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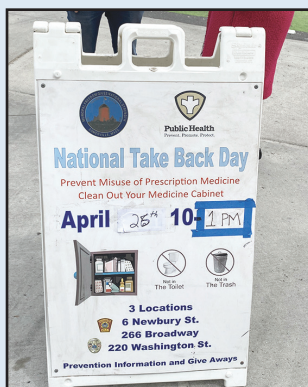
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Firefighters express qualms with traffic calming devices



Representatives from the Somerville Fire Department expressed concerns to the City Council over traffic calming measures implemented by the city.

By Harry Kane

Traffic calming devices are adversely affecting fire engines and fire trucks, says Mike Jefferson, President of the Somerville Firefighters Local 76, who addressed the City Council on April 23 with concerns.

"[There are] hundreds of speed bumps, flex posts, raised crosswalks, across the city," said Jefferson. "The studies show that one speed bump can delay a fire response by 3 to 10 seconds."

As a result of these traffic calming devices, the response times are slower, impacting travel times to medical emergencies or fires that could make the difference in saving lives.

Fire engines, on average, weigh 36,000 pounds and cost \$1 million. A ladder truck, on

Continued on page 4

The Traveling Prints

Local artist repurposes a vending machine to dispense prints

By Christa Lee

If you've ever lined up quarters in a machine to buy stickers, then you might get pleasant flashbacks using the Art Vending Machine, now in Bow Market as of April 12.

Jamie Ferguson, the artist and creator, has filled the machine with art prints based on her photography of the Boston area for the nominal fee of 5 quarters, or \$1.25. Her art prints include photography of Fenway Park, the Citgo sign, and the "Make Way for Ducklings" sculpture by Nancy Schön.

"I started this project at the beginning of 2024 after about six months of running a mail club for art prints," wrote Jamie in an email. She realized that it was offering "people access to art at an affordable price point" and set out to pursue it as a project.

She looked for and found a used



Jamie Ferguson's art prints are currently being dispensed by vending machine at Bow Market in Somerville.

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YUM 2026: A Taste of Immigrant City, Wednesday, April 29, 6 p.m., Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave. Celebrate the unique flavors of Somerville's immigrant-owned restaurants. Since 2010, **The Welcome Project** has brought together food, community, and advocacy at YUM: A Taste of Immigrant City – an annual night of fun and fundraising for programs that benefit immigrants in Somerville and Greater Boston. <https://www.welcomeproject.org/yum2026>.

The City of Somerville's Office of Emergency Management and Health and Human Services Department invite warming center neighbors, clients, and community members to attend a community listening session on **Thursday, April 30, at Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.)** from 6 to 7 p.m. Attendees will get a recap of the 2025-26 season, hear uplifting stories, and have the opportunity to give feedback.

To those celebrating their birthdays this week: Happy birthday to **Aida Sousa-Braga**, who celebrates this week. Happy birthday this week to **Linda Beebe**, who is celebrating this week. We hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to **Beverly Childers** this week. We hope she has a great celebration. Happy birthday to **Dennis Sullivan**. We wish him a great birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Dom Panzino, Chris Lavelli, Joseph DeSousa, Rose Lister, Mike Morrison, Holly Simione,** *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of April 29 – May 5 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday <i>April 29</i>	Cloudy	56°/45°	21%	12%	NE 11 mph
Thursday <i>April 30</i>	Rain	55°/43°	80%	61%	N 9 mph
Friday <i>May 1</i>	Partly Cloudy	57°/40°	6%	2%	WNW 12 mph
Saturday <i>May 2</i>	Partly Cloudy	56°/45°	11%	4%	WSW 11 mph
Sunday <i>May 3</i>	Partly Cloudy	53°/41°	12%	4%	N 10 mph
Monday <i>May 4</i>	Cloudy	64°/45°	22%	13%	SW 12 mph
Tuesday <i>May 5</i>	Partly Cloudy	66°/50°	20%	11%	SW 14 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: **Our Roads Are Getting Fixed But Our Schools Are Facing Cuts**

TheoNa says:

Before crying wolf, the first thing that should happen is the audit that the voters approved.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

The Somerville Times

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Dorothy Dimarzo, Bob Doherty
Photographer: Claudia Ferro*

The Somerville Times is published every Wednesday

A proud member of the following newspaper organizations:



Local preschool seeking a teacher

The Kingdom Rock Children's Village, an early childhood daycare center for children from infants to age 5, wants to hire a lead teacher for one of its classes.

Qualifications required: Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, or related field; ECE teacher certification or qualification; and at least 1-2 years of experience as a pre-school Lead Teacher or Co-teacher.

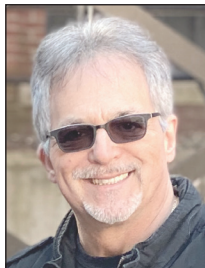
KRCV is located at 10 Winslow Avenue, Somerville, near Davis Square. For more information, see www.KingdomRockcv.org and contact the Director, Stacie Clayton.



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.

Hippies



In May of 1971, there was to be a huge anti-war demonstration in Washington DC.

I was a 16-year-old hippie with the hair, the beads, and the bell-bottoms. I had made friends with a bunch of people from Harvard Square, and one of the guys was driving his Volkswagen bus to the demonstration. I decided that I had to go because of my deep beliefs against the war in Vietnam. But my problem was, what was I going to tell my parents? They would definitely not let me go. But I went anyway, and I was gone for two days.

I can't explain the feeling of camaraderie with the thousands of people on the Washington Mall. And I remember every time I saw a TV camera, I would turn and hide my face in case my parents were watching at home. I can't even remember the lie I told him to explain why I wasn't gonna be around, but I'm sure it was a whopper.

The ride to Washington in the Volkswagen bus was memorable. At one point, we were passing around homemade peanut butter, which was delicious. It was only missing two things: moisture and flavor. But we still ate it.

A couple of years ago, I reconnected with the driver of the Volkswagen bus, my friend Bob. We talked about getting together, as it had been 50 years since I saw him. I'm sure we could have a few laughs together about that weekend.

I probably told my parents I was going to spend the weekend with the imaginary family I invented. They were the Kelsos, and my mother never even checked to see if they were real people. Mom trusted me!

12,000 people were arrested that weekend. I was lucky. I'll never forget the chanting and the excitement of the thousands and thousands of protesters. I really felt like I was doing something worthwhile.

If I weren't born with that Somerville spirit, that do-or-die conviction, then I



would never have this great memory today. I'd like to think that I still have that sense of adventure, even though the places I visit

most are in front of my television. And one last thing, once a hippie, always a hippie! Right on!

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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: What is a Backdoor Roth IRA conversion — and how can it help my finances?

A: A Backdoor Roth IRA is a personal financial strategy that typically involves making a non-deductible contribution to a Traditional IRA and then converting those funds into a Roth IRA. This approach can allow you to build Roth retirement assets even when normal income limits or direct contribution restrictions would otherwise prevent it.

Here are some of the main advantages:

♦ **Roth IRAs offer tax-free growth.**

Once funds are inside a Roth IRA, qualified withdrawals are generally tax-free.

♦ **Roth IRAs do not require Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs).**

Unlike Traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs generally do not force withdrawals later in life, giving you more retirement flexibility.

♦ **Taxes and IRA structure matter.**

Pre-tax IRA funds converted to Roth are generally taxed as ordinary income, and if you hold multiple IRA types, the IRS usually calculates taxation based on your combined IRA balances rather than isolating only one account.

Bottom Line:

A Backdoor Roth IRA can be a powerful

long-term tax planning strategy, helping you build tax-free retirement income, reduce future RMD concerns, and create greater financial flexibility. However, careful planning is essential to manage taxes properly and avoid unexpected consequences.

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.



Firefighters express qualms with traffic calming devices

CONT. FROM PG 1

average, weighs 70,000 pounds and costs \$2 million. There are 10 fire companies in Somerville, including 6 engines, 3 ladder trucks, and a heavy rescue. In 2025, the companies had almost 16,000 calls.

Jefferson says the specialized vehicles or fire truck apparatus are not designed to constantly speed up and slow down, and go over humps or over flex posts. This is resulting in wear and tear on the suspension, brakes, and alignment on the trucks.

"Apparatus are being exposed to thousands and thousands of contacts with traffic calming devices a year, responding to emergencies," said Jefferson. "The toll it is taking on our fleet is unprecedented."

Flex Posts are extensively used in Somerville as part of the city's Quick-Build proj-

ects and Vision Zero action plan. The plastic barriers protect cyclists and discourage illegal parking by narrowing lanes as an affordable traffic safety method for improving traffic problems.

"Flex posts are ripping lines from under our trucks. They are wreaking havoc on the undercarriage of our vehicles," said Jefferson. "It has become a nightmare to traverse these streets in our trucks over the past few years."

Jefferson explained that sometimes motorists mow down flex posts when getting out of the way of emergency responders.

The city has spent millions of dollars on apparatus for fire companies in Somerville, he said, urging city officials to make updates on roads to protect their investments.

The men and women who drive the trucks have provided input and have a firsthand perspective of the adverse effects the streets are causing to the trucks, and the increased difficulty of navigating through the city, he explained.

Jefferson acknowledged all the hard work the mechanics have done servicing and maintaining their fleet, and said the rapid rate at which trucks are going out-of-service may be a result of these traffic calming devices.

"There needs to be more consideration for our fire apparatus, and the men and women of the Somerville Fire Department, when drastic changes are being made to our city streets," he said.

"It's hard to hear this," said City Councilor At Large Ben Wheeler. He said that

the city needs to take more perspectives into account. "I really hope that we are going to make a shift to really taking this information as part of what is informing our decisions about our streetscaping, moving forward."

Ward 4 City Councilor Jesse Clingan said he struggles with the balance between street safety for pedestrians and motorists and assisting in public safety by the fire department.

"In an urban city like this, and the amount of calls they get...the wear and tear that it's putting on the trucks is definitely something we need to consider," said Councilor Clingan.

The item was referred to the Public Health and Public Safety Committee for discussion.

The Traveling Prints

CONT. FROM PG 1

vending machine on eBay, repaired it, and made it her own. It's since been sent on a tour starting at the Cantab Lounge and Brookline Booksmith in 2024, then on to Porter Square Books: Boston Edition in 2025.

"The vending machine concept really aligned with my vision of making art fun and accessible for people, and the undertaking of turning a broken old machine into something beautiful felt like a really fun challenge," said Jamie. The Art Vending Machine will be bringing its vintage and artistic joy to Bow Market through the spring.



Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

World Cup fans revel in expanded bar hours

By Harry Kane

Soccer fans in Somerville will be happy to hear that they will be allowed to stay at bars or restaurants until the end of matches during the 2026 International FIFA World Cup event.

The Somerville Licensing Commission sanctioned a citywide initiative that will allow establishments with an alcoholic beverages license to opt in at no cost to extend operating hours from 9 a.m. until 3 a.m. during the World Cup.

“This is a privilege that the City of Somerville will grant,” said Licensing Commission Chair Joseph P. Lynch, adding that establishments can apply for a permit by contacting the City Clerk’s office with the dates they want operating hours extended.

The World Cup will be conducted in three North American countries – Canada, Mexico, and the United States – and will take place from June 11 through July 19.

Somerville Police Department Captain Diogo DeOliveira said he was excited for

the World Cup, but the department wants the residents of Somerville to be safe. He relayed the concerns held by Chief Shumeane Benford from a public health and public safety perspective.

“An event of this magnitude will attract so many spectators, on foot, via motor vehicles; we would have to be prepared and have extra officers on staff,” said DeOliveira.

Lynch answered by explaining that there will be conditions and guidelines sent to approved applicants who opt in for a permit to extend operating hours. Last call for alcohol service will still be at 2 a.m.

“It is essential that all permit holders remain mindful of local regulations and community impact,” said Lynch.

Lynch explained that excessive noise, over-serving patrons, underage alcohol consumption, or loitering outside establishments will result in the revocation of the special permit.

Outdoor televisions or screens are not allowed to be used for broadcasting the matches, according to the Licensing



The Somerville Licensing Commission is extending the hours that bars can remain open during the FIFA World Cup games.

Commission.

“If I get woken up at 2 a.m. by the Somerville Police Department, who says we have a little bit of an issue down here at XYZ, my determination will be, take the recommendation from the police depart-

ment - shut it down,” said Lynch.

Lynch went on to say that the Licensing Commission is “not puritanical” and they are “giving the patrons a little extra time to 3:30, to then clear out in a very orderly way. This is a test for all of our licensees.”

Somerville's Spring Cleanup

On Saturday, April 25, community members across all seven wards joined their ward’s Spring Cleanup, the first major activation of the city’s Year of the Neighbor initiative, a yearlong push to strengthen connections, build community, and tap into each individual’s ability to have a positive impact across Somerville. Residents joined their neighbors, local elected officials, DPW, and community groups to spruce up streets, parks, and public spaces. Go to www.thesomervilletimes.com to see more photos.



— Photo by Bobbie Toner



— Photo courtesy of Devon Moos Photography



— Photo courtesy of Will Mbah



— Photo by Bobbie Toner



— Photo courtesy of Devon Moos Photography



— Photo courtesy of Will Mbah

COMMENTARY

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The future of Somerville's residential neighborhoods??

By Bill White

Last week, *The Somerville Times* published an article about some proposed zoning amendments that I had filed with the City of Somerville. I received some requests from folks about the proposals and whether I had any photographs that showed my concerns. I figured that it made sense for me to ask *The Somerville Times* to publish the following two photographs, as they dramatically show the concerns that I have.

Basically, photo #1 shows the four buildings that any developer can build on a lot that is larger than 6000 square feet because they can get a lot split from the City of Somerville. For lots less than that, they can build two buildings, the one in the front and the one in the back.

Photo #2 shows the ongoing construction on the front three-story condominium and the rear condominium. These

photos demonstrate just how large the buildings will become. If you would not like to see Somerville's residential neighborhoods filled up like this, then you should send comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov.



Photo#2.



Photo#1.

DeRATification Week taking on Somerville rats

As rodent activity increases with warmer weather, Somerville is launching a push to help the community prevent and address rat activity. DeRATification Week, running April 27 through May 3, combines new tools and clearer guidance, making it easier for Somerville to make life harder for the rats.

"Rats are tough and scrappy, but so is Somerville," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "DeRATification Week is about giving residents the tools and know-how to hit rats where it hurts. When we do the basics right, rats lose their edge."

The campaign will highlight practical steps residents and businesses can take while improving access to the tools and resources the city provides.

"In a city like Somerville, where many residents are renters, education matters—for landlords and tenants alike," said Ward 4 City Councilor Jesse Clingan. "Tenants are often the first to spot issues, and property owners need to act quickly. When everyone does their part, we make real progress. I'm grateful to the Wilson administration for leading this practical, citywide effort."

What to Expect During DeRATification

Week

During DeRATification Week, the city will focus on providing straightforward, accessible ways for residents and businesses to tackle rodent activity.

Key resources and activities include:

Online Rodent Service Request System

- Request a free City property inspection for evidence of rodents and, if needed, free rodent control services, including placement of Terad3 bait boxes and burrow treatments. City inspectors will also share tailored recommendations to help prevent future rodent activity. Request a property inspection today.

- Want to show your property is helping take on the rats? Participating properties also receive a free yard sign encouraging neighbors to join the City's DeRATification effort.

Updated SMART Box Dashboard

- Residents can now view an updated public SMART Box map showing where city-owned smart traps are deployed and where activity is being detected. The dashboard offers greater visibility into ongoing mitigation efforts and shows how data is guiding targeted response citywide.

Redesigned Rodent Control Webpage



- A revamped somervillema.gov/rats provides an improved user experience, with updated city resources, prevention tips, and a multilingual resource library.

Throughout the week, the city will be rolling out the DeRATification video series, sharing tips and resources to stop rats in their tracks. Stay tuned to somervillema.gov/rats and follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and Bluesky to watch the latest.

- Walk & Talk with Mayor Wilson (video)

Join Mayor Wilson and Somerville's rat czar on a walk through Union Square to learn how to spot early signs of rodent activity – and shut it down before it spreads.

- Containerization in Action (video)

A look at how a Somerville resident has successfully containerized their trash, with practical tips on how better storage cuts off one of rats' favorite things: easy food access.

- BurrowRx Demonstration (video)

See one of the city's key rodent mitigation tools in action and how targeted treatments reduce burrow activity at the source.

Help DeRATify Somerville

DeRATification Week emphasizes practical steps residents and businesses can take right away:

- Store trash in sealed, secure containers
- Eliminate food sources and clutter
- Report rodent activity early
- Maintain properties to prevent burrowing

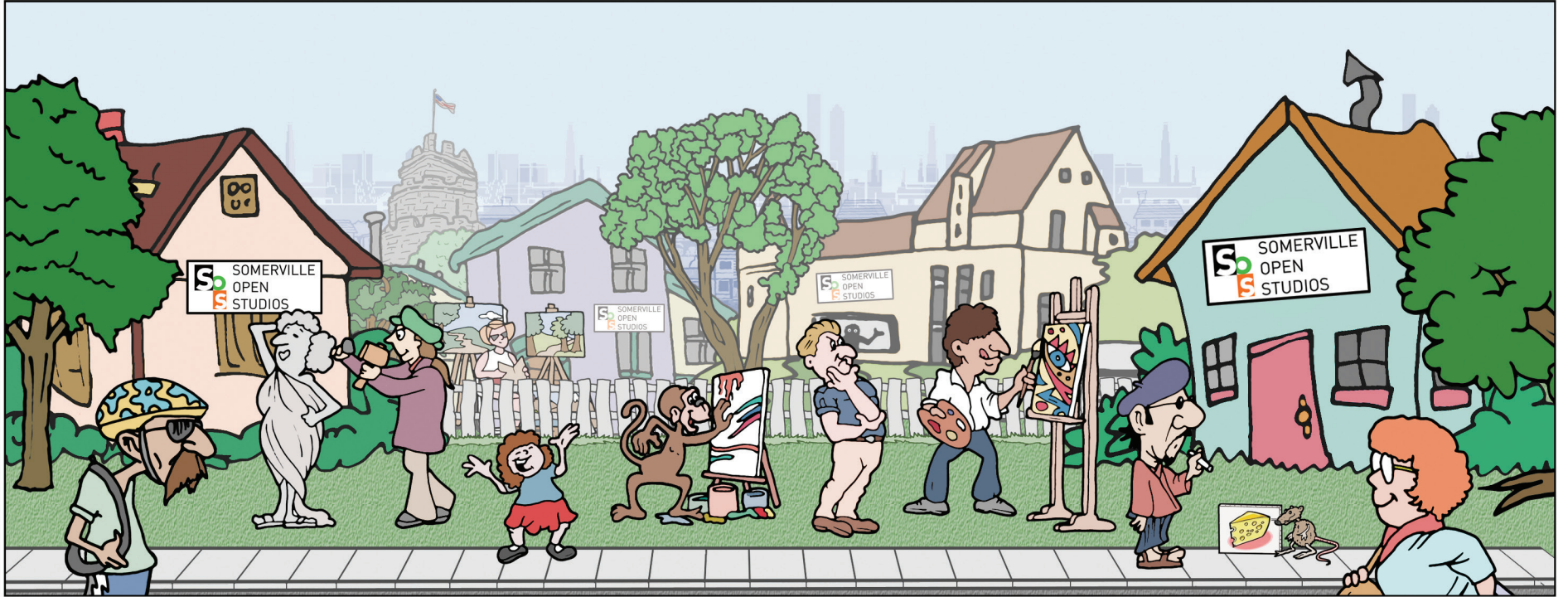
Rodent control is a shared effort between the city, property owners, tenants, and businesses. DeRATification Week is about making it easier for everyone to do their part, and harder for rats to stick around.

For more information and updates, visit somervillema.gov/rats.

COMMENTARY

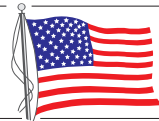
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Somerville Open Studios has something of interest for everyone.

Our View Of The Times



One thing can be said for sure about our great city: there is no want for creative energy and enterprise.

Consider all the wonderful artists who will be participating in this weekend's Somerville Open Studios (SOS) event. Artisans and crafters of seemingly limitless disciplines and choice of media work and thrive right here among us humble, regular types who wouldn't know a palette

knife from a chainsaw.

That's the nicest part of it. Events like SOS give all of us an opportunity to peek in and observe how these creative types work and live. Whether one is knowledgeable or a newbie, there always seems to be a welcoming spirit that prevails throughout the course of the event.

And it's not just about being a voyeur or casual observer either. There are also

plenty of opportunities to "get one's hands dirty" while dabbling in a particular medium for the first time, while taking part in an instructional demonstration.

And, of course, there is also the possibility of making an inspired purchase and adding something new to one's treasure trove of original artwork.

SOS represents the city at its best in many ways. Sharp, creative minds opening

up and reaching out to the community at large, while the people who make up that community reciprocate in kind, sharing their sense of appreciation for what these artists manage to accomplish.

Open Studios 2026 will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 2 – 3, from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. each day. Check out this year's event at <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org>.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

George Sharpe, Charlotte Scanzillo Perkins, Ginny Atwater, Linda Beebe, Barb Balkwill, G.P. Redmond, and Claire D'Anna a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

This year's **SOS fashion show** will once again be held at the **Crystal Ballroom** in Davis Square on **Thursday, April 30**. The Crystal Ballroom is directly above the **Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Sq.** Doors open at 6 p.m. for cocktail hour, with the show beginning at 7 p.m. Seating is first-come, first-served. The venue will have a

full bar and runway seating. The event is free for the public to view original textile art by Somerville artists.

The **27th Annual Somerville Open Studios** takes place this weekend, **May 2 – 3**. Explore artists' studios and meet more than 430 visual artists living and working in Somerville during our annual open studio weekend and other events. For a full schedule, visit <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org/>.

Do less this spring, and do more for your pollinator neighbors. **Wait to clean up your yard until May 1**. Many insects

are still dormant in early spring and may have taken up winter residence in fallen leaves and the hollow stems of plants. Let flowers bloom in your lawn by waiting to mow until June. In early spring, flowers with nectar are still hard to find. To learn more about Somerville pollinators, why they matter to us, and how to help them, check out our **Somerville Pollinator Action Plan** at <https://bit.ly/SPAPlan>.

SustainaVille Week takes place, **May 2-8**. Participate in Somerville's annual week-long series of free events and workshops showcasing the city's climate progress, creativity, and goals and sharing use-

ful tips and information. Events kick off with a community **block party** on Mossland St. on **Saturday, May 2**, from 1 to 4 p.m. Interested in seeing energy efficiency retrofits in Somerville? Visit several open houses, speak to homeowners and professionals to learn from your neighbors. In collaboration with **Mothers Out Front**, **Sunday, May 3**, 1 – 4 p.m. For locations and more information, visit www.somervillema.gov/sustainavilleweek

Please join **Somerville Media Center** in honoring former Mayor **Joe Curtatone** with our **Public Service Award** on **Thursday, June 4**, *Continued on page 13*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1020

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. What race is known as "The Run for the Roses"? | 7. What is the 5th decimal digit of pi? |
| 2. From what age can someone become a jockey? | 8. Bananas are a herb distantly related to what other food item? |
| 3. What draft pick was Tom Brady selected in the 2000 NFL Draft? | 9. What is the most stolen food in the world? |
| 4. What animal was trained to tell the difference between Monet and Picasso? | 10. The Samurai were warriors in which Asian country? |
| 5. What animal is constitutionally protected in Florida? | 11. What instrument did John Lennon receive when he was seven years old? |
| 6. President Coolidge played what prank on the Secret Service? | 12. What was the first Disney movie to be directed by a woman? |

Answers on page 13

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The average person has four to six dreams a night.
2. It's possible to turn peanut butter into diamonds.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

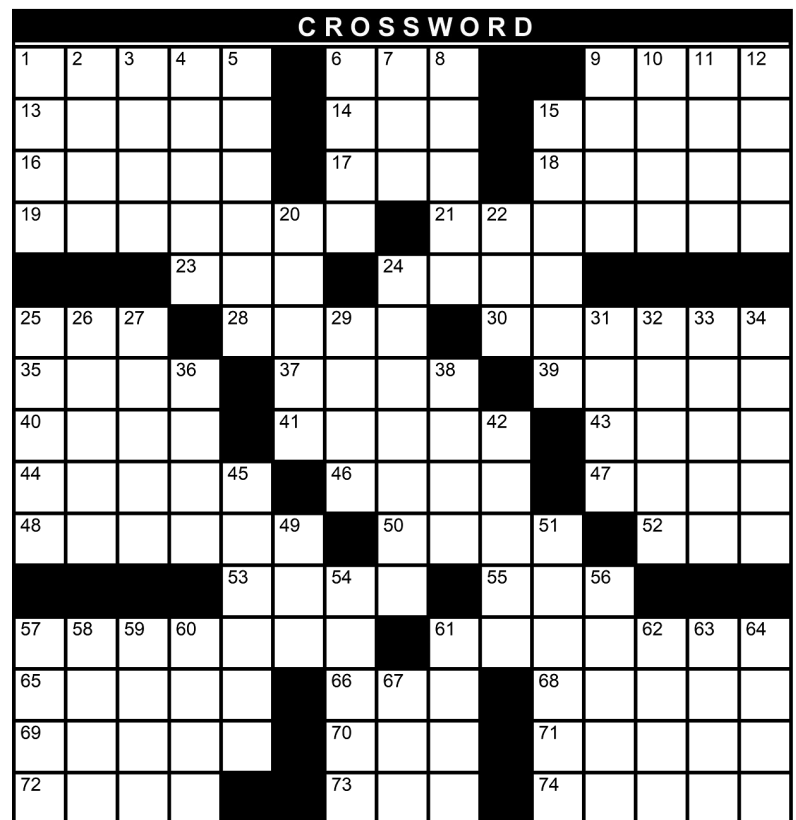
TV MOMS

ACROSS

1. Ionic and Corinthian predecessor
6. Good times
9. AI fodder
13. Offer two cents
14. Doctor Dolittle, e.g.
15. Interior designer's concern
16. Not fiction, pl.
17. Big head
18. Fear-inspiring
19. "Good Times" mom
21. "The Sopranos" mom
23. Possessive pronoun
24. Gumbo pod
25. Protrude
28. Catcher's catcher
30. Marvelous Midge Maisel's first name
35. "Metamorphoses" poet
37. Chows down
39. Millionaire maker
40. Time for eggnog
41. Sure sign of fire
43. "Frasier" actress Gilpin
44. TSA PreCheck alternative
46. Mosque V.I.P.
47. Arabian bigwig
48. Received salary
50. At the apex
52. Masseuse's office
53. "Where the Red ____ Grows"
55. Likewise
57. "Arrested Development" mom
61. "Fresh off the Boat" mom
65. Circumvent
66. French vineyard
68. Open disrespect
69. Dewey Decimal System, e.g.
70. 252-gallon cask
71. Cause anxiety (2 words)
72. Back talk
73. Extra point
74. Vanish without this

DOWN

1. Take of a hat, e.g.
2. Traditional October birthstone
3. Puerto follower
4. Opening, colloquially
5. #55 on periodic table
6. Part of an eye
7. "Married with Children" mom
8. Investor's asset
9. Hold as a conviction
10. Unit of land often featuring a home
11. Load sixteen tons, e.g.
12. Geometry calculation
15. Divert from course
20. Between washes and styles
22. Casino's pull
24. Foot rest
25. "Stranger Things" mom
26. Throat dangler
27. Mosaic artist
29. "Friday Night Lights" mom
31. Tug-of-War gear
32. List entries
33. Like anchor aweigh
34. "Schitt's Creek" mom
36. Martin of Rat Pack
38. 3-handed card game
42. Bring character to life
45. Response to stimulus
49. Ctrl+Alt+____
51. Lemony cream dessert
54. Right-hand page
56. Academy Award
57. Orchid garlands
58. Forearm bone
59. Cow chow, pl.
60. "Beware the ____ of March"
61. "The Handmaid's Tale" mom
62. Letter before kappa
63. Nile dweller, for short
64. Writer Rice
67. ____-D.M.C.



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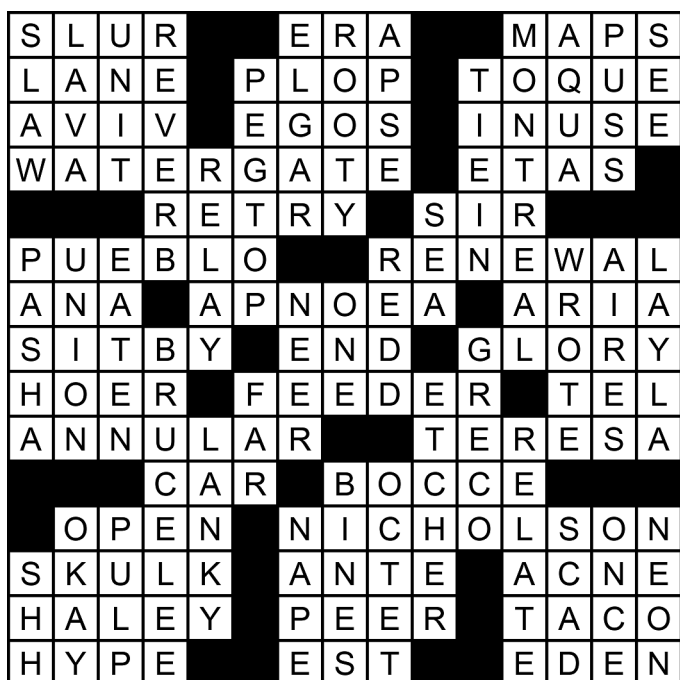
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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

On Saturday, April 25, Somerville residents participated in National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Residents were able to safely dispose of unused or expired prescription medications at two Somerville locations, Public Safety Headquarters and Teele Square Fire Station. City staff were also on-site, providing overdose prevention information and resources.



Mayor Jake Wilson stopped by the Teele Sq. site where District Attorney Marian Ryan, city staff, and members of COHR were on hand to meet with residents. — Photo by Bobbie Toner



The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #353

This article first appeared in the May 22, 2019, edition of The Somerville Times.

King of the Hills

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Somerville is said to be the City of Seven Hills, and Seven Hills Park in Davis Square highlights them. In reality, the city has fourteen hills known by twenty-eight different names. For over three centuries, Winter Hill has been the most notable.



Apparently, no one knows for sure where her name originated or how it remained. Some say she received her name from Governor Winthrop when he first wintered here on his arrival from England. Others speculate that it began in the early revolutionary era when the hill was covered with hundreds of white sailcloth tents pitched by American soldiers during their siege of Boston.



Through the years, the hill's crown has witnessed a kaleidoscope of historic occurrences.

• In 2020, Plymouth, Massachusetts, was four hundred years old. In 1621, Captain Miles Standish, military protector of the Plymouth Pilgrims, was the first European to explore this Somerville hill. For over 120 years, part of his Coat of Arms embellished our Massachusetts State Flag.

• On September 1, 1774, after disembarking from the Mystic River, 260 British troops marched *Continued on page 13*

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**INVITATION TO BID
SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
INVITES PROPOSALS FOR
DOOR REPLACEMENT AT HIGHLAND GARDEN AND BRADY TOWER
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

The Somerville Housing Authority (Awarding Authority) invites bids for the **Door Replacement Project at the Highland Garden and Brady Tower developments**, consisting of selective demolition, repairs, and installation of new exterior balcony doors at Highland Garden, and new storm doors at both Highland Gardens and Brady Tower, both of which are occupied residential developments. The estimated construction cost of this Project is \$211,059 (Base Bid only).

The Project Consists of:

Base Bid: Highland Garden ONLY - Removal and disposal of existing exterior balcony doors and associated storm doors, limited concrete repairs, installation of new fiberglass exterior balcony doors and aluminum storm doors, and joint sealants for a weather-tight installation.

Alternate No. 1: Highland Garden ONLY - Preparation and painting of railings, steel supports and ceiling of balconies, and painting of walls and trim around balcony windows and doors.

Alternate No. 2: Brady Tower ONLY - Removal and disposal of existing balcony storm doors, limited concrete repairs, installation of new aluminum storm doors.

Alternate No. 3: Brady Tower ONLY - Preparation and painting of railings, steel supports and ceiling of balconies and the main entrance, and painting of walls and trim around balcony windows and doors.

General Bidders shall be DCAMM certified in "DOORS AND WINDOWS" and the Filed Sub-Bidder shall be certified eligible in the DCAMM Filed Sub-Bid category of 'PAINTING' for work included in Add Alternates, as described in the Contract Documents.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents are available online after **Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 2:00 PM** at www.Projectdog.com. Enter Project Code **874338** in the project locator box and select "Acquire Documents" to download documents. All plan holders must have an active online account on www.Projectdog.com to acquire documents and to receive project notifications.

Addenda, if issued, will be posted to the Projectdog website and shall be accompanied by e-mail notification to every individual or firm on record as having received the Contract Documents.

This project is being **Electronically Bid (E-Bid)**. All bids shall be submitted online at www.Projectdog.com. Hard copy bids will not be accepted by the Awarding Authority. Tutorials and Instructions are available online at www.Projectdog.com. For assistance, contact Projectdog Inc. at 978.499.9014.

All General Bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit in the form of a certified, cashier's or treasurer's check issued by a responsible bank or trust company made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority or a bid bond, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the value of the bid.

The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Labor and Material (Payment) Bond each in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract sum. Bonds shall be obtained from a surety licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the form shall be satisfactory to the Somerville Housing Authority. The cost of such bonds shall be included in the bid price.

Attention is directed to the Davis-Bacon Act Wage Determinations, a copy of which is included in the Contract Documents, and will be made a part of the Contract.

Bidding procedures and award of the Contract and Subcontracts shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 149, Sections 44A through 44J inclusive, of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including all current amendments; and the guidelines established by the Deputy Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Capital Assets Management (DCAMM), dated June 30, 1981.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work – Doors & Windows and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime Update Statement (Form CQ 3).

Filed sub-bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work – Painting, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime Update Statement (Form CQ 3).

A pre-bid conference will be held at **11:00 AM**, local legal time, on **Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at Highland Garden, 114 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA**. All bidders are invited to attend.

The Awarding Authority is exempt from sales and federal excise tax to the extent permitted under law. Bidders should not include such taxes in figuring or in references to any bid.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws Section 149, Sections 44A through 44L and Chapter 30, Sections 39F through 39P, are incorporated herein by reference. Any inconsistency between the Invitation to Bid, Instruction to Bidders, Bid Forms, Conditions of the Contract, and any other Contract Documents and these statutes, or any other applicable statutes, bylaws, or regulations existing on the date on which the bids are to be received, shall not be grounds for invalidating the bidding procedures, but, where required by law, such statute, bylaw, or regulation shall be deemed to govern.

The Awarding Authority reserves the right to waive any irregularities in or to reject any and all bids, if it be in the public interest to do so, and to act upon the bids and make its award in any lawful manner.

ANTICIPATED PROJECT MILESTONE SCHEDULE

Project out to bid	Wednesday, April 29, 2026
On-site Pre-Bid Meeting	Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.
Filed sub-bid Questions Due	Friday, May 8, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
Filed sub-bid Bids Due	Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
General Bid Questions Due	Friday, May 15, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
General Bids Due	Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

All questions and requests for interpretations must be submitted in writing via e-mail to parul.belsare@socotec.us

A contract is expected to be promptly awarded to the lowest responsible and eligible bidder. The construction phase is expected to commence upon the completion of the shop drawing phase, with the substantial work to be completed within 120 calendar days from Notice to Proceed. The work hours shall be as follows: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm., Saturdays with prior permission.

All bids shall remain in effect for 30 days, Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays excluded after opening of General Bids. Successful bidders shall agree to commence work and complete the Work in accordance with the dates set forth in the Bidding Documents. The Somerville Housing Authority reserves the right to award or not award the project.

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

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Parking Lot Improvements - Bryant Manor at State Aided Development: Bryant Manor (667-4) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **GCG ASSOCIATES, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to:

Removing and reconstructing existing parking lot, installation of a new dumpster pad, line striping, curbing and all other work as specified in the contract documents. Any reference to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) shall be replaced with the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA). The EOHLC Construction Handbook will still be used as referenced.

The work is estimated to cost **\$115,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 05/01/2026 at 12:00PM EDT for general bids.

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

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

General Bids will be received until **07 May 2026 at 11:00AM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

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

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

The Contractor and all subcontractors (collectively referred to as "the Contractor") agree to strive to achieve minority and women workforce participation. The Workforce Participation benchmark is set at **6.9% for women** and **15.3% for minorities**. The Workforce benchmark percentages are a **statutory** requirement under MGL c. 149 § 44A(2)(G).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: None

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

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

4/22/26, 4/29/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
RFP # 26-72**

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

Grants Management and Loan Servicing Software

The RFP package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, April 29, 2026**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:30 pm, Wednesday, May 20, 2026**.

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

Please email tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

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

4/29/26 The Somerville Times

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**SOMERVILLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING**

**THE SOMERVILLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE WILL CONDUCT
A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT'S FY2027 BUDGET**

Wednesday, May 6, 2026, AT 6:00 P.M.

In the EAST SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM-50 Cross Street

To watch the Budget Hearing live from home:

Use the following web address and choose GOVTV: www.somervillema.gov/tv

THE PUBLIC IS CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND

**Dr. Emily Ackman, Chair
Somerville School Committee**

**Leiran Biton, Vice Chair
Finance and Facilities Subcommittee**

**Dr. Rubén Carmona
Superintendent of Schools**

For questions regarding the Budget Hearing, please contact your School Committee Ward Member:

<https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-leadership/somerville-school-committee>

Budget information will be posted on the Somerville Public School website prior to the Budget hearing here:

<https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-leadership/central-administration/finance-and-facilities>

STATE-WIDE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM

PUBLIC HEARING

**THE SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL
CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING TO
DETERMINE PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL
CHOICE PROGRAM FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026, at 6:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

4/15/26, 4/29/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #26-74**

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

Healey School Classroom Renovations

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **04/29/2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **05/21/2025 4:00PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please contact PCS at Lcarroll@somervillema.gov for more information.

**Logan Carroll
Procurement Manager
Lcarroll@somervillema.gov**

4/29/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #26-67**

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

Cross Connection Control Program

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **04/29/2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **05/14/2025 2:30PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please contact PCS at Lcarroll@somervillema.gov for more information.

**Logan Carroll
Procurement Manager
Lcarroll@somervillema.gov**

4/29/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
RFP # 26-73**

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

Language Access Services

The RFP package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, April 29, 2026**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **3:00 pm, Wednesday, May 20, 2026**.

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

Please email thukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

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

4/29/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD Floor
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
RFP #S2027-02**

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

A Vendor to Provide An Enrichment Based Afterschool Program for Students in the Somerville Public Schools-at One (1) Elementary Schools for the period August 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027.

Each Proposal shall be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked "Price Proposal for Vendor Services for the Afterschool Enrichment Program" and a "Non-Price Proposal for Vendor Services for the Afterschool Enrichment Program" in accordance with the Request for Proposal and Contract Documents which may be obtained at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **April 23, 2026** between the hours of Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

All Proposals shall be filed no later than **4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, 2026** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144. Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee which may include possible interviews with the proposal finalists.

Please contact Leah Arredondo (larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us) or call 617-629-5218 to receive the proposal and register as a proposal vendor.

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**

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD Floor
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
BID #S2027-03**

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

ELA Curriculum Materials Only: Textbooks, Library Books, Consumable Materials, E-Books and Online Curriculum Materials That Align to the Massachusetts DESE ELA 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 **Tuesday, April 21, 2026 @ 10 a.m.**

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **2 p.m., Wednesday, May 6, 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**

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Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: If a person is a member of a protected class, do I HAVE to rent to them?

A: No. What you have to do is to treat them the same way as any other tenant who applies. Show them the apartment, check their references and their credit, and do not pass them over just because they are (for instance) unmarried, or Salvadoran, or veterans.

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:

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and speak to the Assignment Editor

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris

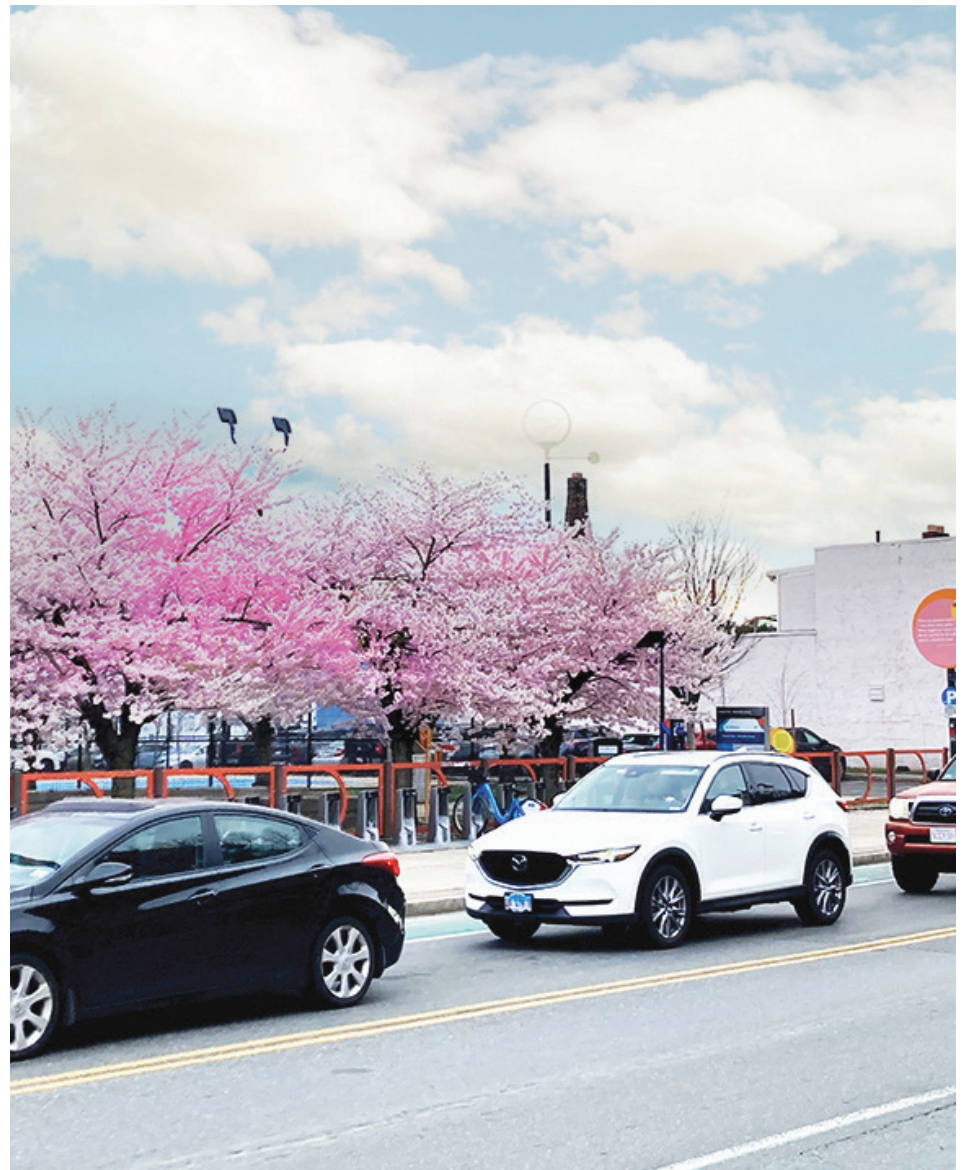


Why do hummingbirds hum?
Because they don't know the words.

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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Somerville Ave. in bloom... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

April 29

- 1429 – Joan of Arc leads French forces to victory over English at Orleans.
- 1661 – The Chinese Ming dynasty occupies Taiwan.
- 1813 – Rubber is patented.
- 1852 – The first edition of Peter Roget's Thesaurus is published.
- 1913 – Gideon Sundback of Hoboken patents the all-purpose zipper.
- 1924 – Open revolt breaks out in Santa Clara, Cuba.
- 1927 – Construction of the Spirit of St. Louis is completed.
- 1945 – The Nazi concentration camp of Dachau is liberated by Allied troops.
- 1975 – The U.S. embassy in Vietnam is evacuated as North Vietnamese forces fight their way into Saigon.
- 1983 – Harold Washington is sworn in as Chicago's first black mayor.
- 1992 – Four Los Angeles police officers are acquitted of charges stemming from the beating of Rodney King. Rioting ensues.

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Mancomunidad de Massachusetts
Tribunal de Familia y Sucesiones de Suffolk
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114

SUFFOLK Division Número de expediente SU25D2066DR

CITACIÓN DE DIVORCIO POR PUBLICACIÓN Y ENVÍO

David Alexander Echeverry Baena vs. Juan Carlos Menjivar Rivera

A la demandada:

El demandante ha presentado una demanda de divorcio solicitando que el Tribunal conceda el Divorcio por Ruptura Irremediable. La Demanda está archivada en el Tribunal.

Se ha dictado una orden de restricción automática en este asunto que le impide tomar medidas que puedan afectar negativamente a la situación financiera actual de cualquiera de las partes. **VÉASE la Regla Suplementaria 411 del Tribunal Testamentario.**

Por la presente se le convoca y se le requiere para que haga la notificación:

Kevin Patrick MacMurray, Esq.
MacMurray and Associates LLC
Two Center Plaza
Suite 605
Boston, MA 02108

su respuesta, si la hay, en o antes del 05/29/2026. Si no lo hace, el tribunal procederá a la audiencia y adjudicación de esta acción. También debe presentar una copia de su respuesta, si la hubiera, en la oficina del Registro de este Tribunal.

TESTIGO, Hon. Janine D Rivers, Primera Justicia Tribunal

Fecha: Marzo 30, 2026

Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.,
REGISTRO DE SUCESIÓN

4/29/26 The Somerville Times

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

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. The Kentucky Derby | desk |
| 2. 16 | 7.9 |
| 3. 199th | 8. Ginger |
| 4. Pigeon | 9. Cheese |
| 5. Pregnant pigs | 10. Japan |
| 6. Ringing an emergency alert bell and then hiding under his | 11. A harmonica |
| | 12. Frozen |

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

from 7 to 9 p.m. at Arts at the Armory, 119 Highland Ave, in Somerville. The celebratory evening will feature cheeses and specialty bites provided by Formaggio Kitchen and more, tasty drinks from Arts at the Armory, live music by Revolutionary Snake Ensemble, raffles, and a special presentation honoring Joe Curtatone's longstanding advocacy for community media and Somerville Media Center. Proceeds from the event will directly support SMC programs. Tickets are available online: <https://tinyurl.com/joecurtatone>

Become a **PorchFest Ambassador**. If you're familiar with Somerville, passionate about music and the arts, or have experience with events and festivals, the **Somerville Arts Council** would love to have you join the team. There are two roles available: **Zone Managers** and **Ambassadors**. Time commitments vary by role, and all volunteers receive a PorchFest t-shirt. Sign up today: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfest-ambassadors/>

Somerville High School is currently accepting **prom donations** on behalf of our senior class. We welcome attire to help make this special night accessible for all students. Monetary gifts are appreciated; however, we ask that cash donations not be given. Thank you for being so supportive in making prom a memora-

ble experience for our seniors. All donations can be dropped off at the Somerville Police Station.

Vendors are wanted for a **Flea Market** to be held at the **Somerville Community Baptist Church**, 31 College Avenue near Davis Square, on **Saturday, May 9**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Seeking vendors of items, either useful or fun, such as vintage finds, household items, toys, knick-knacks, handmade crafts, etc. It costs \$20 to rent a table. For more information or to reserve your table, contact **Heather Roderick**, hroderick32@gmail.com.

PorchFest in Somerville is back on **Saturday, May 9**. Rain or shine. West Zone 12 – 2 p.m. (West of Willow Ave), Central Zone, 2 – 4 p.m. (Willow Ave to Central St), East Zone 4 – 6 p.m. (East of Central St). Check out the map ahead of time to plan out which locations you want to visit. Somerville PorchFest is a community-powered music event where neighbors host musicians on porches across the city. Each year, thousands of residents and visitors walk, bike, and attend performances throughout the city. Severe weather and other emergencies can happen. PorchFest attendees can sign up for day-of emergency text alerts for this year's event: text **SOMPORCHES26** to 888777. Check out the website for updated information: [\[villeartscouncil.org/porchfest/\]\(http://villeartscouncil.org/porchfest/\).](http://www.somer-</p>
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Somerville community members are invited to the **"Slice of the City"** spring meet-up series. This new series of family-friendly pizza parties in the park offers attendees a new way to connect and engage with city leaders and staff, local elected officials, as well as neighbors, all while enjoying Somerville's parks. Events in each of the city's seven wards will occur **throughout the month of May** from 5 to 7 p.m. First up is in **Ward 5** on **Tuesday, May 5**, at **Trum Field Playground** (1 Franey Road). **Somerville Recreation** will host kids' activities, and refreshments and pizza will be provided. For more information and to find all event locations, visit www.somervillema.gov/slice.

Join **Union Square Main Streets** and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the **22nd Annual Union Square Farmers Market**. Shop local **Saturdays from May 9 to October 31**, except July 4 and September 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the **Union Square Plaza**. They continue to offer our SNAP matches. Check the market webpage for the latest info and to see which vendors accept SNAP. To get the latest updates about the Union Square Farmers Market, visit www.union-squaremain.org/2026-season.

Continued on page 15

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 9

over Winter Hill and on to attack the Powder House. This secret raid proved to be the dress rehearsal for the assault eight months later on Concord.

• On the eve of April 19, 1775, Paul Revere galloped over Winter Hill's 135-foot peak on his midnight ride toward Lexington.

• Two months later, on June 17, 1775, a field hospital for the Battle of Bunker Hill's wounded was formed at the summit of Winter Hill. It was organized by Revolutionary War heroine Anne Adams Tufts on her family's farm. She nursed both American soldiers and British prisoners while the site was fortified for

most of the war. Today, Anne's house at 438 Broadway is one of the city's oldest and was built from the timber of Winter Hill's Fort.

• After the 1777 American victory at Saratoga, New York, 2000 Hessians or German prisoners were brought to the Winter Hill encampment. During their stay, they brought with them the practice of Christmas trees and the game of Keg Legging, now known as bowling.

• American martyr, Captain Nathan Hale, spent the last year of his life Ranger training on Winter Hill. After volunteering to be one of General Washington's spies, he was captured by the British and executed.

The famous patriot's last words were, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

The residents of Winter Hill witnessed or were part of the British chase of Paul Revere, the Battle of Lexington that ended in Somerville, the Siege of Boston, an American training camp, and a Hessian prisoner of war camp. For over half of the eight-year Revolutionary War, Winter Hill residents suffered greatly. For the rest of the revolution, they were not called upon, but they served anyway.

Today, Winter Hill Park is a federal park and the smallest in the nation. It honors the sacrifices of those heroes.



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Poet Trapper Markelz sends his daughters 'off to war'

I contacted poet Trapper Markelz about his new collection of poetry, *Off to War, Daughter*. Trapper is on the advisory board of the New England Poetry Club.

Trapper Markelz (he/him) writes from Arlington, Massachusetts. He is the author of the chapbooks *Childproof 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

Doug Holder: You are a high-tech person. What led you to poetry?

Trapper Markelz: It is true, I've been involved in technology since a very early age. You actually get a view of this in the last poem of my book titled *Standing Ovation*, where I describe some of my earliest interactions with my grandfather about programming games in BASIC on my Laser 128 Apple-compatible computer. From there, I went on to run dial-up bulletin board systems (BBSs) out of my basement in junior high and high school, and on to the internet and websites through the 90s into online community development, ad networks, video games, healthcare, and beyond.

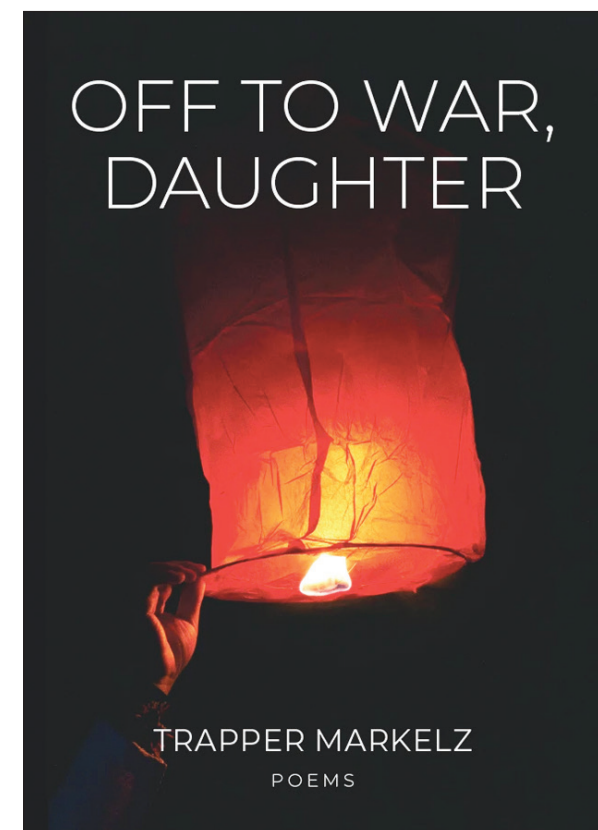
Much of the work with software and technology is writing. The code is a language. The developer and customer documentation is language. The design and technical specifications are language. The documents for running a company, fundraising, pitching, business deals, and day-to-day operations – it's all language that has to communicate not just with machines, but lots of different kinds of people.

I got into poetry pretty late. I heard an NPR episode about Jim Harrison's life in 2018 and started exploring his work. From there, the floodgates opened, and I started reading voraciously. Works included Ted Kooser, Billy Collins, Tom Hennen, Jane Hirshfield, Louise Glück, and Jane Kenyon. I got a *POETRY* subscription, as well as *Rattle*, a half dozen others, and was just reading poetry at every moment.

Growing up, it was common in my family to try new things. We value hobbies and the process of becoming curious about something, learning it, and doing it. I was just standing in the shower one day, and I killed a little bug that was crawling on the windowsill ... and a bunch of words just flashed into my mind. I jumped out of the shower and wrote them down. That was my first poem. I've been learning, writing, and submitting ever since.

DH: What is different about this collection of poetry from others that you have written?

TM: Well, it's only my second collection [*laughs*], and it continues in a theme of family. My first book,



Childproof Sky, was about the loss of my daughter, June, to AIDS in 2009 and the grief and growth that came from that. I wanted this second book to be about living in the shadow of that loss, but also how you can step into new light. When you lose a child, you live with the new reality that it can happen again. Your perspective on everything shifts. Before losing a child, you feel a bit invincible, and then that armor is ripped away in one moment, and it's easy to find yourself hesitating around every corner.

But I didn't want to live that way. This new book, *Off to War, Daughter*, is about how you can build a new kind of armor forged from moving forward—how you can get back in the arena, I guess, as Roosevelt wrote. My poem *There is Fire*, goes right at this feeling:

There is Fire

She watches orange paper lanterns
reach across the twilight pond—
one by one in a soft wind
extinguished

and submerged, except for one
single lantern
arcing away
in missing man formation

before a sudden sign of flame
pitches firefly embers
that fade in the cold,

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Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Brian Russell is an undergraduate at Endicott College in Beverly, MA.

When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade

Based on a painting at the Manninen Center for the Arts at Endicott College.



That's what everyone says, but honestly
Sometimes you just leave them on the table.

one cut open, one just sitting there,
not doing anything, still bright though.

Got the vase, the book, everything kinda set up
like it's supposed to mean something,
but really it's just there.

And the lemons just sit
sharp, real, not trying to be sweet yet.

I guess not everything has to be fixed right away.

Sometimes you just let it be what it is

until you're ready to do something with it.

— Brian Russell

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

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 13

Want to sell your goods? Applications for 2026 are now open for the **Somerville Flea**. Join them in Davis Square from **August to October**. Apply now and be a part of the action. <https://www.the-somervilleflea.com/sell>

A reminder that **yard waste pickup** began the week of April 13. Yard waste should be put out with your trash and recycling on your normal pickup day and be in either a paper bag or a trash barrel with a **"Yard Waste Only" sticker**. Get stickers free of charge at the **DPW building** (1 Franey Rd.), at the **entrance desk at City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.), or by emailing 311re-

quests@somervillema.gov.

Regular **street sweeping schedules** resumed 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).

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We would like to take this opportunity to thank our **Arts Editor, Doug Holder**, for setting up a **GoFundMe campaign** for *The Somerville Times*. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely

thank all who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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Off The Shelf

CONT. FROM PG 14

young wishes
that slip to space.

I'm watching her grow up.
Right now. By this water,
releasing lanterns

like I release her

—into the water,

the wind,
the dark,
the flame.

DH: In that poem, you have elements of fire, water, rain, etc., to describe your children's release into the world. It sounds like some Shakespearean maelstrom. Do you ever feel like King Lear at the edge – screaming against these very elements? The lurking storm ahead?

TM: [laughs] I'm not really much of a screamer, to be honest. But I was a child once. I did grow up like the rest of us. I found myself dodging my way through the shooting gallery that is life. I look back at how I made it to this moment and, wow, if it isn't a whole bunch of luck!

At the heart of that poem is an image of all these lanterns lifting off, sailing into the sky. Some were blown right back down into the water and extinguished before even starting. Others floated around and crashed into each other. Others never even lifted off. But this one lantern ... it somehow beat the odds. It lifted up and sailed away from the others. We want our kids to be that lantern.

That is probably what scares me the most, how much random chance this all is. My wife and I could do everything right, and we could still see these beacons of hope

and light extinguished. That's just something I meditate on regularly. You have to get to a place where you acknowledge it. We can't control whether the storms come and go. We just have to live through them, hope we make it to the next day, and be ok with that hope.

DH: I never had children, and your poems about your four daughters seem to be a love song, laced with fear for their future. How hard is it to let go of children?

TM: I've been so lucky, which, when you lose a child, is a real triumph to be able to say. It all starts with my amazing wife, Maureen, who is just one of the most resilient and stable people I've ever met in the world. You don't need an amazing marriage to raise amazing kids, but it sure does help. Life is a team sport, and not having to do it alone is such a gift. Having a solid foundation like that makes it a lot easier to see your kids grow and move on.

I grew up the oldest of four, and in my family, it was pretty clear that the expectation was that we were to go out into the world and make our own space. I like to think I've passed that on to my kids, and they are excited to get out there and build a life. I wouldn't say it's hard to let go. I'm excited to see them thrive and build their own life. What can be hard is when you think back to what's passed, about how challenging, but how fun those days were when they were younger and everything that has changed. But it's a joy to have lived through that and be here now watching them grow, entering new life stages, and telling new stories.

I've also been lucky to have a son, Jack, as well, the two of us smiling as all these strong women orbit around us. I'm planning my next collection around him, my Dad, and some of the other friends in my life. It's been great seeing him grow into a smart and kind young man who benefits from all these sisters! Although he might not see it that

way! [laughs] But seriously, it's a great household, and they are all a big part of my writing as I try to find a little meaning from the meaningless.

DH: You have been influenced by the poet Jim Harrison, a poet and writer who was known for his intimacy with nature ... it was his religion, so to speak. Is this true for you? What do you take from this writer?

TM: Harrison was the first poet I really connected with. I credit his work with opening the door for me to experience poetry. I was born in Alaska and grew up surrounded by nature. It's something I took for granted when I was younger because it was just all around me. But as I've grown older, I've been drawn back to places and pastimes that put me outdoors. My kids have grown up camping in New Hampshire and hiking the White Mountains. I've discovered a love of cycling down winding roads, and fishing the quiet of a pond at sunrise or sunset.

Much of what Harrison writes about are these moments that connect our small human experience to time and nature, which is so large. I also strive in my own work to connect the everyday to big ideas. He has a poem in his book *Songs of Unreason* that I remember reading for the first time, and it just left me dumbstruck. It's a short untitled piece that goes "I read so much that my single eye became hot / as if it had been staring into nebulae. / Of course it had. On some clear nights in the country / the stars can exhaust us. They only mean what they are." I strive for that clarity and that perspective of the immense in my own work, and enjoy revisiting it in his.

DH: Why should we read this book?

TM: I typically read the books of people with whom I somehow develop a connection. Maybe it's an interview or a poem that appears in some journal. You connect with that, and you think, "I felt something there ... I'm interested in feeling more." Maybe that happened here today!

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