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## Somerville Town Hall with Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley



Massachusetts Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley spoke of her recent meeting with detainee Rümeysa Öztürk at a Town Hall in Somerville this week.

During a Town Hall last Monday at Somerville High School, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) discussed her meeting in Louisiana with Somerville resident Rümeysa Öztürk and outlined how she's fighting back against Donald Trump's cruel and callous agenda to divide communities and impose wholesale harm.

Having returned earlier in the day from Louisiana, Congresswoman Pressley shone light on her experience meeting with Ms. Öztürk, a Tufts PhD student, at the ICE facility where she is being unlawfully detained. She exposed the indignities, injustice, and fear that Rümeysa has endured – and how she remains kind-hearted, courageous, and committed to centering the humanity and dignity of all people.

The Congresswoman, joined for the town hall by Somerville Mayor Katjana

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## Lexie Butterfly Vintage: A rebellion against minimalist fashion

Chatting with the mind behind the 2025 Artwear: SOS Fashion Show

By Suraya Whynott

In anticipation of the Somerville Open Studios Artwear: The SOS 2025 Fashion Show, I had the incredible opportunity to sit down with one of the main organizers of the event, designer and small business owner Lexie Griffith.

Lexie is a vintage fashion enthusiast, constantly working to repurpose 60s and 70s fabrics into stunning pieces with three goals: sustainability, inclusivity, and creativity. She is dedicated to providing Somerville with special, eco-friendly pieces that are designed intentionally for the wearer.

Lexie Butterfly Vintage's main mission is to encourage physical self-expression,

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Designer and small business owner Lexie Griffith, co-organizer of the SOS 2025 Fashion Show.

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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

The ‘Slice of the City’ spring meet-up series is an opportunity to connect and engage with city leaders and staff as well as neighbors, all while enjoying Somerville’s parks. The series begins this week in Ward 1. Ward 1 includes East Somerville, Assembly Square, and more. All events run from 5 to 7 p.m. Pizza and refreshments will be served, and Somerville Recreation will have activities for children available. **WARD 1, Thursday, May 1, 5 p.m.:** Join Mayor Ballantyne, Ward 1 Councilor Matthew McLaughlin, At-Large Councilors, and city staff at **Chuckie Harris Park** (17 Cross St. East)

\*\*\*\*\*

The Somerville Museum is proud to present **History on the Line: The Exhibit and Map**, exploring the untold stories of Somerville’s revolutionary past through physical and digital maps and archival materials. Funded by the **Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism’s MA250 grant program**, this dynamic initiative brings history to life in new and meaningful ways with a map of over 60 historic sites in the Somerville area and an exhibit showcasing the museum’s sweeping archives. Join them on **May 1**, at 6 p.m. for an exhibit grand opening and map launch. Somerville Museum, One Westwood Road, Somerville, <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>

\*\*\*\*\*

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** *Continued on page 7*

# The Somerville Times

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## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of April 30 – May 6 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
<b>Wednesday</b> <i>April 30</i>	Sunny	68°/44°	0%	0%	W 16 mph
<b>Thursday</b> <i>May 1</i>	Partly Cloudy	62°/49°	1%	1%	ESE 12 mph
<b>Friday</b> <i>May 2</i>	Partly Cloudy	75°/56°	22%	15%	SW 13 mph
<b>Saturday</b> <i>May 3</i>	Rain	76°/56°	45%	33%	SSW 14 mph
<b>Sunday</b> <i>May 4</i>	Rain	57°/51°	41%	1%	NW 10 mph
<b>Monday</b> <i>May 5</i>	Cloudy	56°/48°	22%	12%	N 12 mph
<b>Tuesday</b> <i>May 6</i>	Partly Cloudy	60°/52°	21%	13%	NE 13 mph

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

## TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

### Response to: The Battle of Beech and Elm Street

John Stew NJ says:

Very interesting Mr. Clarey !!

Kurt Zwally says:

Great piece. Thanks for taking the time to research and write it.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

## Baby Sign Language Workshops

May 7, 14, 21, 28. 2–2:45 p.m. Parents and caregivers for pre-verbal children ages 4 months and up are invited to participate in a 4-part virtual program about communicating through sign language.

Register here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfA0gRBf4quA8t0exn-HTcU0qEvNhaLx4tU1obcwk155OndKPQ/viewform?pli=1>



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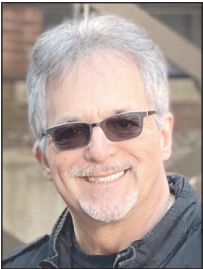
Life in the

VILLE

by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

Ponte Del Leon, adventurer



Man, have times changed. My life has been so planned and regimented lo these past 15 years. Were you as crazy as I was? I know some of you were, but don't worry, I won't print your names. We always had fun, but it was always on the edge. It couldn't be a normal, calm existence.

It was hectic, rushed, and we lived as if it were our last days on earth. I have been in the 'Ville for most of my life, except for a few jaunts to some pretty far-out places. I always returned to Somerville, like a baby bird to its nest. Or something like that.

Back in the early 80s, I was going out with a lovely lady from the 'Ville whose father didn't like me (that's a shocker). He had a problem with long-haired rock musicians who partied too much. We were going hot and heavy when all of a sudden, we broke up. So, I did the logical thing – I left the comfort of Somerville for the unknown San Fernando Valley of California.

I'll show her – I'll move 3,000 miles away, and become a Hollywood star. After all, I had my theatre degree from Emerson College! I got an apartment in the same apartment building where my sister was living with her new baby girl – it was great! I lived downstairs from my niece, sister, and brother-in-law. We had a built-in pool, and she cooked for me. That's when I fell in love with avocados.

Life in Canoga Park was different, but I was getting used to it. I got a job in a head shop (they sold bongos and stuff like that) – a place that sold all sorts of drug paraphernalia. I met Jimi Hendrix's drum-

mer on the album *Band of Gypsies*, Mr. Buddy Miles. I met an agent who lived in Sammy Davis Jr's old house – Sammy had a room the size of my bedroom just for shoes! I think Judy Garland lived there at one time, also.

I also tracked down a couple of Somerville friends out there. You will find Somerville people everywhere you go. I bumped into a guy from my street in Disney World back in the 90s. Forget about Old Orchard Beach, because as I have said before, it's Somerville with water. So, back to the California adventure. There I am, doing pretty well, enjoying the sun, my sister's cooking, and a crazy job, and I get a phone call from Somerville. It seems the gal I had broken up with had a sudden change of heart – she wanted me back.

So, I wanted to get back to Somerville as fast as I could. I dumped the job, the apartment with the pool, my sister's cooking, the weather, and my dreams of becoming a star in Hollywood – and headed home. But being the compulsive thick thick-headed guy that I am, I decided to take a Greyhound bus back to Boston. Why would I wait another week and fly home? I really can't tell you because I don't remember. Maybe it was a cash thing. I think I just wanted to get back and wasn't in a clear mind.

At any rate, I'm on a bus for five days. I hooked up with some other passengers on the way home who were quite the partiers. We all got tossed off the bus in Albuquerque, New Mexico. We had to wait six hours for the next bus. The really tough part about being on a bus for five days is personal hygiene. I got really good at washing my feet in the restroom sinks. I was one of the lucky ones who had plenty



of clean socks.

I wish I had some Febreze and Lysol spray, because I would have sprayed a few passengers. When you're on a long bus ride, you make friends with people, and then one by one, they get off at their destinations. I must say it was pretty emotional saying goodbye to friends you spent 2, 3, and 4 days with in such close conditions. We all took each other's phone numbers. I never heard from any of them ever again.

So, I finally made it home to good old Somerville! I'll never forget the first time I went back into my girlfriend's house since returning. Her dad gave me the usual protective, smile-less, "I hate you" stern father's sneer. What her uncle said made me feel very comfortable – he looks at me and says: "Don't tell me you're back again." And he wasn't fooling.

Yes, it was great to be home. What's so great about California? The heck with the built-in pool, the freedom of my own pad, the cool job, the awesome weather, the fun of being with my sister and her baby. I was finally back with the love of my life.

WRONG! The rekindled romance went down in flames. But hey, I had gained a lot! I got to move back into my little room on Hall Avenue with the psychedelic wallpaper and listen to my dad snore while I was trying to watch TV.

I was back to helping mom with housework too. I had gone from Mr. Independent to Mr. Loser, who moves back in with his parents. I recovered and was soon playing in another band, and would soon start my radio career at Kiss 108 FM. I was back in Somerville and back with my buds and the fam. You can always go home when you live in Somerville. My friends were still on the same bar stools they were on when I left, so I didn't miss a beat.

But I will never take a five-day bus ride again. Oh, and there were a few other women since then who had me jumping through hoops. Someday, I'll tell you about the boy from Somerville who moved to Florida for a year with a girl. So, I will never again hop on a bus, Gus, unless it's to visit my friend in Jersey, or if my truck breaks down.



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## Somerville Police Dept Crime Log April 15 – 21

### Arrest

25020761: On 4/16/25 at approximately 6:28 p.m., Somerville Police responded to YMCA for a weapons call. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated he got into a physical altercation with another male. After the altercation, the male suspect pointed a firearm at the victim's door. Officers then conducted a search of the suspects room and located a semi-auto handgun with a defaced serial number and .45 caliber ammo. The suspect was then placed under arrest.

### Shots Fired

25021027: On 4/17/25 at approximately 10:58 p.m., Somerville Police responded to the area of 17 Webster St for a report of shots fired. Upon arrival, officers located one spent shell casing at the corner of Cutter St and Webster St. There were no injuries reported.

Other Crimes: 1 Moped theft + 2 Car breaks + 1 Package theft + 1 MV theft + 1 Bike theft + 1 Vandalism

— Somerville Police Department



## Somerville Town Hall with Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley

CONT. FROM PG 1

Ballantyne, also took questions and discussed her efforts to fight back against the Trump-Musk cuts to critical federal programs like Social Security and Medicaid, her support for our federal workers and immigrant neighbors, her defense of federal Department of Education funding, and more.

**Transcript: At Somerville Town Hall, Pressley Details Meeting with Detained Somerville Resident Rümeysa Öztürk U.S. House of Representatives April 24, 2025**

Truly, it is so good to be home.

I just landed at Logan this morning returning from my trip to rural Louisiana to meet with my constituent and your neighbor Rümeysa.

Rümeysa, who has been unjustly detained as a political prisoner after being abducted from the streets of Somerville, has been detained for over a month now by ICE.

Many of you have seen the video – the harrowing video. And I wanted to thank the concerned community member and bystander. Rümeysa asked me to say that, for filming that video in the first place.

Rümeysa was taken by plainclothes officers, hurried into an unmarked car, shackled.

She shared with me that when they transitioned her from handcuffs to shackles, she thought surely she was going to be killed, but they would torture her before.

She had no idea where she was going, why she had been abducted.

She was sent over a thousand miles away to a detention facility in Basile, Louisiana.

Let me begin by recognizing that she is detained in a for-profit facility owned and operated by a multi-billion dollar corporation. Now, I have fought long and hard against the use of private prisons and the exploitation of people in carceral settings.

And that also applies to the immigration system. Which is why I believe if you care about mass deportations, you should care about mass incarceration. And if you care

about mass incarceration, you should care about mass deportations. They are two sides of the same coin.

Now, Rümeysa was transported from Massachusetts to New Hampshire to Georgia and then finally to rural Louisiana. So, I went to rural Louisiana to see about her.

Alongside me was Senator Markey and Congressman McGovern. And I want to acknowledge the leadership of my brother colleague Congressman Troy Carter of Louisiana and Ranking Member Bennie Thompson who leads the House Homeland Security Committee for organizing this CODEL, this fact-finding mission.

The meeting with Rümeysa was a true testament to her character. She was kind, despite the cruelty she endured. She was dressed in an orange jumpsuit and wearing the same hijab she was arrested in.

I could feel her uneasiness. Yet she spent most of the meeting not talking about herself, but advocating for the other women locked in the facility – she had with her copious handwritten notes, putting her research skills as a PhD student to work.

Rümeysa is enduring indignities that no one should ever have to. Denied access to legal counsel, denied access to toilet tissue even, for three days. Experiencing sleep deprivation, malnutrition, frigid temperatures. She has suffered multiple asthma attacks, and the medical care is grossly insufficient and culturally incompetent. Rümeysa shared that a nurse removed her hijab without consent.

For her and many other women we met with, the fear was palpable. They wept openly, visibly shaken. They expressed fear of never seeing their loved ones again. Fear of deportation from the only country they call home. Fear of retaliation just for being honest about their confinement.

Despite Rümeysa's fear – actually, in spite of her fear – Rümeysa remains

kind-hearted and courageous.

I asked her pointedly if she had a message for the people of Somerville, and she told me to tell all of you: thank you for being her community.

On that frightful day when she was surrounded by ICE agents and unsure of what would happen to her, she looked up. She saw a neighbor that she didn't know, hadn't spoken to, and was pretty much a stranger. But that neighbor was recording the arrest and when they made eye contact, the neighbor raised their hand as if to say to Rümeysa: I am with you.

And she expressed just how much that meant to her, that it gave her comfort in that moment, after she had screamed, that someone cared. That she didn't know how much they had captured but it gave her some calm, that someone had seen what had happened and maybe they will be able to help me.

And today, more than a thousand miles away, we are still with Rümeysa.

The Massachusetts 7th is not simply a congressional district; it is a community.

And in the face of a dictator, we will resist – because the only way to beat a dictator is with defiance.

That is why I am demanding answers from Marco Rubio on why Rümeysa's visa was revoked despite a State Department memo saying she did nothing wrong.

That is why I am demanding that ICE comply with the judge's ruling that they bring her back to New England.

That is why I am leveraging my power on the Committee on Oversight to go into these detention facilities and ensure every person is treated with dignity and respect, and have their constitutional right to due process.

Remember, this is much bigger than Rümeysa. It's a policy of cruelty and a system of chaos.

For those who might be tempted to marginalize or to other who might be vulnerable, Donald Trump is coming after all of us.

If you are an immigrant, regardless of your status – be it as a DACA recipient, a naturalized citizen, a TPS holder, a student visa, an asylum seeker – he seeks to do things that are harmful and unconstitutional and unlawful.

I'm sure you heard him on that hot mic moment in the Oval Office, saying that he will eventually look to deport people with criminal records.

Again, blatantly unconstitutional and incredibly ironic given his own criminal record.

But it is consistent, as a dictator, he seeks to silence dissent.

So, when I say he is coming for all of us, I mean it could be you tomorrow. It could be you tomorrow for suffering a miscarriage. It could be you tomorrow for reading a banned book. It could be you tomorrow simply for being Black. It could be you tomorrow for being trans. It could be you tomorrow for practicing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It could be you tomorrow for co-authoring an op-ed, practicing free speech.

Our freedoms and our destinies are truly tied.

In a letter James Baldwin wrote to Angela Y. Davis, he said: 'If they take you in the morning, they will surely be coming for us that night.'

And that is the truth.

So, I am ten toes down, fighting for this district every day. It is a true honor and privilege to be your Congresswoman – I don't take it for granted, not for a minute.

You deserve someone who fights for you in Washington like you are family – because you are.

And with that, let's get into a dialogue and answer as many of your questions as we can in this time we have together today. Thank you for being here.

The video of the full address can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7D946-xAsjA>

# City Council discusses senior needs, federal funding, and CPR education

By Carlie Lombardi

On April 24, the Somerville City Council met and covered topics including senior services, federal relief fund updates, sports equity initiatives, and zoning changes.

**Council on Aging presentation reveals senior needs**

Director Ashley Spiliotis introduced Sierra Somerville, a senior research associate from UMass Boston, who presented key findings from a comprehensive survey of Somerville’s older residents. According to the study, over 11,000 Somerville residents are aged 60 or older, which is 14% of the city’s population – a number expected to remain stable over the next decade.

Key findings showed low awareness of Council on Aging (COA) programs, a desire for expanded fitness and educational offerings, transportation and mobility challenges, housing insecurity, financial hardship, and social isolation among older residents.

Among the report’s recommendations were increasing outreach by initiatives like sending birthday greetings to residents when they turn 60, exploring partnerships for expanded program space, expanding transportation options, and addressing financial insecurity through working with local businesses.

Councilors raised questions about space limitations at COA centers and discussed creative solutions to address food insecurity. Councilor Strezo suggested developing programs like a “coupon club” or collective Costco memberships to help seniors save on groceries. In response, Spiliotis affirmed that technological sup-

port for seniors using digital coupons is already being explored.

**ARPA funds successfully obligated**

ARPA Director Satin Hernandez reported that Somerville successfully obligated all its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds before the December 31, 2024, federal deadline. Over 80% of funds have already been spent across 44 projects.

Hernandez noted that a federal compliance review is upcoming, but expressed confidence, stating that the city is up to all regulations and submitted the necessary documentation on time. She also confirmed that while some flexibility remains for reallocating funds among approved projects, the Flex ARPA rental assistance program had already transitioned to stable, non-ARPA funding.

**Council approves CPR education resolution**

Later in the meeting, the council accepted a late item resolution supporting proposed state legislation to require CPR and AED training in Massachusetts high schools. Harvard junior Nayan Sapers, co-founder of the CPR Ambassador Program, spoke virtually to advocate for the resolution, noting that bystander CPR can double or triple survival chances after cardiac arrest.

Sapers said, “City council resolutions matter,” explaining that local government support can encourage state lawmakers to prioritize the issue.

**Pool closures and zoning hearings**

Councilor Davis reported frustrations regarding the continued closure of the Ginny Smithers pool due to chemical imbalance issues. Although maintenance has been performed and efforts made to cor-



rect the problem, the pool remained closed as of the meeting.

**Looking ahead**

The council laid several items on the table for further action, including continued

discussions on the city charter revision and guaranteed basic income program results.

The next city council meeting on April 29, will include further updates on these ongoing initiatives.



## Somerville Public Schools need your feedback

Each year, Somerville Public Schools invites all SPS students, families, and staff to complete the annual Conditions for Learning Survey. It will inform decision-making both in the schools and at the district level.

The survey is open until May 2, and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions, please contact Samantha Eligene, Director of Data Assessment and Accountability.

Family Conditions for Learning Survey – Spring 2025: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LF6HHZ9>



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# Beacon Hill Roll Call



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

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

This week, *Beacon Hill Roll Call* examines the salaries and other benefits received by your state representatives.

**NEW HIGHER \$82,044 BASE SALARY FOR REPRESENTATIVES** - The base salary for the state's 160 state representatives rose from \$73,655 for the 2023-2024 session to \$82,044 for the 2025-2026 session. That's an 11.39 percent hike which means an additional \$8,389 per representative. The estimated price tag for the hikes is \$1,342,240.

Gov. Maura Healey announced these hikes in January. Under state law, Legislative salaries are up for adjustment in January every two years, either up or down, under a 1998 constitutional amendment approved by a better than two-to-one margin by voters. It requires that every two years the salaries of the governor, the other five constitutional statewide officers and the state's 160 representatives be increased or decreased based on data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) that measures the quarterly change in salaries and wages.

It also requires that the same formula be used every two years to increase or decrease the stipends that 108 representatives receive for their service in Democratic or Republican leadership positions, as committee chairs or vice chairs and as the ranking Republican on some committees.

Representatives' base salaries were \$46,410 when the voters approved the automatic pay adjustments in 1998. Since that time, the salaries have been increased every two years except for a \$306 pay cut for the 2011-2012 session; an \$1,100 pay cut for the 2013-2014 session; and a salary freeze for the 2015-2016 legislative session.

The new \$82,044 salary means that the base House salary has been raised \$35,634 or 76.7 percent, since the mandated salary adjustment became part of the state constitution in 1998.

**\$22,430.96 OR \$29,907.95 FOR GENERAL EXPENSES** - Each representative also receives an annual general expense pay allowance of \$22,430.96 for members who live within a 50-mile radius of the Statehouse and \$29,907.95 for those who are located outside of that radius.

This separate, flat rate expense allowance is taxable as income. It is designed to pay for some of the costs of representatives' district offices and other expenses including

contributions to local civic groups and the printing and mailing of newsletters. Representatives are not required to submit an accounting of how they spend the money, but they are allowed to deduct any expenses, permitted under federal law, from their gross income on their federal and state tax return.

**EXTRA PAY FOR 108 REPRESENTATIVES** - One hundred and eight of the state's 160 representatives receive an additional stipend, ranging from \$7,776.07 to \$119,631.81, above the \$82,044.31 base salary, for their positions in the Democratic and Republican leadership, as committee chairs, vice chairs and the ranking Republican on some committees. The stipend is increased or decreased every two years based on data from the BEA that measures the quarterly change in salaries and wages.

House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy) the top Democrat, earns the highest stipend of any representatives: \$119,631.81. House Minority Leader Brad Jones (R-North Reading), the top Republican, earns an \$89,723.85 stipend.

Here are the top five representatives who are paid the highest salaries including the three categories of base pay, stipends and general expense pay allowance:

Reps. Ronald Mariano (D-Quincy) \$224,107.08; Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston) \$201,676.11; Bradley Jones (R-North Reading) \$194,199.12; Michael Moran (D-Brighton) \$194,199.12; and Kate Hogan (D-Stow) \$179,245.15.

The 34 representatives who receive the lowest salary of \$104,475.27 are:

Reps. James Arena-DeRosa (D-Holliston); Michelle Badger (D-Plymouth); Michael Chaisson (R-Foxboro); Manny Cruz (D-Salem); David DeCoste (R-Norwell); Rodney Elliott (D-Lowell); Dennis Gallagher (D-Bridgewater); Colleen Garry (D-Dracut); John Gasky (R-Carver); Ryan Hamilton (D-Methuen); Tara Hong (D-Lowell); Vanna Howard (D-Lowell); Kristin Kassner (D-Hamilton); Patrick Kearney (D-Scituate); David LeBoeuf (D-Worcester); Marc Lombardo (R-Billerica); Bill MacGregor (D-Boston); Joan Meschino (D-Hull); John Moran (D-South End); Francisco Paulino (D-Methuen); Bridget Plouffe (D-Brockton); Sean Reid (D-Lynn); Amy Sangiolo (D-Newton); Margaret Scarsdale (D-Pepperell); Gregory Schwartz (D-Newton); Danillo Sena (D-Acton); Dawne Shand (D-Newburyport); Priscila Sousa (D-Framingham); Alyson Sullivan-Almeida (R-Abington); Kenneth Swezey (R-Hanson); Joshua Tarsky (D-Needham); Erika Uytter-

hoeven (D-Somerville); Marcus Vaughn (R-Wrentham); and Richard Wells (D-Milton).

**PARKING SPACES** - Legislators are entitled to a parking space inside the Statehouse garage or at the nearby McCormack State Office Building. For 2025, the first \$325 in monthly value of the space is a tax-free benefit under federal and state guidelines that apply to all public and private employees, not just state legislators. Any value of the space above this amount is treated as taxable income.

The value of the parking spaces in 2025 was determined by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to be \$477 per month. Based on that figure, legislators would be taxed on the excess \$152 monthly by the Internal Revenue Service and the state.

**HEALTH INSURANCE** - Representatives are eligible to choose from 11 health insurance plans offered by the state's Group Insurance Commission, which manages the plans for 259,929 individuals—current and retired state workers, as well as certain municipal workers and their dependents.

Representatives elected on or before July 1, 2003, pay 20 percent of the total premium and the state pays 80 percent. Those elected to their first term on or after July 1, 2003 pay 25 percent while the state picks up only 75 percent. State and federal privacy regulations protect this information and it is not possible to obtain records about which plans individual legislators have purchased. The out-of-pocket monthly premiums paid by representatives for family plans range from \$369.98 to \$655.62 per month. For individual plans, they pay from \$149.82 to \$300.64 per month.

**LIFE INSURANCE** - Representatives who purchase a health insurance policy from the state are also required to buy the state's basic \$5,000 life insurance policy. The costs for employees are based on age and whether the employee is a smoker or non-smoker. They range from 4 cents per month to \$2.49 per month. The same 20/80 25/75 formula used for health insurance also applies to this life insurance. Representatives also have the option to buy additional life insurance with a value of up to eight times their salary - up to a maximum of \$1.5 million. The entire premium for the optional insurance is paid by the representative.

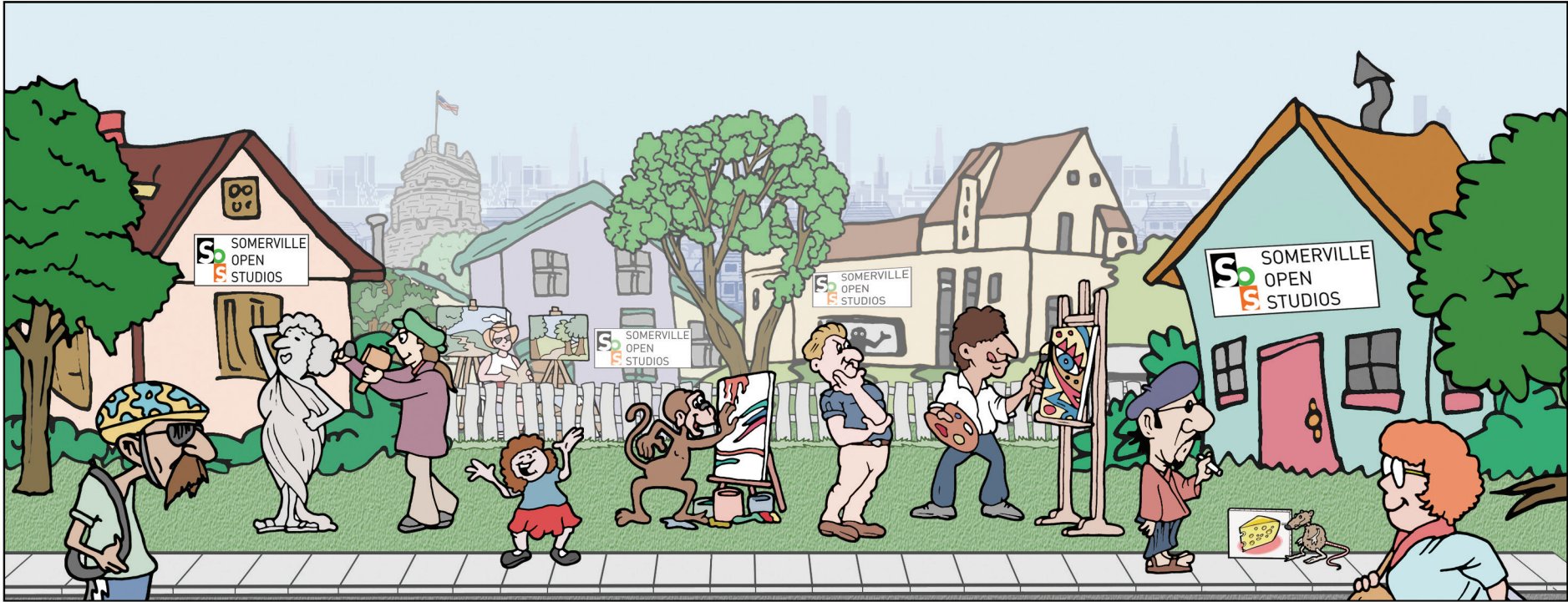
**LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE SPENDING ACCOUNT** - Representatives also have the option to open a Health Care Spending Account (HCSA) and Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP), and to buy long-term disability insurance. The HCSA allows representatives to set aside funds to pay for out-of-pocket health

Continued on page 16

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 coming 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 add 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 2025 will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 3 – 4, from 12 to 6 p.m. each day. Check out this year's event at <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org>.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

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 **Rose Lister, George Sharpe, Charlotte Scanzillo Perkins, Ginny Atwater, Linda Beeb, Barb Balkwill, G.p. Redmond, Claire D'Anna, Eric Pedro Sr., Johnny Ferola, Karen Mancini and Jack Costello** 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Somerville Open Studios 2025** will take place on **Saturday and Sunday, May**

**3–4, from 12 to 6 p.m. each day, at artists' studios and homes throughout Somerville.** Nearly 400 artists in 118 locations citywide will open their studios to the public. Map, artist, and (soon) trolley info at <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org/>. The **SOS First Look Show** at the **Somerville Museum** will be open from **April 24 through May 17.**

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Open Studios 2025 Fashion Show** takes place on **May 2** at the **Crystal Ballroom** in Davis Square. Doors open at 6 p.m. for cocktail hour, and the wearable art fashion show begins at 7 p.m. Free to all, open

seating. RSVP here: <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org/artwear-the-sos-2025-fashion-show/>

\*\*\*\*\*

The City is hiring **Somerville high school students** for opportunities across the city. Applicants must be Somerville residents and at least 14 years of age by **May 4**. Summer jobs require approx. 20 hours per week for six weeks starting in July. Learn more and apply now here <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/mayors-jobs-program>

\*\*\*\*\*

Interested in trying out **city biking**? On **May 5** from 6-8pm visit the **Alley @**

**somernova** (24 Dane Street) for a beginner friendly workshop and bike ride through Somerville. **@massbike** will be leading a workshop on riding a bike in Somerville. Learn how to navigate the city streets, safety 101, and street etiquette. The workshop will be followed by a short bike ride. If you don't have a bike that's ok, free blue bike codes will be provided! All are welcome, language interpretation will be provided to all who want it for free. To request an interpreter, please contact us at [somerviva@somervillema.gov](mailto:somerviva@somervillema.gov) or call 311 (617-666-3311) at least 7 days before the event. Pizza provided.

*Continued on page 21*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's  
*Olio*  
#971

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. In which year did the NBA play its first All-Star Game?

2. Where was the first NBA All-Star Game played?

3. What Celtics player is tied with Larry Bird for the most points for the Celtics in a game?

4. Did Larry Bird play his entire career with the Celtics?

5. What is also known as Japanese horseradish?

6. Cavolo Nero is a type of which vegetable?
7. What is the beat of a song is also called?

8. Which band had a hit *Mr. Brightside*?

9. What group recorded the song *Dream On*?

10. How many baseball world series' have the Boston Red Sox won?

11. What type of car is Stephen King's *Christine*?

12. What was the first video ever uploaded to YouTube?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The largest bill in the United States was a \$10,000 note.
2. It's possible to turn peanut butter into diamonds.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

MOTHER'S DAY

ACROSS

1. T. Rockwell's "How to Eat Fried \_\_\_\_"
6. Pro football org.
9. Tea servings
13. Relating to axis
14. Gershwin or Levin
15. Break of day
16. Repeat, in music
17. Red Cross bed
18. Arm bones
19. Mother \_\_\_\_, personification of physical world
21. Mother \_\_\_\_, fictional dog owner
23. Opposite of hence
24. Sleeveless garment
25. Money source
28. Golfer's destination
30. Pass, as time
35. "Metamorphoses" poet
37. The Beatles: "Mother \_\_\_\_ comes to me"
39. "The Goldbergs" sibling
40. Unacceptable, to a baby
41. Alpine singing
43. Resembling wings
44. Fill with optimism
46. Fill to satisfaction
47. Orion's \_\_\_\_
48. Like funereal atmosphere
50. Lice eggs
52. Morse code dash
53. Remainder of a cigarette
55. Before skip and a jump
57. Mother of \_\_\_\_, a.k.a. Daenerys Targaryen
61. Mother \_\_\_\_, Missionaries of Charity founder
64. PassÈ
65. Stir or fuss
67. Add together
69. Anomie, alt. sp.
70. Decompose
71. Very angry
72. Puppy sounds
73. "\_\_\_\_ no evil, hear no evil"
74. Tennis-affected joint

DOWN

1. Took place
2. Yoked team
3. Capital of Latvia
4. Kind of ray
5. Cast-off skin
6. French Riviera city
7. "To" follower
8. Wood turning device
9. Tulip starter
10. Leo's Karenina
11. \_\_\_\_ gum, food additive
12. Put metal to the pedal, p.t.
15. Difficult to detect
20. With ample space
22. Employ
24. Green and lush, as in trees
25. Mother \_\_\_\_, investigative journalism nonprofit
26. Convex molding
27. Twofold
29. Cambodia's neighbor
31. A in UAE
32. Heaped
33. Famous Teatro alla \_\_\_\_

CROSSWORD														
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
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16						17				18				
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72						73				74				

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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

34. Mother \_\_\_\_, personification of planet
36. Shower with affection
38. Abominable snowman
42. River in Hades
45. Personify
49. Mother Superior is the head one at the convent
51. Foray
54. Former Russian leaders
56. Mother of \_\_\_\_, a.k.a. nacre
57. June 6, 1944
58. Raja's wife
59. On the surface
60. Emeralds and rubies
61. Carrying bag
62. Hunk of something
63. Lowest female singing voice
66. Female forest ruminant
68. Archery bow wood
- Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

OBITUARY

Elizabeth M. (Campbell) Gillis



Mrs. Elizabeth M. (Campbell) Gillis, of Somerville MA died Sunday (April 20, 2025) at Countryside Healthcare of Milford after a period of declining health. She was the beloved wife of Orwell M. Gillis who died in 1976.

Marie was born in Somerville MA, the daughter of the late James C. Campbell

and the late Aldona W. (Gallant) Campbell. She attended Somerville High School.

Marie was first employed as a young woman working at Hawks Cleaners located in Somerville MA. She later worked for many years at Tufts University. Elizabeth had been a resident of Somerville for most of her life and enjoyed knitting & crocheting.

Marie is survived by her 7 children: Jean DeLibero of Malden MA, Joan Welch of Burlington MA, Susan Gillis of Milford MA, Barbara DiGregorio and her husband Arthur of Upton MA, Paul Gillis of Cornish ME, MaryAnn St. Cyr and her husband Mark of Bolton MA and Timothy Gillis of Somerville MA; also many grandchildren & great grandchildren; her

2 siblings: Jean Foster of Burlington MA and Joan Brennick of Somerville MA; also several nieces & nephews.

Marie was the sister of the late James Campbell; the late Barbara R. Householder; the late June Foster; the late Linda Fhorl; the late David Campbell and the late Margaret Campbell.

In accordance with her wishes cremation will take place and a Private Committal Service will be held at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett MA. There are no funeral home visiting hours.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Edwards Memorial Funeral Home, 44 Congress Street, Milford MA. Please visit [www.edwardsmemorialfuneralhome.com](http://www.edwardsmemorialfuneralhome.com) for complete obituary & condolence book.

Somerville Police Department supports Senior Prom goers



The Somerville Police Department collected \$1,400.00 along with seven dresses from members of the Police Department. Keezer's and Men's Wearhouse each donated two suits, and barbershops and hairdressers throughout the City of Somerville's business community donated two dozen haircuts. These donations were delivered to Somerville High School and will be used to support our Seniors and their Prom. They thank everyone who donated to help make the 2025 Senior Prom a success.

— Somerville Police Department

Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Curing Salts for Food Preservation

Over the past couple of years, I became interested in meat curing after checking out some curing and smoking sites on Facebook. I did some online research about the method and decided to give it a try.

Depending on what type of cured meats you want to make, the right type of curing salt is key. For instance, the two main salts are Prague Powder Premium #1, and Prague Powder Premium #2. They are commonly referred to as pink salt. But it is important to note these salts are NOT Himalayan pink salt and should not be used as such. These salts can be dangerous if not used as directed, and should be stored away from any other salts and spices.

Both of these salts contain sodium nitrates. Prague #1 is used for making sausage, bacon, jerky and others. Prague #2 which contains a higher content of sodium nitrate and is used for meat products that are air dried

and not cooked, like salami, air dried ham, prosciutto, and pepperonis.

I highly recommend reading the link listed below for more detailed information on the chemical structures and how these and other salts work for meat preservation. <https://barbecuebible.com/2014/08/26/guide-nitrites-prague-powder-curing-salts/>

Another great source for information about meat curing, along with excellent recipes, is a book by Michael Ruhlman and Brian Polcyn called *Charcuterie The Craft Of Salting, Smoking & Curing (Revised & Updated)*.

I hope if you're interested in curing your own meats you will give it a try. I can tell you, having made my own bacon and Canadian bacon, I'm hooked! Do your research and make up a game plan, and I promise the result will be rewarding and absolutely delicious! The picture here is cured and smoked bacon.

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



LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID  
CAPEN COURT (667-1)  
HVAC CONTROLS REPLACEMENT PROJECT  
SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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. The bids are to be prepared and submitted at [www.biddocsonline.com](http://www.biddocsonline.com). Tutorials and instructions on how to complete the electronic bid documents are available online.

GENERAL BIDS

The Somerville Housing Authority invites **HVAC Contractors** to submit Bid Proposals for the **HVAC Controls Replacement Project** at the **Capen Court (667-1) Senior Housing Development** in **Somerville, Massachusetts**. General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the **Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) category**. Bidders must include a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Update Statement.

The Project consists of: Removal and replacement of the existing control valves, actuators for all control valves serving existing fan coil units and replacement of all thermostats as noted on the plans with new.

General Bids will be received until **2:00 PM**, (local legal time) Thursday, **May 15, 2025** and publicly opened on-line, forthwith.

General bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five percent (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount in the form of a bid bond, certified check, treasurer's check or cashier's check issued by a responsible bank or trust company made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority. The Bid Deposit shall be satisfactory to the Awarding Authority and conditioned upon the faithful performance by the principal of the agreements contained in the Bid.

CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Construction costs are estimated to be **\$365,000.00**

PRE-BID CONFERENCE

A pre-bid walkthrough shall be held at the site located at 1 Capen Court, Somerville, MA 02144 on Tuesday, **May 6, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**. Contractors shall meet at the site. Contractors shall meet all COVID-19 safety requirements.

BID DOCUMENTS AND DEPOSIT

All Bids shall be submitted electronically online at [www.BidDocsOnline.com](http://www.BidDocsOnline.com) no later than the date & time specified above. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. The bids are to be prepared and submitted at [www.BidDocsOnline.com](http://www.BidDocsOnline.com). Tutorials and instructions on how to complete the electronic bid documents are available online (click on the "Tutorial" tab at the bottom footer).

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for pick-up at [www.BidDocsOnline.com](http://www.BidDocsOnline.com) (**may be viewed electronically and hardcopy requested**) or at **Nashoba Blue, Inc. at 433 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749 (978-568-1167)**

There is a plan deposit of \$50 per set (maximum of 2 sets) payable to BidDocs Online, Inc.

Deposits must be a certified or cashier's check, or money order. This deposit will be refunded for up to two sets for general bidders upon return of the sets in good condition within thirty (30) days of receipt of general bids. Otherwise, the deposit shall be the property of the Awarding Authority.

Additional sets may be purchased for **\$50.00**

Bidders requesting Contract Documents to be mailed to them shall include a separate check for **\$40.00** per set for UPS Ground (or **\$65.00** per set for UPS Overnight), payable to **BidDocs Online, Inc.** to cover mail handling costs.

Bids and the Contract are subject to: M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive, Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, Equal Opportunity provisions of Executive Order 11246, Non-Discrimination provision of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Labor Standards of the Davis-Bacon Act and related acts and Contract Work Hours Standard Act, and prevailing wage determinations as issued by the U.S. Secretary of Labor. The work performed under this contract is funded in part through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and is subject to all provisions and regulations issued pursuant to this act. This project is covered by Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968.

All Bids for the project are subject to the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws (Ter. Ed.), Chapter 149, Sections 44A to 44L inclusive as amended.

RIGHT OF THE AWARDING AUTHORITY TO REJECT BIDS

The right is reserved by the Somerville Housing Authority to reject any or all Bids, if it be in their interest to do so.

MINIMUM WAGE RATES

Bids are subject to the Federal Davis-Bacon wage rates and Related Acts.

4/30/25 The Somerville Times



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

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

The **Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)** will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov).

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_5ZxAIFRMSi-ZDEC-XwRTbA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5ZxAIFRMSi-ZDEC-XwRTbA)  
Webinar ID: 813 6889 3447

TO CALL IN

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

ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT

DETERMINATIONS OF PREFERABLY PERSERVED (STEP 2 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

**HP24-000122 - 128 Central Street**  
Applicant: Pro Touch Home Improvements INC – Nilton Dornelas  
Owner: Nilton Dornelas  
*The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.*

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

4/30/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
IFB# 25-65

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

Argenziano Additional/Infill Classroom

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com), [www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/purchasing/bids](http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/purchasing/bids), or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **05/01/2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **05/22/2025 2:00PM 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 Andrea Caruth at [acaruth@somervillema.gov](mailto:acaruth@somervillema.gov) for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

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

4/30/25 The Somerville Times

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THE SOMERVILLE TIMES,  
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Facebook at [www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1](http://www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1)

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
KATJANA BALLANTYNE  
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, May 15th, 2025** at 6:30 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

REGISTER ONLINE

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_asZV7-kwSsGCru3TkLQBig](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_asZV7-kwSsGCru3TkLQBig)

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

- Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Article 2 and Article 10 of the Zoning Ordinance to revise definitions and the green score calculation of columnar trees.

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

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. Persons unable to attend the hearing may provide comments by email to the Planning Board and the City Council at [publiccomments@somervillema.gov](mailto:publiccomments@somervillema.gov). Comments must be received no later than 12 Noon the day of the Hearing to ensure they are conveyed to the Committee for inclusion with the hearing testimony. 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.

4/30/25 The Somerville Times

Legal Notice

The following vehicles will be sold  
Pursuit to M.G.L. 255 S.39A  
2002 Toyota Camry Vin# 4T1BE32K22U579252  
2006 Ford E150 Vin# 1FTRE14L46DA83985  
2013 Ford Taurus Vin# 1FAHP2D88DG197982  
2013 Hyundai Veloster Vin# KMHTC6AD7DU142641  
2004 Honda Element Vin# 5J6YH285X4L012520  
2006 BMW X3 Vin# WBXPA93466VWD28680  
2011 Land Rover LR4 Vin# SALAK2D47BA569733  
2010 Mazda 3 Vin# JM1BL1SG0A1188532  
2010 Toyota Corolla Vin# 2T1BU4EE7AC290527  
To satisfy the debt owed to  
Cityside Enterprises Inc.  
617-776-6111

4/16/25, 4/23/25, 4/30/25 The Somerville Times

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Lexie Butterfly Vintage

CONT. FROM PG 1

creating clothing for all body types and genders. She strongly advocates for the inclusion of all bodies within vintage fashion. Lexie began to explore her love for fashion at a young age, playing dress up in her mother's clothing, but feeling excluded from the vintage clothing world due to the pieces not best suiting her height. This sparked her passion for altering clothing and repurposing vintage fabrics for her unique pieces. Using sourced psychedelic prints and other period-correct fabrics, Lexie creates classic 60s and 70s silhouettes, which are customizable for all sizes.

When Lexie moved to Somerville, she fell in love with the "artsy, queer, and funky" inclusivity of the town. "You get to be who you want to be, and I think that's really inspiring." Just as Lexi loves Somerville, Somerville has fallen in love with Lexie. Lexie Butterfly Vintage has become more than just a store but has transformed into a safe space for the queer community in Somerville to self-express - her pieces becoming beloved and highly sought out - and this is not something she takes for granted.

"I'm really honored by that - I think it's a really great honor," she told me. "I have major gratitude for that community to entrust me. I think it's more of my duty to them to find a way to include everybody." Lexie's work prioritizes the inclusion of all genders, bodies, and price points so that there is something for everybody.

Lexie is greatly inspired by the innovation of a vintage garment, as well as the intentionality behind every quirky detail of the vintage items she sources. By focusing on inclusivity and sustainability within her designs, Lexie can curate beautifully unique pieces that stay authentic to her brand. I decided to ask her what she thinks about the current trend of minimalist clothing that contrasts her personal work and style preferences.

She commented by saying that, although she respects minimalist clothing and those who choose to wear them, the simplistic and tailored look in trendy minimalism is inherently upper class and alienates middle and lower-class individuals. Her mission is to include all clothing lovers regardless of financial privileges. Additionally, she believes that her approach to design that starkly con-



trasts minimalism is a form of rebellion against the societal assimilation expected in fashion and design.

"My idea of fashion is not fashion at all - it's style. It's about what you like and what sparks joy for you." Lexie encourages everyone to wear clothing that represents the individual rather than encouraging shoppers to blend in. "Everyone was born to stand out, and they should own that."

So, I think it's time to address the elephant in the room ... the clown. If you are familiar with Lexie Butterfly Vintage, you know that Lexie is very loyal to her business persona who dresses as a clown - bright red nose and all. Lexie's company has entirely embraced her clown aesthetic, including clowns in her logos, pieces, and fashion show collections. I asked Lexi what inspired the adoption of clowns into her brand's aesthetic, and she answered that it was a "crime of opportunity." She happened to find a clown suit from the 1930s and, having never considered clown-themed items before, she fell in love with the piece. The clown suit felt right, and she decided to embrace it and incorporate details into her work. Not only does it match the playfulness of her design, but also perfectly captures Lexi's natural whimsy, of course, making sure to include her iconic purple hair.

In this year's SOS Show, Lexie is working with her best friend Victoria to curate a collection of pieces inspired by the Free Speech Movement of the 60s. Using her love for 60s political prints and silhouettes, the two are designing pieces that spotlight the political activism of the Free Speech Movement and other relevant displays of political activism. Of course, Lexie had to include her

clown branding somehow, but with a "morbid spin".

This year, her "Clowns in the White House" theme works to connect the past with the present through the repurposing of vintage fabrics to emphasize the repetition of history and not learning from our mistakes. She is making a statement to remind her audience of the political activism we saw in the '60s to inspire current forms of rebellion. Lexie and Victoria are including incredible pieces that I am personally so excited to see in action at the upcoming show.

Lexi herself is one of the main organizers of the upcoming Artwear: The SOS 2025 Fashion Show and is excited to show off her collection as well as spotlight numerous other local Somerville artists. The show is intentionally titled "Artwear" in reference to any clothing or wearable designs that push the boundaries of fashion, and the artists participating fully embraced this term within their pieces. The show is entirely free and open to all, held at the Crystal Ballroom in Davis Square on Friday, May 2. Doors open at 6 p.m. for cocktail hour, and the show begins at 7 p.m. I am ecstatic and cannot wait to attend and see Somerville's textile artists in action.

If you want to learn more about Lexie and her work, feel free to pop by her two locations: Bow Market Suite 36 and Chartreuse Microbus Collective inside Cafe Zing.

Somerville Open Studios, Saturday and Sunday, May 3 - 4, 12 - 6 p.m. Explore artists' studios and meet visual artists living and working in Somerville during our annual open studio weekend and other events. <https://www.somervilleopenstudios.org>.

# Liz Eldridge Announces Candidacy for Ward 2 School Committee in Somerville

Liz Eldridge is running for Ward 2 School Committee to ensure every student gets the support they need to improve outcomes and change trajectories.

As Chair of the Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSE-PAC), Eldridge has worked closely with families and caregivers to advocate for stronger transparency, collaboration, communication, and real solutions. Under her leadership, SSE-PAC significantly expanded active membership, launched new community engagement initiatives, and built critical partnerships with Somerville Public Schools to increase accountability and support for students and families.

"I'm a passionate parent who believes deeply in the possibility and potential of our students and schools. I'm running for Ward 2 School Committee because

more than half of our students aren't meeting grade-level expectations and that has to change. I'm ready to do the hard work to improve outcomes, ensure every student gets the support they need, every educator has the resources to succeed, and every family and community member has a voice in shaping the future of our schools," said Eldridge.

Eldridge is not a politician, she's a community servant and solution finder who has spent years advocating for Somerville families and students to receive an equitable education. As an Emmy® award-winning documentary producer, she has highlighted critical issues like affordable housing within Somerville. She also works part-time at a local food pantry and volunteers with a writers group to uplift the voices of our unhoused and transient neighbors. Eldridge is a 2022 Peace Stu-

dio fellow, an organization that develops artists and journalists to inspire hope and catalyze transformative social change in local communities across the U.S.

In addition to her advocacy and community service, Liz is a soon-to-be 2025 Emerge Massachusetts alumna, participating in an elite, highly selective 70+ hour training program that equips Democratic women with the tools to run and win elections. Emerge alumnae have run and won 88% of their races in 2024.

"Our students can't wait," said Eldridge. "By working together, we can build schools that truly serve every student, educator, and family. I believe Somerville is a community of trailblazers and we can lead the way in public education."

Learn more at [www.LizForSomerville.com](http://www.LizForSomerville.com) and follow the campaign on Facebook



Ward 2 School Committee candidate Liz Eldridge.

at Liz Eldridge for School Committee - Ward 2 Somerville and on Instagram @LizEldridgeForSomerville.

## Somerville Museum presents History on the Line exhibit and map

The Somerville Museum is proud to present History on the Line: The Exhibit and Map, exploring the untold stories of Somerville's revolutionary past through physical and digital maps and archival materials.

Funded by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism's MA250 grant program, this dynamic initiative brings history to life in new and meaningful ways with a map of over 60 historic sites in the Somerville area and an exhibit showcasing the museum's sweeping archives. Join them on May 1 at 6 p.m. for an exhibit grand opening and map launch.

The History on the Line exhibition showcases Somerville's history through objects from the museum's collection, organized along key thematic lines. Exploring Map Lines, Assembly Lines, Transportation Lines, Story Lines, Family Lines, and Revolutionary Lines, the exhibit reveals the many revolutions and evolutions that have shaped Somerville into the community it is today.

Discover the changing landscapes of Somerville throughout its history, stories of the Revolution women's rights and civil rights in Somerville, the wealth of innovation from Somerville companies to cottage industries. Peek into the Pantry of familiar and unfamiliar food products, and find an incredible number of familiar names who lived, owned businesses, or traveled through Somerville.

Alongside the exhibit, the official History on the Line Map pinpoints spaces, places, and people in the early city and in the Revolutionary War before 1800. The annotated, illustrated map contains 60 points of interest, and it is available in digital and paper formats. Digital and physical copies of the map are available for pickup at the Somerville Museum. The digital version of the map features recorded narrations from Somerville High School students. This map centers Somerville within the mainstream narratives of the nation's early years, while also elucidating little-known stories.

"By focusing on Somerville's Revolutionary past, we get a richer and more honest account of what the war meant to different people," said Dr. Paul Polgar, a lecturer in Tufts University History Department. "The Revolution was not a single, unified movement; it was a series of overlapping struggles, full of ambiguity. Some fought for self-government, others for personal freedom. Some saw economic opportunity, others faced ruin. Looking at history from this local perspective challenges us to move beyond mythologized versions of the past and reckon with the Revolution in all its complexity."

Stephanie Marlin-Curiel, Executive Director of the Somerville Museum, comments: "The 250th Anniversary of the colonists' fight for liberation from British rule is a momentous milestone, and we are thrilled to amplify this story with diverse voices and perspectives. Somerville's rich history has shaped the vibrant community we know today, and how we tell that history will help define the future we want to create. This is an incredible opportunity to engage, reflect, and inspire— history is truly 'on the line.'"

For over a century, the Somerville Museum has held space for the stories that shape collective history. On the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution, History on the Line programming channels a national story into a locally-meaningful, community-minded experience. From family-friendly events in the park to fascinating historical deep dives, the wide-ranging and dynamic programming provides something for everyone to enjoy.

<https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>



# Visiting artist sprays mural in Union, praises 'cozy, artsy Somerville

By Jeffrey Shwom

International artist Mishiko Sulakauri debuted his Georgian and Somerville-influenced street art outside Warehouse XI in Union Square last Wednesday. Sulakauri, a 2025 Artist in Residence at Harvard University's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies [1], interwove home country influences with his newfound affection for Somerville. He painted surrealistic sketches like a horse holding an umbrella, Prospect Hill Tower, his signature inclusion of a lamb, a left-handed graffiti artist, and an evil, mythological dragon creature called a gveleshapi with Georgian pictograms.

His work includes pop images, a biblical reference to the apple from Genesis, and an umbrella referencing this rainy spring, with the intent of having something for everybody.

Sulakauri connects images from his home in Tbilisi to Somerville and his US

experience. "We have a lot of huge wine culture in Georgia. It's a very old ancient culture, like 8,000 years." Hence, the fictional monster Godzilla is blowing fire and holding grapes over Prospect Hill Tower, and the first American flag raised by George Washington. Then, there's the sheep riding the horse and a flag with the English word, an attempt at some animal fun.

"My surname comes from a high mountainous region where there are only sheep and people. When I was a teenager, I started to paint the sheep all around the town to become some kind of an urban shepherd." He was raised in the capital city and worked under the street name "LAMB." His work with sheep was included in an exhibit by street artist and activist Banksy.

Before he arrived, he had different ideas of what he wanted to sketch. Once he got to the States, it all changed.

"I create my art based on my surroundings and based on my environment. Doing the sketches in Georgia, in my hometown



Georgian artist Mishiko Sulakauri incorporated motifs from his home country and Somerville into he recently completed at Warehouse XI in Union Square last week. — Photo by Rachel Strutt

of Tbilisi, was totally different, totally different vibes. The U.S. is a place where you feel a lot of freedom and you feel that you can... let's say do whatever you want." He wanted the newly minted characters to be "very surrealistic, very uh funky," layered with meaning and a lot of fun. His experience in Somerville really drew him in, too.

"I love architecture. I love the rich history that it has." He praised "how art works in this neighborhood" and the great vibes. Recently, there was a jazz festival at Arts at The Armory. He realized it was right down the street from him. "This is good news when you want to receive art." For him, whether it is passing by Somerville Theatre or hearing music at Warehouse XI, "as an artist and an art lover, it's cozy to be so close with art."

The mural is on display at Warehouse XI, 11 Sanborn Ct, down the street be-

tween The Independent and BRONWYN in Union Square.

This is the third Exchanging Notes [2] project run in partnership between the Somerville Arts Council and the Davis Center. Last September, the cultural exchange project featured "Dance and Drums from Somerville and Tbilisi, Georgia" with dancers Claire Lane and Lasha Mdzinarashvili and percussionists George Oniani and Marcus Santos at The Hive at Boynton Yards. The 2023 project [3] featured writers and musicians traveling to each other's countries to work on their art.

#### Links:

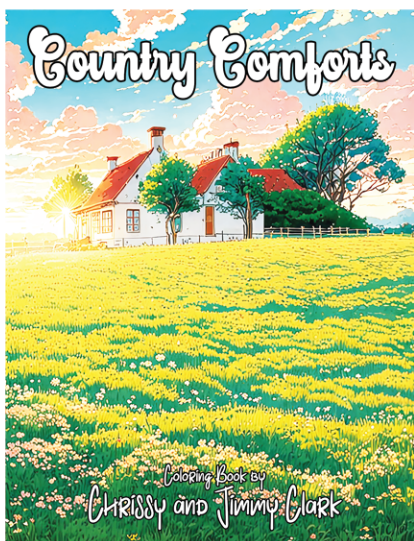
- [1] <https://daviscenter.fas.harvard.edu/>
- [2] <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/exchanging-notes/>
- [3] <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2023/10/5/night-with-exchanging-notes/>



Mishiko Sulakauri's Warehouse XI mural.

— Photo courtesy of Mishiko Sulakauri

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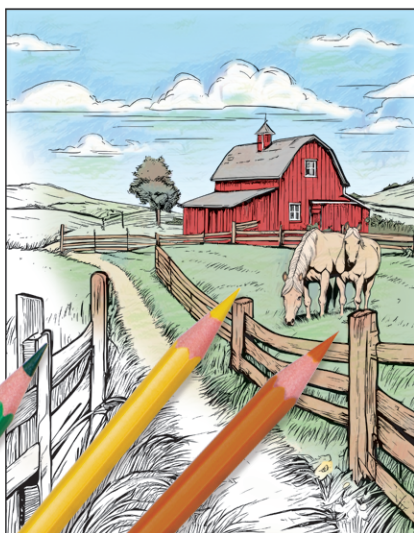
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Ms. Cam's

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Answers

1. 1951

2. Boston Garden

3. Jayson Tatum

4. Yes

5. Wasabi

6. Kale

7. Pulse

8. The Killers

9. Aerosmith

10. 9

11. Plymouth Fury

12. Me at the zoo

# Book review: ‘The Moving Finger (Miss Marple #3)’ by Agatha Christie

**By Dennis Fischman**

Anyone who has read a murder mystery has heard of Agatha Christie. Along with Dorothy Sayers [1], Margery Allingham [2], Josephine Tey [3], and some less-remembered authors like Gladys Mitchell [4], she is one of the British women who made up the Golden Age of Mystery in the early 20th century.

And anyone who has heard of Agatha Christie [5] most likely has heard of Miss Jane Marple. From her home in the little village of St. Mary Mead, she studies human nature with a keen and jaundiced eye. Not for her the sleuthing of a Sherlock Holmes, nor the “little grey cells” of Christie’s other famous detective, Hercule Poirot. For her, it’s noticing how people act and react that reminds her of other people she has known, and that’s what lets her solve a mystery.

In this book, we meet most

of the characters before Miss Marple does. They appear at first to be types: the injured war hero, his flamboyant sister, the doctor, the lawyer, the unworldly vicar and his practical wife. The thing is, in this book, the types come to life with idiosyncratic traits and hidden depths. That’s why the mystery works. You wonder, “If I misjudged this person the first time or two I met them, perhaps they have more secrets? Perhaps they are really the murderer?”

The quiet little village of Lymstock seems the perfect place for Jerry Burton to recuperate from his flying accident under the care of his sister, Joanna, who would probably be more at home in London. They settle in for a round of daily walks and conversations with everyone else in the village, who are curious about the newcomers – they don’t see many, and not very often, either! But soon

a series of vicious poison-pen letters destroys the village’s quiet charm, eventually causing one recipient to commit suicide. Then another person dies.

Are the deaths related? Do they happen because of the accusations (false or true) made in the letters? Who is writing them, and why? Which of these seemingly quirky people in this apparently bucolic town wants to kill other people’s reputations ... or simply kill them?

One of the townspeople knows our Miss Marple and invites her to stay, but not until three-quarters of the book is done. By that time, we really have come to know and care about the villagers and their visitors, and the portrait of their lives is the best part of the book. The solution – with the characteristic Agatha Christie twist! – is both logical and satisfying, but it’s also in some ways beside the point. So, read



The Moving Finger (Miss Marple #3) by Agatha Christie. Harper Collins, 2012.



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

this book if you enjoy British mysteries, but be prepared for it not to follow the usual pattern of detective novels.

**Links:**

- [1] [https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/8734.Dorothy\\_L\\_Sayers](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/8734.Dorothy_L_Sayers)
- [2] [https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/30748.Margery\\_Allingham](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/30748.Margery_Allingham)
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- [4] [https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/47319.Gladys\\_Mitchell](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/47319.Gladys_Mitchell)
- [5] [https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/123715.Agatha\\_Christie](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/123715.Agatha_Christie)

## Money Map Tip of the Week

**By Vincent Hicks, CPA**

**Q: Are there any practices that big businesses use that could significantly help me with my finances?**

**A:** Yes – quarterly check-ins!

Big companies review their finances every three months to stay on track. You can do the same with your personal finances or small business!

- A quarterly check-in means taking time to review where you stand financially – not just tracking numbers, but spotting opportunities and catching problems early. Here’s what to focus on:
- Review income and expenses for trends, problem areas, and opportunities
  - Check savings goals – emergency fund, major purchases, retirement
  - Manage debt – pay down high-interest debt (like credit cards) and optimize good debt (like a HELOC, when used wisely)

- Shift spending from low-value items (like unused subscriptions) to financial priorities (like insurance or emergency savings)
  - Review your credit report once a year to protect your financial standing
- Quarterly check-ins aren’t just for CEOs – they’re a simple habit that can help anyone manage money with less stress and more success.

**Any questions? I’d be happy to help.**

I’m Vincent Hicks, CPA, based in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Reach out at [vhicksconnect@gmail.com](mailto:vhicksconnect@gmail.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.*



# Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 6

care expenses with before-tax dollars while the DCAP allows them to set aside funds to pay for certain dependent care expenses with before-tax dollars. This participation reduces their federal and state income taxes. The entire premium for long-term disability is paid by representatives.

**DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE** – Representatives are eligible to choose one of two dental/vision insurance plans. Current monthly employee premium costs paid by representatives for family plans range from \$15.16 to \$20.52, while individual plans range from \$4.91 to \$6.64. All representatives pay 15 percent of the premium and the state pays 85 percent.

**REPRESENTATIVES WHO LIVE 50 MILES FROM THE STATEHOUSE ARE NO LONGER ELIGIBLE TO PAY A REDUCED OR NO FEDERAL INCOME TAX ON THEIR LEGISLATIVE SALARY** – For many years until recently, representatives who live more than 50 miles from the Statehouse were eligible for a special federal tax break. A 1981 federal law allowed them to write off a daily expense allowance when filing their federal income tax return. The complicated system determined a daily amount, ostensibly for meals, lodging and other expenses incurred in the course of their jobs, which can be deducted for every “legislative day.”

Under the Massachusetts Legislature’s system and schedule, every day of the year qualifies as a legislative day. The Legislature does not formally “prorogue” (end an annual session) until the next annual session begins. This allowed representatives to take the deduction for all 365 days regardless of whether the Legislature is actually meeting or not. Representatives did not even have to travel to the Statehouse to qualify for the daily deduction.

The amount of the deduction was based on the federal per diem for Massachusetts. It varied from year to year. The daily per diem for representatives for fiscal year 2023, the last year this deduction was allowed, varied in different parts of the state and was seasonal. It ranged from \$98 per day to \$459 per day or between \$35,770 and \$167,535 annually.

*Beacon Hill Roll Call’s* research indicated that in fiscal year 2023, 41 of the state’s 160 representatives lived more than 50 miles from the Statehouse, qualified for this deduction and were eligible to pay a reduced or no federal income tax on their legislative salaries.

**REPRESENTATIVES ARE NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR PER DIEMS** - Legislators are no longer entitled to collect “per diems” to reimburse them for mileage, meals and lodging expenses for travel from their home to the Statehouse. These reimbursements were discontinued in 2017. They were not taxable income and ranged from \$10 per day for legislators who reside in the greater Boston area to \$82 for Western Massachusetts lawmakers and \$100 for those in Nantucket.

## TOTAL SALARY FOR REPRESENTATIVES

Here is the total annual salary for local representatives including the three categories of base pay, stipends and general expense pay allowance.

Rep. Christine Barber	\$126,906.23
Rep. Mike Connolly	\$112,251.34
Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven	\$104,475.27

## ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

**JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HEARING** – The Judiciary Committee held a hearing on several bills including:

**PROTECT SURVIVORS OF SPOUSAL ABUSE FROM ALIMONY PAYMENTS (S 1236)** - Would give the courts the authority to terminate alimony payments and deny future alimony petitions if the spouse receiving the payments has been convicted of spousal abuse.

The bill defines “abuse” as including “attempting to cause or causing physical harm, placing a spouse in fear of imminent serious physical harm and causing a spouse to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threat or duress.”

“Every year, more than 12 million people in the U.S. experience violence by an intimate partner,” said sponsor Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow). “Yet, in Massachusetts, it is possible for survivors of spousal abuse, who have already taken the near impossible step of leaving an abusive marriage, to be required to pay alimony to their abuser after they escape that relationship.” He noted that he filed the measure to ensure that survivors are protected from further abuse.

**DISABLED ADULTS AND CHILD CUSTODY (S 1164)** – Would prevent a parent’s disability to be considered a negative factor in determining custody or parenting time with a child unless there is specific evidence that there is a link with the parent’s disability and a child’s alleged harm. It must also show that this harm cannot be prevented or alleviated by accommodation.

“Parents with disabilities sometimes lose custody of their children due to their disabilities,” said sponsor Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem). “This bill seeks to address this issue by requiring courts to find evidence of any harms when making custody decisions, explained in writing, and requiring supportive measures when appropriate that can be taken to avoid harm to the parents and their children. It will potentially help keep families together.”

**DIGITAL ASSETS OF THE DECEASED (S 1048)** – Would establish regulations over what happens to a decedent’s digital assets including social media, e-mail and online accounts.

Supporters said that people are unlikely to specifically designate control over these assets in a will, and companies have a patchwork of different policies on the subject or no policies at all. They noted that this often gives com-

panies discretion over whether to provide access to an account, and family members can be left with no ability to retrieve important information, particularly in the event of an unexpected death.

“At the moment, there is legal uncertainty about what happens to a person’s digital assets—their email, social media and other online accounts—when they pass away,” said sponsor Sen. Cindy Creem (D-Newton). “[The bill] would make it easy to determine who, if anyone, should have access to a deceased person’s online accounts. It would also establish procedures and safeguards to prevent inappropriate disclosure of the deceased’s private communications. The legislation protects privacy while also ensuring that there is clarity about who may access the digital assets of someone who has died.”

**HEALTH CARE SURROGATE (S 1047)** - Would create a process for handling the care of incapacitated patients who don’t have a health care proxy. The measure would allow attending physicians to appoint surrogate decision makers and identifies several candidates for that role, including the incapacitated patient’s spouse, unless legally separated, parent, adult child or adult sibling.

Under current law, Massachusetts health care providers must go through the difficult process of seeking a judicially appointed medical guardian before even routine decisions about care can be made. Then, after a medical guardian is appointed, some decisions, including those related to transfers to nursing facilities, require additional judicial approval. These cumbersome processes are a disservice to incapacitated patients, whose care can be delayed by weeks.

A surrogate would not be empowered to make decisions about transferring the patient to an inpatient mental health facility nor be able to make any “extraordinary” decisions about life support, sterilization and abortion. Those decisions would continue to be determined by a court.

“Massachusetts is one of only four states without a statute allowing for the appointment of a health care surrogate when an incapacitated patient does not have a designated proxy,” said sponsor Sen. Cindy Cream. “[The bill] would create a more practical process for making medical decisions in such cases, while preserving important safeguards. Certain decisions would still require additional judicial approval, ensuring continued oversight. The bill strikes a careful balance by allowing timely care decisions to be made in the patient’s best interest, while respecting their rights and aligning as closely as possible with their known values and wishes.”

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Massachusetts has some of the most beautiful state parks in the country, and it takes all of us to preserve them for generations to come. In honor of Earth Day, it’s nice to get outside and celebrate our natural spaces.” — Gov. Maura Healey who along with First Lady Joanna Continued on page 17

COMMENTARY

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

MassDems LGBTQIA+ Remember Pope Francis’s Legacy of Inclusion

The passing of Pope Francis on Easter Monday comes at a time of unprecedented challenges for global leadership. We, the elected members of the Massachusetts Democratic State Committee who serve on LGBTQIA+ Outreach, remember Pope Francis’s legacy of bridging divides between people all over the world, reserving a special place for migrants, the LGBT, and other marginalized communities.

“Pope Francis was a leader who chose bridges over barriers. His commitment to peace, humility, and human dignity offered hope to millions - especially those of us long pushed to the margins. He reminded the world that faith can be a force for inclusion,” recounts Dallas Ducar, Democratic State Committeewoman and Trans Healthcare Policy Advocate, “May his legacy call us all to build a more just and loving future.”

Over his twelve years of service, Pope

Francis transformed Church culture to be more accepting of the LGBT community becoming the first pontiff to “apologize” for the past treatment of the LGBT community, to publicly support same-sex civil unions, to oppose discrimination, and to make it possible for transgender people to be baptized as Catholics. Most famously, Pope Francis is remembered for saying, “Who am I to judge?” in 2013, setting a tone of acceptance towards the LGBT community, which continued throughout his tenure.

Democratic National Committeewoman Karen Payne also remembers Pope Francis as a positive example of global leadership: “Throughout his life, Pope Francis deeply understood his role in the world - as a servant to the people and a voice for the voiceless. He dedicated himself to uplifting the poor, championing social and economic justice, and promoting

unity across communities and cultures. With compassion at his core, he committed himself wholeheartedly to bringing people together, fostering dialogue, peace, and understanding. He embraced the marginalized with genuine kindness and humility, reminding the world of the power of love and inclusion. His legacy of service and compassion will forever be remembered and cherished by people around the globe.”

Thomas McGrath, Democratic State Committeeman representing the First Middlesex District, remembers Pope Francis as “a real trailblazer in reaching out to the LGBTQIA+ community.” Justin Klekota, Democratic State Committeeman representing the Second Middlesex District, concurs: “Pope Francis’s legacy of LGBT inclusion demonstrates the power of reconciliation. For too long, LGBT people have been alienated from their communities simply for living their lives as

they were born. Pope Francis gave back to an entire generation of LGBT youth their legitimate place in their communities and their families.”

Steve Kerrigan, Chair of the Massachusetts Democratic Committee, added his sentiment: “Pope Francis showed the world that compassion and courage are not mutually exclusive. His willingness to confront centuries of exclusion and embrace those on the margins was a beacon of hope and humanity. In a time when division too often dominates, his legacy reminds us that true leadership means opening doors, not closing them. We honor his memory by continuing the work of building a more inclusive and loving world.”

*Respectfully Submitted by the Massachusetts Democratic State Committee LGBTQIA+ Outreach*  
*April 25, 2025*

Beacon Hill Roll CallCONT. FROM PG 16

*Lydgate, visited Torbert MacDonald State Park in Medford to celebrate Earth Day.*

“Massachusetts is hemorrhaging private sector jobs, and the Healey administration’s answer is to bloat the government at a time when our state’s fiscal wellbeing is in a very tenuous position. This isn’t job growth—it’s political insulation, and taxpayers are the ones footing the bill.” — *Paul Craney, executive director of the Mass Fiscal Alliance on newly released employment data which he says revealed a net loss of 24,800 private sector jobs over the last year.*

“When employers violate our laws, including through wage theft and untimely payments, workers are unfairly harmed, exploited and financially deprived. My office will continue to enforce our laws to protect and empower workers, reminding employers that Massachusetts is serious about workers’ rights.” — *Attorney General Andrea Campbell announcing that Swissport, a North Carolina-based airport services company that employs workers at Boston’s Logan Airport, will pay \$3.1 million in restitution and penalties to resolve allegations, including failure to make timely payments and pay overtime to more than 2,000 airport workers.*

“The persistent increase in antisemitic incidents over the past five years is a stark reminder that antisemitism continues to impact our communities. Particularly con-

cerning is the continued proliferation of extremist incidents and the rise of attacks against Orthodox Jews. The alarming manifestations of antisemitism in 2024 instill fear and are reminders that much work remains to be done.” — *Samantha Joseph, Anti-Defamation League New England’s Regional Director, on the group’s annual audit of antisemitic incidents reporting a total of 638 incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism in 2024 within the five-state region of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. She said that this is the fifth year in a row that antisemitic incidents increased and broke the previous all-time high in 2023.*

“If the MassDems care about strong leadership on issues like housing, the migrant crisis and the economy, their options are support Mike Kennealy or recruit a primary challenger to Maura Healey. She has failed miserably on all of the issues Massachusetts residents care about.” — *Ben Hinchey, campaign manager for Mike Kennealy, responding to Democratic Party Chair Steve Kerrigan.*

**HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK’S SESSION?**

*Beacon Hill Roll Call tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature’s job and that a lot of important work is done*

outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session. During the week of April 21-25, the House met for a total of seven minutes while the Senate met for a total of 25 minutes.

Mon. April 21	No House session No Senate session
Tues. April 22	House 11:01 a.m. to 11:04 a.m. Senate 11:11 a.m. to 11:32 a.m.
Wed. April 23	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. April 24	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:04 a.m. Senate 11:06 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.
Fri. April 25	No House session No Senate session

*Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com*

## SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS:

**Medical Equipment Program** – Through the generosity of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and from the direction of Mayor Ballantyne, the Council on Aging can provide Durable Medical Equipment at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60, or have a permanent disability, and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. We currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies and Transport Wheelchairs (wheelchairs are intended for transport and are not self-propelling or self-breaking.) For additional information, or for an application, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

**Lockboxes for Seniors** - What is the Lockboxes for Seniors program? The Lockboxes for Seniors program is intended to provide Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) access to your residence in the event of an emergency where you are unable to open the door. A key to your residence will be stored in a secure metal storage device, like a realtor's lockbox, at your residence. The access code to the lockbox will only be available to Police, Fire, or EMS personnel and used only during an emergency. Who is eligible? The program is targeted towards Somerville community members who live alone and are aged 65+, or those who are disabled and/or suffer from major medical illness at any age. Individuals living in apartment complexes or other facilities with maintenance staff are not eligible for this program. How do I know this is safe? A member of the Somerville Fire Department will install and demonstrate how the lockbox operates and answer any questions you may have. The four-digit combination on the lockbox will only be available to respond to emergency personnel in the event of an emergency. Who should I contact for more information? For more information, please contact Debby Higgins at the Council on Aging via Email at dhiggins@somervillema.gov or by telephone at (617) 625-6600 ext. 2321. There is no charge to participate in the program if you meet the established target criteria. The Council on Aging will verify eligibility for services. This program is designed for those who are at most significant risk for falls or have limited mobility. All participants will be required to provide a spare house key to be used in the lock box as well as a safety inspection of the property.

**Let's Celebrate Older Americans Month** – Thursday, May 1st starting at 11:00 a.m. at the Dilboy Post located at 351 Summer Street. Doors open at 10:15 a.m. \$10. per person. Lunch will be stuffed chicken, salad and vegetables. The 2025 theme, Flip the Script on Aging, focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about and approaches aging. We encourage individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and dispel misconceptions. Reserve your spot for the event and lunch by calling Debby Higgins on 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

**Cultural Event Series** – Tuesday, May 13th starting at 1:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Marcus

Santos from Grooversity Global Drumming Network will lead this hands-on interactive, multicultural show, showcasing a friendly body movement adaptation of traditional rhythms and dances from different countries. Lunch will be provided by City Fresh Catering and will be served at noon. \$3. Per person. RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2323 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**Asian Tea** - Chronic Disease Self-Management Program – Mondays, May 5th and 12th starting at 2:00 p.m. at the Ralph & Jenny Center. This program offers supportive workshops designed to help participants build confidence in managing their health and leading active, fulfilling lives. The workshop will be conducted in both Mandarin and Cantonese. RSVP by calling Yi Lam at Somerviva, 781-808-7346.

**Portuguese Senior Coffee Social** – Tuesday, May 20th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Ralph & Jenny Center located at 9 New Washington Street. Somerviva invites you to participate in our third gathering of 2025. Come, drink coffee, see friends and talk to our staff. Special guest, artist Yumi Izuama, will be presenting a hands-on project. This event will be held in Portuguese. For more information

Mark your calendars, the COA is hitting the road.

#### Day Trips

**The Doobie Brothers Concert at Lake Pearl, Wrentham, MA** – Wednesday, May 21st - \$136. per person. Enjoy an afternoon of the Doobie Brothers greatest hits. Motor coach roundtrip transportation. Luncheon included. Refunds are unavailable after May 1st. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

**Lobstahs and Laughs** – Wednesday, July 16th - \$142. per person. Featuring The Bobby Darling Show at Foster's Clambake Restaurant in York, Maine. Motor coach roundtrip transportation. Lunch of either Lobster Bake or ½ BBQ Chicken. Refunds are unavailable after June 16th. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

**Tom Jones Tribute Band** – Thursday, August 21st - \$136. per person – at the Danversport Yacht Club. Motor coach roundtrip transportation. Lunch of Chicken Picatta or Baked Haddock. Refunds are unavailable after July 21st. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

**Fall Foliage Day Trip, New Hampshire** – Wednesday, September 24th - \$159. per person. Motor coach roundtrip transportation with stops at The Cathedral of the Pines, Lunch at the Old Mill

Restaurant, a visit to Smith's Country Cheeses and a visit to Red Apple Farm. Lunch of Baked Haddock or the Famous Old Mill Chicken Vegetable Pie. Refunds are unavailable after August 25th. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

**Always Olivia – Olivia Newton-John Tribute** – Wednesday, October 22nd - \$137. per person. At the Venus De Milo in Swansea, MA. Motor coach roundtrip transportation. Luncheon and show included. Refunds are unavailable after September 22nd. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

**Christmas with Tony Bennett and Barbara Streisand** – Wednesday, December 3rd - \$136. per person. At the Danversport Yacht Club. Motor coach round trip transportation, a tribute show to Barbara Streisand and Tony Bennett. Lunch of Baked Stuffed Chicken or Baked Haddock. Refunds unavailable after November 14th. Payments accepted by check, made payable to the SCOA. For more information contact Connie Lorenti by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2319.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

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

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

#### JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

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

If you would like to become part of our Google Group, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

#### MEAL PROGRAM

Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services Meal Program. All are welcome! Registration is required. You will need to register on a weekly basis. Each week, on Monday or Tuesday call the COA Reservation line on 617-625-6600, ext. 2323, to reserve your spot for the following week. Please leave your name, phone number and the day/days you would like to attend for the upcoming week. We will return your call to confirm your reservation by Wednesday afternoon. Lunches are provided by Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services. Congregate Meal Program and catered by City Fresh. A suggested \$3 donation for lunches. Menu Subject to Change. Meals served at Noon.

# Somerville community invited to Tufts Street reconstruction kick-off meeting

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Ward One Councilor Matthew McLaughlin, and city staff are inviting the community to join a virtual community meeting about upcoming construction and safety improvements on Tufts Street.

The event will take place Wednesday, May 14, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. Visit [somervillema.gov/tuftsstreet](https://somervillema.gov/tuftsstreet) to learn more and attend the meeting.

During the meeting, staff from the city's Engineering Division will present information about the project including:

- A brief review of the project objectives and final design
- An overview of the construction process, expected impacts, and preliminary schedule of work
- How residents can stay informed as work progress

Following the event, a recorded presentation will be available on the project website. Construction is currently expected to begin in either late June or July. Schedules are subject to change due to weather or other factors.

About the Tufts Street Reconstruction Project

The city is repaving Tufts Street and reconstructing its sidewalks as part of the Citywide Pavement and Sidewalk Management Program ([somervillema.gov/paving](https://somervillema.gov/paving)). As part of this effort, city staff have, after a year and a half of community engagement, developed a new design for the street to make it safer and more comfortable for everyone.

Tufts Street is designated as a "Neighborhood" in the Somerville Bicycle Network Plan, which is a walk- and bike-friendly street designed to lower vehicle volumes and speeds.

The final design for Tufts includes:

- Two-way connections for vehicles and for bikes
- Wider sidewalks
- Traffic calming features including raised crossing across Tufts Street at Glen Street, Dell Street, and Cross Street.
- Landscaped areas and expanded tree



wells to support the longevity and of health of trees increasing long-term shade coverage

More information and visual representations of the final design are available on the project website at [somervillema.gov/tuftsstreet](https://somervillema.gov/tuftsstreet).

This project is one of a series of actions the city is undertaking in pursuit of our Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and series injuries from our roadways.

## Somerville launching 'Neighbors Talking to Neighbors' dialogue series

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is today announcing the launch of Neighbors Talking to Neighbors (N2N), a new City initiative aimed at strengthening community connections via open, respectful conversation, as ongoing cultural turmoil leads to increased feelings of isolation, division, and fear.

The dialogue series will be led by Somerville's Department of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and will offer a series of facilitated dialogues, trainings, and panel discussions focused on building understanding across different lived experiences.

"As forces across the country try to divide us, Somerville is choosing a different path: one rooted in empathy, compassion, and community," said Mayor Ballantyne. "My aim for our Neighbors Talking to Neighbors series is to give residents the tools and space to have honest conversations, build relationships across differences, and make our community stronger together."

The pilot series will focus on four pressing topics to both Somerville and the U.S. at large:

- Race
- Immigration
- LGBTQIA+ Community
- Interfaith Relations

Session topics were identified based on feedback from multiple City departments and partners, including the SomerViva Office of Immigrant Affairs, Somerville Public Library, Somerville Public Schools, and the Somerville Police Department.

**How It Works**

Each of the four sessions will be professionally facilitated and open to all residents. Participants will agree to shared community guidelines designed to foster a respectful, welcoming environment. All sessions are free to attend, but registration is required. Some topics will have separate times for youth and adults to facilitate age-appropriate conversations.

Upcoming Dialogue Sessions:

Session Topic: Race

Date: Wednesday, May 7




Place: Virtual

Time:

- Youth Session: 3 - 4:30 p.m.
- Adult Session: 6:30 - 8 p.m.
- Session Topic: Immigration
- Date: Friday, May 9
- Place: Virtual
- Time:
- Youth Session: 3 - 4:30 p.m.
- Adult Session: 6:30 - 8 p.m.
- Session Topic: LGBTQIA+
- Date: Wednesday, May 14
- Place: Virtual
- Time:
- Youth Session: 3 - 4:30 p.m.
- Adult Session: 6:30 - 8 p.m.
- Session Topic: Interfaith Relations
- Date: Wednesday, May 28
- Place: Somerville High School Highland Forum (81 Highland Ave.)
- Time: 7:30 - 9 p.m.

**About Neighbors Talking to Neighbors**

Neighbors Talking to Neighbors is part of Somerville's long-term commitment to fostering a connected, compassionate, and inclusive community. For more information, contact the Somerville Department of Racial and Social Justice at [rsj@somervillema.gov](mailto:rsj@somervillema.gov).



**Somerville Fair Housing Commission**  
*Question of the week*

**Q:** I want to increase the rent on a unit. What do I need to do?

**A:** If your tenant has a lease and you do not have an escalator clause in it, you must wait until the end of the lease and then may raise the rent by giving 30 days notice or signing a new lease. If your tenant is a tenant-at-will, you must give them at least 30 days notice before raising the rent.

*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.*


### Tufts Electronic Music Ensemble: Back to the Future – Electronic Music From The ‘60s to Today

The Tufts University Department of Music presents “Tufts Electronic Music Ensemble: Back to the Future - Electronic Music From The ‘60s to Today” in the Fisher Performance Room at the Granoff Music Center on Thursday, May 1, at 8:00 p.m. The 10th annual concert of the Tufts Electronic Music Ensemble.

An eclectic collection of rock, jazz, classical, and experimental music on electric and electronic instruments. Paul Lehrman, director. Music by Alexander Courage, Frank Zappa, Genesis, Mahavishnu John McLaughlin, Supertramp, Jimmy Cliff, and The Seatbelts. This event will be livestreamed at [go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream](http://go.tufts.edu/musiclivestream).

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts’ Medford/Somerville campus. For more information, please visit [go.tufts.edu/musicevents](http://go.tufts.edu/musicevents) or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.

## Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Street scene... — Photo by Denise Provost

### BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



What’s an astronaut’s favorite board game?  
Moon-opoly.

The "Original"

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## On This Day in History

### April 30

0313 – Licinius unifies the whole of the eastern Roman Empire under his own rule.

1527 – Henry VIII of England and King Francis of France sign the Treaty of Westminster.

1725 – Spain withdraws from the Quadruple Alliance.

1789 – George Washington is inaugurated as the first U.S. president.

1803 – The United States doubles in size through the Louisiana Purchase, which was sold by France for \$15 million.

1930 – The Soviet Union proposes a military alliance with France and Great Britain.

1931 – The George Washington Bridge, linking New York City and New Jersey, opens.

1945 – Adolf Hitler commits suicide in his bunker.

1973 – President Richard Nixon announces the resignation of Harry Robbins Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and other top aides.

1980 – Terrorists seize the Iranian Embassy in London.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Join Union Square Main Streets and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the **21st Annual Union Square Farmers Market**. Shop local Saturdays from **May 10 – October 25**, except September 20, from 9am to 1pm on the Union Square Plaza. Thanks to our partnership with the **City of Somerville** and the **Somerville Farmers Market Coalition**, they are proud to continue to offer our SNAP match. Check the market webpage for the latest info and to see which vendors accept SNAP. For more information about the Union Square Farmers Market, visit [unionsquaremain.org/2025-season](https://unionsquaremain.org/2025-season).

The **City of Somerville’s Office of Emergency Management and Health and Human Services Department** invite residents to attend a community listening session to discuss and provide feedback on the city’s **2024 – 25 warming center** at the **Cummings School**. The meeting will take place on **Thursday, May 8**, at **Somerville High School** (81 Highland Ave.) from 6 to 7:30 p.m. City staff will be present to facilitate discussion and gather feedback which will be used to improve future operations.

The city’s **Mobility Division** has been collecting feedback for the **Western Pearl Street Reconstruction project**, part of Somerville’s **Pavement and Sidewalk Management Program** and an effort to increase safety for all. Now, preliminary design concepts are here. Community members are invited to an open house on **Wednesday, May 7**, at **Ed Leathers Park** (between Skilton Ave. and Walnut St.) from 5 to 7:30 p.m. to learn more about the project, review concept design options, and share input. The event will feature multiple stations describing different aspects of the project with staff ready to answer questions. Pizza will be provided. Learn more. Can’t attend the open house? Future opportunities to give feedback will be available after the open house at [www.somervillema.gov/westernpearl](https://www.somervillema.gov/westernpearl).

**Joshua Sariñana’s** upcoming exhibition, **Mental Mapping**, will be showcased **191 Highland Ave., Second Floor, Suite 2A**, Somerville. The exhibition runs through June 22. This exhibition delves into the intersections of neuro-science, artificial intelligence, and visual storytelling. Mental Mapping explores how internal networks, such as memory, perception, and emotion, shape the way we experience and navigate

the world. <https://www.joshuasarinana.com/mental-mapping>

Join the **Commission for Persons with Disabilities** at the first of their **#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth** events next **Wednesday, May 7**. This event will bring together people of all ages to discuss supporting one another and how we can normalize the language of mental health. RSVP: [bit.ly/HT\\_25](https://bit.ly/HT_25)

The **City of Somerville** invites all residents to join the waitlist. Rental units become available at 50%, 80%, and 110% of the Area Median Income. For example, the income level is \$130,250 for a four-person household at 80% of AMI. If you would like to apply for the **Consolidated Inclusive Housing Waitlist**, visit them at one of our application events or go to [www.somervillewaitlist.org](https://www.somervillewaitlist.org) and apply before **May 30**.

Kick off **SustainaVille Week** and join Somerville area climate, environmental, and biodiversity justice advocates and concerned residents to explore shared concerns and goals, network, and build resilience. This event will be held on **Saturday, May 3**, at the **Somerville Community Growing Center** (22 Vinal Ave.) from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Learn more. <https://www.somervillema.gov/events/2025/05/03/climate-convening-2025-building-somerville-areas-capacity-climate-action>.

Help celebrate **e-mobility** during **SustainaVille Week**, returning **May 3 – 9**, with a full lineup of events celebrating sustainability and climate action in Somerville. Community members are invited to participate in an **E-Mobility Expo** to showcase their own electric rides – whether it’s an e-bike, electric vehicle (EV), scooter, or some other electric transport. The expo will take place on **May 9** at the **Day Street Lot** in **Davis Square** (44 Day St.) from noon to 6 p.m.

**PorchFest 2025** will take place on **Saturday, May 10**, from 12 to 6 p.m. (inclement weather date: Sunday, May 11). Visit <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/> for more information. The **PorchFest Map** is live. Check out who’s playing, where, and when– whether it’s your own street or your favorite band across town. Stay in the loop: Text SOM-PORCHFEST to 888777 to get emergen-

cy alerts on the day of the event. <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfest-listing/>

This May, the **Union Square Neighborhood Council** is holding its bi-annual election for the **USNC board**. All members are invited to vote in the election, as well as run for a board seat. (If you have any questions about the USNC or what it means to be a member, please consult their website at: [sites.google.com/view/usnc](https://sites.google.com/view/usnc). The election will be held in person as follows: **Day 1: Saturday, May 17**, 8 am – 12 p.m., Argenziano School, 290 Washington Street. **Day 2: Tuesday, May 20**, 7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m., [TBA] Somerville.

Thinking about **running for local office?** **Starting May 5**, nomination papers for Mayor, Councilor at Large, Ward Councilor, and School Committee will be available to take out. To begin the process, make an appointment with the Elections Department to pick up your nomination papers. A separate appointment is required to return them. Appointments are available **from May 5 through June 9**. Important deadlines: **June 9 at 5 p.m.**, last day to take out nomination papers. **June 11 at 5 p.m.**, deadline to submit completed papers to the **Board of Election Commissioners**. For more information, visit [somervillema.gov/elections](https://somervillema.gov/elections).

Attend a **School Committee Meeting**. Dates and times for school committee meetings are listed on the SPS district website calendar. Visit the **School Committee website** for information and find meeting details on the **City of Somerville Events page**: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/events/calendar>.

**Hazardous Waste Drop-Off, Saturday, May 10**: Next monthly **Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day** at DPW (1 Franey Rd., 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.)

**Street sweeping** in Somerville resumed on **Tuesday, April 1**. Somerville’s street cleaning program is an essential public works program that not only keeps our city cleaner but also reduces the risk of flooding and icing due to clogged storm drains. Signs indicate the time and date of no parking due to sweeping. The street sweeping season runs from April 1 until December 31 each year. 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. The penalty for not complying with street sweeping parking regulations is a \$50 fine. Check the signs on the streets where you park and visit [www.somervillema.gov/sweeper](https://www.somervillema.gov/sweeper) for more information.

**Somerville Animal Control** is in need of towels/blankets/linens. They can arrange a porch pickup if you message them on Facebook or they can be dropped off at the police station at any time.

You can download a helpful **packet of Know Your Rights resources and information** in the language of your choice below. **Somerville Public Schools** have also created a list of resources on the **One Somerville Resource page**, which can be found here <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-departments/somerville-family-learning-collaborative-sflc/one-somerville-resources>.

**SCES** is teaming up with **City Fresh Foods** to offer a five-pack of **frozen home-delivered meals**. This new meal delivery option is ideal for consumers who want the convenience of home-delivered meals but are not able to be at home each weekday to receive deliveries. Meal recipients can choose which weekday they would like to receive the frozen meals, with up to five meals in each bulk delivery. Each meal comes with bread, milk, and a dessert. Current SCES clients who are interested in receiving meals should call their office at 617-628-2601 or contact their case manager for more information.

The **Somerville Growing Center** will host **Earth Day: Rooted in Resilience, Saturday, April 26**, 2 – 4 p.m., Rain date: Sunday, April 27. Continue to celebrate, following the morning events at **South Street Farm** with **Groundwork Somerville**. Demonstrations of vermicomposting and making ink from natural materials. Explore volunteer opportunities with the Growing Center and activism with local climate and justice focused groups. Visit the Pollinator Gardens and make native seed balls. Pot up a Red Fire Farm herb seedling to take home (limited supply). Exchange garden supplies with other gardeners. Check their social media for updates and details! <https://www.thegrowingcenter.org/>

**City Alerts** are a great way for those who live, work, or own a

# Arbor Day Cookout at Cobble Hill Apartments

On Friday April 25, the residents of Cobble Hill Apartments celebrated Arbor Day by preparing personal placards and hanging their messages on trees that are at risk of being cut down at 90 Washington Street. Attached is a collection of pictures of those who attended. They are most thankful for the city officials who attended as well.

They have discovered the following sustainability website that measures the percentage of tree canopy in local communities. Its findings cannot be ignored: <https://insights.sustainability.google/places/ChIJZeH1eyl344kRA3v52Jl3k-Ho?ty=2023&hl=en-US>.

This website reports that the City of Somerville has an average tree canopy

cover of 19%. By comparison, Cambridge has 30% and Boston has 27%. Perhaps worst of all, Cobble Hill's census tract records only 7%.

Further impairing what is already a bad outcome for the neighborhood, the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA) wants to develop all four acres at 90 Washington Street. If this happens, the one acre that includes green space and 38 trees will be lost for future generations of Somerville residents.

It is their hope the SRA will honor the recommendations of the 90 Washington Street Civic Advisory Committee and do all it can to preserve the green space for the residents of Cobble Hill, East Somerville and for future generations.



## Orange Line service suspended between North Station and Oak Grove night of May 9 and every day through May 18

The MBTA is today reminding riders that Orange Line service will be suspended between North Station and Oak Grove beginning at approximately 8:30 PM on Friday, May 9, and continuing every day for the following nine days, May 10 – 18.

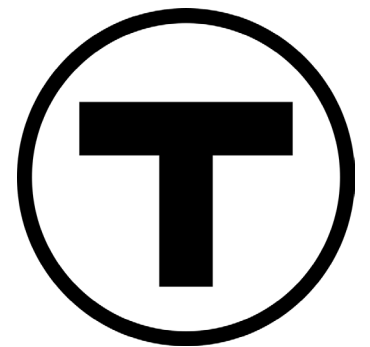
Riders can find complete information at [mbta.com/PlannedWork](https://mbta.com/PlannedWork). More information on these service changes and alternate travel options is below:

- Free and accessible shuttle buses will make all stops between North Station and Oak Grove.
- Riders using shuttle buses should budget ample extra travel time. For example, a rider traveling to Downtown Crossing from Oak Grove should budget an additional 45 – 60 minutes of travel time in addition to their regular commute.
- Express shuttle buses will also serve Oak Grove, Malden Center, and North Station.
- Accessible van service will be available on weekdays during this service change, directly serving all Orange Line stations between Oak Grove and North Station. Please see onsite personnel to request the accessible van.
- Riders are strongly encouraged to consider the Haverhill Commuter Rail Line for fare-free service to and from Oak Grove, Malden Center, and North Station. Regular fares should be purchased beyond Oak Grove.
- Travel time between Oak Grove and North Station on the Haverhill Line is approximately 20 minutes.

The service change is in place to support MassDOT's Maffa Way/Mystic Avenue Bridge Superstructure Replacements project [4], which will replace the two deteriorated bridge superstructures and improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.

More information is also available through in-station signage and public announcements. Transit Ambassadors and MBTA staff will be available on-site to offer information and assistance during these service changes. Riders are encouraged to subscribe to T-Alerts or to follow the MBTA on X @MBTA for up-to-date service information.

For more information, please visit [mbta.com/PlannedWork](https://mbta.com/PlannedWork) or connect with the T on X @MBTA [9], Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.



### Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

business in Somerville to receive important city information that affects your neighborhood. City Alerts provide information about emergencies (including snow emergencies), construction and road closures, water service interruptions, community news, and more. To sign up, visit [somervillema.gov/alerts](https://somervillema.gov/alerts) and click on the button for your preferred language. Step-by-step sign-up

instructions are available at: [somervillema.gov/alerts](https://somervillema.gov/alerts). Having trouble signing up? You can call 3-1-1 (617-666-3311) for assistance.

\*\*\*\*\*

Through the generosity of the **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**, and from the direction of **Mayor Ballantyne**, the **Council on Aging** can provide **Durable Medical Equipment** at

no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60, or have a permanent disability and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. We currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies, and Transport Wheelchairs. For addition-

al information or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

\*\*\*\*\*

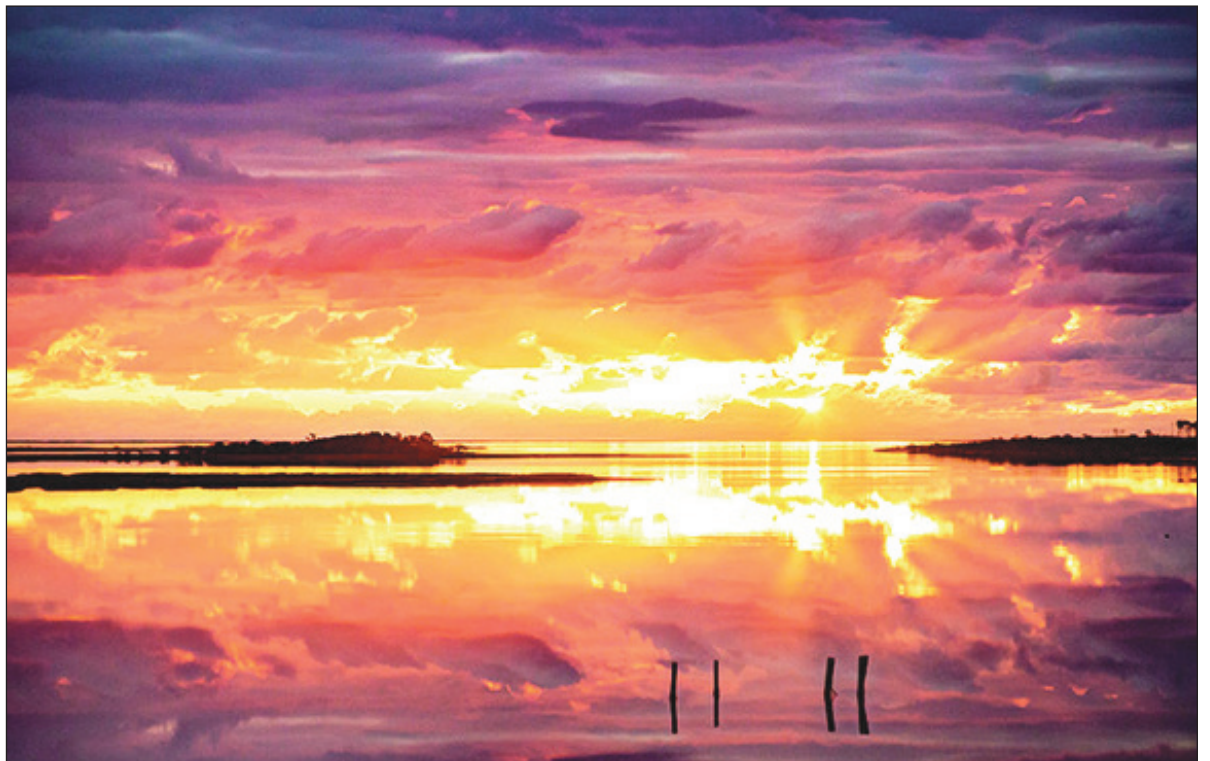
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# OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## 'The Thirty-Two Directions' by CD Collins



*The Thirty-Two Directions*  
By CD Collins

I wake before the innocent fire of dawn, the pulsing tangerine sun above the chicken coop. I take a photograph to send to California, letting her know about the grandeur of this small farm in rural Kentucky where you might assume you know what motivates the movement of the stars and the people as you sit on the front porch and count the ratio of cars to trucks. Always more trucks, some loud without mufflers and no one stopping them. Some trucks built so high up you need the running board even if you're a grown man.

I waited to send the photograph until people were waking in California. She wrote back in response to the sunrise pleated by the tin roof: Dear God.

Mornings, I position myself with my prayer beads and the hot chocolate she'd sent the recipe for: Darkest chocolate, salt, MCT oil, full on milk and cream, cayenne, cinnamon. You can get something similar in the drive-up booth in the Dollar Tree parking lot.

This was the time when we hardly left our houses, when we checked hourly for an opening at the pharmacy for a vaccination. A time we'd been told was coming and we may have believed, but we didn't know how to trust it. A time when I didn't see anyone except my cousin Gordon, who showed up with a practically see-through bandana over his nose.

Gordon suspected they'd insert a tracker in his arm if he let them go through with the needle. His wife got the shot, though. People started falling all around us. We could hear the artificial breathing, the

pale faces surfacing in our sleep.

We did not know how long it would last, or what transformation would arise. The Governor spoke to us each night. We adorned our porches with green lights to express honor. The wind blew from west to east.

\*

Now we do not know where the wind will come from next as we watch the disassembling of all we've built.

Can you help us in Los Angeles? What do the Giant Flemish rabbits in cages behind the barn know as they huddle with their quivering nostrils?

We feared what would happen, but could not conceive the speed, our feet on the ground, then steadying ourselves on the running board. Our feet rising, floating, the ground beneath misty and distant.

We couldn't conceive the speed nor the multitudinous directions.

We knew only cardinal directions, or intercardinal directions, northeast, southwest.

Now they come from every direction, coming for the goats and fowl, coming for the rings on your fingers, coming for the sunrise, coming for the day in its brightening and release.

Can you hear us Arkansas, can you hear us Belize? Now we must say what we want, not turn away in desperate alarm.

Can you hear us Senegal, can you hear us, St. Petersburg? Can you hear us, Kyiv? Can you hear us?

We are calling.

We are listening.

*\*Previously published in Writer's Hour Magazine*

# Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

As a prolific author from the Boston area, Peter F. Crowley writes in various forms, including short fiction, op-eds, poetry and academic essays. His writing can be found in *Pif Magazine*, *New Verse News*, *Counterpunch*, *Galway Review*, *Digging the Fat*, *Adelaide's Short Story* and *Poetry Award* anthologies (finalist in both) and *The Opiate*. He is the author of the poetry books *Those Who Hold Up the Earth* and *Empire's End*, and the short fiction collection *That Night and Other Stories*.



### Death

Our bodies are warm  
And then they stop

Within minutes they're as cold as snowed over  
South Dakota cornfields in the dead of winter  
and as heavy as Idaho potato sacks

### II.

The heart is pumping  
And then it's not

Neurons, forevermore, hold their fire  
The swampy brain, fueling profusion of thought,  
becomes a delectable object for the thirsty worm

### III.

Everything we know evaporates  
Luckily, we cannot grieve for ourselves  
Others will,  
perhaps

Some, we will haunt  
Until they, too, fall unto the soft clay earth  
becoming ghosts in the whispering winter wind,  
their ethereal spirits growing ever fainter

— Peter F. Crowley

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