do..." she trailed off. "They drop food on people and then they kill them," Sen. Jehlen said. "If the US can build a pier in four months," she said referring to the Cypriot government initiative 210 nautical miles off the coast of Gaza where the US would build a temporary pier to collect hu-

manitarian aid at the island's port city of Larnaca, "they can stop the killing. The President can end this if he wants to."

Rantisi explained the importance in Somerville of "the symbolic vote for ceasefire made me feel my community cares. I felt held. The US is sending all these weapons and the refusal at the UN to pass a resolution has made the US accomplice in what is happening"

"The equivalent TNT of two atomic bombs have been used by Israel on Palestinians," Murray said. Pat Jehlen thought of a friend in a hospital. "What if she were there?"

"This is an Al-Jazeera reporter, the only surviving member of his family," event organizer Sara Halawa said, passing around the image of Moamen al Sharafi

beneath the headline "An Israeli raid kills 22 members of the correspondent's family. "Almost two hundred journalists have died."

"The logic of occupation makes you justify what you're doing," Mr. Jehlen said. "How does it end?"

"It's our duty," Somerville resident Laura Curiel said, "because we're tax payers. Our President can easily stop this." In Tuesday's primary election, nearly 23 percent voted "No Preference," the highest percentage in Massachusetts, result of an effort led by Somerville 4 Palestine: "We are fighting to make sure the atrocities our government has supported and funded ends now."

Christopher Spicer
Chair, Somerville Human Rights Commission

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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

From page 8

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Easter witches | 7. Mexico's victory at the Battle of Puebla |
| 2. The cricket | 8. Bicycle race |
| 3. The Easter Lily | 9. Bonsai |
| 4. Holi | 10. Niagara Falls |
| 5. Origami | 11. Hands |
| 6. Pineapple | 12. Los Angeles Lakers |

Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 6

checks can create needless barriers for otherwise qualified workers. Eleven other states already taken similar steps.”

Sen. Mike Barrett (D-Lexington), the Senate sponsor of the bill, did not respond to repeated requests from Beacon Hill Roll Call to comment on the bill and its passage.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (H 3248) – The House gave initial approval to a bill that applies the federal law known as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act to any museums and state agencies that receive state or local funding in the state of Massachusetts.

The federal law, according to the National Park Service’s website, requires that federal agencies and museums receiving federal funds take inventory of Native American human remains, funeral-related and sacred objects and provide written summaries of other cultural items. The agencies and museums must consult with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations to attempt to reach agreements on the repatriation or other disposition of these remains and objects. Once lineal descent or cultural affiliation has been established, and in some cases the right of possession also has been demonstrated, lineal descendants, affiliated Indian tribes or affiliated Native Hawaiian organizations normally make the final determination about the disposition of cultural items.

Co-sponsors of the bill, Reps. Dave Rogers (D-Cambridge) and David Biele (D-South Boston) did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call to comment on their proposal.

ASSAULT A TRANSIT WORKER (H 4355) – The House gave initial approval to a bill that imposes a prison sentence of between 90 days and 2.5 years or a fine of between \$500 and \$5,000 on a person who assaults a transit worker while the transit worker is performing his or her duties. The measure also expands the definition of assault to cover flinging a bodily substance including blood, saliva, mucous, semen, urine or feces.

“Before the Carmen’s Union approached me with this issue, I had no idea how bad these experiences were,” said sponsor Rep. Joe McGonagle (D-Everett). “Seeing the statistics, hearing the stories, it is very hard to ignore. It is imperative that our transit workers are able to perform their jobs safely, knowing they have support and protection.”

\$500 STIPEND FOR NON-PROFIT BOARD MEMBERS (H 4358) – The House gave initial approval to a bill that amends a current law which provides that a non-profit group lose its civil liability protection if it pays any amount of stipend to a board member. The bill would allow the non-profit to retain its civil liability protection as long as the stipend is not more than \$500.

Sponsor Rep. Alice Peisch (D-Wellesley) noted that federal law currently allows this \$500 stipend. “This change would allow nonprofits to provide board members with this modest stipend, facilitating their service and improving board representation,” said Peisch.

DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES (H 4429) – The House gave initial approval to a bill that would make some changes in the current state laws about debt collection practices.

The measure includes increasing from 85 percent to 90 percent the percentage of a person’s wages that is protected from garnishment. Another provision reduces from the current 12 percent to 3 percent the maximum interest rate that can be charged for judgements issued after 2024.

Supporters said the bill would help people to eventually pay off their debts without being overburdened by them and will ensure that no one in Massachusetts will be imprisoned for failure to pay a consumer debt.

“The [measure] creates common-sense consumer protections to prevent wage garnishment, reduce interest rates on debts and keep more money in the pockets of working families,” said co-sponsor Rep. Christine Barber (D-Somerville.)

Co-sponsor Rep. Tram Nguyen (D-Andover) did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call asking her to comment on the passage of her bill.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Hosting the inaugural ClimaTech summit is an incredible opportunity to show global climate leaders how Massachusetts is uniquely qualified to be the climate innovation lab for the world. We’re pioneering new industries and developing cutting-edge technologies that will power a healthier future, create high-quality jobs and ensure a sustainable future for our community.” — *Massachusetts Clean Energy Center CEO Dr. Emily Reichert announcing that in June, Massachusetts will host the inaugural edition of ClimaTech, a new, global leadership conference focused on innovation and bringing new technologies to market to combat the climate crisis and spur economic growth.*

“Consumer skepticism of autonomous vehicles is not surprising, given the recalls and well-publicized incidents that occurred last year. It’s critical that drivers understand both the capabilities and limitations of technology in their cars and how, when and where to use the systems properly.” — *Mark Schieldrop, Senior spokesperson for AAA Northeast on a new survey from AAA on self-driving vehicles which shows 66 percent of U.S. drivers express fear about these vehicles.*

“From day one, our mission ... has been simple: to honorably serve those who have served us. With the leadership of Gov. Maura Healey and the support of our partners

and stakeholders in the veteran community, our Executive Office is incredibly proud of our significant milestones, but we know there is much more work to do. We are just getting started and look forward to many years of making a difference in the lives of those who have bravely served our nation.” — *Secretary Jon Santiago on the 1-year anniversary of the creation of the state’s first-ever cabinet level Secretary of Veterans Services to focus on veteran care.*

“Cities and towns are on the front lines of climate change. They are playing a leading role but they can’t do it alone. The Healey-Driscoll Administration is here to help our municipal partners reduce reliance on fossil fuels, energy costs and emissions. These grants provide critical resources such as technical assistance for planning, design and data collection when implementing new clean energy projects. — *Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony announcing \$268,000 in grants to cities and towns across Massachusetts to develop clean energy projects.*

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 March 11-15, the House met for a total of 39 minutes and the Senate met for a total of four hours and 51 minutes.

Mon. March 11	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:11 a.m. Senate 11:17 a.m. to 11:27 a.m.
Tues. March 12	No House session No Senate session
Wed. March 13	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. March 14	House 11:02 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Senate 11:10 a.m. to 3:51 p.m.
Fri. March 15	No House session No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com

A celebration of Irish Heritage at Sally O'Brien's

Liam Mannion, proprietor of Sally O'Brien's, and former City Councilor Bob McWatters hosted a celebration of Irish Heritage on St. Patrick's Day, March 17 at Sally O'Brien's. Sally's featured an Irish fare of corned beef and cabbage, spirits, Irish music, and appearances of local and state elected officials. All were welcome to join the festivities.



Governor Maura Healy and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll with Adeline Mannion, Liam Mannion and former City Councilor Bob McWatters. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor were spoofing the commercial Matt Damon and Ben Affleck did for the Super Bowl.



State Auditor Diana DiZoglio and former City Councilor Bob McWatters.



Registrar of Deeds Maria Curtatone, former City Councilor Bob McWatters and Governor's Council Terrence Kennedy.



Deputy Fire Chief Mike Avery, Registrar Maria Curtatone, DA Marian Ryan, Governor's Councilor Terrence Kennedy, former Malden City Councilor Robert McCarthy and former Somerville City Councilor Bob McWatters.



City Councilor Kristen Strezo and Adeline Mannion.



Somerville Mayor Ballantyne, Former Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay and DA Marian Ryan.



Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Governor Maura Healy.



COA St. Patrick's Day luncheon

The Somerville Community Police and Somerville Fire Department made the Somerville Council on Aging's St. Patrick's Day luncheon at The George Dilboy Post a success. The Rebecca McGowan School of Dance entertained everyone with a fantastic step dance performance. — Photos courtesy of Somerville Council on Aging



SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS:

Upcoming events:

Medical Equipment Program – Through the generosity of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and from the direction of Mayor Bal-lantyne, 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.

Cultural Series Event – Thursday, March 21st at our Holland Street Center. When it comes to the early days of rock 'n' roll some of the most pioneering and powerfully influential figures were women. This show will highlight women who were instrumental in making rock and roll what it is today. The Retro Polatin Duo, Jill Goldman and David Polatin, will sing, play, and discuss some of the women who defied the odds and changed the landscape of rock and roll. Portuguese Lunch from J&J Restaurant and performance is brought to you at no cost by Somerville Cambridge Elder Services Multicultural Meal Program, a City of Somerville, ARPA funded program. Please reserve your spot for the event and lunch by calling Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Intergenerational Poetry – Mondays, March 25th, April 1st and 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, are 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. If you have any questions and to RSVP please contact Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600 ext. 2317 or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov

Cultural Musical Event – Wednesday, March 27th starting at 1:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Part lecture, part concert. Come explore the world through music, as vocalist and educator Tamara Jokic discusses the music of the Mediterranean, and performs songs in multiple languages, from Spanish and Hebrew to Serbian and Portuguese – while bringing

their historical and cultural contexts to life via stories, images, and video. Tamara Jokic, an international educator, Sony Recording Artist, and winner of Berklee's Outstanding Vocalist Award, has performed across the world, from European operas to NYC's Carnegie Hall. Lunch will be provided by SCES at 12:00 p.m. RSVP to Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

Designing Your Retirement, A Path to a Happy, Healthy and Fulfilling Retirement – Friday, March 22nd at 11:00 a.m. in our Holland Street Center. Many enter retirement with little planning, expecting retirement will be an endless vacation. Unfortunately, some will discover they have too much free time or are occasionally bored. Dr. Zwerling presents a process – based on scientific literature, expert opinion, and common sense – that will empower you to design a happy, healthy, and fulfilling retirement. It is never too late to build a better retirement! RSVP by calling Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317. Grab and Go lunch available upon request.

Nutrition Myths: Fact or Fiction – Thursday, March 28th starting at 11:30 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join Somerville Cambridge Elder Services and the Somerville Council on Aging for a nutritious hot lunch and a discussion on Nutrition Myths. Celebrate March Nutrition Month and our dedication to nutrition and wellness for local adults. Meet the dedicated Nutrition Staff from SCES and learn about their meal options and other available nutrition services. To RSVP call 617-625-6600, ext. 2323 (the COA Reservation Line.)

General Nutrition Classes – Mondays starting at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom and 12:30 p.m. in person at the Ralph & Jenny Center. Wednesday, March 21st and 28th starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Holland Street Center. New and returning members are welcome! To RSVP, call Mary Marshall at 617-625-6600, ext. 2316 or email her at headtofitness10@yahoo.com.

LCR Game Day – Wednesday, March 20th starting at 10:00 a.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

Knitting Group – Tuesday, March 26th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Looking to learn or improve your knitting skills? Learn how to knit a hat with Natasha. If you have any questions, please contact Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600 ext. 2317 or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov

Bingo – Every Tuesday at our Ralph & Jenny Center – starting at 10:00 a.m. Lunch is available following Bingo. RSVP to Debby Higgins

by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov

Bingo –Holland Street Center –starting at 10:00 a.m. Lunch is available following Bingo. Dates include March 28th. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov

Veteran's Group – Meets the 4th Tuesday of each month (March 26th) at our Holland Street Center starting at 10:30 a.m. Please note new time. RSVP to Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or email dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

Project Outlook, Low Vision Group - Meets the 4th Thursday of each month (March 28th) from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Project Outlook is a group of residents with low or no vision who enjoy getting together for camaraderie and socialization. Project Outlook has been active for over 30 years. All are welcome. This month's group will feature Mr. Erin Fragola from Perkins School for the Blind. He will be presenting on services available through the Perkins Institute and the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. For more info contact Claudia Ferro at 857-237-1801 or Molly Pagliuca at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318.

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.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Gif Card. Lyndell's, 720 Broadway.

Save the date for the **Hive Open House**. It will be on held on **Monday, April 11**, 7:00 p.m. **The Somerville Arts Council's SomArt program**, which supports the creation of new work in performance, visual arts, and trans/interdisciplinary disciplines, continues to grow. Over at the Hive location, there are classes in **Butoh, modern contemporary, African Contemporary, among others**. It's also a rehearsal space; **Nozama Dance, InEdit**, and **Advance Theater Lab** in Italian with **All'italiana** have been in deep exploration and practice. The Hive, 651 Windsor Street Suite 401a, Somerville. <https://somartspace.org/somart-space-the-hive/>.

Join **SPL and Somerville Asian Family Network (SAFN)** to celebrate **Holi**, the festival of colors. Listen to a story and paint a colorful card. Anybody can show up for the storytime, registered or not, but registration is required for the craft activity. Learn more and register at <https://somervillepubliclibrary.assabetinteractive.com/>.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Ward 6 Councilor Lance Davis, and Ward 5 Councilor Naima Sait invite you to learn about **flood relief and water quality improvement efforts** planned for **Morrison Ave.** (Cedar St. to Grove St.) and the surrounding neighborhood. At this meeting, city staff will introduce the project and share initial concept designs. Following the presentation, residents will have the opportunity to ask questions about the project and provide feedback. This virtual meeting will be held on **Monday, March 25**, online via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. Learn more and register to attend at <https://voice.somervillema.gov/morrisonavenue>.

Somerville PorchFest 2024 will take place on **Saturday, May 11**, (rain date May 12) from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. Perhaps you've sat on your porch and overheard a neighbor strumming guitar on another porch? Porchfest takes this idea and multiplies it. This is not a festival per se but rather a community event where Somervillians share their love of playing and listening to music ... from their porch, driveways, yards, etc. Registration is now open: <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfest-2024/>.

For families interested in the **SPS Com-**

munity Schools afterschool program, the registration period began on March 19, at 9:30 a.m. and runs **until March 28**. This registration period is for all grades. Registration link: <https://www.ezchildtrack.com/csafterschool/parent/>. As in previous years, Community Schools uses a weighted lottery system that prioritizes applicants who register any time during March 19 – March 28 registration period and returning families. Please visit the Somerville Community Schools Afterschool webpage to learn about the program, fees ,and registration support.

Somerville Little League 2024 Spring registration is open.Go to www.somervillelittleleague.org to register.

The Welcome Project welcomes back **YUM 2024: A Taste of Immigrant City** to an in-person event. After a five-year hiatus, they will be returning to the **Arts at the Armory** for a night of great food, music, and conversations about how the immigrant community continues to be an asset to Somerville and the US. For more information visit. <https://www.welcome-project.org/yum2024.html>.

Are you a member of **Somerville High School's class of 1974**? The class of 2024 is looking for participants for this year's **Class Day festivities** which will take place on **Friday, May 31**, beginning at 8:00 a.m. at **Somerville High School**. They are looking for 50 graduates in total from 1974 to participate. If you would like to take part in the festivities, visit SPS Facebook page and fill out the Google Form by March 15. The Class of 2024 looks forward to seeing you. Email any questions to **Irma Calderon** at icalderon@k12.somerville.ma.us.

The **Somerville High School club crew team** is looking for athletes to join their team. No experience necessary. The Somerville High School Rowing Team meets **Mondays through Fridays** from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the **Blessing of the Bay Boat House** on 32 Shore Drive in Somerville. Sign up today. <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/sportsregistration>.

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 donate 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. Team registration deadline is **April 12**. Register your team here. <https://foodforfree.org/hoops-forhunger/>.

Carnaval will be here soon. If you are a vendor, make sure you submit an application soon. This will be in our stories as well: <https://www.eastsomervillemainstreets.org/carnaval>

Somernova has some new and exciting events coming up. **Wednesday, March 27: Somerville's Third Annual Women's History Month Celebration**. The event will take place at 6:30 p.m. at Somernova, 29 Properzi Way and is open to all. RSVP is encouraged but not required. And also on Wednesday, March 27, each month, **The Dojo** hosts **Gaming is Not a Crime** by **YouthStream**. Join in and build community through playing your favorite games. The event features cash prizes and pizza and starts at 6:00 p.m. Hosted at The Dojo at 15 Properzi Way, Somerville. For more information visit Somernova at <https://somernova.com/>.

The **Somerville Council on Aging's Cultural Musical Event** takes place on **Wednesday, March 27**, starting at 1:00 p.m. at the Holland Street Center. Explore the world through music, as vocalist and educator **Tamara Jokic** discusses the music of the Mediterranean, and performs songs in multiple languages while bringing their historical and cultural contexts to life via stories, images, and video. Lunch will be provided by SCES at 12:00 p.m. RSVP to **Debby Higgins** by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov

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>.

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. They 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.

The **Somerville Arts Council** also has a call to all **musicians** for **ArtBeat 2024**. Calls are now available. Submission Deadline April 15. To learn more visit <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/>. Now in its 38th year ArtBeat is one of their largest festivals of the season. They invite applicants to explore all themes related to "wild." They seek music that lends itself to a festival environment, typically not classical or purely instrumental jazz for this setting.

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>.

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.

SHS sprint team qualifies for championship



The Somerville High School boys track 1600 Meter Sprint Medley team qualified for the New Balance National Indoor Track Championships at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston. The team finished 22nd out of 60 teams with a time of 3:36.95. The runners were Wil Parkes, Ford Christie, Marcus Odilon, and Attikos Kaye. Pictured with the team is Coach Dickerson. Learn more about the event at <https://nbnationalsin.com/>.

Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Approximately spring...

— Photo by Denise Provost

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BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why did the deer go to the dentist?
It had buck teeth.

On This Day in History

March 20

- 1413 – Henry IV of England is succeeded by his son Henry V.
- 1760 – The Great Fire of Boston destroys 349 buildings.
- 1792 – In Paris, the Legislative Assembly approves the use of the guillotine.
- 1815 – Napoleon Bonaparte enters Paris and begins his 100-day rule.
- 1918 – The Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union ask for American aid to rebuild their army.
- 1932 – The German dirigible, Graf Zeppelin, makes the first flight to South America on regular schedule.
- 1965 – President Lyndon B. Johnson orders 4,000 troops to protect the Selma-Montgomery civil rights marchers.
- 1976 – Patty Hearst is convicted of armed robbery.
- 1982 – U.S. scientists return from Antarctica with the first land mammal fossils found there.
- 1987 – The United States approves AZT, a drug that is proven to slow the progress of AIDS.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

7:00 AM Fit 4 Life Home Workout w/ Phelan #2
 7:30 AM Chair Yoga w/ Janine Duffy
 8:00 AM Museo Inmigrante: Mental Health In the Latino Community
 10:00 AM SomerViva em Português
 10:30 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 11:00 AM Museum of Bad Art Tour
 12:00 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 3:00 PM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me
 4:30 PM Fit 4 Life Home Workout w/ Phelan #1
 5:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 8:00 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 8:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting 3-12-24
 9:00 PM SomerViva an Kreyol
 9:30 PM Haiti: Resilience Rising
 11:30 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

12:00 AM SomerViva em Português
 12:30 AM Finance Committee Meeting 3-12-24
 1:10 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 2:00 AM Museum of Bad Art Tour
 7:00 AM Fit 4 Life Home Workout w/ Phelan #2
 7:30 AM Ayanna Pressley Press Conference of Clarendon Hill Housing
 8:30 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 9:00 AM SomerViva an Kreyol
 9:30 AM Haiti: Resilience Rising
 11:30 AM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 12:00 PM Museo Inmigrante: Mental Health In the Latino Community
 2:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 5:00 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 8:15 PM Somerville Museum: Access for All
 8:31 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 9:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 11:40 PM SPD Ride Along

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

12:00 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 12:30 AM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me

2:00 AM SomerViva an Kreyol
 2:30 AM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 7:00 AM Museo Inmigrante: Mental Health In the Latino Community
 8:40 AM Somerville Museum: Access for All
 9:00 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 9:30 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 10:00 AM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 10:30 AM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me
 12:00 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 12:30 PM Somerville Museum: Access for All
 1:00 PM Cultural Capacity Forum
 2:05 PM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 3:30 PM Fit 4 Life Home Workout w/Phelan #2
 4:00 PM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond
 5:10 PM SPD Ride Along
 5:30 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 6:00 PM Finance Committee Meeting 2-20-24
 7:32 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 8:00 PM SomerViva an Kreyol
 8:30 PM Haiti: Resilience Rising
 10:30 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 11:00 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 11:30 PM Somerville Museum: Access for All

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

12:00 AM SomerViva en Espanol: Casa de la Cultura
 12:30 AM Finance Committee Meeting 3-12-24
 1:30 AM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 7:00 AM Yoga with Jenn Falk - Practice IV
 8:00 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 8:30 AM Finance Committee Meeting
 9:05 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 9:30 AM Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner 2023
 11:00 AM Museo Inmigrante: Mental Health

1:00 PM In the Latino Community
 1:30 PM SomerViva em Português
 3:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 4:15 PM Davis Sq. Commercial Area Plan Meeting
 6:30 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 7:00 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 10:05 PM Ayanna Pressley Press Conference of Clarendon Hill Housing
 11:00 PM Finance Committee Meeting 3-12-24
 11:40 PM SPD Ride Along

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

12:00 AM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 7:00 AM Chair Yoga w/ Janine Duffy
 7:30 AM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 8:00 AM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me
 9:30 AM SomerViva an Kreyol
 10:00 AM Haiti: Resilience Rising
 12:00 PM SomerViva em Português
 12:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting
 1:05 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 1:30 PM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 3:00 PM School Committee Meeting
 6:05 PM SomerViva em Português
 6:30 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 7:00 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 7:30 PM SomerViva an Kreyol
 8:00 PM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond
 9:10 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24

MONDAY, MARCH 25

12:00 AM Senior Circuit - Climate Change
 12:30 AM Davis Sq. Commercial Area Plan Meeting
 2:35 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 7:00 AM Yoga with Jenn Falk - Practice II
 8:00 AM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 9:30 AM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 10:00 AM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 1:10 PM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond

2:30 PM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 3:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 6:00 PM Somerville Museum: How the GI Bill Changed America
 7:06 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 7:30 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 8:00 PM SPS Capacity Study Community Presentation
 9:30 PM SomerViva an Kreyol
 10:00 PM Davis Sq. Commercial Area Plan Meeting

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

12:05 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 12:30 AM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond
 1:40 AM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me
 7:00 AM Fit 4 Life Home Workout w/ Phelan #2
 7:30 AM Talking Business: Night Life
 8:00 AM SomerViva an Kreyol
 8:30 AM City Council Spotlight: Naima Sait
 9:00 AM Davis Sq. Commercial Area Plan Meeting
 11:05 AM Ayanna Pressley Press Conference of Clarendon Hill Housing
 12:00 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 3:30 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 4:00 PM Chair Yoga w/ Janine Duffy
 4:30 PM Talking Business: Night Life
 5:00 PM City Council Meeting 3-14-24
 7:40 PM SPD Ride Along
 8:00 PM SomerViva an Kreyol
 8:30 PM Haiti: Resilience Rising
 10:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting
 11:00 PM Museo Inmigrante: Mental Health In the Latino Community

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

12:40 AM Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me
 2:08 AM SomerViva em Português
 2:30 AM SomerViva an Kreyol

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

8:00 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 9:00 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 10:30 AM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 1:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships
 3:30 PM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 5:00 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 5:25 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 6:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 7:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 8:30 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 11:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

1:30 AM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 3:00 AM el Sistema Spring Concert
 3:25 AM el Sistema Spring Concert
 8:00 AM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 10:30 AM SHS Boys Basketball vs Reading
 12:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 1:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 2:30 PM SHS Baseball vs Medford
 5:00 PM Brown School Winter Concert
 6:00 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 8:30 PM SHS Boys Basketball vs Reading
 10:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 11:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

12:30 AM SHS Baseball vs Medford

3:00 AM Brown School Winter Concert
 8:00 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 9:00 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 10:30 AM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 1:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships
 3:30 PM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 5:00 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 6:00 PM SHS Baseball vs Lynn English
 7:30 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 8:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 9:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 10:30 PM WHCS K-3 Spring Concert
 11:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

1:10 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 2:00 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 8:00 AM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 10:30 AM SHS Baseball vs Medford
 1:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 2:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 3:30 PM SHS Baseball vs Medford
 6:00 PM Brown School Winter Concert
 7:00 PM SHS Volleyball vs Lynn English
 8:30 PM SHS Softball vs Chelsea 5-25-23
 10:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 11:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

12:15 AM SHS Baseball vs Medford

8:00 AM Brown School Winter Concert
 9:00 AM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 9:30 AM Scrapheap Showdown 2023
 10:00 AM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 11:30 AM WHCIS 4-8 Winter Concert
 12:30 PM SHS Spring Concert & Art Exhibition
 2:30 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 3:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 4:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 5:30 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 6:00 PM Brown School Winter Concert
 7:00 PM School Committee Update: Leiran Biton
 7:30 PM Scrapheap Showdown 2023
 8:00 PM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 9:30 PM WHCIS 4-8 Winter Concert
 10:30 PM SHS Spring Concert & Art Exhibition

MONDAY, MARCH 25

12:30 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 1:30 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 3:00 AM el Sistema Spring Concert
 8:00 AM Boston Debate League City Championships
 10:15 AM el Sistema Spring Concert
 11:00 AM B Team Intramural Soccer Championship
 12:00 PM School Committee Meeting
 2:00 PM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond
 3:30 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 5:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 6:00 PM Boston Debate League City

8:15 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 9:00 PM B Team Intramural Soccer Championship
 10:00 PM Phil Reavis: Highlander to Olympian & Beyond
 11:30 PM el Sistema Spring Concert

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

12:00 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 1:15 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 8:00 AM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 9:00 AM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 10:30 AM School Committee Meeting
 1:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships
 3:30 PM SHS Hockey vs Hopedale
 5:00 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 5:25 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 6:00 PM Girls Intramural Futsal Championship
 7:00 PM Boys Intramural Futsal Championship
 8:30 PM School Committee Meeting 3-18-24
 11:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships
 6:00 PM Boston Debate League City Championships
 8:15 PM el Sistema Spring Concert
 9:00 PM B Team Intramural Soccer Championship
 10:00 PM Boys' Intramural Soccer Championship
 11:00 PM Girls' Intramural Soccer Championship



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Poet Robbie Gamble: Much More than a 'Can of Pinto Beans'

Interview by New England Poetry Club Co-President Doug Holder.

Recently, I was at a New England Poetry Club reading to hear poet Robbie Gamble and others read from their work. Gamble has a new chapbook out titled *A Can of Pinto Beans*. Gamble generously gave me a copy and I decided to interview this accomplished bard.

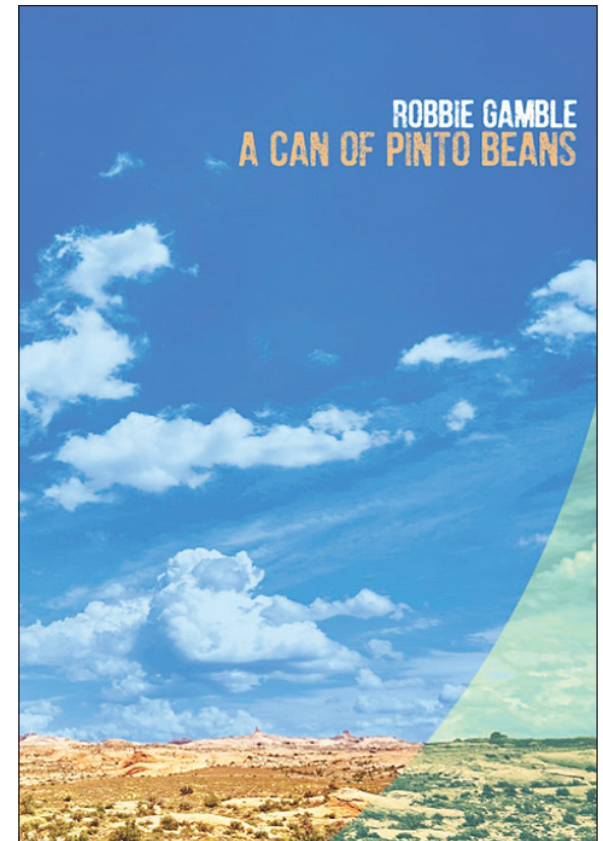
From his website:

Robbie Gamble's poems have appeared in the *Atlanta Review*, *Poet Lore*, *RHINO*, *Spillway*, and *The Sun*, among other journals. His essays have appeared in *MassPoetry*, *Pangyrus*, *Scoundrel Time*, *Solstice*, and *Tahoma Literary Review*. Recipient of the Carve Poetry prize, and a Peter Taylor Fellowship at the Kenyon Summer Writers Workshop, he holds an MFA from Lesley University, and he serves as poetry editor for *Solstice: A Magazine of Diverse Voices*.

Robbie worked for twenty years as a nurse practitioner with Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, and he now divides his time between Boston and Vermont.

Doug Holder: These poems arise from your work with the organization NO MORE DEATHS that helps migrants passing through the remote sections of the Sonora Desert along the Arizona/Mexican borders. Can you tell us a bit about your experience?

Robbie Gamble: Prior to COVID, I spent a chunk of time each summer for several years volunteering for No More Deaths/ No Más Muertes in a rugged stretch of desert near Arivaca, Arizona where several thousand known migrant fatalities have occurred over the past decade. The aim of the organization is to prevent further deaths by providing medical and material support to migrants passing through. No More Deaths operated a base camp in the desert with a M.A.S.H. tent-style clinic where we could provide some basic care for injured or exhausted migrants. We also went out daily deeper into the desert, starting in four-wheel-drive vehicles and then continuing on foot, to leave gallon jugs of water and food along known migrant trails, with the hopes of preventing people from becoming dehydrated and malnourished on their journey. Passing through this desert often required them to walk 30 to 60 miles from the border, often being pursued by Border Patrol agents. I'm



a nurse practitioner, and I'm fairly fluent in Spanish, so I had a good skill set for the work. The conditions were difficult, with daytime temperatures sometimes exceeding 110 degrees. We were also sometimes harassed by Border Patrol agents, who did not approve of our activities. At the time I was volunteering, there was a shaky agreement between No More Deaths and the Tucson Sector Command of Border Patrol allowing us to operate the Arivaca base camp, but it was still stressful to work in such a highly militarized zone where we were often under surveillance.

DH: *A Can of Pinto Beans* seems like a rather pedestrian title for a book of verse. But it is so much more than a can of beans, isn't it?

RG: The Sonoran Desert is a vast, open space where we rarely encountered the people we were trying to support. Mostly we were aware of migrants' activities by the things they left behind: footprints, trash, discarded possessions, and on occasion, human remains. I came to envision the chapbook as a collection of bits of evidence that people had passed through this desert space, and how they had experienced their journey. The title poem *A Can of Pinto Beans* is a kind of cinematic zoom *Continued on page 23*

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Carissa Szabo is a current senior at Endicott College. She is soon to become an elementary school teacher in Turkey after graduation in May. She has always had a passion for new experiences. Growing up in rural Vermont, she was a neighbor to the trees and lakes. Her father and grandmother showed her their love of nature and from there Carissa began writing poetry about the natural world around her.



It Is Nice Here, So I Sit

The sun shines on and within me
All I hear are the leaves rustle
As the wind finds her voice.
A chickadee calls for his partner.
The trail is washed with
Muted warm colors.
Oak leaves, dried grasses,
Twigs and rocks:
Utterly divine.

Can I sit here,
Stretch my toes into the ground
Reach my arms up
Until my fingertips brush
The powdered sky,

Until I become a tree myself?
Crack my ribs
Wide open into the breeze.
My skin would harden
And become brittle,
Covered with pale green lichen

An oak tree would do me well.

Right in the middle of

This trail intersection.
I would point the way to
Travelers and bikers.
Home small critters.

No luck,
Still flesh and bones.
I will try again next time.

— Carissa Szabo

Public Safety for All Task Force announces Emergency Response Community Workshop

The city's Public Safety for All (PSFA) Task Force invites Somerville community members to attend an Emergency Response Community Workshop on Wednesday, April 3, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The 90-minute community workshop session will feature facilitation from members of the PSFA Task Force and the Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA).

Attendees will hear a brief update about the Task Force's work and mandate, be introduced to key terms for the workshop, and be asked to respond to questions covering emergency response team composition, training, materials, and evaluation of performance.

The workshop will take place at the Somerville High School Cafeteria, 81 Highland Avenue. Registration for this event is not required and attendance is open to members of the Somerville community. Members of the Department of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ) will check in attendees at the front door. Food and drink will be provided during the event as well as children's activities.

This workshop will be facilitated in English with interpretation available in Mandarin, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Nepali, and Cantonese.

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

Who was John Boynton? Despite his quiet manner, he left a memorable footprint.

- John Boynton was a prominent Worcester industrialist.

- He served a short time in the Massachusetts Legislature.

- He was the first president of the Millers River Bank in Athol, Massachusetts.

- In his quiet manner, he gave \$10,000 to the public schools in Mason, New Hampshire where he was born.

- In 1868, Templeton's Boynton Free Public Library was donated in his name by David Whitcomb,

his cousin and former partner in the tinware business.

- Boynton was Templeton's Postmaster for five years from 1843 to 1848.

- The Templeton Museum at One Boynton Road in Templeton, Massachusetts houses one of his tinware carts and many of his tin artifacts.

- In 1989, Salem, New Hampshire, with monies from the Boynton Fund, named a new middle school after him.

- Since 1865, Worcester Polytechnic Institute owes its origination to John Boynton's \$100,000

donation. This gift was used to create a free school wherein young men would learn useful mechanical arts in addition to the standard subjects of study. Today, WPI students can celebrate their founder with visits to Boynton Hall, Street, Park, or the nearby Boynton Restaurant & Spirits nicknamed "The Boynton."

- John passed away on March 25, 1867 in Templeton.

Today, his Boynton Yards in Somerville can be described as a future state of the art innovative campus for bio technology. John would be pleased!



Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

shot, beginning with a panorama of the horizon and then focusing down onto this one piece of traiside detritus, which had been violently destroyed by a Border Patrol agent in order to deny migrants a small portion of possibly life-saving nutrition. So to me, the can embodies the migrants' journey, and our small efforts to alleviate their suffering, and the institutional violence simultaneously being deployed to prevent their passage.

DH: Did you plan to write poems about your work, or did it just naturally arise?

RG: I wrote a sequence of five poems upon returning from one of my earlier trips to Arizona, and I shared them in a workshop. Eileen Cleary read them, and she said, "This needs to be a chapbook, and I want to publish it." I didn't think I had enough material for a manuscript, but she kept after me, and eventually I wrote some more poems about the work, and included some found snippets from my journal and from operational logbooks to flesh out the project, and she did publish it, in Lily Poetry Review Press.

DH: In your poem *Water Bearer* you seem to question your journey into these harsh environs – you seem to be asking yourself about your motives and why you abandoned your comfort zone.

RG: Very much so. It sometimes seemed that what we were doing was a small drop in a very dry bucket, and I wondered if our efforts were having much of an impact at all. And the conditions were difficult, both physically and psychologically. But I've also worked with political refugees and undocumented folks for much of my adult life, and I've heard many stories about how a chance moment made it possible for someone to survive. And that spurs me on to do what I can.

DH: Why should we read this book?

RG: "The Border Crisis" is very much in the news these days, couched in broad, menacing, dehumanizing terms. What I hoped to do in this book is to present a more granular, up-close picture of what is taking place at this particular stretch of the border, what is at stake for the human beings who feel compelled to risk this journey, because they can no longer remain in their communities of origin. I also tried to explore the complicated relationship among three distinct cultures in these borderlands, the indigenous peoples who have lived in the region for centuries, for whom the idea of a border is a colonial construct; the groups of Latinos from the South who are passing through in search a safer, more tolerable life; and the Anglo-American forces who hold the technology and

the firepower and the legislative wherewithal to dictate who gets to enter and who is excluded. I'm writing as a witness, someone who is not from this harsh geography, but I hope that I have been able to put in enough time and observation to bring some insight into the injustices that I have seen.

A Can of Pinto Beans

Just below the ridgeline saddle
tossed to the side of the trail
lying dented among rocks,
bleached label peeled back,
and the downhill-facing end
of the can stabbed through
by some Border Patrol agent's
Ka-Bar knife, a precise wound
mouldering around the edges,
with filaments wafting down
the corners, no, they're streams
of tiny ants, crawling in and out,
bearing flecks of nourishment away.

— Robbie Gamble

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