



Inside:



Bonnets and baskets and ties
page 3



Irish Film Festival returns
page 5



"We Create Diamonds" opens
page 6

School district establishes special education reserve fund



Money earmarked for the special education reserve fund was restored during the Finance Committee meeting on March 24.

By Harry Kane

Lawmakers approved a new special education reserve fund to set aside money for unexpected or high-cost special education expenses.

City Councilors overwhelmingly voted in favor of Mayor Jake Wilson's request to adopt Massachusetts General Law, Part 1, Title VII, Chapter 40, Section 13E, during the March 26 City Council meeting.

"[This] legislation allows us to create a separate fund, like a stabilization fund, for the schools, that has a pool of money that can only be used with appropriation from the School Committee and City Council," said Ward 2 City Councilor J.T. Scott.

The Finance Committee had already approved \$430,965 during a March 24 meeting from the unreserved fund balance for the *Continued on page 4*

Call for artists: \$50K mural opportunity in Union Square

A highly visible new canvas is coming to the heart of Union Square, and the city is looking for an artist to define it.

The Somerville Arts Council is seeking a muralist or artist team to create a large-scale public artwork on the exterior of the expanded Prospect Street Substation Building, directly across from the Union Square Green Line Station.

Set at one of the busiest corners of the neighborhood, the project offers a rare opportunity to shape a new visual landmark in a neighborhood defined by movement, creativity, and community. The project is in partnership with and funded by Eversource.

Project Details:
Budget: \$50,000, funded by Eversource
Location: Union Square, Somerville
Application Deadline: April 15, *Continued on page 2*



Pascal Michel painting his mural at Highland Creole Cuisine.

— Photo by Greg Cook



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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.

SCC's Annual Member Block Party takes place 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 at www.bit.ly/scblockparty. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) will be the keynote speaker, a leader whose voice and vision continue to push forward the fight for equity, dignity, and justice. They will also be joined by Somerville's Mayor, Jake Wilson. At a time when so much is changing in our city, this is a moment to be in the room.

March 30, 2026, marked 31 years without Justice for Deanna Cremin. Anyone with information regarding Deanna Cremin's unsolved murder, please call this confidential tip line: 617-544-7167.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to our good friend Ida Fasano. We're wishing her a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to Sissy McWatters-Ankenbauer, who is celebrating this week. We hope she had a great day. Happy birthday to Bruce Rollins II, who also celebrates this week. We hope he enjoys his day as well. Happy birthday to Chris Pedersen. We hope he has a great day. Happy birthday to Linda Rock *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	Thunderstorms	70°/38°	52%	41%	W 12 mph
Thursday March 26	Rain	39°/38°	45%	33%	ENE 13 mph
Friday March 27	Rain	60°/47°	38%	26%	SSW 11 mph
Saturday March 28	Cloudy	51°/41°	22%	17%	NE 12 mph
Sunday March 29	Rain	62°/47°	51%	42%	SSW 15 mph
Monday March 30	Partly Cloudy	56°/39°	21%	16%	NW 14 mph
Tuesday March 31	Sunny	50°/36°	10%	5%	NW 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: PTAC meets to discuss better bus network agenda for spring 2026

TheoNa says:

If the service is weekdays only then the bus lanes should be marked weekdays only.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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School year 2026–2027 calendar available

The school year calendar for next year is now available on the Somerville Public Schools website for download and viewing in English: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/2026-2027-school-year-calendar-1>.

Translated calendars will be available soon. The first day of school for students in grades 1 to 12 will be August, 31, 2026.

Students in prekindergarten and kindergarten start September 2, 2026.

Call for artists: \$50K mural opportunity in Union Square

CONT. FROM PG 1

at 11:59 p.m.

This is a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Artists are invited to submit examples of past work and an overview of their artistic practice. A site-specific proposal is not required at this stage.

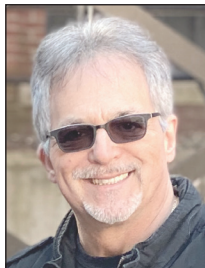
Submissions are open to individual artists, artist teams, and nonprofit organizations, with a focus on those experienced in murals or public art.

Learn more and apply:
somervilleartscouncil.org/public-art/call-for-muralists-public-artwork-for-union-square.

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.

Bonnets and baskets and ties – Oh My!



This article first appeared in the April 12, 2009, edition of The Times.

I took the boys to Sears to buy spring jackets on Saturday.

The place was mobbed with families buying Easter clothes. A couple of kids were screaming while the mothers attempted to get them to try stuff on. The fitting rooms had lines, and there were clothes on the floor that people plopped there instead of replacing them on the rack. You might say that mayhem was running amok in the store.

My kids don't wear "dress" pants, so on Easter Sunday, they will probably just wear the new black jeans I bought them, with a decent shirt and their new jackets. One kid could use some new sneakers. However, if he gives me any crap about going to the store to try them on, no sneakers. He couldn't care less if he wears new ones or old ones. Getting them to try on clothes is a horror show. It's very stressful for me.

My boys have only had a few pairs of dress shoes. The number of times they wore them made it a poor investment. They mainly wear hooded sweatshirts with zippers. Times have changed.

When I was a kid, my mother dictated what I wore, where I wore it, and when I wore it – but that was okay. We made the annual Easter trip to Anderson Little. My mom had a built-in homing device that led her directly to the pants that would be the most uncomfortable for me. Mom picked the trousers, I put them on, and stood on a stool. A guy with a tape measure came over and wrote down numbers after making me feel very embarrassed.

I stood in a pew at St. Clement's church and felt like my legs had bugs crawling on them. Never again would I ever wear wool. When pants started being made with polyester/Dacron and other acrylic blends, I thanked the Lord. Standing up in front of the class, getting berated by a nun is bad enough on its own, but when your legs are itching like crazy, and you can't scratch them, that's Hell. When I was very young, my brother and I had matching wool hats



to cap off our rash-inducing outfits. Oh, what lovely memories. Mom always made sure my brother, sister, and I were always dressed to the nines, and she did a great job! Comfort was not factored in.

Clip-on ties were a great invention for

kids and parents. Not only was it a time saver, but it was fun for us. One of the most popular gags was yanking another kid's tie off. The only bad part about that was if the kid was wearing a real tie. Can you say pain in the neck *Continued on page 11*

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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: What is one of the biggest tax changes for 2025 – especially for Massachusetts taxpayers?

A: The increase in the SALT (State and Local Tax) deduction cap may be one of the most impactful — particularly in high-tax states like Massachusetts.

Under prior law, the SALT deduction was capped at \$10,000, limiting how much taxpayers could deduct for:

- + state income taxes, and
- + local property taxes

Beginning in 2025, that cap has been increased to \$40,000 under new tax law.

Here's how this works in practice:

- + **SALT deductions apply when you itemize.**

You can deduct certain expenses — including state income taxes and property taxes — if your itemized deductions exceed the standard deduction.

+ The prior \$10,000 cap limited many taxpayers.

In states like Massachusetts, many households already pay well above \$10,000 in combined state and local taxes but couldn't deduct the full amount.

+ The new \$40,000 cap changes the equation.

With a higher cap, more taxpayers may now find that itemizing results in a larger deduction than taking the standard deduction.

+ This can reduce federal taxes – and increase refunds!

A larger deduction lowers taxable income,

which can reduce taxes owed and potentially increase your refund.

+ There are still limitations.

The higher cap begins to phase out for higher-income households (generally starting around \$500,000 of income for married couples filing jointly), which may reduce or eliminate the benefit at higher levels.

Bottom Line:

The increase in the SALT cap could shift many taxpayers — especially in Massachusetts — back toward itemizing deductions. That change alone may lead to lower federal taxes and larger refunds compared to prior years.

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.

School district establishes special education reserve fund

CONT. FROM PG 1

special education reserve fund.

Finance Director Edward Bean said the money will go toward funding special education, out-of-district tuition, and special education transportation costs.

The money had been earmarked for special education, but the funds were distributed late, explained Bean. “The Department of Revenue was late in distributing Q4 FY2024 special education circuit breaker funds to the city.

“This is the amount of money that should have gone to the school department had it been distributed timely by the Department of Revenue,” said Bean.

Prior to the Finance Committee meeting, the special education “rainy day account” was approved during a Legislative Matters Committee meeting on March 17. At that meeting, Interim Chief Financial Director Robert Berretta spoke about the rationale behind establishing the special education reserve fund.

“I want to start by saying I think this

represents a really awesome partnership between the city and the schools,” said Berretta. “What we're really trying to do here is basically some risk management.”

Due to year-to-year fluctuations in special education costs like out-of-district tuition and transportation costs, the dedicated fund will help manage financial volatility.

Berretta said costs can range upwards of \$130,000 per student for out-of-district tuition and explained it can be difficult to absorb the costs in an appropriated budget, hence the need for a reserve fund.

Funds can carry over and be used in future fiscal years, he said, allowing districts to manage unpredictable high-cost student placements without needing immediate new appropriations.

The reserve fund balance cannot exceed two percent of the annual net school spending of the school district, according to Section 13E.

“This is not a savings account,” said Ber-



retta. “This is some very prudent long-term planning that we've engaged in, knowing that special education costs can change quickly from year-to-year.”

By establishing the dedicated reserve fund, the district will now have a safety net in place to cover high-cost, unexpected, or unbudgeted special education expenses.

Citizen Self Service

View Real Estate Tax, Personal Property Tax, and Utility (Water/Sewer) Bills 24/7 on Somerville Website at “Services” Dropdown

The City of Somerville treasury & collection department provides a web-based look-up directly from official City records that enables access to bill information without the need to contact the treasury department. **Citizen Self Service (CSS) is the same official city records database treasury staff members use to answer your questions.** View real estate tax bills, water/sewer (utility) bills, and personal property tax bills online, in real time, 24/7. There is even a “payoff date calculation” option, simply change the date to a future one of your choice. Because CSS is in real time and live, when a payment posts in the office it shows on CSS immediately. Note that payments made on City Hall Systems, the city's online payment vendor, will appear on CSS the next business day after the payment file is loaded. CSS also links to City Hall Systems, enabling easy payment access that is safe, secure and free of charge if a checking account is used as the payment method.

Visit www.somervillema.gov “Services” dropdown menu for 24/7 Citizen Self Service look-up access. CSS is also available on the treasury webpage, www.somervillema.gov/treasury. To pay a bill, use the “Payments” dropdown. Contact treasury@somervillema.gov or (617) 625-6600 x-3500 with questions, or for assistance.

Boston's Irish Film Festival returns to the Somerville Theatre

By Matthias Gat

Director Ross Whitaker visits the Somerville community for a special Q&A following the North American premiere of his most recent movie, *Beat the Lotto*.

On a chilly, not-quite-spring, Saturday evening, residents gathered at the Somerville Theatre in Davis Sq. to attend 2026's Irish Film Festival. As the largest celebration of Irish film outside of Ireland, Irish Film Festival Boston was established in 1999 in an effort to expose Irish film to a wider audience.



Two attendees of the film festival at the pre-screening reception for director Ross Whitaker.

Director Ross Whitaker was a special guest this year to talk about his most recent documentary, "Beat the Lotto." Whitaker directed various movies in the past, covering topics that range from boxing champions to bird songs. The unifying theme between all of his films is spotlighting Irish stories.

Before the screening, a small reception was held for Whitaker. In attendance were family, friends, and people with all access passes. One of the attendees, Theresa Kelly, spoke on how important the film festival is, drawing on her Irish heritage. She mentioned in one of the screenings at the

2019 festival that, in the background of a documentary on the gay community in Ireland, she saw one of her first cousins. In a sense, Kelly says that "Irish cinema feels like going home."

Beat the Lotto is a documentary about mathematician Stefan Klincewicz, who discovered a way to cheat Ireland's National Lottery by using mathematical analysis and exploiting a loophole he discovered. The film, despite its simple premise, covers more than just the tactics of the lottery syndicate. It touches on the socio-economic state of Ireland in the 80s and why the lottery was so culturally significant.

After the screening, Whitaker was joined on stage by the executive director of the event, Dawn Morrissey, to answer questions from the audience. With a packed theater came a number of questions, but only a few could be answered in the time crunch.

One audience member asked whether former Irish Lotto director Ray Bates, who served as what can best be described as the "antagonist" of the film, was involved in the filmmaking process. Whitaker revealed that Bates had originally agreed to be part of the film, but ultimately changed his mind. He said that Bates was still one



Ross Whitaker takes the stage to answer questions from the audience about his movie, his creative process, and more. — Photos by Matthias Gat

of the first people who was shown the documentary, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

The Irish Film Festival is a great way to highlight independent and international cinema, and given the opportunity, anyone should go. With how many people the film festival draws in yearly, it would be worth considering for more identity-based screening events to take place at the Somerville Theatre in order to reflect Somerville's diverse community.

Book review: 'A Talent to Amuse' by Daniel M. Kimmel

By Dennis Fischman

A Talent to Amuse [1] is a book with a clever setup and a surprisingly touching conclusion.

The setup: a writer, Sherman, has succeeded at making a living (no small feat, there!) by churning out formulaic stories in several genres, under different pen names, but he's hit writer's block. What he really wants to do is to write the Great American Novel.

For that, he's going to need a different muse. Literally.

Because in this book, the nine Muses of classic Greek legend are real, and their many-times-great-grandchildren are real, too – but highly specialized. One of these new muses is Komikos, the guy who's been inspiring our hero's humorous genre fiction.

Another is the lovely Cassie, short for Vinteokaseta. Formerly

the muse of Blockbuster Video stores, she is now out of work and (like Sherman) looking for inspiration and reinvention.

The conclusion? I'm not going to spoil it. You can probably see where this is going, yourself. Along the way, though, Sherman and Cassie confer with all nine of the classical muses plus their mother, Mnemosyne, goddess of memory. Each one inspires Sherman to write a short story, all of which appear in the book.

We also meet other modern muses, like the ones who inspire influencers, crossword puzzle composers, and real estate agents.

Yes, author Daniel M. Kimmel [2] himself possesses "the talent to amuse," as you can see from his inventiveness and sense of humor. A classic piece of advice for authors is to write what you know, and Dan (full disclosure: he's a local author and a fellow member of Temple B'nai Brith in

Somerville) does just that.

His past publications have included books about:

- Movies and science fiction (*Jar Jar Binks Must Die... and other Observations about Science Fiction Movies*) [3];
- Movies and aliens who act in them (*Shh! It's a Secret: a novel about Aliens, Hollywood, and the Bartender's Guide*) [4];
- Movies and romance (*I'll Have What She's Having: Behind the Scenes of the Great Romantic Comedies*) [5]; and,
- Classic horror movies and Jewish families (*Father of the Bride of Frankenstein*) [6].

He draws on every one of those themes here, and more.

You could read this book in one day, as I did, and enjoy yourself the whole time, or you could read it aloud in snatches to someone who will snicker, guffaw, and sigh along with you. It depends on your own talent for amusement.



A Talent to Amuse by Daniel M. Kimmel. Fantastic Books, 2025.

Links:

- [1] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/243383416-a-talent-to-amuse>
- [2] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/316124.Daniel_M_Kimmel
- [3] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/10135112-jar-jar-binks-must-die-and-other-observations-about-science-fic>



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

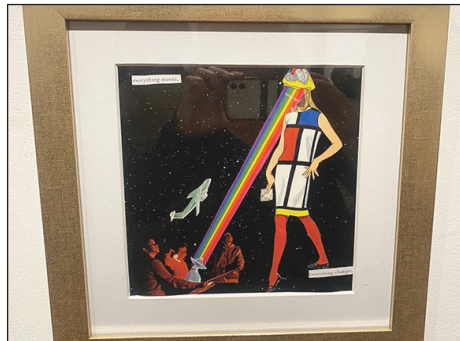
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- [4] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/16051811-shh-it-s-a-secret>
- [5] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3088151-i-ll-have-what-she-s-having>
- [6] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/43586447-father-of-the-bride-of-frankenstein>

'We Create Diamonds' opens at The Nave

The We Create Diamonds exhibit opened at the Nave Gallery on March 21 and will run through April 18. Curated by Michael Talbot, We Create Diamonds is a call to the creative community in response to the wide-spreading events sweeping the nation. For hours and more information, visit <https://navegallery.org/wp/we-create-diamonds/>. Join them for their next event, Re-sistance Through Community and Music, Friday, April 10, 7 – 9 p.m. A celebration of freedom and protest with Boston songwriters Danielle Miraglia, Jen Kearney, and Grace Gervitz. A ben-efit for the Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network (BIJAN). Nave Gallery (Teele Square), 155 Powder House Blvd, Somerville.

— Photos by Bobbie Toner



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COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Happy spring holidays, Somerville.

Our View Of The Times



If there's one universal certainty among most – if not all – people, we surely enjoy the transition from the cold, gloomy atmosphere of winter to the explosion of life and natural beauty as the months of spring unfold.

Hallmarks of this special time include the religious holidays that many of us celebrate, such as Easter, for those of the Christian faith, and the rites of Passover

practiced by those of the Jewish faith. Likewise, the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr begins later this month.

Whatever one's faith – or lack of religious belief – we can all pretty much agree that the old-fashioned traditions we have known our lives can bring us closer together, as long as we embrace them in the spirit of goodwill and community involvement.

One doesn't necessarily have to have re-

ligious convictions to enjoy watching the young ones having a ball at a neighborhood Easter egg hunt.

History tells us that the custom of the Easter egg hunt has its origins dating back to the late 16th century, when the Protestant reformer Martin Luther organized egg hunts for his congregation. Easter eggs and the egg hunt became more popular in mainstream England in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries as society began to change. The tradition continued on through the present day, and it looks as though it will go on into the future.

This has become a tradition that the religious and secular alike can enjoy either participating in or simply observing.

And hey, if nothing else, there are those great after-Easter candy blowout sales at your local pharmacy. Just don't overdo it.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Coutoumas, who is celebrating this week. Happy birthday to Cheryl Constantine Leatham, who is also celebrating. We hope she is having a great day. We wish a happy birthday to all of our Facebook friends, such as Charles Ryan, Heather Ann, Michael R. Foster, Leo Connerty, Joanna Christine, Lyss Nicole, Rachel Fuller-DeAmato, Sarah Obrien, Liam Seward, Patricia O'Leary Shanahan, Carolyn Ryan, and Jeanine Jenks Farley, 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 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.

***** 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/. Continued on page 13

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1016

1. What tech company was founded on April 1, 1976?
2. What U.S. city hosts "The April Fool's Day Parade" each year?
3. In 1996 what food chain played an April Fool's joke claiming they purchased the Liberty Bell?
4. What restaurant did an April Fool's prank in 1998 by introducing a left-handed sandwich?
5. What does Spain celebrate that is equivalent to April Fools' Day?
6. What is traditionally thrown at people in Portugal on April Fool's Day?
7. Which music legend was murdered on April Fool's Day, 1984?
8. On April 1, 2008, What did Nestlé claim to have changed the name of the Butterfinger candy bar to?
9. In Scotland, what was April Fool's Day formerly known as?
10. Which country had the "Spaghetti Tree Prank" on April Fool's Day in 1957?
11. Which Jewish holiday is often celebrated in April?
12. What popular flower festival is celebrated in Japan in April?

Answers on page 10

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. You can't hunt camels in Arizona.
2. On average, people fear spiders more than they do death.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD FILL-IN-THE-BLANKS

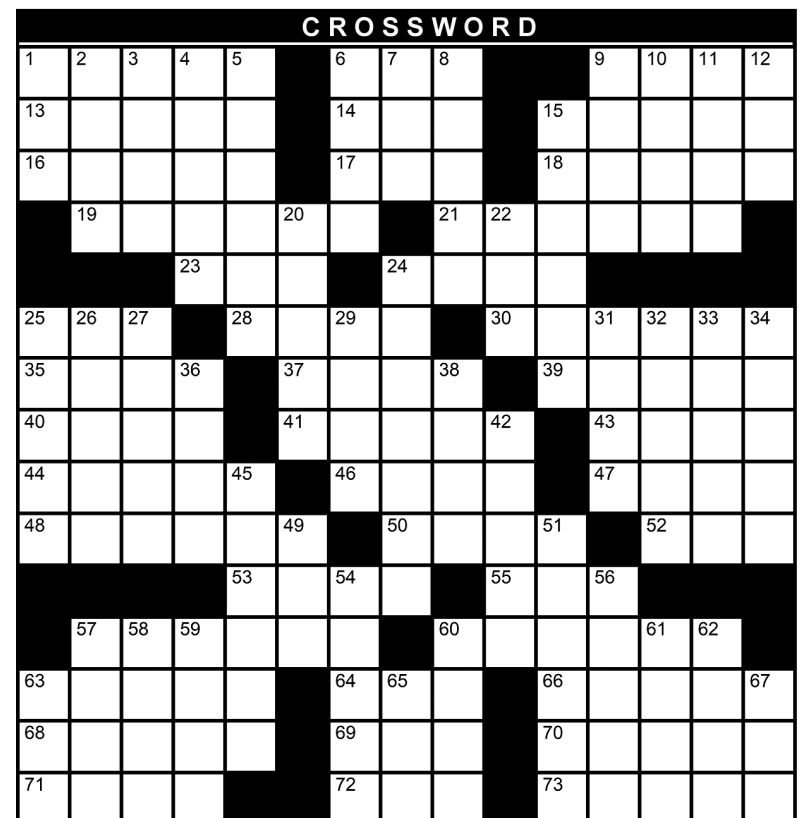
ACROSS

1. Double's trick
6. Pick
9. Marching band member
13. North one or South one, in Asia
14. Morse Code dash
15. Root of iris
16. Indian black tea
17. Mother lode stuff
18. Disinclined
19. Mad as a ____
21. Fit as a ____
23. Pilgrimage to Mecca
24. ____ A Sketch
25. R&R destination
28. Table, in Mexico
30. Aerie baby
35. Otter's den
37. ____ as a button
39. Type of union
40. Axillary, in biology
41. Bored to ____
43. Fit of shivering
44. Treated with calcium hydroxide
46. Recipe amt.
47. Not fiction
48. Lawrence and DiCaprio movie "Don't ____"

50. Like some hard times
52. To the ____ degree
53. Not less
55. Hi-____ graphics
57. Fly off the ____
60. Storm in a ____
63. Louisiana swamp
64. "____ whiz!"
66. Did like a lunatic
68. Mr. T and friends
69. Am is to I a ____ is to we
70. Certain pudding ingredient
71. Mosquito net, e.g.
72. Local area network
73. Leavening agent

DOWN

1. Reggae's cousin
2. Silly talk
3. Minor one in the sky
4. Not o'er





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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



5. Type of gong instrument
6. ____-Eaters
7. ____ for the course
8. "Grand ____ Auto"
9. Walked on
10. Caspian Sea feeder
11. "Take a ____ Out of Crime"
12. Type of tree
15. Idiom for outdated or trite (2 words)
20. Tape deck button
22. Break the ____
24. Palatable
25. ____ we dance?
26. President Franklin Roosevelt's diagnosis
27. "Remember the ____!"
29. Cooking grease
31. Tennis' Steffi
32. Flotsam and jetsam alternative
33. Something educed
34. By the skin of your ____
36. Hiker's journey
38. Gaelic language
42. ____ tire
45. Lollipop brand
49. D.C. mover and shaker
51. Not very far
54. Fit for a king
56. Go "Boo!"
57. A ____-hate relationship
58. Pirates' affirmatives
59. Famous flood survivor
60. Nirvana's "Smells Like ____ Spirit"
61. Iris holder
62. Three ____ in a pod
63. "Kapow!"
65. Pitcher's stat
67. Banned insecticide, acr.

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

OBITUARY

Carol R. Margey



Carol R. (Ivester) Margey, a long-time Somerville resident, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, March 26, 2026. She was 82 years old.

Carol was one of five children born in Cambridge to Ellen (Barrett) and Ernest Ivester. Carol was the dear sister of the late Dorothy Shappe, the late Lillian Difraia, the late Maryel-

len Lawrence, and the late James Ivester. She is survived by many loving nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Carol was the loving mother of the late Daniel (Danny) Mosher and the late Kelly Mosher. Carol was devoted to her children and loved them deeply.

Carol's memorial service and burial will be private.

Somerville kicks off pothole repair season

After a particularly brutal winter, the City of Somerville's Department of Public Works (DPW) is ramping up its annual pothole repair push — and asking residents to help by submitting reports through the city's 311 system.

"We're from the government, and we're here to help," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "Keeping our streets safe and well-maintained is a core part of what we owe residents every day."

What is a Pothole?

Potholes form when water seeps into existing cracks in pavement and into the underlying soil, weakening the road surface.

Freezing temperatures cause that water to expand, and the weight of traffic breaks apart the asphalt, leaving holes that can grow larger if left unrepaired. The freeze-thaw cycles of New England winters make spring one of the busiest times of year for DPW pothole crews.

Report a Pothole, So We Can Fix It

Residents submitted more than 1,200 pothole reports through 311 in 2025 – a 38% increase over the prior year – and DPW answered: crews closed more than 1,300 requests, as they cleared out a backlog of requests from the previous year.

March is consistently the busiest month as freeze-thaw cycles peak, and with reports already running high in early 2026, crews are geared up for another active season.

Residents who spot a pothole, especially larger or more hazardous ones, are encouraged to submit a 311 report, which can be done via phone, email, app, web form, or social media.

Phone: 311 (dial 617-666-3311 if calling from outside of Somerville)

TTY/Hearing Impaired (only) dial 866-808-4851

Email 311requests@somervillema.gov.

Download the 311 app

Message us on Facebook

Enter your request via the city website at somervillema.gov/311

Of course, potholes are just spot repairs. The city also steadily works to resurface full roads, upgrade full streetscapes, and repair sidewalks as well.

To learn more about Somerville's paving and sidewalk management program, including upcoming paving work, please go to: somervillema.gov/paving.

— City of Somerville



Pothole repairs being done on Highland Ave. last Wednesday afternoon. — Photo by Bobbie Toner

**The Somerville Times
Historical Fact of the Week**



Eagle feathers #351

This article first appeared in the April 1, 2015, edition of *The Somerville Times*.

Torpedoes Away

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Before Vice-Admiral Ralph Waldo Christie left the U.S. Navy in 1949, he had spent thirty-eight years working his way up the ranks. The Somerville native graduated from the Naval Academy in 1915. As an Ensign, he had various duties. His first ship assignment was on the battleship *New Jersey*, where he received instruction on submarine construction and torpedo design. This prepared him for the newly opened Submarine School in New London, Connecticut, becoming one of its first members. By 1923, he had earned a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



During these eight years, he captained four different submarines and was involved in top-secret torpedo guidance programs. Some of this torpedo testing was done on the historic ship, the U.S.S. *Indianapolis*. Seventy years ago, on July 30, 1945, after dropping off the ultra-secret materials to build the first atomic bomb at Tinian Island, the *Indianapolis* was sunk by Japanese torpedoes. Out of a crew of 1,196, only 317 survived. Eight hundred and seventy-nine sailors and marines died, most from horrible shark attacks. It was the worst naval loss at sea in American history. If you saw the original movie *Jaws*, you would have been utterly moved by the story of the *Indianapolis* and the fate of its sailors. A Hollywood movie, depicting the fate of the U.S.S. *Indianapolis*' catastrophe, is now being produced by Robert Downey Jr. and his wife.

When World War II began, the then *Continued on page 13*

LEGAL NOTICES

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



**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 15, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here:

[Agendas, Minutes, & More.](#)

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingRef=1vHINMHbQw20iWC7ALX3Hw>

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:

92R Orchard Street Bennie Ber, d/b/a NehKooDah seeks relief from SZO Section 10.2.2.d, regarding the number of cars permitted per carport, which requires a Hardship Variance.

92R Orchard Street Bennie Ber, d/b/a NehKooDah seeks relief from SZO Section 10.2.2.d.iii, carport height limitations, which requires a Hardship Variance.

92R Orchard Street Bennie Ber, d/b/a NehKooDah seeks relief from SZO Section 14.1.7.b.ii, regarding further reducing nonconforming landscape and permeable area, which requires a Hardship Variance.

56 Franklin Street The Law Office of Richard G. DiGirolamo on behalf of Victor Moreira proposes a Major Amendment to a previously issued Special Permit (ZBA 2018-46) in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, previously the Residence B (RB) zoning district.

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

<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>.

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

Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.

4/1/26 The Somerville Times

Legal Notice

The following vehicles will be sold Pursuit to M.G.L. 255 S.39A

- 2012 HONDA CIVIC VIN# 2HGFB2F58CH544119
- 2004 CHEVY EXPRESS VIN# 1GCEG15X341209231
- 2018 HONDA FIT VIN# 3HG5G5H61JM707297
- 2015 HONDA ACCORD VIN# 1HGCR2F31FA187608
- 2007 NISSAN ALTIMA VIN# 1N4AL21E57C121171
- 2012 HONDA CIVIC VIN# 19XFB2F5XCE359726
- 2016 AUDI S4 VIN# WAUBGAF19GA009986

To satisfy the debt owed to Cityside Enterprises Inc.
617-776-6111

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

There will be a Public Hearing before the **City Council's Committee on Licenses and Permits** on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026**, at **6:00 PM**, on a petition for a New Used Car License.

New Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Xeluxe AutoGroup, 20 Cummings Street, 0 vehicles inside, 45 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/joinMeeting?meetingRef=GzKfyP7qSR2uMRbduE6cBQ>
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

4/1/26 The Somerville Times



**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, 4/1/26 The Somerville Times

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR**

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville City Council's **Land Use Committee** and the **Somerville Planning Board** will hold a joint public hearing on **Thursday, April 16th, 2026** at 6:30 pm.

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

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue.
2. 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/joinMeeting?meetingRef=AhGlcqYpRUOHcn-JN-TNQQ>
3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 4:00 PM on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council and Planning Board for inclusion with the Hearing testimony.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comments concerning the following:

- 26 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance sections 3.1.8c, 3.1.9c, 3.1.10c, 3.1.13k, 3.1.13l, 3.2.12l, and 3.2.12m.
- Union 2 Associates, LLC requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 2 and 9 Union Square, 286, 290, and 298 Somerville Avenue from Commercial Core 5 (CC5) to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6).
- 29 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage.
- 14 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage.
- 14 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 12.2.2 regarding affordable dwelling units.
- 29 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 15.7.2.d Zoning Board of Appeals Board Rules.

Zoning amendments may be viewed online by searching the Somerville City Council's online meeting calendar for the meeting or request information: <https://somervillema.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. The Chair(s) may opt to extend the period for written comments, in which case additional comments will be accepted until the date indicated. This information can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

4/1/26 The Somerville Times

Ms. Cam's

From on page 8

Olio Answers

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Apple, Inc. | 7. Marvin Gaye |
| 2. New York City | 8. The Finger |
| 3. Taco Bell | 9. Huntigowk Day |
| 4. Burger King | 10. Switzerland |
| 5. Día de los Santos Inocentes on December 28 | 11. Passover |
| 6. Flour | 12. Cherry Blossom |

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LEGAL NOTICES

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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 21, 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_Fiwdhr8JSIG_7AVNglpt-A

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

141-143 Walnut Street (garage) Applicant: Peter Quinn Architects
 Owner: Walnut Street 141 Development LLC
 The Applicant seeks to demolish an accessory building on a Local Historic District (LHD) property.

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.

Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.

4/1/26 The Somerville Times

Big green health machines: Somerville's public health kiosks are open for public use

By Matthias Gat

As a result of advocacy from At-Large Councilor Kristen Strezo, these new kiosks provide 24/7 access to various health and safety products at no cost.

In November, Somerville's first public health vending machines were installed in front of the West Branch Library in Davis Square and Project Soup in East Somerville. These kiosks are part of a larger initiative funded by Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership, which is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

At these kiosks, people can choose from a variety of health products like condoms, menstrual products, Narcan, sharps containers, diapers, blankets, hats, gloves, and more, all at no cost.

In an update published by the City of Somerville in January, the machines were recorded to have dispensed 940 items within the first eight weeks of installation. Furthermore, 39% of the items dispensed were outside of normal business hours. This statistic highlights the importance of 24/7 access to health services, as it shows that people do need these things,



— Photo by Bobbie Toner

even during odd hours.

In a video uploaded to the Somerville Government YouTube channel discussing the new kiosks, Mayor Jake Wilson said that during a crisis, the vending machines were used to get Narcan, which ended up saving someone's life.

These kiosks were championed by At-Large Councilor Kristen Strezo. As a Councilor, Strezo consistently advocates for affordable living, social justice, the environment, supporting small businesses, and creating opportunities for local artists.

In the video, Strezo says that she

believes that Somerville deserves access to free health products. She emphasizes the importance of addressing period poverty with free menstrual products and pregnancy tests.

In the video, she says that "going without these products" due to lack of accessibility should not be an option.

These machines are open for any person to use, completely anonymous, and most importantly, free. For more information or feedback on the kiosks, you can visit the city government website here: <https://www.somervillema.gov/healthkiosk>

Bonnets and baskets and ties – Oh My!

CONT. FROM PG 3

and detention?

And there is nothing cuter than a little girl with her new dress, pretty bonnet, and dainty Easter purse. It goes perfectly with a brand new, shiny pair of patent leather shoes.

I loved to tell my friends that I had an Uncle Bunny and an Uncle Chick. How cool was that around Easter time? Bunny was short for Bernardino, and Chick was a nickname for my uncle's last name.

For Easter dinner this year, I am not doing the Honey Baked Ham thing. Every year, I make that long drive up Route 1 and stand in that stupid line. To tell you the truth, I don't know what the big deal is. Last year's wasn't that great. I think

it will be a simple ham from Johnny's or BJ's this time. I should have saved the aluminum Honey Baked wrapper from last year so people would think it was an overpriced Honey Baked. Ham, potatoes, corn, and rolls, that's it. And a great big apple pie from BJ's. This year, I really don't feel like standing in any long lines to buy Easter fixings. I just get mad, and it takes away from the pleasure of the day. But that's just me.

Then it's the annual egg hunt at my house. I fill plastic eggs with money and hide them around the house. I vacuumed and swept on Saturday, so I hope nobody finds any dust bunnies.

And don't forget to buy some white eggs

to color. Last year, I was up to my (rabbit) ears with hard-boiled, colorful eggs. I'm pretty sure I tossed a few out.

Palm Sunday just passed, and the church on the corner of Francesca Ave and College Ave had its annual donkey parade down College Ave – I missed it this year. In the meantime, there are enough jack-asses speeding down College Ave to tide me over.

The stores have been jam-packed with everything Easter since they took down the Valentine's Day stuff. This year's new offerings are little plastic eggs shaped like ladybugs and edible fake grass. Yes, that's right, edible fake Easter basket grass. Next year, they will have edible baskets and can-

dy wrappers, too, I bet. Speaking of candy, I am the only person I have ever heard of who does not like marshmallow Peeps. Give me a Cadbury or Resses egg any day!

In the past, Easter meant trips to Gilchrist's Basement, Thom McCann, and Gorins. A last-minute drive to J.M. Fields, Zayres, or Bradlees for the right belt or accessory may have been needed, also. We went to church and fidgeted from the uncomfortable new clothes and brand new shoes that were not broken in.

We keep those precious memories of our brothers and sisters and ourselves, all decked out in our new Easter clothes. If we are lucky, we have some black and white photos around to bring more smiles.

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1



Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week

Q: I hear that April is Fair Housing Month. Why, and what does that mean?

A: In April, we come together as a community and a nation to celebrate the anniversary of the passing of the Fair Housing Act and recommit to that goal which inspired us in the aftermath of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's assassination in 1968: to eliminate housing discrimination and create equal opportunity in every community.

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

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

To donate visit:

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

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Want to write local Somerville stories?

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and speak to the Assignment Editor

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Which month has 28 days?
All of them!

The "Original"
All Types Vent Cleaning
Restaurant Hood Cleaning
Dryer Vent/ HVAC Cleaning
Power Washing
Licensed and Insured
in Massachusetts
We travel all over
Massachusetts
Call today to find out
our weekly specials!
Call Jimmy 857-366-3761

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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Runner-up in the 2026 Ms. Pothole competition... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

April 1

- 1778 – Oliver Pollock creates the dollar sign.
- 1863 – The first wartime conscription law goes into effect in the U.S.
- 1905 – Berlin and Paris are linked by telephone.
- 1918 – England's Royal Air Force is formed.
- 1920 – Germany's Workers Party changes its name to the Nationalist Socialist German Worker's Party (Nazis).
- 1924 – Adolf Hitler sentenced to five years in prison for the "Beer Hall Putsch."
- 1928 – China's Chiang Kai-shek begins attacks on communists.
- 1929 – The yo-yo is introduced in the United States by Louie Marx.
- 1945 – U.S. forces launch invasion of Okinawa.
- 1970 – The U.S. Army charges Captain Ernest Medina for his role in the My Lai massacre.
- 1982 – The United States transfers control of the Panama Canal Zone to Panama.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

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 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.

Open Sewing Hours at West Branch Community Room, Monday, April 6, 6 – 8 p.m., 40 College Ave. Join in for an **Open Sewing Night at West**. Bring your own project and use their space and machines to work on it. Adventurous beginners welcome, but be aware this is not a sewing class and that there will be no instructor present. Questions? Email Brigid at bblack@somervillema.gov.

Attend the next **SomerWrites event at Portico Brewing, 101 South St., on April 21, 7 p.m.,** featuring an open mic and guest talk with Somerville writer **Lesley**

Bannatyne, moderated by **Somerville Arts Council Board member Sarah Beckmann**. These events are free and open to all, no matter your genre or background. Whether you have academic experience in a writing field or are simply curious to learn more about different types of writing, this space is an opportunity for you to share your work and/or network with local artists. Contact Sarah (beckmann.sarah12@gmail.com) to add your name to the open mic list, or to become a featured guest during one of these events! Questions welcome.

Attention, activist street bands! The applications for this year's **HONK! Festival** in Somerville are now open. If your band would like to be considered for this year's festival, just follow the application <https://honkfest.org/2026-festival/2026-band-application/>. This year's festival dates will be **October 8-11**.

Calling all artists age 2-18: Submit your work for the **Somerville Open Studios Kids & Teens Art Show**. Join an Open Studio to create your art on **Tuesday, April 14, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m., West Branch Library, 40 College Ave.** Art will be displayed in the **West Branch Library Atrium April 27 – May 11**. Contact **Elena** with any questions: elenaclamenart@yahoo.com.

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>. Deadline is **Wednesday, April 15**.

With Fiscal Year 2027 approaching, the **Somerville Community Preservation Committee (CPC)** is once again inviting residents to help shape the next round of CPA-funded projects through the **CPA survey** (www.bit.ly/cpasurvey2026) or by giving feedback at a virtual public hearing (www.bit.ly/cpahearing2026) on **April 22**.

Deadline extended to April 4! Modeled after the **first residential telephone in the world**, which was installed here in Somerville in 1877, the **Somerville Museum's "Let Freedom Ring" public art project** celebrates lesser-known sites in Somerville where freedoms were fought. Artists are invited to pick up and paint a 3D printed replica of the first residential telephone, inspired by one of the historical sites. Information provided. This project is funded by an MA250 grant from the **Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism**. Learn more and apply at www.somervillemuseum.org/freedom.

The **Somerville Arts Council** is pleased to announce the **March Artist of the Month, Barbara Mangum**, an art conservator and long-time board member of the **Somerville Museum**. Read the full interview here: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/aotm/2026/barbara-mangum/>.

Sign up for the city's **Mobility Newsletter**. The **Mobility Division** works every day to fulfill the city's **Vision Zero commitment** to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries from our transportation system by making our streets safer and more

accessible for people of all ages and abilities. Learn more about what the **Mobility Division** does and keep up with current projects by signing up for their newsletter <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/mobility>.

For anyone **in need of food resources**, go to the **Somerville Food Coalition's website**: www.https://bit.ly/4ocJ6NB. Free local pantries, community meals, community fridges, and more. Find more information at <https://www.somervillema.gov/snap>. Here are some locations where you can find free food: **Somerville's Community Fridges** can be found at 35 Prospect St., **Elizabeth Peabody House, 275-277 Broadway, St. Clements**, across from 29 St. Clements Road. Donations are welcome at these locations.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our **Arts Editor, Doug Holder**, for setting up a **GoFundMe campaign for The Somerville Times**. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely thank all who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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.

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

Captain Christie was already in command of six boats (submarines) in the Atlantic Ocean waters. They were on full war-time footing. After Pearl Harbor, he and his boats were ordered to Australia. They were to set up bases, patrol Southern Pacific harbors, and attack enemy ships, which they accomplished. While commanding Taskforce Forty-two, his boats sank thirty ships, 181,800 tons, and damaged 20 more. Within a year, he was promoted to Rear Admiral and Commander of submarines in the South Pacific.

During the early months of combat, many captains reported misfires or duds with their torpedo shots. Because he had been involved in early torpedo research, this bothered him. It took some time, but the problems were finally corrected. Admiral Christie was the highest-ranking Flag Officer to engage in actual submarine war-time patrols. He joined one of them on the tail end of an epic patrol. The boat's name was "The Harder," commanded by Captain Samuel Dealey of Texas, who had sunk three Japanese destroyers on that fifth mis-

sion. Later, the Harder and its crew were lost on their sixth mission. At Admiral Christie's urging, Captain Dealey was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

Not all torpedoes were launched from submarines. Some were dropped from planes, and some were launched from P.T. (patrol torpedo) boats, such as former Lieutenant John F. Kennedy's PT-109. Kennedy went on to Congress representing the Somerville area before becoming President. "Dealey Plaza," in Dallas, Texas, is the site of the former President's assass-

ination. It is named after newspaper publisher George Dealey, the uncle of Submarine Captain Sam Dealey.

During his career, Vice Admiral Ralph Waldo Christie received many honors and awards. Among them were the Navy's Distinguished Service Medal, the Navy's Legion of Merit, and the Army's Silver Star for gallantry in action while serving as Commander of Submarines in the Seventh Fleet. The Silver Star medal was presented to him by General Douglas MacArthur.



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Poet Wyn Cooper's new book explores 'an island of pain in a sea of indifference'

Recently, I caught up with poet Wyn Cooper, a former Somerville resident, to talk about his new collection of poetry, *The Unraveling*.

Wyn Cooper has published five books of poetry, including, most recently, *Mars Poetica*.

His sixth book, *The Unraveling*, will appear in May 2026. His poems, stories, essays, and reviews have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *AGNI*, *The Southern Review*, *Five Points*, *Slate*, and more than 100 other magazines. His poems are included in 25 anthologies of contemporary poetry, including *A Century of Poetry in The New Yorker*, *Poetry: An Introduction*, and *The Mercury Reader*. His first novel, *Way Out West*, was published by Concord Free Press in 2023.

In 1993, *Fun*, a poem from his first book, was turned into Sheryl Crow's Grammy-winning song *All I Wanna Do*. He has also co-written songs with David Broza, David Baerwald, Jody Redhage, and Bill Bottrell. In 2003, Gaff Music released *Forty Words for Fear*, a CD of songs based on poems and lyrics by Cooper, set to music and sung by the novelist Madison Smartt Bell. Their second CD, *Postcards Out of the Blue*, based in part on Cooper's postcard poems, was released in 2008. Their songs have been featured on six television shows.

Cooper has taught at the University of Utah, Bennington College, Marlboro College, and The Frost Place. He has given readings across the country, as well as in Europe and South America. He is a former editor of *Quarterly West* and the recipient of a fellowship from the Ucross Foundation. For two years, he worked at the Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute, a think tank run by the Poetry Foundation. He lives in Vermont and Massachusetts and works as a freelance editor. His website is www.wyncooper.com.

Doug Holder: *The Unraveling*, your new book of poetry, is a perfect heading for the state we are in. As Yeats wrote, "Turning and turning in the widening gyre The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world." Your take?

Wyn Cooper: I wrote these poems over a six-year

She will never be that small again—
how she clung to my hair
over ridge and rock.
How I set her down sweaty
at the end,



period with no theme in mind, no narrative arc. Even after it was accepted two years ago, I couldn't see how the poems were related, except that some were reactions to the pandemic, and some were indirectly about the end of a long marriage. Even the title was different. In my attempt to replace that title with one I liked, I came up with over a hundred of them, and created a small focus group of Cambridge poets who were kind enough to read the ms and react to the titles I came up with. None of them was compelling or sufficiently able to summarize the collection. I finally realized that the majority of the poems described different kinds of unraveling – of human relationships, of the effects of the pandemic, and of the state of both our country and the world. The center simply wasn't holding.

DH: I am glad that you have a poem about Somerville Ave., my neck of the woods. I have written about the Ave before, noting its twists and turns with the Boston skyline in the distance. It is a very urban sprawl of an avenue. But in spite of the grittiness of the street, you put angelic, yellow *Continued on page 15*

a slice of my soul left in that parking lot.

I can see myself returning to that trail
someday, when she is grown and gone,
with no daughters left to carry.

— Trapper Markelz

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Trapper Markelz (he/him) writes from Arlington, Massachusetts. He is the author of the chapbooks *Child-proof Sky* (Cherry Dress, 2023) and *Off To War, Daughter* (Rockwood Press, 2026). His work has appeared in the journals *Baltimore Review*, *Passengers Journal*, *Pine Row Press*, *Wild Roof Journal*, *The Dewdrop*, and *Poetry Online*, among others. Learn more at trappermarkelz.com.



No Daughters Left to Carry

I hiked on a summer day with my daughter
up a rock pile. We stepped to the summit
after tiny hands scrambled on shale
to read a sea of green from a lumber perch.

It was then I learned she wasn't wearing
any socks. A mile of mountain and a mile
of blisters to go with it. I'd like to think
my bedside manner got the best of me that day,

but in stoic silence, I hoisted her
upon my shoulders to carry her down.
Over each root and almost rolled ankle,
I built a stitch of restive irritation
I wish to un-remember.

But memory is a funny thing. I asked her,
years later, what do you remember?
Your pain? My frustration?
The downward inertia
of our descending silence?

But she remembers the road
we did not take, the cliff and its edge,
the tin roof diner with booths
and craft root beer.

Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 14

monarchs at the end. Does hope spring eternal?

WC: I lived on the Somerville side of Porter Square for a decade, and would often walk down the avenue toward Boston. I always found it to be a more meditative journey than my walks in other directions. I like to think that the poems in this book, like the poem you refer to, describe a world that's unraveling, but a world that can also provide hope because of the people in it who don't give up. There's beauty peeking out from the chaos, and simply walking down the avenue provides an example of that.

DH: How do you come up with ideas for your poems? What is the process?

WC: I think most of my poems come out of my unconscious, because I never ever sit down to write a poem "about" something. I just play with language until thoughts and eventually lines and sentences form, and trust that my unconscious is doing the work. It's like our dreams: where on earth do they come from?

In my poem *Chronic* I used a quote from Freud to focus me – he wrote that his experience of cancer was like "an island of pain in a sea of indifference."

DH: Could you have written this book when you were young?

WC: My first book, *The Country of Here Below*, came

out when I was 30, and it was fairly dark, but it reflected a world much different than the world we live in now. My mindset, however, was not all that different. Maybe I need to grow up!

DH: Why should we read this book?

WC: Despite the subject matter and the fact that the book's title wouldn't lead a reader to expect hope, I think readers will find that there is hope here. In a larger sense, I think the fact that there are so many poets who continue to spend countless hours on poems that attempt to understand our hearts and minds is a miracle, and I think miracles are always hopeful by definition.

Somerville Avenue

Entering the atmosphere
the beat of wings grows louder,
the wings not wings but wonders
as speakers hung from streetlights carol
Hark! the herald angels sing.

Jets lift off from Logan, their contrails
parallel in late Atlantic light,
hark the angels serving cocktails

who herald flight so brightly.

This checkerboard street
steers cars southeast, toward
Brahmin vistas that harken back
to cows on the Common.

Underpasses pass by sign-holding men
who seek alms with palms turned weary
from weather; the cars pass quickly.

Flags flap half-mast in wind that smells
of Portuguese barbeque
no longer on the menu,
the lounge closed for repairs.

But hark! the yellow monarchs,
their wings a spotted map
that waves to angels brightly—
their presence heralds spring

and neverending rain.

— Wyn Cooper

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