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Sussen Miller, Gary Rogers, and another community activist hold signs at Roger's rally, a week before his eviction trial. — Photo by Mina Rose Morales

By Mina Rose Morales

On a cold, windy St. Patrick's Day, Somerville residents rallied in Union Square on Tuesday to support Gary Rogers, a week before his eviction trial begins on Monday, March 30.

"The people united will never be defeated," chanted Maria Lora, a community organizer with the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS), an organization helping residents fight poverty.

Neighbors turned out to show Rogers he isn't facing the fight alone. "I think [that's] really important," said Danny McLaughlin, CAAS's director of community organizing and advocacy. "So many times, people feel alone in these situations. They can feel really isolated. We had elected officials come out to support Gary. We had volunteers" *Continued on page 4*

Somerville's Porchfest returns: Applications now open

PorchFest returns to Somerville on Saturday, May 9, and applications are now open for participants. The annual event organized by the city's Somerville Arts Council features mini concerts hosted by residents on their porches, yards, and even on stoops across the city. All musical genres are welcome, from alt rock to zither quartets, and hosts are invited to apply by the April 21 deadline to participate. Volunteers are also invited to apply to be Porchfest ambassadors to assist visitors.

"PorchFest is one of Somerville's most awaited events for good reason. Not only is it a sign that spring is truly here, but there's nothing quite like seeing porches transform into stages and hosting a citywide jam fest," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "To keep this tradition strong, our Arts Council and public safety teams are working closely" *Continued on page 4*



Porchfest 2026 takes place on Saturday, May 9, throughout city neighborhoods.

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Somerville is celebrating **Women's History Month** with an **evening of storytelling**. Somerville residents are invited to a storytelling evening on **March 31**, celebrating women's stories at **"Her Stories, Our Somerville."** Hosted by the **Somerville Commission for Women (SCW)** and the **City's Department of Racial and Social Justice**, the event will elevate women's voices and experiences through short, spoken word narratives. Women-identifying community members interested in sharing their story can register to do so via the event RSVP form. No prior storytelling experience is required to participate. The themes for Her Stories, Our Somerville include: A moment that changed me, Finding my voice, and A woman who has shaped my life. Stories must be submitted in advance. If you are selected to speak at the event, the Commission for Women will contact you within one week of the event to coordinate storytelling logistics. **Tuesday, March 31, 7 p.m. Culture-House HQ, 16 Union Sq.** Due to a maximum capacity of 50 persons, RSVPs are strongly encouraged. For more information about the event, please contact the Somerville Commission for Women at somervillecommission-forwomen@gmail.com.

Happy birthday this week to the following: First, a very happy belated birthday to former Somerville resident **Michael Sullivan**, who now resides in Worcester. We hope he had a great birthday. Happy birthday to **Pat Scrima**, a great guy and another former resident. We hope he enjoys his birthday. Happy *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of March 25 – March 31 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday March 25	Partly Cloudy	53°/41°	4%	2%	W 11 mph
Thursday March 26	Rain	62°/46°	52%	43%	SW 15 mph
Friday March 27	Cloudy	50°/26°	25%	13%	NW 12 mph
Saturday March 28	Partly Cloudy	37°/28°	2%	1%	NNW 10 mph
Sunday March 29	Partly Cloudy	44°/36°	1%	1%	W 12 mph
Monday March 30	Partly Cloudy	56°/38°	6%	3%	SW 14 mph
Tuesday March 31	Partly Cloudy	50°/37°	14%	9%	W 10 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: **Somerville poet Sarah Beckmann: A poet of water and women's rights**

susan isla tepper says:

This is such a lovely and deep poem.

Response to: **City Hall Conversations w/ Mayor Wilson and President Davis: Ep. 1**

Kate Zebrose says:

I had been wondering about the snow removal and why it had not been to the curb. It was at least interesting to hear the explanation.

Perhaps 'VilleChats' or 'SomerChats' for possible names.

Response to: **Nominations open for the Davis Square Neighborhood Council**

Somervillian says:

Neighborhood Councils shouldn't be a thing. We elect public officials to represent us. Elected public representatives and their institutions have actual reporting and transparency requirements, not to mention it is a real open election. Pseudo-legitimate shadow reps with much less mandate should not be doing our elected reps' work.

"when approved by the Somerville City Council, have the exclusive ability to negotiate Community Benefits Agreements with developments". How would that not get shot down in court? There is a constitutional right to assembly. Anybody who wants to band together and negotiate with private developers may.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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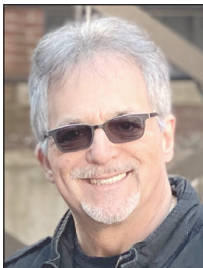
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

Your 'stuff' lasts longer than you do!



I always thought that it was kind of weird that inanimate objects outlast and outlive the people that owned them. The other day, I

grabbed the shoeshine box that has been in my family forever to give my shoes a quick once-over before work. As I dug into the box, with its well-worn brush, pieces of torn facecloth applicators, and an assortment of polish colors, I stopped to ponder it.

My dad bought this box back in the early 60's – the box is still here, and he's gone.

The shine box is just one of the "things" that have lasted longer than the people who bought and used them. We all have stuff around the house that belonged to loved ones who are long gone. As a matter of fact, the tin of brown shoe polish still had the old faded price sticker on it – it was from Bradlees! So in this case, not only is the person who bought it gone, but the store is gone as well!

It doesn't seem fair that stuff outlasts

people. It does, however, give me the opportunity to tie it into my daily life -during supper, I launched into the shoeshine box story: "You know, my father bought that shoeshine box back in 1960." Rolling eyes indicated preparation for another "back in the day" by dad story.

I think we all have lots of stuff around the house that has outlasted the purchasers themselves – and in some cases – the stores they came from. Does anyone still have his or her old BayBank card? I actually have a BayBank towel! I bet some of you still have an old phone with the little paper dial inserts. Remember the old exchanges? MONument, SOMerset or PROspect? Of course, you remember! Sure, the old phones may still be around, but not the people who made so many calls on them over their lifetime. My mother (now in Heaven) used a phone like that to perhaps call Surabian's Drug Store in Ball Square for some paregoric when I was teething (the empty bottle is probably still in the back of our medicine cabinet).

You would think by reading my stories that I live most of my life in the past, but



I really don't. Today I am happier than I have ever been in my life, but for some reason, I am reminiscing about days gone by a lot more frequently. Maybe it's because I really enjoy boring my kids with my tales of "when I was a kid." Who knows?

It doesn't seem fair that stuff outlasts people, but I'll tell you this – at least all

the surviving artifacts keep our loved ones fresh in our memory.

So I am going to sit in Dad's chair from Barbos, soak my feet in the "foot fixer" from Lechmere Sales, and watch the Red Sox on my new 50" high definition TV.

Did I mention that I am happier than I have ever been in my life? Good.

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Somerville Police Dept Crime Log March 10 – 16

Assault

26014583: On 3/11/26 at approximately 7:48 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a business on Broadway for a fight. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim, who stated that two males were shoplifting items, and a fight ensued. During the fight, the male suspects began punching the victim.

Arrest

26015675: On 3/15/26 at approximately 12:33 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Jaques St. for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim, who stated that the house is under construction and his tools were missing from inside. He then pointed to a male party who he believed was in possession of the tools. Officers stopped the male, and he stated the tools were in a nearby park. Officers then proceeded to the park and recovered the tools, and the male suspect was placed under arrest.

Other Crimes: 3 Package thefts + 2 MV thefts + 9 Car breaks + 2 MV vandalisms + 7 Bike thefts

— Somerville Police Department



Somerville residents show 'coraje' for tenant facing eviction

CONT. FROM PG 1

come out, we had students come out, we had renters come out," McLaughlin added.

Rogers, a Somerville tenant, has lived on Sargent Ave. for about seven years. In February 2024, shortly after his home was purchased by Ryan Pinto, a California-based investor, Rogers received a rent increase of more than a 90%, jumping from \$1,050 to \$2,200 per month. The landlord issued a notice requiring him to either sign a new lease at the higher rate or move out. Rogers had been on a self-extending lease, which continued even without his signa-

ture. Since then, he has continued paying the original \$1,050 per month. It has been 746 days—two years, one month, and four days – since he refused to sign the new lease. He remains in the same apartment.

"Gracias a Gary por demostrarnos la palabra coraje," said Juan Carlos Canales, a tenant organizer at CAAS.

That pattern has played out across Somerville, where tenants have faced rent increases ranging from more than 50% to over 100%. Over the past year, residents have also rallied against rising rents and

evictions, including in cases involving the same investor, Ryan Pinto.

As Canales said, those experiences have left many feeling "coraje."

McLaughlin, who grew up in Somerville, has spent years helping neighbors channel their "coraje." Over the past 30 years, he has seen friends and families pushed out of the city, many arriving in search of the American dream, only to be displaced. That's why he feels Roger's case is significant.

"It's symbolic of what's happening all across Somerville, except people just don't

know they can fight, or don't have the energy. We want to encourage people that you don't have to walk away and you can fight," he said.

Rogers said he is continuing the fight, driven by moments that remind him why it matters. He recalled what a woman told him at a CAAS meeting and how it has stayed with him.

"Gary, you've really helped me," she told him. "When I first came here, I was embarrassed. I was embarrassed to be here. Now that I've heard your story, I'm not embarrassed."

Somerville's Porchfest returns: Applications now open

CONT. FROM PG 1

together to make sure this year's event is welcoming for everyone, and I can't wait to see it come to life."

In addition to hosting or performing, community members can get involved by volunteering to be a Porchfest Ambassador. Volunteers will orient visitors, answer questions, monitor safety, and serve as points of contact. It's a great way to help make the event a success, and ambassadors get a cool, limited edition Porchfest T-shirt.

Key Updates and Changes for 2026:

Porchfest has become popular, so the city needs all hosts and participants to help keep the event organized and safe. Please review and follow the information and guidance below as you plan to host, perform, volunteer, or attend:

Locations and Timing

To bring music to a range of neighborhoods – and to keep the noise impacts in any one area to just two hours – Porchfest is held in 2-hour blocks in three city zones.

This year, Porchfest will move across Somerville in these three timed zones:

West Zone (West of Willow Avenue):

12 – 2 p.m.

Central Zone (between Willow and Central Streets): 2–4 p.m.

East Zone (East of Central Street): 4 – 6 p.m.

To ease congestion on streets and sidewalks, attendees are encouraged to use Somerville's Community Path to travel between zones.

If nature calls, there will be additional porta-a-johns available to help keep Somerville clean and safe for everyone. Please use them.

Street Limitations for Safety:

To ensure firetrucks and ambulances are not impeded, and to keep pedestrians safe, the Somerville Fire and Engineering Departments identify key safety routes for us, and performances are not allowed on those streets.

In some cases, we also need to restrict areas at the ends of the side streets that form intersections with safety routes.

But you still have options even if you are on a restricted street or corner.

Residents on ineligible streets or corners

are encouraged to partner with a neighbor on a nearby designated street. This is a great way to get to know your neighbors while helping keep Porchfest safe.

Spacing Between Performances:

Imagine if you could hear, say, eight concerts at once. That's not a great way to enjoy music, so performances have to be spread out.

Participating performance locations need to be at least 8 houses apart from another approved PorchFest performance location.

Participants are responsible for managing their volume so each show nearby can be heard.

Use the map to see where performances have already been approved to know where bands are already playing.

Apply to Host a Porch Concert:

Applications are due April 21 at 11:59 p.m. Applying does not guarantee participation.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by Public Safety officials and the Arts Council.

A map of approved locations will be published online as applications are approved.

Apply at somerilleartscouncil.org/porchfest.

Apply to Host a Block Party:

Block parties must apply separately through Citizen Serve (somerillema.gov/citizenserve) to request a block party permit.

Applications are open March 17 – April 20 and will be reviewed based on the same street safety restrictions above.

Apply to be an Ambassador Volunteer:

This is an excellent opportunity for community members who love PorchFest, have seen this event grow, and are interested in keeping it safe, accessible, organized, and neighborly.

Apply to be an ambassador at somerilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfest-ambassador.

Be sure to note the deadlines. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone, we can't make any exceptions to the deadlines. All information and the application link are available at somerilleartscouncil.org/porchfest.

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

Food For Free battling food insecurity in Somerville

By Christa Lee

Food insecurity has a formidable opponent in Food for Free, a Boston-based nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting food pantries through logistical operations. On March 17, Food for Free partnered with The Greater Boston Food Bank and Salem Pantry to gather unused seafood at the Seafood Expo North America 2026 (SENA) at the Thomas M. Menino Convention and Exhibition Center.

“You’re just trying to run around this convention center to find food that’s been left behind by people participating in the Seafood Expo,” said Andrew Dunn, the Associate Director of Development at Food for Free. It was a successful food recovery effort as a total of 11,500 pounds of seafood has already been distributed to 7 organizations—Cambridge Community Center, Grant Manor Tenants Association Food Bank, East End House, Elizabeth

Peabody House, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, Project Soup, and St. Paul AME Church—to serve their communities.

Food for Free “works as a logistics backbone” by providing transportation services and serving around 132,000 local residents annually through strategic food purchases and food recovery efforts. They also coordinate monthly “School Markets” at 72 Somerville schools in a year, bringing food like fresh produce, milk, and meat on elementary and middle school campuses for parents and guardians to benefit from as they pick up their kids.

“It’s an unfortunate fact that about 40% of people who are food insecure are highly resistant to going to free food programs or food pantries due to stigma or fear of not being deserving,” said Andrew. “What we can do to help alleviate those pressures is to deliver that in a culturally acceptable way.”

If you are food insecure and want to



Food For Free distributes food to several local organizations, alleviating food insecurity throughout the region.

sign up for support, you can contact any of these organizations: Allston/Brighton Food Pantry, Cambridge Community Center, East End House, Elizabeth

Peabody House, Grant Manor Tenants Association Food Bank, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, Project Soup, and St. Paul AME Church.

Parking Office to be first city-owned building to decarbonize

The aging gas-fired boilers and cooling system at the City of Somerville Parking Office building will soon make way for new, green solutions, including solar and heat pumps, making it the first city-owned building to essentially decarbonize. The project will not only deliver energy cost savings and advance the community’s climate goals but will also give city staff experience operating and maintaining the kind of electrified building systems envisioned for all of the city’s buildings in time.

“Our buildings make up the largest portion of the city’s fossil fuel use, and decarbonizing these structures is a monumental undertaking — but you don’t wait for the perfect moment or try to do it all at once,” said Mayor Jake Wilson. “You take the next right step. Our Parking building is running on ancient boilers and a leaking cooling system. Soon, it will be powered by 95% clean energy and can serve as a model for what comes next. That’s how this city turns challenges into steady steps forward. This is us walking the walk on climate action.”

The building on Holland Street in West Somerville is a prime target for sustainable upgrades. The structure is currently served by three gas-fired boilers and a traditional rooftop cooling unit. The boiler plant is beginning to fail, with numerous pip-

ing leaks, and the boilers are beyond their useful life. But the building is also unique among city-owned buildings: it already has electrical service from the utility capable of handling the added electrical load of an electric HVAC system.

To decarbonize the building, three projects are planned for this summer (2026), including a new 67-kilowatt DC rooftop solar array that will be the largest city-owned solar installation (larger leased arrays exist on the East Somerville Community School and the High School). The gas-fired boilers and old rooftop unit will also be replaced with a new heat pump air handler and basement heat pump units for heating and cooling. Finally, weatherization and improvements to the building’s exterior aim to improve staff comfort in the basement work areas, where the city’s street signs and parking meters are maintained.

Combined, the three projects will bring the building to approximately 95% decarbonized. The final 5% will be achieved when the current relatively new gas-fired hot water heater (similar to those found in residential homes) reaches the end of its useful life and is replaced with an electric-powered unit.

As the charts detail, the three projects are expected to collectively produce more



The city’s Parking Office will be the first to go through a decarbonization process to lower costs and help meet climate goals. — Photo by Bobbie Toner

than \$18,000 per year in energy cost savings. Total reductions in fossil fuel use are also projected to equal the total energy use of eight Massachusetts homes or the gas consumption of 38 passenger vehicles. The charts can be viewed on our website at <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/>.

The upgrades are funded by the city’s Energy Stabilization Fund. The fund sets aside money for projects that reduce carbon emissions and energy costs for city operations. This project is a prime example of how the fund can effectively be used

to work toward the community’s Climate Forward municipal decarbonization goals. Learn more about Climate Forward at somervillema.gov/climateforward.

For more information and updates on Somerville’s progress on decarbonization, visit the Climate Forward dashboard at www.somervillema.gov/climatedashboard. Sign up for the SustainaVille newsletter at somervillema.gov/subscribe to stay up to date on all of OSE’s decarbonization efforts and sustainability initiatives.

COMMENTARY

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Thank you for supporting me at my campaign kickoff!

By Will Mbah

This past Sunday, I had the honor of kicking off my campaign alongside friends, family, and valued members of our community. It was heartwarming to see the support and the incredible energy that everyone brought to the event. Over 100 people attended the kickoff, and we raised over \$5000!

It was a pleasure listening to Medford Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn, Somerville Mayor Jake Wilson, Jarred Johnson of TransitMatters, and State Senator Jamie Eldridge as they offered their support to my campaign. Additionally, I want to thank State Representative Mike Connolly, Mayor Emeritus of Somerville Gene Brune, Medford School Committee Member Aaron Olapade, Somerville City Councilors Ben Wheeler, Jesse Clingan, Emily Hardt, Ben Ewen-Campen and

Matt McLaughlin, Winchester School Committee Member Tom Hopcroft, and Vice Mayor of Cambridge Burhan Azeem.

This kickoff was just one stop on the long journey between us and Election Day and us. There will be many more events like this in the future, and I look forward to seeing you at them!

Thank you so much for all your support!

Want to help? You can support my campaign by:

Helping us reach our fundraising goal: As the race heats up, I'll be looking to print literature, hire staff, feed volunteers, and host more community gatherings. Any amount you're able to contribute really helps!

Signing up for our canvass launch: Our first canvass will be April 12th at Colette Bakery in Medford, and I would love to have you knocking doors with us!

Donate: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/willmbah34/>



PTAC meets to discuss better bus network agenda for spring 2026

By Ewan Henrie

The Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee met on March 19 at 101 South Street to announce changes to transportation in Somerville. The main topic of discussion was the changes to the bus network of Somerville that will be enacted on April 5.

The first and most prominent change was the merging of Route CT2 and 85 into the new Route 85, with the CT2

name soon to be retired. The service will be between Ruggles Station and Assembly Station. Unlike the CT2, which had limited stop service, the new Route 85 will be an all-stop service. The Committee also announced that the time between buses arriving at stops will be cut to 15-25 minutes at peak times and 30-45 minutes at off-peak times.

Other changes to Somerville's bus network were that Route 87 would extend to Arlington Center, Route 350 would

extend to Burlington Mall Road, and that Route 40 and Route 50 would no longer be combined. The Route 350 extension will provide extra service to places such as the Burlington Mall, Wegmans, the Lahey Hospital, and other retail establishments in the area.

Afterwards, the mobility staff talked about the methods they used to develop signs for the reconstruction of streets and fast-building projects. They also shared the importance of pleasing the different

stakeholders involved in the process of developing the signs. There was a discussion of the decisions based on community engagement and those based on standards. Route 40 and Route 50 will still run on weekends despite no longer being combined.

There was a Q&A portion of the meeting, in which one of the questions was whether Route 85 would still only run on weekdays. The committee confirmed that it would remain a weekday-only service.

Nominations open for the Davis Square Neighborhood Council

Nominations for the board of the Davis Square Neighborhood Council (DSNC) are open and will close at 8 p.m. on Monday, March 30. The DSNC will elect its board of directors at the end of April.

The DSNC started in January of 2024 and aims to give residents, business owners, and workers a stronger voice in Davis Square development and community priorities. Neighborhood Councils are allowed by City of Somerville ordinance, and when approved by the Somerville City Council, have the exclusive ability to negotiate Community Benefits Agreements with developments within their geographical range.

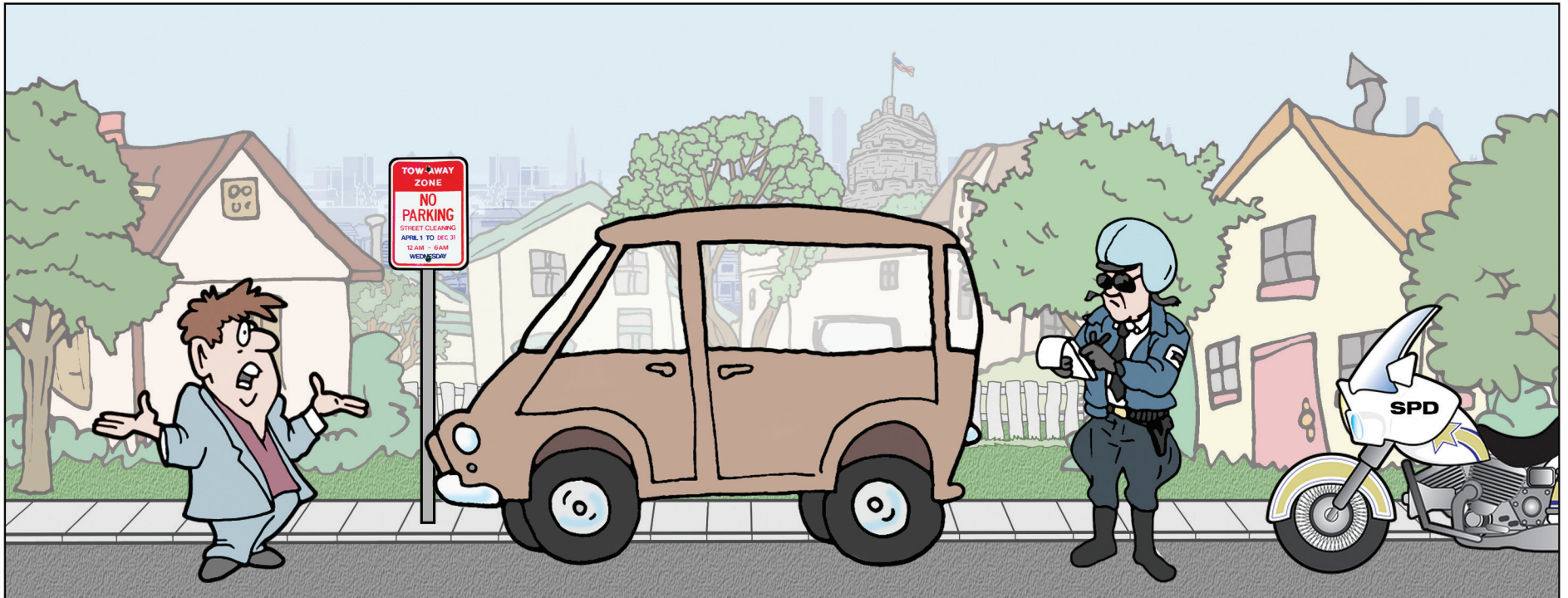
The DSNC will be electing nine members to its board, and several officers. People who reside within ½ mile of the boundaries of the Davis Square neighborhood, or receive support services, are employed, operate a business, own real estate, or regularly volunteer within the Neighborhood boundaries are eligible to run for and serve on the board.

Nominations are open through Monday, March 30, at 8:00 p.m. DSNC members can be nominated by filling out this form, or attending the March 30 meeting in-person or on Zoom. The March meeting will be at 6 p.m., location TBD (check the DSNC website for further details).

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Remember, Somerville, street sweeping resumes on April 1 and parking restrictions apply.

Our View Of The Times



Spring has finally arrived, and with it comes the inevitable regular street-sweeping activities throughout the city.

As inconvenient and annoying it may be to comply with schedule, it is an inescapable fact of life for us all and we must make the adjustment accordingly.

Practically speaking, the Traffic and Parking department is doing its best to keep city residents informed and ready to

make sure they avoid the \$50 fine that has been mandated for those who fail to comply with the parking regulations.

The city has provided complete schedules on various web pages as well as offering email re-minder services and access to scheduling data on its 311 phone line. Additionally, all streets affected are furnished with signs indicated the days and hours of sweeping times.

So all in all, there is little excuse for getting caught with your car being parked in the wrong place at the wrong time. The information is out there, and you can mark your calendars, set your phone apps, tell your mom to call and remind you, etc.

We can grouse and moan about the inconvenience, but let's face facts. We all want our streets to be safe and clean, and

complying with these reasonable regulations isn't so much to ask of us, is it?

Just get out there when the time comes, put the ignition key in the slot and you know the rest. Nothing could be simpler and aggravation will soon fade away.

Consider it your small contribution to keeping our great little city looking as good as possible. Pitch in and do your part, or at least be ready to pay the price if not.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

birthday to Sue Pye. We hope she has a wonderful birthday. A big happy birthday to Karen Michelle. We wish her the best, and we hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to Tyler Hart, of the famous Hart family. We wish him a great birthday. We wish a happy birthday to all of our Facebook friends, such as Rhonda Annette, Edward Bean, Beth Redmond, Don Joe, Maureen D Kelley, Christine Andrade McSheehy, Jim Haloran, Megan Donovan, Kathleen Kennedy, Christopher John, and Daniel M Rivera, who are all celebrating this week. To all the others we may have missed, and yes, we must admit there are a few more

out there. We sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

Regular **street sweeping schedules** resume on **Wednesday, April 1**, and will continue **through December 31**. Community members should check street signs to know when parking is prohibited due to sweeping. On designated street sweeping days, vehicles must be moved from the side of the street being swept, as noted on signs posted on each street. Vehicles that do not move may be ticketed and towed. For more information on street sweeping, visit somervillema.gov/sweeping or call 311 (617-666-3311).

Join **Connexion** and **East Somerville Main Streets** for an **Easter Egg Hunt**, family fun activities, and a visit from the **Easter Bunny** at **Foss Park** on **Saturday, April 4**, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Activities begin at 11:30 a.m. and the Easter Egg Hunt will begin exactly at 12 p.m. Please make sure to arrive before 12 p.m. in order to participate.

Somerville's **2026 high school graduates** are invited to apply for **City of Somerville Municipal Scholarships** designed to help students launch their next steps, be that professional training, college, or a

job in the trades. Selected applicants will receive \$2,000 to help with post-secondary education expenses, including tuition, professional programs and certifications, and union fees. To qualify for consideration, students must be in high school, a resident of the City of Somerville at the time the financial aid is awarded, and be accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution. Awards are granted both on the basis of merit and need. To apply, students must complete the online application at bit.ly/municipalschol26 by **Friday, March 27**, at midnight. For more information, visit somervillema.gov/scholarship or contact *Continued on page 13*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1015

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. When does spring end in 2026? | of Conan O'Brien's podcast? |
| 2. What flower is considered a symbol of new beginnings? | 8. When did the first electric streetcar operate in Boston? |
| 3. What actor played Alex Keaton on the '80s TV show <i>Family Ties</i> ? | 9. What song tells the story of a man named Charlie trapped on Boston's subway system? |
| 4. What flower is famously associated with Vincent van Gogh's paintings? | 10. Who was the first winner of the Academy Award for Best Actress? |
| 5. Which musical was based on the life of Annie Oakley? | 11. Where would you find Metropolitan Opera House? |
| 6. What New Jersey town is home to a statue of Frank Sinatra? | 12. What film was a biographical story of country singer Loretta Lynn? |
| 7. What is the title | <i>Answers on page 10</i> |

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- Queen Elizabeth II's cows slept on waterbeds.
- Basenji dogs are the only breed that doesn't bark.

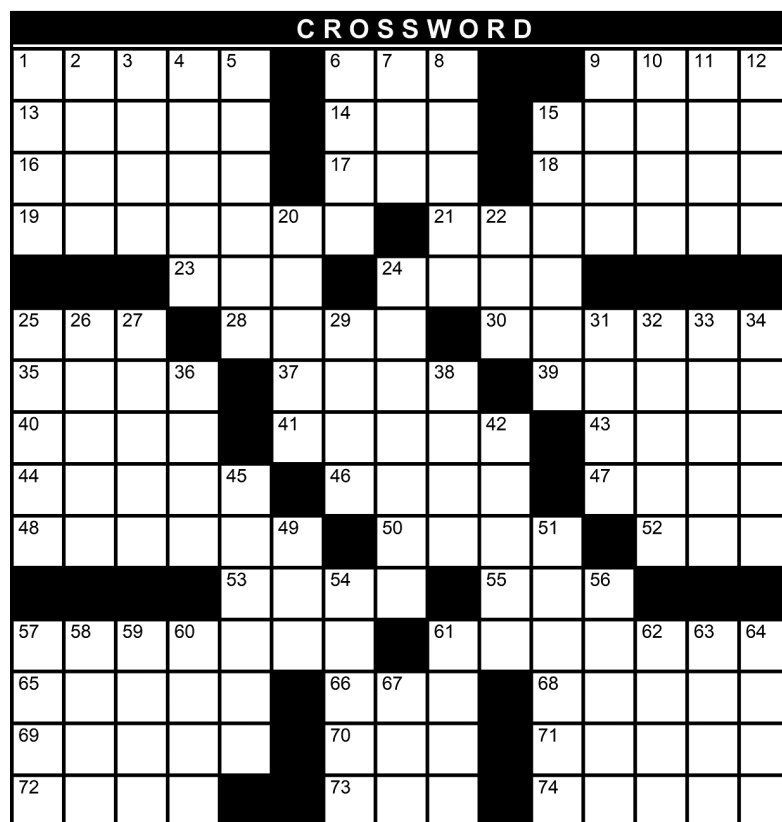
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ACROSS

- Smacks
- Marketing pop-ups
- Kindred
- Jeopardy
- Dog foot
- Threefold
- Throat dangler
- Mogul rider
- Right-hand page
- Lady Gaga: "You and me could write a bad ____"
- Missy Elliott: "Get Ur ____"
- Exclamation of disgust
- At the apex
- Pèrignon of champagne fame
- Two-masted vessel
- Cast out
- Larger-than-life
- Electrical resistance units
- Star bursts
- Silicate mineral
- Alexander, for short
- ____ of the valley
- Sushi option
- Alpine lift
- Impose a tax
- Forward and email, e.g.
- Made in Vegas
- Siren's domain
- Cajole
- Drake: "I need a ____ dance"
- Adele: "We could've had it all ____ in the deep"
- Olivia Rodrigo: "I got my ____"
- Earliest stage of sickness
- Ribonucleic acid, acr.
- Tipi, alt. sp.
- Drugstore shampoo brand
- Many, many moons
- Witchy woman
- ____ Spumante
- Ovine mom
- Chinese green tea

DOWN

- Horse prod
- Left, Latin prefix
- ____ lily
- Pilaff or plov
- Colloquially
- Location of altar
- ____ Prescott of Dallas Cowboys
- Swiftie's idol
- Geometric calculation
- ____ the Can
- Ariana Grande: "Cause I'm so ____ you"
- Glowing gas
- Trephination tool
- Maroon 5: "The ____ that controlled my mind"
- Actor Lowe
- Sheriff of Nottingham's collection container
- Raise doubts
- Suppose
- #40 Across, pl.
- Pink: "So ____? I'm still a rock star"
- Long-lasting Steelers coach
- Brown and such
- Topical remedy
- OutKast: "____!"
- The Killers: "Comin' out of my ____"
- Food fish
- Eagerness
- Stir up violence
- Knotts or McLean
- Mole
- Come to terms
- Each and all
- Parks of Civil Rights fame
- Blame
- Law school prerequisite, acr.
- Denim innovator
- Copenhagen native
- "Iliad," e.g.
- Nevada city
- "As ____ on TV"
- Gotye: "____ you're just somebody that I used to know"



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Finance Committee report: City Council

By The Times Staff

City Councilor Ben Wheeler reported at the City Council meeting on March 12 about the seven-item agenda from a March 10 Finance Committee meeting.

The committee recommended approval of a \$31,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for upgrades to the Franey Road hazardous household waste drop-off site.

“The Department of Public Works staff explained that this will fund winterization and a new garage door with a pedestrian cutout for better access,” said Wheeler.

The committee recommended appropriating approximately \$56,000 from the Bike Share Stabilization Fund for an 18-dock Blue Bike station at Boynton Union Connect.

These funds were donated by the developer for Somerville to purchase equipment using our existing regional contract, he explained.

Three police department grants generated extended discussion during the meeting. The first was for some \$23,000 for youth violence prevention, with roughly

\$6,000 from the city.

“The new captain of community relations is exploring programs like aquarium trips and basketball games alongside hotspot patrols and youth academies,” said Wheeler.

There was concern regarding a requirement in the grant text that the police department submit daily crime data to the Commonwealth Fusion Center through the system known as either CopLink or CrimeTracer, he said.

“We received written confirmation that this data is not shared at the federal level, though some questions about the risk around this sharing remained,” said Wheeler.

The Finance Committee recommended approval for a \$43,000 police software grant.

Police department staff explained that the gray key forensics tool is used to bypass smartphone passwords in crime investigations, but only by a small number of approved officers, and only with a search warrant or explicit consent often from victims seeking to share evidence, Wheeler explained.



City Councilor At Large and Finance Committee Chair Ben Wheeler.

Existing surveillance technology impact reports provided transparency regarding these legal and procedural safeguards, he added.

This grant also covers Blue Voice Inc., a new AI tool. “We discussed how this might be used, what data would be uploaded to

it, and how to ensure it’s not used to leak personally identifiable information about Somerville residents, nor to substitute AI decision making for human decision making,” said Wheeler.

Additionally, a \$127,000 grant was recommended for special *Continued on page 10*

Dorothy's Corner BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Passover Charoset

Charoset symbolizes one of at least five traditional items found on the Seder Plate during Passover. Charoset is a sweet relish of fruits, nuts, honey, spices, and wine. It represents the clay that was used to make bricks when the Israelites were enslaved in Ancient Egypt.

For more detailed information, go to <https://jamiiegeller.com/recipes/ashkenazi-style-charoset/>. The recipe below was adapted from <https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/charoset>, Emily McKenna.

- 2 Apples, peeled and chopped into small pieces
- 1/2 Teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 Lemon, juiced
- 1/2 Cup toasted walnuts
- 1/2 Cup raisins
- 1/8 Cup honey

- 1/4 Cup orange marmalade
- 1/2 Teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 Teaspoon Chinese five spice
- Pinch of kosher salt

Preheat oven to 350°. Place the walnuts onto a cookie sheet and place in the oven for 10 minutes. Prepare the apples and place into a medium bowl. Add the lemon zest and lemon juice to the apples and mix well. This helps keeping them from oxidizing.

In a small saucepan, add the raisins, honey, and orange marmalade. Place over a low heat and stir until the raisins are completely covered, about 2 minutes. Take off the heat and add the cinnamon, five spice, and salt, stir until completely mixed. Chop the walnuts into smaller pieces and add to the apples, then add the raisin mixture to the apples and blend everything together until well incorporated.

Let sit for 4-6 hours in the refrigerator. Serve with matzo crackers. Serves



4-6 people.

If you’re planning on cooking a brisket and the side of tzimmes, here’s a link to a crock pot tzimmes recipe from a previous post I did in the past:

<https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/64030>.

Visit Dorothy’s website at <http://ddimarzo2002.wix.com/thymethief>.

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

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, April 7, 2026**, at 6:45pm through Zoom.

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

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oottS0KUQXq3XzBpzKmqvw

TO CALL IN

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

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

Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties

197 Morrison Avenue Applicant: East Coast Metal Roofing – Paul Lechiara
Owner: Hamilton Bennett
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by constructing a new roof.

Determinations of Historic Significance (STEP 1 IN THE DEMO REVIEW PROCESS)

17 Clyde Street Applicant: Law Office of Richard G. DiGirolamo
Owner: PJJJ LLC
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Determinations of Preferably Preserved (STEP 2 IN THE DEMO REVIEW PROCESS)

30 Vinal Avenue Applicant: 30 Vinal LLC
Owner: Michele Daly Taylor
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

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

3/18/26, 3/25/26 The Somerville Times



**City of Somerville
PLANNING BOARD
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Somerville Planning Board (PB) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, April 2, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_q_L55qgNThqhs_IkE_Vkpg

TO CALL IN

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

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

365 Somerville Avenue Somerville Family Dental PC request to remove a condition of a previously issued Special Permit (DRA#2020-012) in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district.

369 Somerville Avenue Somerville Family Dental PC request to remove a condition of a previously issued Special Permit (DRA#2020-012) in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district.

1 McGrath Highway Somerbridge Hotel LLC proposes a Major Revision to the previously Site Plan Approval case # P&Z 21-028 in the High-Rise (HR) zoning district.

1 McGrath Highway Somerbridge Hotel LLC proposes to establish a Hotel Use in the High-Rise (HR) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

1 McGrath Highway Somerbridge Hotel LLC proposes to establish a Formula Business in the High-Rise (HR) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov.

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
BID #S2027-01**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for:

Science Curriculum Materials: Textbooks, Consumable Materials, E-Books and Online Curriculum Materials That Align to the Massachusetts DESE STE (Science, Technology and Engineering) Curriculum Frameworks.

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **Wednesday, March 25, 2026 @ 10 a.m.**

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **2 p.m., Tuesday, April 7, 2026**, at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof, waive any minor informality in the Bid process and to award the Contract that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville School Department.

Robert A. Berretta
Interim CFO
Somerville Public Schools

3/25/26 The Somerville Times

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. June 20, 2026 | 8. January 1, 1889, connecting the Allston Railroad Depot to Coolidge Corner and Park Square |
| 2. Daffodils | |
| 3. Michael J. Fox | |
| 4. Sunflower | 9. Charlie on the MTA |
| 5. Annie Get Your Gun | 10. Janet Gaynor, 1929 |
| 6. Hoboken | 11. Lincoln Center, NYC |
| 7. Conan O'Brien Needs A Friend | 12. Coal Miner's Daughter |

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Finance Committee report: City Council

CONT. FROM PG 9

response team equipment and training, including protective armor and cameras that are pole-mountable and investigation-specific, and detailed in their own surveillance technology impact report.

Addressing concerns regarding over-militarization, police department staff emphasized that department policies ensure this tactical gear remains behind the scenes and only used to protect residents in high se-

curity incidents, Wheeler explained.

Last item of the agenda included the economic development staff presenting UCH-TIF, a tax incremental financing policy managed from the state level to incentivize housing production.

When the City Council sees a clear affordability benefit in a case of development, this tool allows the city to waive a portion of future taxes on the added value that development will

bring to a property, he explained.

“To be clear, this is not a tax cut or a city payment,” said Wheeler. “It’s a time-limited reduction of the increased taxes that development would normally generate. While the state sets minimum subsidy criteria to qualify, Somerville, and the City Council in particular, will maintain the power to demand deeper affordability on a project-by-project basis.”

COA St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

The Somerville Council on Aging held its St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on Tuesday, March 17, at the Dilboy Post located at 351 Summer Street. Seniors enjoyed an afternoon of music, a lunch of corned beef and cabbage, and a performance by the Rebecca McGowan School of Irish Dance. — Photos by Claudia Ferro



St. Patrick's Day celebrated at Sally O'Brien's

Liam Mannion, proprietor of Sally O'Brien's, and Former Alderman Bob McWatters held their annual St. Patrick's Day celebration on Tuesday. Community members, along with local and state elected officials, stopped by to celebrate Irish heritage with music, corned beef and cabbage, a pint of Guinness, and plenty of laughter. This year's celebration had a terrific showing. Among the guests were Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Secretary of State William Galvin, State Auditor Diana DiZoglio, Governor's Councilor Terrence Kennedy, District Attorney Marian Ryan, Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, Registrar Maria Curtatone, Former Congressman Michael Capuano, State Representative Christine Barber, State Representative Dan Ryan, Mayor Jake Wilson, City Councilors Matt McLaughlin, Ben Ewen- Campen, Jesse Clingan, Naomi Sait, Jon Link, Ben Wheeler, Kristen Strezo and Will Mbah. Former Mayor Dorothy Kelley Gay, Former Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, and Former Alderman John Connolly.



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Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: Do I have a right to have my dog live with me? He's essential to my health.

A: It depends on whether he's a service dog (specifically trained to assist you), a therapy dog, or an emotional support dog. Here's an explanation of the differences: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service dogs have full public access rights, meaning they can accompany their handlers in all public spaces, including restaurants, stores, and public transportation. Therapy dogs do not have the same legal rights as service dogs. They are considered pets and require permission to enter public places. Their access is typically limited to the facilities where they provide support.

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

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

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

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BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobby George Potaris



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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Seasonal confusion... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

March 25

- 708 – Constantine begins his reign as Catholic Pope.
- 1634 – Lord Baltimore founds the Catholic colony of Maryland.
- 1668 – The first horse race in America takes place.
- 1776 – The Continental Congress authorizes a medal for George Washington.
- 1911 – A fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company claims the lives of 146 workers.
- 1940 – The U.S. agrees to give Britain and France access to all American warplanes.
- 1954 – RCA manufactures its first color TV set and begins mass production.
- 1965 – Martin Luther King Jr. leads a group of 25,000 to the state capital in Montgomery, Ala.
- 1969 – John Lennon and Yoko Ono stage a bed-in for peace in Amsterdam.
- 1970 – The Concorde makes its first supersonic flight.
- 1986 – President Ronald Reagan orders emergency aid for the Honduran army. U.S. helicopters take Honduran troops to the Nicaraguan border.

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: If I receive a tax refund, does that mean my tax return is in the clear and the case is closed?

A: No — not necessarily! A refund is a positive sign, but it does not mean your return has been fully reviewed or permanently closed.

Many taxpayers assume that once they receive their refund, everything is finalized. In reality, a refund — like an e-file “accepted” status — reflects an initial validation, not a complete IRS review.

Here are the key “hurdles” your return typically passes through:

♦ **Filing Confirmation** (Accepted or Processed):

Your return is officially received by the

IRS. This confirms basic information (like your identity), but not overall accuracy.

♦ **Refund or Payment Processed:**

Refunds are often issued before full verification is complete, so receiving one doesn’t mean your return is fully cleared.

♦ **IRS Matching Review (Behind the Scenes):**

The IRS compares your return to W-2s, 1099s, and other third-party data — often weeks or months later.

♦ **Silence Period (No News is Good News):**

If no notices arrive within a few months, it’s a strong signal that no immediate issues were identified.

♦ **Statute of Limitations (Final Closure):**

In most cases, the IRS has three years to assess additional tax, starting from the later of

the filing date or the filing deadline (typically April 15, or later if filed under extension).

Important exceptions:

♦ 25%+ income omission – 6 years

♦ Fraud – no time limit

Bottom Line:

A refund isn’t the finish line. Your return is generally only “closed” once the IRS statute period expires.

Any questions? I’m Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area.

Reach out at vincent@hickscpasolutions.com or (859) 553-0788.

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



Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

311 (617-666-3311).

Somerville High School and the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation are proud to announce the formation of the **Somerville High School Alumni Newsletter**. Through this newsletter, they aim to strengthen the bonds of the SHS community by providing important updates, honoring the achievements of their alumni through inspiring stories, assisting alumni with opportunities to engage in the SHS Community, and fostering the spirit of SHS pride and belonging that unites them all. The Somerville High School Alumni Newsletter will be published semi-annually in December/January and May/June. Subscribe to the Somerville High School Alumni Newsletter at <https://www.shsscholarship.org/shs-alumni-newsletter>, and they will email you the alumni newsletter when it comes out this spring. They are also in the process of creating an SHS Alumni Home Page that will be found on both the school’s and foundation’s (www.shsscholarship.org) websites. Make this your go-to place for all things SHS alumni-related. More information on this will be published in the upcoming SHS Alumni Newsletter.

 The **Somerville Recreation Adaptive Sports Clinic** is a welcoming, inclusive program designed for participants of all abilities to explore hockey, basketball, baseball, soccer, and football in a sup-

portive and fun environment. With an emphasis on skill-building, teamwork, and confidence, this free clinic creates opportunities for athletes to move, play, and shine at their own pace. **Saturdays, March 14 – April 11.** Register online at www.somervillerec.com.

 In Somerville, **if you are a senior**, you may be able to **reduce or defer your property taxes** – and now is the time to apply before the **April 1 deadline**. The city’s **Senior Tax Deferral program** allows qualifying seniors age 65 or over to delay paying all or a portion of their tax bill as long as they live in the home they own, and their gross income is below \$86,000. Tax deferral works like a loan with 2.5% percent interest currently charged. Payment is not due until the property is transferred to heirs or others. See the application form at bit.ly/taxdeferral. Learn more about deferral or other tax relief options at www.somervillema.gov/assessing (click on Exemptions and Other Tax Relief).

 Join the **Somerville Homeless Coalition** for a night of local love at **The Crystal Ballroom** featuring some of Somerville’s best. Their **2026 Spring into Action celebration** on **March 26** brings together local flavors and fantastic live music from **West of Willow** and **The Loomers**. Be part of it and celebrate their community with them. Save the date; tickets drop in February. For

support or additional information, please contact mcon-lan@shcinc.org.

 The **Somerville Arts Council** invites musicians, dancers, street performers, installation artists, craft vendors, buskers, and creatives of all kinds to be part of **ArtBeat 2026**, Somerville’s beloved summer arts festival in Davis Square. This year’s theme is **REvolution**, a celebration of transformation, creative energy, and the ideas that move us forward. **July 18, Davis Square.** Apply now and help bring this year’s ArtBeat to life. Learn more and apply: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls>.

 The next episode of the **SPS podcast** is now streaming on #Spotify. Second-grade teacher **Becca Faigan** has some new innovative ideas as she leads the **Healey School’s project-based learning initiatives**. Plus, hear how our young students thrive in a multilingual environment as we stop by the Healey for this edition of **“Teach Me Something.”** <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/podcast>.

SCC’s Annual Member Block Party is coming up on **April 2** at **Arts at the Armory**. This celebration brings together neighbors, supporters, local leaders, and community members to celebrate the work that is being done together to build affordable housing, expand economic opportunity, and strengthen

community in Somerville. Expect great food, music, and conversation. SCC has been helping families build stability and opportunity in Somerville for more than 55 years. Register today <https://www.somervillecdc.org/>

 On Friday, April 10, **GLOWBALL** will transform the Armory Performance Hall into an immersive Rave created by DJ WhySham and visual projectionist Jay Medina, all in support of The Center for Arts at the Armory. **GLOWBALL** is an “anti-gala”—there will be no speeches, presentations, or auction. There will be pop-up performances by **Sean Bjerke** and **RHOUSE Dancers**; **The House of Nahdra**, **AfroFuture Fashion Portal**, and **Circus 617**. This year’s honorees: **Ellen Waylonis**, Lifetime Achievement Award; **Willie Burnley**, Community Arts Advocate; and **Wendy Jehlen**, Outstanding Artist. **GLOWBALL** tickets include complimentary international bites and glow-in-the-dark styling and face painting. This will surely be Somerville’s most illuminating party of 2026. For tickets and more information, visit: <https://artsatthearmory.org/>.

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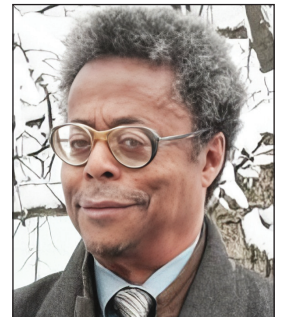
OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Passing the time with Boston Poet Laureate Sam Cornish

This is an article I wrote in 2008 about the late, first Boston Poet Laureate, Sam Cornish.

a music called the blues.



Sam Cornish, the Boston Poet Laureate, invited me to his office to chat before participating in another meeting we were involved with later in the day with Boston-area poetry activists. On the subway, on the way to the meeting, I read through a collection of Cornish's that I picked up at the Grolier Poetry Book Shop some time ago: *Cross A Parted Sea*. Cornish writes about everything from Pullman Porters, sharecroppers, Jackie Robinson, Martin Luther King, his father, etc. He does it with just the right amount of raw energy and the Blues, and his choice of words packs a wallop, or at times a well-appointed sucker punch: Case in point:

Sam Cornish's office is in the back of the audio-visual department in the basement of the Copley Square Branch of the Boston Public Library. Cornish is an affable, warm, and modest man, making him an easy person to talk to and open up to. Cornish, like the former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, is all about community and outreach. From talking with Cornish I got the impression he is not interested in getting more PR for the mandarins of the poetry world. He wants to reach what he calls the "Boston Underground," which he defines as the community of poets and writers outside the academy. This is a population who publishes little magazines and books, writes for the love of it and are not careerists. He feels that these "holy fools" should get some recognition as well. Cornish wants to address the larger question "Why does poetry matter?" He wants to show that poetry is an essential element of society. It is more than foundation grants, book contracts, and plum teaching positions.

Later Dale Patterson (Boston Library Foundation), Harris Gardner (Tapestry of Voices), Lo Galluccio (Poet Activist, Ibbetson Update Book Reviewer, and author),

Joe Bergin (Carpenter Poets), and Kate Finnegan (Kaji Aso Studios) came to discuss the process of getting grants for pet projects of Cornish's, and other proposed projects by group members. Some interesting ideas were thrown out like: poetry performances at the old Strand Theatre in Dorchester, a small press book fair, readings in coffee shops across the city, thematic cross-cultural readings, paid visiting poets conducting workshops for neighborhood youth, you name it ... Dale Patterson, a well-seasoned grant writer, plans to work up a draft proposal that hopefully will wind up in the willing hands of a number of foundations.

It was great to be with these enthusiastic folks who took time out of their very busy lives to volunteer their respective talents in promotion of the word. Sam Cornish is a great laureate, a man of the people, and his hands are on the pulse of the city. When I lived in Brighton years ago I used to see him walking the streets, his inquisitive, searching eyes scanning the city behind thick glasses. Cornish mentioned the book "Walker in the City," by Alfred Kazin. Kazin was a keen observer, a lover of the ebb and flow of the eclectic, teeming city streets. This is exactly what Cornish is, and what I admire about the man. Cornish has walked the walk and he has earned the right to talk the talk.

I think Boston had the right idea in supporting and funding this position. I can only hope that my hometown of Somerville will be infused with the same wisdom and fund a position such as this.

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Jonathon Nimmons is a British poet and the founder of WriteSeen, the world's first creative social network.



What the Thorns Remember

I loved you
on our third call
I hated you
dividing your smiles

the Bougainvillea
flowering over
our fingers
questions
opened wounds
with blood leaping
from our nails

deleting numbers

tears shepherding
new trails in the grass

maybe autumn
as magenta petals
fall
into hands loose

in a polaroid
my mind snapped
as you folded us
into a pocket

where outlines
of a bar shutting
lifted our kiss
into song

drunk slurs

shading this frame

my roots reach
for a wet brush
to colour in

a dark rose

sharper teeth.

— Jonathon Nimmons

Dog Town Slim

Our grandfathers
were
hard as nigger
sweat
writers
that drank
the muddy
waters
of Mississippi
and the Congo
traveled
the world
in books
foot&
fist
through
Dunbar
Douglass
Johnson
And Hughes
no Uncle Toms
but men
on Grand Street
or Lenox Avenue
left bank
or after hours
joint
upside
the heads

of Gentiles
of Crackers
or to Spain
fuck
fascism
and the Krauts

their lives so crazy
that women
wrote
about them made

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