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Somerville installs nation's first outdoor dual sharps disposal kiosk



An outdoor dual sharps disposal kiosk, the first of its kind in the nation, has been installed at Seven Hills park.
— Photo by Bobbie Toner

The City of Somerville has installed the nation's first outdoor dual sharps disposal kiosk at Seven Hills Park, further advancing its harm reduction and public safety initiatives. Located behind the Davis Square MBTA station, the kiosk is accessible by foot, bike, and car, with nearby access from Meacham Road.

This innovative installation is the first of its kind in both Massachusetts and the United States. It is designed to make safe disposal of sharps more accessible while offering a discreet alternative to the indoor kiosk located at the Somerville Police Station.

"This is one small but important piece of a complex and critical public health response," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. "By expanding access to safe disposal, we're helping protect both individual and community wellbeing."

Continued on page 4

20-Year Remembrance of Senator Charles 'Charlie' Shannon

By Sean Fitzgerald

This week marks the passing of a Somerville icon, who died in office 20 years ago last Saturday, April 5, 2005. Not many people know this, but Senator Shannon was actually born in Somerville, and served for 20 years as a Lexington Police Officer.

The next time you are at Dilboy Stadium, go take a look at the plaque honoring his commitment to the youth of Somerville, as he was largely responsible for developing that project. It is in need of a serious refurbishment, but it never made the cut of the previous or current administration's priority list.

While he lived in Winchester, and also represented Medford and Woburn, the center of his district was always the City of Somerville. You didn't need to schedule an appointment if you

Continued on page 4



Former Somerville Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay with the late Senator Charles "Charlie" Shannon in 1999.
— Photo by Sean Fitzgerald



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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.

On April 10 at 7:30 p.m., Somerville’s Fair Housing Commission, Department of Racial and Social Justice, and Somerville Public Library invite you to a film screening of *Segregated by Design* followed by a panel discussion of fair housing and discrimination with local experts. Food and drinks will be provided. Registration is required: www.tinyurl.com/ykjnt9f9.








Aspiring gardeners of all ages are invited to attend a workshop with **Green City Growers**. Learn how to plant, maintain, fertilize, and harvest successful crops. The first event of this series will be held on **Wednesday, April 9**, at the **Central Library** (79 Highland Ave.) from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Learn more and register to attend. <https://somervillepubliclibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/gardening-workshop-with-green-city-growers-39/>.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: We wish a happy birthday to all of our Facebook friends such as **Steve MacEachern**, **Linda Camiel Butler**, **Patricia Garrity**, **Warren Goldstein-Gelb**, **Loretta McGonagle** and **Mark Hnl Kaye** who are all celebrating this week. To all the others we may have missed and, yes, we must admit there are a few more out there. We sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

In recognition of **Week of the Young Child**, **Mayor Katjana Ballantyne**, **Somerville Public Schools**, and *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of April 9 – April 14 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 Wednesday <i>April 9</i>	Sunny	47°/30°	1%	1%	NW 14 mph
 Thursday <i>April 10</i>	Cloudy	51°/37°	2%	1%	SW 11 mph
 Friday <i>April 11</i>	Rain	50°/41°	40%	32%	E 11 mph
 Saturday <i>April 12</i>	Rain	43°/40°	71%	59%	NE 16 mph
 Sunday <i>April 13</i>	Rain	50°/45°	39%	21%	N 11 mph
 Monday <i>April 14</i>	Partly Cloudy	61°/45°	17%	11%	NW 9 mph
 Tuesday <i>April 14</i>	Partly Cloudy	64°/44°	22%	12%	SW 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: Massachusetts elected officials call for release of detained Tufts student Rümeyssa Öztürk

Jamie Fitzgerald says:

Thank you for fighting for her case. While I support the detainment of illegal, especially ones that are committed crimes after coming into the US, she is innocent as far as the public details of this case have been. As an independent, I don’t think any one party nor one person is infallible, but this wrong needs to be corrected.

Response to: A Zoning Overlay – for Whom?

Katherine Wheeler says:

Thanks for pointing out both aspects: how the project is oversized for its location and possibly, too, the economic environment and how, after thought we were giving our time to a good–faith collaborative process the city undercut everything and is designing to developer specs, with the developer taking most specifics off the table pending the zoning decision.

Cui bono: whose benefit?

Response to: Marking Transgender Day of Visibility: Somerville’s Commitment to Safety and Dignity

Somerville Resident says:

How about the mayor actually involve herself in helping victims of domestic violence in the city from abuses from city officials and color of law violations? Just a thought. Last I checked, an operable window and clean air was not only the law , fire code, but a human right. F this propaganda bs.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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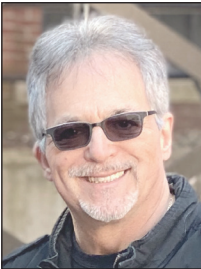
Life in the

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.

Milkshakes and mercurochrome



Remember when your medicine cabinet contained bottles of paregoric and Mercurochrome? On those old fashioned looking small bottles, you could barely make out the words Surabian, Grover, or Sordillo Drugs. There were many, many drug stores in Somerville at one time. Now, not.

A lot of us had our first lime or raspberry Rickey at one of them. Surabians was in Ball Square and it's the drug store that Dr. Harry Goldenberg sent my parents to with prescriptions. I still remember that "Lud" was one of the pharmacists and he was always smiling and very helpful.

The following is an account of what some Somerville people remember about those drug stores of old. I remember some of them, but if they aren't exactly correct it's because our memories aren't what they used to be (probably from too much paregoric as kids!). Just Remember, if some of the facts aren't correct, the paper was free! I'll tell you the name of the drug store and where it used to be, according to my sources.

Grover's was on the corner of Cross St. and Broadway. Winter Hill Pharmacy was on Temple St. and run by Jack Kaplan. He knew his customers by name and took care of people who had trouble paying. Sordillo's was in Magoun Square and at one time ice cream sodas were only 25 cents. Walnut Drug was on the corner of Sargent Ave. and Broadway, complete with a soda fountain (most of the old ones had them).

Adams Drug was at the corner of Willow Ave. and Highland Ave. and their soda fountain had a beautiful marble counter. Kramer's Drug was on Somerville Ave. where China Delight is now. They used to deliver, too, as many did.

In Teele Square there was Furbish and Shute and Kerner's was at the corner of Partridge Ave. and Medford St. On the corner of Morrison Ave. and Highland Road was Dick's drugstore where Ball Square kids went for sodas and comic books. Stone Pharmacy was at the corner of Broadway and Holland St. They had a mean vanilla Coke for 20 cents and an "all around" was a mixture of all the soda flavors in one glass.

McNeal's (not sure of the spelling) occupied the space where Primo's Pizza used to be. Berry and McDonald was at North St. and Broadway. It was robbed one time and the pharmacist gave the gunman some capsules with rat poison in them. Reeds was at the corner of Day St. and Highland Ave. We paid our utility bills there and stocked up on candy before going to the Somerville Theatre.

There was a Rexall Drugs in the square also, but the site is confusing. Winter Hill had Paul Revere Drugs, and who can forget Goodell's in Powder House Square where Dunkies is now. Union Square had Cardillos and Janar Pharmacy (formerly Austin Drug) was also in Magoun Square. They served piping hot fresh Kemp's nuts.

The owner of Janar's, Mr. Januario, would give neighborhood kids free ice cream for showing a good report card. Do you remember the creepy paintings



on the walls of Cardillos depicting "medical miracles?" Lots of times you could bypass the physician and the pharmacist would just give you what he thought you needed after a short diagnosis. Armstrong Pharmacy was in Union Square and Scanell's was at the corner of Beacon and Washington.

Lots of memories were made sitting for hours at the soda fountain in the old drug stores in the Ville. The pharmacists knew you and cared about you. They wore smocks and often were perched above the

customers in a raised area. We were there after school, before school, and when we needed to pick up medicine. Often, we were there waiting for the new Batman or Superman comic. Today, we have CVS, Walgreens and Rite Aid, but nothing personal like in the old days.

I'm not taking my final thought to the bank but I am pretty sure it's true. When LePore Drugs closed in Ball Square, a rug store took over the space. All they did was remove the D from DRUGS, and the sign read, RUGS!

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Artist wraps up public installation in Davis Square

By Jeffrey Shwom

Painter, maker, and scenic artist Karen McGill [1] wraps up her 10 week installation at INSIDE OUT GALLERY, in the windows outside CVS in Davis Square. As shared in the Somerville Creates group [2], “For artists, this inherent allure of the natural world can ignite a longing for deep exploration, furthering their journey of artistic expression.

For Inside-Out Gallery’s featured artist, Kerri McGill, this resonates deeply. Her vibrant landscapes depict not only tranquility, but reflect the age-old philosophical ideals of the human experience within nature.” McGill works out of Vernon Street Studios [3].

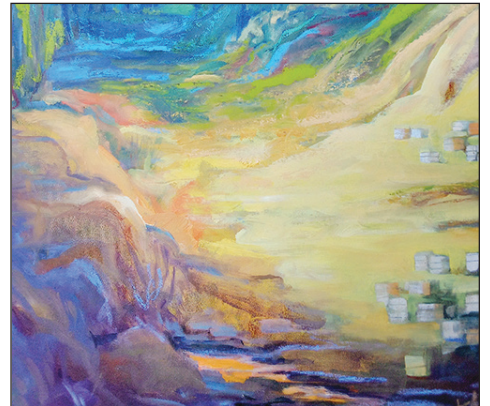
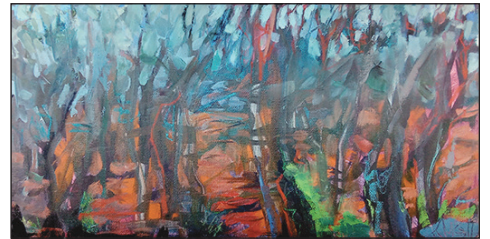
The arts council curates Inside-Out Gallery [4], “an eclectic array of works from artists and local organizations,” typically monthly, in the space that is visible to the public from the sidewalk. For artists interested in booking the window, contact Heather Balchunas [5], Arts Coordinator at SAC.

Links:

- [1] <https://www.kerrimgill.com/>
- [2] <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2555594324713636/posts/3943355435937511/>
- [3] <https://www.vernonstreet.com/>
- [4] <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/initiative/inside-out-gallery-2/>
- [5] <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/about/staff/>



— Photos by Jeffrey Shwom



Somerville installs nation’s first outdoor dual sharps disposal kiosk

CONT. FROM PG 1

Unlike indoor drop boxes, which only accept sealed, puncture-proof containers, this new dual kiosk can accommodate both containers and individual sharps. A secure, single-use slot allows for the safe disposal of individual needles, providing greater flexibility and convenience for community members.

More outdoor kiosks are planned across the city, with upcoming installa-

tions slated for sites near the East and West Branch Libraries.

“As part of our ongoing commitment to public health and safety, this kiosk provides a critical resource for safe sharps disposal in a high-traffic, accessible location,” said Karin Carroll, Director of Health and Human Services. “We encourage community members to use this resource responsibly and help keep

Somerville clean and safe.”

To ensure safety and cleanliness, the city has contracted a professional vendor for regular disposal services, and Somerville’s Community Health Workers will monitor the site to maintain accessibility and upkeep.

What to do if you find improperly discarded sharps:

Do not touch or attempt to pick up the item.

Report the location by contacting Somerville 311:

Phone: Dial 311 or (617) 666-3311 (available 24/7)

Email: 311requests@somervillema.gov

For more information on safe sharps disposal, visit somervillema.gov/publichealth.

20-Year Remembrance of Senator Charles ‘Charlie’ Shannon

CONT. FROM PG 1

needed his help-and he literally helped thousands of his constituents-all you had to do was stop by Cafe Resmini on Highland Avenue, (now Three Little Figs) around 8 a.m., and tell him that you had a problem, and needed his help. true to form, he would deliver, time and time again! He was definitely old school, unsurpassed at constituent service, was probably the last of the ward healers, and took his responsibility seriously every day. He is deeply missed by all those who knew him and those who called him a friend.

Senator Patricia Jehlen, (D-Somerville), who succeeded Shannon—

“As a retired police officer, Sen. Shannon was an important and credible voice on issues of public safety and the needs of young people. His memory is preserved in Shannon Grants, which promote community safety and reduce gang violence.”

Representative Paul Donato, (D-Medford), who served with Shannon —

“Senator Shannon was a mentor to me and had a profound influence on my life.

He was a staunch political ally, a trusted advisor, but more importantly, a close personal friend. Not only did we work on many of the important issues together facing our constituents, but had a personal friendship that extended beyond the State House. I miss him every day.”

Charles “Chuck” Shannon III, statement on behalf of the Shannon family —

“The untimely death of my father, the late Senator Shannon, 20 years ago, was a tragic loss for the Shannon family, his friends, and his constituents. While his passing has been incredibly difficult, we, the Shannon family, are heartened by the continued success of the Shannon Community Initiative which continues to keep my father’s passion for helping young people excel and community engagement as the best way to keep his memory and vision alive.”

Former long time Somerville Mayor and Registrar of Deeds Gene Brune —

“Senator Charlie Shannon was an outstanding elected official that dedicated much of his time working with problems

to combat youth and gang violence. First as a police officer for many years and then later as the senator. Charlie was a team player that enjoyed helping others and was known for his smile and great personality. The Senator continues to be missed even today by those of us that had the pleasure of working or knowing him. Thank you for your service, Charlie.”

Former Somerville Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay —

“I fondly remember Senator Shannon-Charlie as we called him-coming out to endorse my candidacy for Mayor in the 1999 special election. He took me all around Ball Square to meet the people that are the fabric of the neighborhood, and throwing his full weight and organization behind my campaign. He was the best public servant, a hero to the working class, and a true friend of mine.”

Former Somerville Ward 3 Alderman Robert McWatters —

“Senator Shannon was a champion with his leadership in the Senate on sponsoring legislation in support of pro-



Senator Charles “Charlie” Shannon.

grams to reduce youth violence and substance use disorder. He had a penchant in helping the underserved population in getting treatment and help they weren’t able to access. Senator Shannon’s career was over too soon before he was able to make a difference.”

Ordinance changes and sports camera tech: Legislative Matters meets

By Jeffrey Shwom

The Legislative Matters Committee discussed three items, including use of sports camera technology at SHS, and two ordinance changes related to tree preservation and energy use and climate change.

SHS presents case for camera use in high school gym

The school district’s athletic director shared a transparency report about future sports camera technology use in the high school gym. Amara Anosike, Chief of Staff of the school district, spoke at an April 1 Legislative Matters committee meeting about the interest in high school basketball and volleyball teams having access to Hudl Focus cameras in the high school gym and possibly at Dilboy Stadium. “Hudl is widely used across the state and in all schools in the Greater Boston League” and the city wants to meet regional best practices.

Per the Surveillance Technology Impact Report submitted by Director of Athletics Stan Vieira, a Hudl camera records sports games and practices, with cameras that “automatically follow the action, capture multiple angles, and upload video to a Hudl library.” The camera uses would be limited to “boys’ and girls’ basketball practices and games in order for coaches to break down game and practice footage and statistics. This information will only be shared with the SHS Basketball coaching staff and Hudl,” which stores the data. “Nothing will be shared and everything will remain on the Hudl server.” There would be no audio recorded and the technology will not be used for live streaming.

Councilor Davis, who has children who use Hudl, wanted more clarification in writing if the cameras would run all time, who can turn them on, and what activities could be recorded. Councilor Strezo wanted to make sure adults using the technology were CORI and SORI checked

(criminal offender and sex offender registries). The athletics department will make revisions and resubmit the report to the committee for review, with Councilor Davis stressing cooperation and a smooth approval to not hold up any contract negotiations with Hudl. The district wants to start using the technology in the fall.

“Better protect the trees” tree preservation ordinance discussed

City officials finally presented recommended changes to the Tree Preservation Ordinance, a year after a committee submitted comments. As stated by Vanessa Boukili, Senior Urban Forestry and Landscape Planner, the goal of the Urban Forestry Committee and the Urban Forestry Division working together on amendments was to “better protect the trees in this city.” The ordinance seeks to further protect public shade trees and city trees from damage during construction, create a tighter enforcement section to allow for maximum enforcement allowed by law, and further protect trees on private property.

Former committee member Chris Dwan had written a letter to the city in January 2025 disappointed that the mayor had not forwarded and did not include some recommendations to the council, which sparked a renewed interest from councilors. Dr. Boukili explained the ordinance’s journey from one department to the next, through inspectional services to legal and more.

The last major overhaul of the ordinance occurred in 2019. At that time, the changes that gained the most attention were the introduction of a permit process if a tree was deemed “significant” on private property and creation of the Urban Forestry Committee.

Refresh of Energy Use and Climate Change Commission



In another attempt to refresh and update ordinances, the Office of Sustainabil-



The Hudl camera system is being considered for use at Somerville High School and Dilboy Field.
— Photo courtesy of Hudl

ity and Environment put forth changes for the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change. Director of Sustainability and Environment Christine Blais reviewed the recommendations to simplify the commission’s name to Climate Action Commission, broaden the language of the

statute to meet the widening range of climate-related issues, and effectively doubling the number of commissioners (from seven to 13) while removing residency requirements for commission members. Legislative Matters expects a few tweaks to the proposed ordinance.



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Monthly online parenting workshop

Families (and educators) are invited to monthly workshops about parenting and child development.

The next workshop is called Connection, Co-Regulation, and Coping Skills: Helping kids and teens navigate big feelings and is available through one of our mental health partner providers. April 9, 12:00 p.m., online.

Find out more at: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/>

Beacon Hill Roll Call



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

THE HOUSE AND SENATE: 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 state senators.

NEW HIGHER \$82,046 BASE SALARY FOR SENATORS - The base salary for the state’s 40 state senators rose from \$73,655 for the 2023-2024 session to \$82,046 for the 2025-2026 session. That’s an 11.39 percent hike which means an additional \$8,391 per senator. The estimated price tag for the hikes is \$335,640.

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 40 senators 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 all 40 senators receive for their service in Democratic or Republican leadership positions, as committee chairs or vice chairs and as the ranking Republican on some committees.

Senators’ 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 \$82,046 salary means that the base Senate salary has been raised \$35,636 or 76 percent, since the mandated salary adjustment became part of the state constitution in 1998.

EXTRA PAY FOR ALL 40 SENATORS – All 40 senators receive an additional stipend, ranging from \$30,207.04 to \$119,631.81, above the \$82,046 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.

Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland), the top Democrat, earns the highest stipend of any sena-

tor: \$119,631.81. Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester) the top Republican, earns an \$89,723,85 stipend.

Supporters say legislators in these important positions should be appropriately compensated for their many added responsibilities and hard work.

Critics say the base salary is sufficient and is eligible to be increased every two years.

Here are the top 10 senators who are paid the highest salaries including the three categories of base pay, stipends and general expense pay allowance.

Sen. Karen Spilka (D-Ashland)	\$224,107.08
Sen. Michael Rodrigues (D-Westport)	\$216,929.17
Cynthia Creem (D-Newton)	\$216,630.09
Michael Barrett (D-Lexington)	\$201,676.12
Sal DiDomenico (D-Everett)	\$201,676.12
Joan Lovely (D-Salem)	\$201,676.12
William Brownsberger (D-Belmont)	\$201,676.11
Cynthia Friedman (D-Arlington)	\$194,199.13
Sen. Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester)	\$194,199.12
Sen. Julian Cyr (D-Truro)	\$186,722.15

The senators who receive the lowest salary of \$134,682.32 are Sens. Michael Brady (D-Brockton); William Driscoll (D-Milton); Patricia Jehlen (D-Somerville); John Keenan (D-Quincy); Robyn Kennedy (D-Worcester); Liz Miranda (D-Boston); Michael Moore (D-Millbury); and Pavel Payano (D-Lawrence)

\$22,430.96 OR \$29,907.95 FOR GENERAL EXPENSES – Each senator 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 senators’ district offices and other expenses including contributions to local civic groups and the printing and mailing of newsletters. Senators 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.

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 – Senators 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.

Senators 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 senators 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 – Senators 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 to \$2.49 per month. The same 20/80 25/75 formula used for health insurance also applies to this life insurance. Senators 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 senator.

LONG-TERM DISABILITY AND HEALTH CARE SPENDING ACCOUNT – Senators 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 senators to set aside funds to pay for out-of-pocket health 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 senators.

DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE – Senators are eligible to choose one of two dental/vision insurance plans. Current monthly employee premium costs paid by senators for family plans range from

Continued on page 16

COMMENTARY

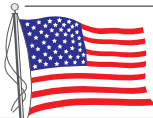
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Have a happy Earth Day, Somerville.

Our View Of The Times



It began after a bad oil spill that took place in 1969 off the coast of California. A year later, the first annual Earth Day was celebrated to demonstrate universal support for environmental protection and responsible stewardship of the planet and its inhabitants.

Since then, public and official awareness of the negative impacts of human activity – such as air and water pollution – have

been raised to a level where concrete action is being demanded to mitigate those effects and heal the ills that have been inflicted on our world.

The equinoctial Earth Day is celebrated on the March equinox (around March 20) to mark the arrival of astronomical spring in the Northern Hemisphere, and of astronomical autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. In most cultures, the equi-

noxes and solstices are considered to start or separate the seasons.

The occasion, celebrated on Tuesday, April 22, will represent an opportunity to reflect on how fragile our biological and environmental systems truly are, and the need for proper care and implementation of procedures that will ensure the optimal health of both the large and small on the only home we have, our precious planet Earth.

Similarly, the many factors affecting our environmental health demand that immediate and meaningful measures must be taken as soon as possible.

Cooperation between nations, corporations, informed experts and the common inhabitants of this world is clearly the best hope for saving us all.

May all of us gather together in the common cause of doing just that.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Somerville’s early childhood community invite parents, children and educators to enjoy music, pizza, and games at the **One Somerville, Every Child** celebration on **Thursday, April 10**, on the **Somerville High School** concourse (81 Highland Ave.) from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

PorchFest 2025 will take place on **Saturday, May 10**, from 12 to 6 p.m. (inclement weather date: Sunday, May 11). Applications are now open. Submit by **Thursday, April 10**, at 11:59 p.m. Application submission does not guarantee participation. Certain streets will be restricted for performances to ensure safety. View

the restricted street map on our website or view the streets listed below. View how to submit your application for consideration <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/>. Want to be a **PorchFest Ambassador**? Volunteer applications are due **April 13** at 11:59 p.m., join the fun and help keep the fest running smoothly. Fill out the very short form today. More info here: www.somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfest-ambassadors/.

The **Council on Aging** will be hosting **coffee hour** with **Mayor Katjana Bal-lantyne** and **Police Chief Shumeane Ben-ford** on **Friday, April 11**, 11:00

a.m., **Holland Street Center**, 167 Holland Street. Join in for coffee and conversation during this opportunity for a meaningful dialogue, to ask questions and to share your insights. Lunch will be served at noon. Please call **Debby** to RSVP at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321.

Vinyl Index and **Bow Market** present **Record Store Day 2025**. The annual celebration of indie record stores is back on **Saturday, April 12**, 9 a.m. – 11 p.m. for a fun-packed day of exclusive records, event tees and totes printed live, DJs spinning inside and out, music-inspired food and drinks, and more.

Voting is now open for the city’s second **Participatory Budgeting** cycle. Residents aged 12 and up can now vote on their favorite city improvement ideas. Voting is open through **Wednesday, April 30**. Learn more and cast your vote at: www.somervillema.gov/pb.

A Lens Full of Light, photographs by **Gretchen Ann Graham** and **Julián Cancino** are on view at the **Washington Street Gallery**, 321 Washington St. **A Lens Full of Light** is a dual exhibition by photographers Gretchen Ann Graham and Julián Cancino,

Continued on page 21

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's
Olio
#969

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. April 8 is the birth-date of what religious figure?

2. When is National Unicorn Day?

3. In what year was the first Earth Day celebrated?

4. In which month does National Poetry Month take place?

5. In what TV series did actor Tom Hanks co-star with Peter Scolari in the early 1980s?

6. What actor plays Ken in the 2023 movie *Barbie*?

7. Which U.S. state is
- known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes"?

8. What is Texas' state flower?

9. How many moons does Neptune have?

10. Which country has won the most FIFA World Cup titles?

11. Who is the all-time leading goal scorer in the FIFA World Cup?

12. What candies have the slogan "Sometimes you feel like a nut. Sometimes you don't"?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. "Schoolmaster" is an anagram of "the classroom."
2. The sun makes up over 99% of our solar system's mass.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

TV SIBLINGS

ACROSS

1. Newton of science
6. Over the top, in text
9. Monica Geller's brother
13. Eurasian antelope
14. Public health org.
15. Add together
16. Underground worker
17. Put down
18. Modify
19. Mitchell Pritchett's sister Claire
21. Alex P. Keaton's sister
23. Lao-tzu follower
24. ____ it like it is
25. Banned insecticide
28. Wolf, in Mexico
30. Ubiquitous deciduous tree
35. Nevada's ____ 51
37. Passionate dislike
39. What scribes do
40. Lime-rich soil
41. Rocky ridge
43. Flying saucers, acr.
44. Certain "razor" creator
46. Skier's aid
47. Sicilian mountain
48. Activity of the intellect
50. Rush job notation, acr.
52. Stitch
53. Belted out
55. Mad Hatter's beverage of choice
57. Wednesday Addams' brother

CROSSWORD											
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10
13						14				15	
16						17				18	
	19					20		21	22		
			23				24				
25	26	27		28		29			30	31	32
35			36		37			38		39	
40					41				42		43
44				45		46				47	
48					49		50			51	52
				53		54			55		56
57	58	59	60					61			62
64						65	66			67	
69						70				71	
72						73				74	

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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

6. " ____ the Lonely," song

7. One "Sister, Sister"

8. Bouquet garni ingredient

9. Sushi choice

10. "The Simpsons" palindrome

11. Court petitioner

12. Light on one's feet

15. Rendered suet

20. Tumult and commotion

22. Any high mountain

24. Carryall (2 words)

25. Vampire Stefan Salvatore's brother

26. Harry Potter's antagonist

27. 9 a.m. prayer

29. Lisa and Maggie's naughty brother

31. Phoebe and Piper Halliwell's sister

32. British elevators

33. Repent
34. Redo, to a carpenter

36. "Sad to say ..."

38. J.F.K. postings

42. Muse of love poetry

45. Lose

49. Famous frat house letters

51. Reached culmination

54. Naiad or maenad

56. Anoint

57. Make like a cat

58. Part of an eye

59. Mouthful, swallowed

60. Fence board

61. Apple co-founder

62. A Flock of Seagulls' 1982 hit

63. Newts in terrestrial stage

66. Belonging to us

68. Be a witness

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

OBITUARY

Dominic J. Dascoli



Dominic J. Dascoli, “Donnie”, of Somerville, formerly of the West End of Boston, passed away on Sunday, March 30, 2025. He was 85 years old. Born

in Boston, he was the cherished son of the late Dominic and Anna F. (Zuzcowski) Dascoli. Dominic was a U.S. Army Veteran serving from 1961 to 1964, as an M.P. Dominic enjoyed eating at the former Good Times Restaurant in Somerville, playing the horses at Suffolk Downs Race Track in East Boston and scratching lottery tickets. Dominic enjoyed living by Foss Park and Winter Hill since 1958. Dominic was the dear brother of John J. Dascoli and his wife Lorraine of Methuen and he was predeceased by his siblings Rose Kelly and her late husband Frederick, Josephine Saia and her late husband Dominic, Barbara Intravaia and her late husband Dominic and Paul and Alfred Dascoli. Dominic was the loving uncle of many nieces and nephews and his late niece Barbara Saia-Houlihan. Visiting hours will be held in the Dello Russo Funeral Home, 306 Main St., Medford, MA, on Wednesday, April 9, from 11AM-1PM, followed by a funeral service in the funeral home beginning at 1PM. Relatives and friends are invited. In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory can be made to a charity of your choice. Services will conclude with burial in Woodlawn Cemetery-Everett.

OBITUARY

Leeann Anderson



Leeann Anderson, 55, of Waltham, MA, passed away peacefully on March 24, 2025. Born and raised in Somerville,

MA, she was the beloved only daughter of James Anderson and Lillian (Rugoletti) Anderson. Leeann was the cherished sister of three brothers: Paul and James Jr. who survive her, and John, who predeceased her in October 2020. She was a loving and devoted mother to five children: Gravin, Christen, Ashley, Alex, and Joseph. Leeann’s life was further blessed by her four grandchildren: Parker, Jaiden, Grayson, and Scarlett, who brought her immeasurable joy. Leeann is reunited with her longtime beloved partner, Richard Costa, who predeceased her in November 2020. She is also remembered by Rich’s three children: Richie, Ashley, and Aaron. Her legacy will live on through the love and beautiful memories she shared with all who had the honor of knowing her. Leeann’s family and friends will continue to honor her life by keeping her spirit alive in their hearts. She will be dearly missed but never forgotten. A memorial service will be held in Leeann’s honor at St. Patrick’s Parish, 71 Central St, Stoneham, MA 02180, on April 22 at 10:00 AM.

OBITUARY

Daniel E. Mosher



April 5, 1967 – March 30, 2025

Daniel E. Mosher, known to many as Danny, passed away suddenly on March 30, 2025, at the age of 57. Born in Somerville, he was the cherished son of Carol R. Margey (Ivester) and the late Wayne K. Mosher. Danny was also the beloved brother of the late Kelly Mosher. He leaves behind his loyal dog and best pal, Bandit, along with many cousins and friends who will miss him dearly. Danny’s memorial service will be private. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Danny’s name to Great Dog Recue of New England <https://gdrne.com/donate/>

The Somerville Times
Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #326

This article first appeared in the April 19, 2021, edition of The Somerville Times.

One If By Land, Two If By Sea
By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Somerville statesman Edward Everett first brought Paul Revere’s ride to light in his 1825 speech at Concord. Thirty-five years later, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow solidified Revere’s fame with his legendary 1860 poem, Paul Revere’s Ride.



Longfellow wrote it with the hope of avoiding the bloodshed of a civil war. It inspired the whole nation but didn’t prevent hostilities. A decade later, North Chelsea, Massachusetts, changed its name to Revere in honor of the patriot hero. The town named one of its schools and one of its main streets that runs to the ocean after him. Revere Beach is the first public beach in America.



Although Somerville never claimed Revere as its name, she can vaunt an historic trail of connections with the famous “Midnight Rider.”

An old memorial and a brand new statue in front of the Somerville Holiday Inn on Washington Street pay homage to Paul Revere. On the eve of April 19, 1775, he came dangerously close to being captured here by British Cavalry.

The summit of Winter Hill was once the location of a revolutionary fort, and today is the site of Paul Revere Park, which is the smallest federal park

Continued on page 12

LEGAL NOTICES

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



NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT and NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Date of Publication: April 9, 2025
City of Somerville
Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
93 Highland Ave
Somerville MA, 02143
617-625-6600

Request for Release of Funds

On or after **April 9, 2025**, the City of Somerville will submit a request to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of the following funds: Community Project Funding, and Section 108 Loan funds to undertake a project to be known as Clarendon Hill Phase II located at 34 North St. in Somerville, MA. The project is to be undertaken on A site that contained a 216-unit public housing complex, built in the 1950s, is being demolished and rebuilt in three phases. The new development will be a 591 unit mixed-income development, with 216 units still being public housing, 75 rental units restricted to households at or below 80% AMI, 5 rental units restricted to households at or below 110% AMI, and 295 unrestricted market rate units. The project design includes physical traffic calming treatments, improvement of residents' access to the surrounding community (including safe access to the large, green, open space across the street), and the creation of an equitable neighborhood out of an isolated housing development. The development is currently owned by the Somerville Housing Authority and each phase will be transferred through a 99-year ground lease. An award of \$2,400,000 in CPF funding has been allocated, and an application has been submitted for \$9,750,000 as a Section 108 Loan. The project is a collaboration between the Somerville Community Corporation, the Preservation for Affordable Housing, and the Somerville Housing Authority. The total estimated cost of this phase of the project is \$98,000,000.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The City of Somerville has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) and is available upon request. Any individual, group, or agency may submit written questions on the ERR to Miranda Rubin, City of Somerville, OSPCD, 93 Highland Ave. 3rd Floor Somerville, MA 02143. ERR may be examined or copied during normal business hours' Mon, Tues, and Wed, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Thurs 8:30 AM-7:30 PM, Fri 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Public Comments

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on this activity may submit written comments to the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development at the address indicated above or to mrubin@somervillema.gov. All comments received by April 23, 2025 will be considered by the City of Somerville prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which notice and proposed project they are addressing.

Environmental Certification

The City of Somerville certifies to HUD that Katjana Ballantyne, the Certifying Officer, in her capacity as Mayor of Somerville consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Somerville to use HUD program funds.

Objections to Release of Funds

HUD will accept objections to its release of fund and the City of Somerville's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Somerville; (b) the City has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to the HUD Office of Community Planning and Development at Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building 10 Causeway Street, 5th Floor Boston, MA 02222-1092, (617) 994-8350 or via email: ma_webmanager@hud.gov. Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Katjana Ballantyne, Mayor of Somerville, Certifying Officer

4/9/25 The Somerville Times



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, April 17, 2025 at 6:30 pm**.

This meeting will be held in the Committee Room, on the 2nd Floor of City Hall, and by remote participation, using the Zoom platform. To attend and be heard, enter the link exactly as it appears below into your internet browser. You will then be asked to register for the meeting.
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_djr_iA-BRle8NPCQwWLq6g

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

- 15 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance sections 3.1.8c, 3.1.9c, 3.1.10c, 3.1.13k, 3.1.13l, 3.2.12l. and 3.2.12m.
- Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 2-5 and 10 of the Zoning Ordinance to remove conflicts with the State Building Code.
- Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinances to allow the Building Official to waive certain dimensional standards for means of egress.

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

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. 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.

4/2/25, 4/9/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
BID #S2026-04

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for:
School Bus Transportation Services for Special Needs Students

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **Tuesday, April 8, 2025**.

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **4 p.m. on Monday, April 28, 2025** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud. This is a three (3) year contract: **July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028**.

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

Patricia Durette
Interim Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

4/9/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
RFP # 25-61

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

Parking Management Information System

A request for proposals (RFP) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, April 9, 2025**. Sealed proposals will be received at the above office until: **2:00 pm, Wednesday, May 7, 2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

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

Felisa Garate
Procurement Analyst
617-625-6600 x3406

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NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

Removal of Public Shade Trees
City of Somerville

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 87, the City of Somerville will hold a **virtual public shade tree hearing on Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.** using Zoom software to consider the removal of the following 12 public shade tree(s):

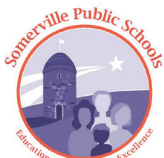
- 350 Broadway on Dartmouth Street - Two callery pear: 13.6" diameter, fair condition, 9.3" diameter, fair condition
- 32 Florence Street - One callery pear: 4.8" diameter, fair condition
- 44 Franklin Street - One littleleaf linden: 16.0" diameter, fair condition
- 62 Franklin Street - One green ash: 12.4" diameter, good condition
- Opp 66 Franklin Street (across from) – Two honeylocust: 10.1" diameter, good condition, 8.2" diameter, fair-good condition
- 97 Washington Street on Franklin Street - One callery pear: 16.7" diameter, good condition
- 22 Mount Vernon Street - One Norway maple: 21.4" diameter, fair-good condition
- 57 Myrtle Street - One green ash: 14.8" diameter, good condition
- 41 Myrtle Street - One flowering cherry: 8.4" diameter, good condition
- 63 Perkins Street - One callery pear: 18.5" diameter, good condition

Trees are proposed for removal as part of a sewer rehabilitation project. Removals are required to make spot repairs to sewer mains. Replacement trees will be planted. More information on the project will be provided during the hearing.

The trees identified above have been posted for public inspection. **In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 87, any objections to the removal of any of these trees must be submitted in writing to the Tree Warden prior to or at this public hearing.** Documents may be sent via email to: trees@somervillema.gov, or mailed to: Vanessa Boukili – OSPCD, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA 02143. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this Public Shade Tree Hearing will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of this hearing will be available upon request to trees@somervillema.gov.

Registration URL: <https://tinyurl.com/h2m7s8uz>
Webinar ID: 831 1694 5434

4/2/25, 4/9/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD FLOOR
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
BID #S2026-05

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for:
**School Student Transportation Services Including
Charter Transportation for Somerville Public Schools.**

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **Wednesday, April 9, 2025.**

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 29, 2025** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud. This is a three (3) year contract: **July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.**

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

Patricia Durette
Interim Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

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Mayor Katjana Ballantyne declares April 2 ‘Start by Believing Day’

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne signed a proclamation declaring April 2 as “Start by Believing Day” in the City of Somerville, affirming the city’s commitment to supporting survivors of sexual violence and fostering a community where everyone feels safe, heard, and believed. The proclamation marks the launch of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in Somerville.

View video of the signing here: youtu.be/4dgiAGfuC7I

To further highlight this commitment, Mayor Ballantyne joined Maureen DiPaolo, Victim/Witness Advocate with the Somerville Police Department, and Kimberly Sheridan, Chair of the Somerville Commission for Women, for an in-depth conversation on how the City supports survivors, and why believing someone when they disclose abuse is a powerful and necessary first step toward healing and justice. Their discussion will be available on the CityTV YouTube channel and the Somerville Commission for Women webpage soon.

“Believing survivors is a choice that each of us can make,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “This proclamation is just one step, but it’s an important



one. Together with our community partners, we are making it clear that in Somerville, we start by believing.”

The “Start By Believing” campaign is a global initiative led by End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) to transform the way society responds to sexual assault. In Somerville, City departments and community organizations are joining together to take the pledge and support a cultural shift that prioritizes

survivor support.

For more information and resources, the Department of Racial and Social Justice and the Somerville Commission for Women will be housing relevant materials, statistics, and more information about the campaign on their webpage throughout April: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/office-somerville-commissions/somerville-commission-for-women>.

Somerville’s 2025 Happiness Survey launched

How happy are Somerville residents? The City of Somerville wants to know!

On Monday, April 7, the city launched its biennial Happiness Survey, a unique initiative that has helped shape City policies and programs since 2011. The survey measures resident satisfaction with life in Somerville, city services, neighborhood well-being, and more.

In April and May, nearly 17,000 randomly selected households will receive either a postcard or a survey packet, inviting one household member to participate online or on paper. The city encourages all selected households to participate, including new Somerville residents.

Participation is anonymous. Demographic information will only be used to make broad comparisons and ensure the survey results represent our community.

Surveys will be available in multiple languages. Residents who need translation assistance can contact 311 or the SomerViva Office of Immigrant Affairs. Survey results will be shared later this year.

To learn more about the Happiness Survey and see past results, visit somervillema.gov/HappinessSurvey.



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.

JUST SAY NO!



By Mayor Emeritus
Eugene C. Brune

The questions I and many Somerville people are asking is what is the mayor or the Ward 6 Councilor is saying?

What do the City Council members think about a proposal to build a twenty-five-story, five-hundred-unit building in Davis Square? Currently, they are waiting as there is no application before any board. If Copper Mill submits one, you will then hear the concerns, as well as the final vote. I am hoping that common sense will prevail.

I also read that the developer Copper Mill LLC was encouraged by the city to meet with the community to get their reaction to this proposal to build twenty-five stories. In reading *The Somerville Times*, I also understand that there were several standing rooms, only crowds with the vast majority against this idea.

As the former Ward 6 Alderman and former Mayor, as well as a former resident of Ward 6 for 85 years, my vote would be NO to twenty-five stories. Yes, to a de-

velopment that will help the city bring in new tax revenue and is agreeable to our residents as well as not hurting the business community in Davis Square. I understand the need for more housing; I agree, but what Somerville needs is more affordable housing for our long-term residents who are being forced out by high rents. Somerville is fortunate to have several nonprofit companies, many of which I had the pleasure of working with in my role as a former Alderman and Mayor. If given the opportunity they would do an outstanding job building affordable units.

In 1972, when serving as the Ward 6 Alderman which includes Davis Square, I had the opportunity to join the fight and discussions as to why Somerville and Davis Square needed the Red Line to continue from Porter Square to Davis Square. The discussions were brought on when Arlington refused the subway to continue from Porter Square to Arlington Center.

As the then Ward 6 Alderman and looking at the future of the city as well as Davis Square, I felt that, at that time, the only thing that was going to save Davis Square would be the addition of the MBTA Red-line subway station.

In speaking with former Governor Dukakis, as well as the former Secretary of Transportation, Fred Salvucci, I emphatically urged both men that Davis

Square was slowly dying, all we had then were barrooms and shoe stores, and even the shoe stores were moving out. This was an undisputed known fact. Another fact is that at one time Davis Square was one of the top best Squares in the state.

At the same time, I met with members of the Davis Square Task Force and to my surprise, they also had many questions, and needed answers from me as to future problems the subway may bring to Davis Square. I had a wonderful and trusting relationship with this group of many Somerville lifetime Davis Square residents that loved their Davis Square. Later when I was elected Mayor, I continued meeting with them, as well as Arts On The Line as to what they would hope for the future of Davis Square.

These community groups did not want Davis Square to be another Central Square or Harvard Square. They asked that we have a 50-foot height limit for any future buildings in Davis Square. They wanted their Davis Square to be safe, and that included a park where they could enjoy meeting friends, sitting, and having a cup of coffee after doing the shopping. They asked me to bring in a variety of non-franchised restaurants and retail stores. I also promised them that we would have no new barroom licenses issued; Only restaurants that primarily serve breakfast,

lunch, and dinner.

Somerville spans just 4.2 Square miles and has about 88,000 residents. Despite the high population density, most people enjoy the village-like atmosphere.

Additionally, is the Davis Square community of businesses and residents prepared to manage increased traffic for at least two to three years due to extensive construction activities around Davis Square?

Will those same people. Want to put up with huge crane towers, many large contractor trucks making deliveries of steel and construction materials, nonstop noise, as well as the loss of revenue to so many businesses? How about the lack of parking that will happen due to the many of the now available spaces taken away while this exceptionally large development is going on.

Also, can we guess how many big developers are just waiting with plans and proposals for high-rise apartments in Davis Square, if this major proposal is approved? Residents and businesses will be living in a construction area for several years or forced to move out.

Also, let's not forget that this 25-story skyscraper, if permitted, will be blocking the sun in that area forever. Many are worried that whatever the ruling comes down for Copper Mill, the city and Davis Square may well be

inundated with several other proposals. Many will be watching the leadership of the elected city officials, from the mayor to City Council members and boards, hoping that the city leaders will make common sense decisions based on their judgment and active and on-going community involvement.

I was always pleased that all the former Mayors, who came after me, Mike Capuano, Dot Gay, and Joe Curtatone, respected the wishes of residents and businesses of Davis Square. As former Mayors we clearly understood that a city or town cannot sit still and not make changes. We must maintain consistent tax revenues.

As a former mayor considering such a proposed massive development for Davis Square, I would ask for a much more sensible plan. I believe my former colleagues would agree.

Residents and businesses in Somerville, particularly those in Davis Square, expect the mayor, city councilors, planning and zoning boards, to use practical common-sense judgment for balanced growth consisting of four to six stories, 70 feet maximum building heights.

Thank You.

Eugene Brune
Mayor Emeritus
Former Ward 6 Alderman
Former Register of Deeds,
Middlesex South

Historical Fact

CONT. FROM PG 9

in the nation. Three apartment buildings historically circle the area, notably named The Concord, The Lexington and The Paul Revere. In 1910, President William Howard Taft visited and honored the location.

Revere worked for and with his dear friend, Doctor and General Joseph Warren, martyr of Bunker Hill. After the battle, Warren's body was identified by Revere who had performed dental work on him. Revere's next born son was named

after Warren, and Somerville was almost named after him.

The first Prospect Hill flag raising took place on Revere's 40th birthday, January 1, 1776. After the American victory at Saratoga, 4,000 British and Hessian prisoners were brought to Prospect Hill and Winter Hill under guard of Colonel Revere.

One of Revere's grandsons, Edward Revere Curtis, made Somerville his home. He was born on George Washington's birth-

day, February 22, when Boston became a city. He was a popular businessman and alderman. Curtis Street in Teele Square was named after him. Out of the 776 buildings that were lost in the Great Boston Fire of 1872, his was the last.

On the eve of April 19, 1775, on a daring ride through Somerville and beyond, Revere triggered American history. That night he rode a steed with no name, but we will never forget its rider and his name ... Paul Revere!



Somerville Land Use Committee tackles transit-oriented zoning and community concerns

By Carlie Lombardi

On April 3, the Somerville Land Use Committee met and dove into key zoning issues, focusing primarily on a proposed upzoning near transit areas and ongoing community conversations around development in Union Square.

Union Square zoning amendment delayed

The Committee reviewed a proposal to rezone a group of parcels on Horace Street, Ward Street, and South Street from Mid Rise 4 to Mid Rise 6. While the Planning Board gave a positive recommendation, Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen expressed concern about unresolved issues raised by local residents and the Union Square Neighborhood Council. Specifically, residents want more clarity and commitment around community benefits and green space. The Committee agreed to leave the item in committee until they can get further updates, especially from the Ward 2 councilor.

Transit-oriented upzoning presentation

The centerpiece of the meeting was a presentation by Samantha Carr, the city's new Land Use Analyst. She outlined the potential for increasing density and mixed-use zoning near transit hubs as a

way to address housing affordability and maximize the impact of the Green Line Extension.

Carr presented case studies from Leander, TX; Petaluma, CA; and Mount Vernon, NY, showing how other cities have implemented "smart codes" and tiered density allowances in proximity to transit. She also discussed recent zoning changes in Cambridge that allow for six-story buildings if affordable housing thresholds are met. Using Somerville's own zoning history, Carr identified several areas, such as Davis Square, Gilman Square, Ball Square, and East Somerville, as ripe for upzoning based on previous proposals and current zoning inconsistencies.

Councilors debate strategy

Council members responded enthusiastically to Carr's approach. Councilor Ewen-Campen urged the committee to reflect on whether long-delayed neighborhood plans are worth waiting for or if it's time to act now with available zoning tools. He emphasized the need for data on how well the current zoning is working, especially in terms of permitted housing units since the 2019 overhaul.

Councilor Lance Davis supported the idea of density bonuses as a way to leverage



more affordable housing and open space, referencing Mount Vernon's example of 15-story podium towers tied to community benefits. He also emphasized the need to preserve small businesses while increasing height and density.

Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen and Councilor J.T. Scott raised the issue of neighborhood plans again, with Scott arguing that relying on those alone leads to endless delays. Instead, he suggested pursuing a "middle ground" approach

that would allow for incremental upzoning in key areas without needing years of planning.

Next steps

Carr and Senior Planner Dan Bartman agreed to collaborate on identifying potential areas for incremental upzoning that don't require full-scale neighborhood plans. The Committee is expected to revisit the conversation in two weeks, with updates on requested data and refined proposals.

Celebrate Fair Housing Month with two community events in Somerville

April is Fair Housing Month, and Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is inviting residents to learn about housing rights, discrimination, and how we build a more inclusive community at two free events hosted by the Fair Housing Commission and the Department of Racial and Social Justice. Both events are free, open to all, and include food and refreshments.

Fair Housing Film Screening and Panel Discussion

- Date: Thursday, April 10, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
- Location: Central Library (79 Highland Ave)
- About: Join us for a screening of the powerful short film *Segregated By Design*, followed by a panel discussion on fair housing and discrimination in Somerville. Local advocates, City staff, and housing experts will share insights on how structural inequities persist, and how we can dismantle them together.
- Register: tinyurl.com/ykjnt9f9
- Speaker Event: How to Legally Handle Section 8 Vouchers
- Date/Time: Thursday, April 17, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
- Location: Central Library or Zoom
- About: Tenants and landlords alike are encouraged to attend this practical workshop led by housing attorney Todd Kaplan. Learn about legal rights and responsibilities around Section 8 and non-wage income, common application questions, and how to avoid discriminatory practices.
- Register: tinyurl.com/8w4ju282

For more information, please contact Shannon Lawler, Housing Program Specialist, via email at slawler@somervillema.gov.



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Answers

1. Buddha

2. April 9

3. 1970

4. April

5. Bosom Buddies

6. Ryan Gosling

7. Minnesota

8. The Bluebonnet

9. 14

10. Brazil

11. Miroslav Klose

12. Mounds and Almond Joy

Tax Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: A tax form showed up after I filed my taxes – should I panic!?

A: No need to panic – but don't ignore it. Forms like 1099s or corrected W-2s often arrive late.

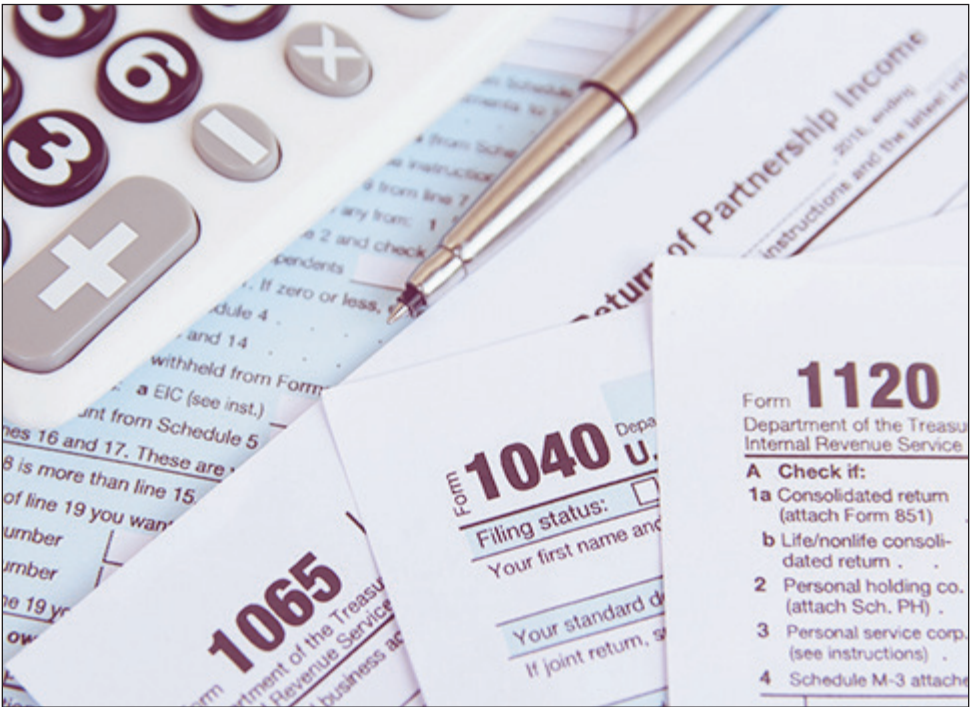
Here's what to do:

- See if it changes your return. Does it report new income or revise something?
- If it doesn't change anything – or changes something minor (under \$100) – you may not need to act. But if you're unsure, check with a tax pro.
- If it does change your return significantly, file an amended return (Form 1040-X) to avoid IRS notices, interest, or penalties.

• If you'd rather not amend now, set aside money just in case. If the IRS catches it later, they may send a bill – with interest and penalties added. And if they do, don't assume the IRS is always right – double-check their math. They may not have all the facts.

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 or (859) 553-0788.

Disclaimer: This column provides general tax information and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Tax laws change frequently, and individual circumstances vary. For personalized guidance, consult a tax professional.



Middlesex District Attorney to address City Council on unsolved murders of Deanna Cremin and Charline Rosemond

Middlesex District Attorney Marian T. Ryan will appear before the Somerville City Council at its upcoming meeting on Thursday, April 10, 2025, to provide an update on the ongoing investigations into the unsolved murders of Deanna Cremin and Charline Rosemond.

The visit comes in response to a pending City Council resolution recognizing the anniversaries of both tragic cases and reaffirming the community's commitment to seeking justice for the victims and their families.

"As we approach the anniversaries of

the murders of these young women, it is important to remember their lives and to remind their loved ones and their community that we remain steadfast in exhausting every investigative tool to bring answers and accountability," wrote DA Ryan in a letter to the Council.

Deanna Cremin, 17, was found murdered near her home in Somerville in 1995. Charline Rosemond, 23, was found shot to death in the city in 2009. Despite years of investigation, both cases remain open. DA Ryan's office formed a dedicated Cold Case Unit in 2019 to

apply new forensic tools and pursue unresolved cases like these with renewed urgency. However, neither case is currently being investigated by this unit, as both are considered "active."

City Councilor Jesse Clingan welcomed the DA's engagement. "These cases have haunted our community for far too long," said Clingan. "We realize the limitations of what can be shared publicly in these cases, but coming to Somerville in person to update the Council and the public will help foster faith that the DA's office is taking Deanna and Charline's families' cries for

justice seriously."

The April 10 meeting is open to the public and will be held at 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA. Community members are encouraged to attend or follow the proceedings via the city's livestream.

Deanna's friends and family held Mass and Walk for Deanna on Sunday, March 30, the 30th Anniversary of her death.

Charline's family is planning a balloon release on Sunday, April 13, at the location where Charline was found, behind 10 Webster Avenue.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of *The Somerville Times* do not reflect the views and opinions of *The Somerville Times*, its publishers or staff. Readers are invited to send letters to the editor to *The Somerville Times*. Please email your letters to News@TheSomervilleTimes.com or mail them to 699 Broadway, Somerville, MA 02144. *The Somerville Times* Reserves the right to edit letters for style, grammar and length. All letters must include an name and contact information. Contact information will not be shared with the public. We look forward to hearing from you.

Senate Democrats Must Begin Denying Unanimous Consent

To the Editors,

Unanimous consent speeds up the Senate by avoiding time-consuming votes on routine business. Under the Trump administration, there is no routine business. Denying unanimous consent can't stop Senate Republicans from doing anything, but, by requiring quorum calls and roll call votes,

it can slow them down.

Delaying Senate business a few hours may not seem like much, but deployed as a strategy, it adds up. Imagine delaying the confirmation of RFK Jr. a week. Flu shot and mRNA vaccine meetings might have happened. Another week of research on cures for pancreatic cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Another paycheck to thousands of people who have devoted their lives to saving ours.

Imagine if Senate Democrats contin-

ue to add weeks of delays. Do we protect Medicare & Medicaid from Dr. Oz for another two weeks? A month? Do we protect the Department of Education from Linda McMahon for a month? Do the delays build until Congressional Republicans are compelled to come to the table and actually act like the separate branch of government the Constitution says they are?

The power of Congressional Democrats is limited, but it exists. If millions of Americans with all kinds of lives, obliga-

tions, and abilities can take to the streets, in all kinds of weather, in deep blue cities and deep red towns, and Cory Booker can hold the floor for 25 hours, Democrat Senators can shoulder the inconvenience of roll call voting for every single Senate action. Maybe it only buys us another day from the next wave of destruction. But that day might save someone's life.

Josh Cook
Somerville

Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 6

\$15.16 to \$20.52, while individual plans range from \$4.91 to \$6.64. All senators pay 15 percent of the premium and the state pays 85 percent.

SENATORS 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, senators 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 senators to take the deduction for all 365 days regardless of whether the Legislature is actually meeting or not. Senators 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 senators 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, 11 of the state’s 40 senators 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.

SENATORS 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 SENATORS

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

Sen. Patricia Jehlen	\$134,682.31
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ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

AFFORDABLE HOMES COMMISSIONS – The

Accessible Housing Commission, Extremely Low-Income Housing Commission and Senior Housing Commission, all created by the Affordable Homes Act recently signed into law by Gov. Maura Healey, have begun working to address the housing challenges of people with accessibility needs, extremely low-income residents and people with accessibility needs.

Massachusetts’ first comprehensive statewide housing plan, A Home for Everyone, has identified 222,000 homes that need to be built in order to end the housing crisis in Massachusetts.

“The housing crisis has impacted everyone in one way or another, but for some, finding housing that fits their needs is exceptionally challenging,” said Ed Augustus, secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. “These commissions are tasked with identifying those challenges and providing concrete recommendations and strategies to ensure everyone in Massachusetts – particularly seniors, residents on extremely low incomes and people with accessibility needs – can access the safe, affordable and dignified housing they need.”

\$850,000 FOR LOCALLY GROWN, NUTRITIOUS FOOD IN SCHOOLS - The Healey Administration announced it is awarding \$850,000 in state-funded, competitive Massachusetts Farming Reinforces Education and Student Health (FRESH) grants to 26 school districts and 11 early education and care programs. This funding supports the National School Lunch Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors to start or expand their capacity to grow or procure local food and educate students, teachers, school nutrition professionals and staff about the local food system.

“While the Trump Administration continues to take away food from children and families, and hurt local businesses and farmers, Massachusetts is continuing to prioritize programs like these,” said Gov. Healey. “We know that our students succeed when they have access to healthy food, and we can create partnerships that support local businesses and farms in the process.”

“It’s important for students to understand where food comes from and how it is produced and prepared,” said Education Secretary Dr. Patrick Tutwiler. “The MA FRESH grants are an important tool that connect students to their local food system and produce, while also providing STEM educational opportunities focused on food literacy, nutrition, plant science and agriculture.”

HOME EQUITY THEFT LAW – Last year, the House and Senate approved and the governor signed a law, as part of the state budget, that prohibits cities and towns that foreclose on properties on which the owner owes back property taxes, from keeping all of the profits when the city or town sells the property at auction. Prior to passage of this law Massachusetts law allowed this practice. The new law allows the city or town to keep only

the amount owed in back taxes and send the remainder to the owner.

Last year, the United States Supreme Court ruled that cities and towns that foreclose on properties on which the owner owes back property taxes, cannot keep all of the profits when the city or town sells the property at auction. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, writing a unanimous decision about a similar Minnesota law, said that “a taxpayer who loses her \$40,000 house to the state to fulfill a \$15,000 tax debt has made a far greater contribution to the public fisc than she owed.”

The law’s sponsor, Sen. Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford) says the law is facing a new challenge, proposed as part of a fiscal 2025 supplemental budget filed by Gov. Maura Healey last week, that would make it harder for homeowners to recoup their rightful equity.

“The same municipal officials who partnered with private firms to prey upon vulnerable homeowners suffering from immense challenges in their lives are the same special interests who have heavily lobbied the administration to give them another bite at the apple while everyday people continue to lose their life savings,” said Montigny. “There are hundreds of pending cases within the trial court that deserve immediate relief in accordance with the protections provided under the new law, including the reduced interest rate that was previously set at a predatory level.”

Montigny continued, “Efforts to weaken these long overdue legal protections will not be tolerated and these elected and appointed municipal officials should be more concerned with helping their residents, not concocting new ways to continue to rob them. It is unacceptable that consumer advocates and the lead legislative sponsor of this measure have been left in the dark while financially driven special interests have been allowed to once again pervade the legislative process. The Healey Administration should immediately rescind its support for these harmful measures that were concocted without consulting the consumer advocates who deal with these difficult cases on behalf of homeowners every day.”

NON-LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING COMMISSION (S 6) – The Election Laws Committee held a hearing on a proposed constitutional amendment that would create a non-legislative redistricting commission to replace the current commission made up exclusively of state legislators. The commission, like the current commission, would be responsible for creating congressional districts, 160 representative districts, 40 senatorial districts and eight councilor districts every ten years based on the national census.

The proposed commission would include a dean or professor of law, political science or government from a Massachusetts college, appointed by the governor; a retired judge, appointed by the attorney general; and an expert in civil rights law, appointed by the secretary *Continued on page 23*

Mayor Ballantyne champions worker equity, support, and retention with new paid family medical leave

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is proud to announce the introduction of a new eight-week paid family medical leave (PFML) benefit for eligible city employees. This significant enhancement to employee benefits aims to lower the financial risks to employees taking qualifying parental or family medical leave, reducing the likelihood of unpaid leave when welcoming a new child or facing illness.

The initiative is part of a broader effort by the Ballantyne administration to not only invest in the city's workforce and advance worker equity but to lead on building a quality workplace environment. Recent advances in pay equity, strong new union contracts, and steady modernization of benefits are all part of a push to attract, support, and retain quality workers for the community, which improves services and lowers costs.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor, allows eligible public and private employees nationwide to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for specific family and medical reasons. But FMLA, established in 1993, does not require compensation during a leave.

The benefit is a significant step forward. For example, currently, Somerville offers most employees two weeks of paid parental leave. That will now increase four-fold to eight weeks not just for new parents but will also introduce, for the first time, dedicated paid leave for others in need of medical or caregiver leave.

"We recognize that the arrival of a new child or a serious medical situation shouldn't force our employees into financial hardship," said Mayor Ballantyne. "By providing paid family and medical leave, we're giving our workers the security they need to focus on what truly mat-

ters – their and their families' health and well-being – without the added stress of lost income. This is about protecting our workforce both from the financial fallout that too often accompanies life's most challenging moments and also giving them the best chance at a healthy recovery. It's also about controlling costs for our community. Workers are expensive to replace, and research shows they are more likely to return to their jobs after a paid leave than an unpaid leave."

The new PFML program is distinct from standard sick, vacation, and personal time. In addition to that time, it provides employees with up to eight additional weeks of paid leave for qualifying life events, such as parental leave, critical illness, caregiver needs, or family medical issues. Once the new paid benefit is depleted, employees may cover any remaining period of absence with their accrued paid time off.

"This benefit is designed to keep more workers financially stable during a crisis or when growing their families, and research shows this not only benefits employees it helps protect our investment in them," said Anne Gill, Director of Human Resources. "Paid family leave has been shown to dramatically increase staff retention and improve morale, which matters. It's not just costly to hire and train new employees, it's very time-intensive. The impacts of the loss of workplace knowledge when employees leave should also not be underestimated. Offering paid leave is a win-win for the community—we support our workers and they in turn keep serving all of us."

The new 8-week PFML applies to all eligible non-union employees and has also been introduced in four union agreements established over the last two years: including contracts with the City's School



Custodians, Fire Alarm Dispatchers, and Emergency Telecommunicators/Police Dispatchers, as well as with the city's largest bargaining unit, SMEU Unit B.

The benefit goes into effect on April 6, 2025. The same medical practitioner approvals and documentation that are currently required for FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) leave also apply to PFML. To be eligible, employees must have worked a minimum of one full year for the City and at least 1,250 hours in the past year.

Recent City workforce initiatives and efforts include:

The City's Wage and Compensation Study, which took on wage bias and wage equity by researching and reclassifying positions to ensure comparable pay for similar work across departments. This study has been instrumental in promoting equitable and competitive compensation.

Five new union contracts as mentioned above including the landmark SMEU Unit B agreement, which features unprecedented 14%-17% average salary increases in FY25, addresses long-standing wage bias, and was based on comprehensive analysis of region-

al compensation for 90+ job titles.

Enhanced benefits across union agreements including improved salaries, modernized unbiased job titles, expanded and updated benefits, and stipends.

Employee training investments across departments both in relation to specific skills development and for overall customer service training.

Introduction of a non-union wage and compensation adjustment in parallel to union adjustments to similarly address non-union wage bias and bring compensation to competitive standards.

"We are strengthened by investing in our staff, which is why my administration is taking significant steps to ensure that our workforce is compensated fairly and that our benefits not only rise to modern standards but lead on them. These agreements and benefits are advances toward equity that are decades overdue," said Mayor Ballantyne. "My goal is to be sure we are a city where every worker's contribution is compensated fairly so we can attract and retain the best talent and staff."

— City of Somerville

'Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Symphony Orchestra'

The Tufts University Department of Music presents "Sunday Concert Series: Tufts Symphony Orchestra" in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 3:00 pm. John Page directs the TSO in their spring concert.

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus.

For more information, please visit go.tufts.edu/musicevents or call the Granoff Music Center, Box Office at 617-627-3679.



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 realtors 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 E-mail 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.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program – Mondays, April 14th, 28th and May 5th and 12th starting at 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 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.

De-Cluttering Group – will meet on Wednesdays, April 9th and 16th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Looking for assistance with taking control of your clutter. This six-week group teaches you how to address your mess and skills on how to let go of items. This group is open to Somerville and Cambridge residents. RSVP by

calling Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov..

Friendly Caller Program - We have many wonderful volunteers who are waiting to give you a call. Whether you are looking to make a new friend or would just like a friendly chat to look forward to every week, this program has you covered. Call Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 to learn more about the program and to sign up.

Knitting Group – Every Tuesday in April from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center located at 167 Holland Street. Have you always wanted to learn how to knit or are you a knitter looking to find other friends who knit? Look no further than Knitting with Natasha. Join a supportive and fun group as we learn more about knitting while knitting together! Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317 or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov.

John Clark and his Great American Music Experience presents Big Band Swing – Thursday, April 17th starting at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. \$3. per person. Lunch will be provided by City Fresh Catering and served at noon. Join John as he shares the history of Big Band Swing and the Roots of Swing, Benny Goodman, Glenn Millar and more. Reserve your spot for the event and lunch by calling Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Coffee Hour with Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Police Chief Shumeane Benford – Friday, April 11th starting at 11:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join us for coffee and conversation during this opportunity for a meaningful dialogue, to ask questions and to share your insights. Lunch will be served at noon. Reserve your spot for the event and lunch by calling Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Coffee & Conversation Groups – Every Monday in April from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center located at 9 New Washington Street. And every Thursday in March at the Holland Street Center from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Join us for this staff-led discussion group which covers a range of topics thought up by participants. This is a friendly group, where all topics are discussed respectfully. Grab-n-Go lunch available. RSVP to Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 or email Maureen at mbastardi@somervillema.gov.

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 at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

Poetry Class at the COA – meets on Wednesday, April 2nd, 16th, 23rd & 30th from noon to 1:00 p.m. Free of charge. Learn more about how to create your own poems at the Somerville Council on Aging, led by Somerville poet, Shirley Ware. Learn the art of writing poems in a nurturing, creative environ-

ment. Grab-n-Go lunch is available upon request. RSVP to Natasha Naim by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2317.

Scrape Painting Art Therapy – Monday, April 14th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Registered Art Therapist, Erica Curcio for a relaxing and crafty afternoon. In this workshop, you will learn how to create art by pulling paint across the canvas with a scraper. This is a process-based art therapy program where you will learn how to use this new technique and then have free time to create your own work of art! The cost is \$3. RSVP contact Molly Pagliuca at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318 or email Molly at mpagliu-ca@somervillema.gov.

Looking for a location to chat with your friends? – Come to the COA on Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., the senior center is open, and the coffee is on as we wait for the start of Bingo.

General Exercise / Holland Street Center – Every Monday in April starting at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and every Wednesday in April starting at 9:00 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. RSVP to Michelle Deutsch at 617-625-6600, ext. 2315 or email Michelle at mdeutsch@somervillema.gov.

Asian Tea: Chronic Disease Self-Management Program – Mondays, April 14th, 28th and May 5th and 12th starting at 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 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.

Looking for a location to chat with your friends? – Come to the COA on Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., the senior center is open, and the coffee is on as we wait for the start of Bingo.

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.

The Ralph & Jenny Senior Center has a new phone number. You can reach the center by calling the city number at 617-625-6600, ext. 2336.

GovTV – Xfinity 22/Astound 13/613

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9			
7:00 AM	COA: General Seated Exercise		
7:30 AM	Mental Health Matters: Teen Mental Health		
8:00 AM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
9:00 AM	City of Somerville Civic Day 2025		
9:30 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
10:00 AM	Preserving Black History: Panel & Discussion		
11:45 AM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
12:00 PM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25		
3:30 PM	School Committee Update: Superintendent Dr. Carmona		
4:00 PM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
4:30 PM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
5:00 PM	Chair Pilates & Cardio Throwback		
5:30 PM	City Council Spotlight: Lance Davis		
6:00 PM	SomerViva em Português		
7:00 PM	SomerViva en Espanol		
7:30 PM	City of Somerville Civic Day 2025		
8:00 PM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
8:30 PM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
9:30 PM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology		
10:00 PM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
10:15 PM	Sanctuary Cities/Federal Challenge		
11:00 PM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
11:30 PM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9			
12:00 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
12:30 AM	Sanctuary Cities/Federal Challenge		
1:10 AM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
1:30 AM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
7:00 AM	Chair Yoga w/ Janine Duffy		
7:30 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
8:00 AM	SomerViva an Kreyol		
8:30 AM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
9:00 AM	SomerViva en Espanol		
9:30 AM	Construction Advisory Group Meeting		
12:00 PM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
12:30 PM	City Council Meeting 3-27-25		
7:00 PM	City Council Meeting - LIVE		
FRIDAY, APRIL 11			
12:30 AM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
1:00 AM	City Council Spotlight:		
		Ben Ewen-Campen	
			Ben Ewen-Campen
			Preserving Black History: Panel & Discussion
			National Donor Day 2025
7:35 PM			
8:00 PM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
8:30 PM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
9:00 PM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
10:00 PM	City of Somerville Civic Day 2025		
10:30 PM	SomerViva em Português		
11:00 PM	City Council Spotlight: Kristen Strezo		
11:40 PM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
SUNDAY, APRIL 13			
12:00 AM	City Council Meeting 4-10-25		
7:00 AM	Chair Pilates & Cardio Throwback		
7:30 AM	School Committee Update: Superintendent Dr. Carmona		
8:00 AM	SomerViva en Espanol		
8:30 AM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
9:00 AM	SomerViva em Português		
9:30 AM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
10:30 AM	Sanctuary Cities/Federal Challenge		
11:10 AM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
11:30 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
12:00 PM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
12:30 PM	Mental Health Matters: Teen Mental Health		
1:00 PM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25		
4:00 PM	Museum of Bad Art Tour		
5:00 PM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
6:00 PM	SomerViva en Espanol		
6:30 PM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights - Nepal		
7:00 PM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
7:30 PM	SomerViva em Português		
8:00 PM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
8:30 PM	City Council Meeting 4-10-25		
MONDAY, APRIL 14			
12:00 AM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
12:30 AM	SomerViva en Espanol		
1:00 AM	Museo Inmigrante: What Being an Immigrant Means to Me		
7:00 AM	Yoga with Jenn Falk - Practice IV		
8:00 AM	Women’s History Month Celebration		
9:00 AM	SomerViva en Espanol		
9:30 AM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology		
10:00 AM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
			Start By Believing Proclamation
			Patriots Day Celebration 2024
			National Donor Day 2025
			City Council Meeting 4-10-25
			Preserving Black History: Panel & Discussion
			Chair Pilates & Cardio Throwback
			School Committee Update: Superintendent Dr. Carmona
			Mental Health Matters: Teen Mental Health
			City Council Spotlight: Lance Davis
			SomerViva em Português
			Finance Committee Meeting 4-8-25
			Women’s History Month Celebration
TUESDAY, APRIL 15			
12:00 AM	SomerViva em Português		
12:30 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights-Nepal		
1:00 AM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
1:15 AM	Sanctuary Cities/Federal Challenge		
2:00 AM	Patriots Day Celebration 2024		
7:00 AM	COA: General Seated Exercise #2		
7:30 AM	Chair Yoga w/Janine Duffy		
8:00 AM	Mental Health Matters: Teen Mental Health		
8:30 AM	SomerViva em Português		
9:00 AM	SomerViva an Kreyol		
9:30 AM	SomerViva: Know Your Rights-Nepal		
10:00 AM	Community Meeting: Public Safety		
11:30 AM	SomerViva em Português		
12:00 PM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
12:30 PM	Start By Believing Proclamation		
1:00 PM	City Council Meeting 3-27-25		
5:30 PM	Mental Health Matters: Teen Mental Health		
6:00 PM	SomerViva an Kreyol		
6:30 PM	City Council Spotlight: Ben Ewen-Campen		
7:00 PM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25		
10:00 PM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology		
10:30 PM	SomerViva an Kreyol		
11:00 PM	Museum of Bad Art Tour		
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16			
12:00 AM	Senior Circuit: Virtual Reality		
12:30 AM	City Council Meeting 4-10-25		

EdTV - Xfinity 15/Astound 15/ 614

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9			
8:00 AM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game		
9:30 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford		
11:00 AM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing		
12:30 PM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final		
2:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford		
3:30 PM	MSBA Logo Award Ceremony at SHS		
4:00 PM	Middle School Track and Field Meet		
5:00 PM	SHS SomerStars 2025		
6:00 PM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game		
7:30 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford		
9:00 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing		
10:31 PM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final		
THURSDAY, APRIL 10			
12:00 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford		
1:30 AM	MSBA Logo Award Ceremony at SHS		
2:00 AM	Middle School Track and Field Meet		
3:00 AM	SHS SomerStars 2025		
8:00 AM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden		
10:00 AM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford		
11:30 AM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing		
1:00 PM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25		
4:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford		
5:06 PM	SHS SomerStars 2025		
6:30 PM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology		
7:00 PM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden		
9:00 PM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford		
10:30 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing		
FRIDAY, APRIL 11			
		12:00 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		1:06 AM	SHS SomerStars 2025
		8:00 AM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		9:30 AM	Girls’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		10:30 AM	SHS Jazz Band Live at the Burren
		11:30 AM	Middle School Track and Field Meet
		12:30 PM	SHS Class Cup Challenge
		1:00 PM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		2:30 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		4:00 PM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		5:30 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
		7:00 PM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		8:30 PM	Girls’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		9:30 PM	SHS Jazz Band Live at the Burren
		10:30 PM	Middle School Track and Field Meet
		11:30 PM	SHS Class Cup Challenge
SATURDAY, APRIL 12			
		12:00 AM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		1:30 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		2:35 AM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		8:00 AM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25
		11:00 AM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		12:30 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
		2:00 PM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball
		3:15 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Revere
		5:00 PM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		6:30 PM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		8:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		9:05 PM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		10:30 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
SUNDAY, APRIL 13			
		12:00 AM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game
		1:15 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Revere
		3:00 AM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		8:00 AM	SHS SomerStars 2025
		9:00 AM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology
		10:00 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		11:06 AM	Middle School Track and Field Meet
		12:00 PM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball
		1:30 PM	SHS Ring of Honor - Jerry Knight
		2:00 PM	MSBA Logo Award Ceremony at SHS
		2:30 PM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		4:00 PM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		5:30 PM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
		7:00 PM	SHS SomerStars 2025
		8:01 PM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology
		9:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		10:05 PM	Middle School Track and Field Meet
		11:00 PM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball
MONDAY, APRIL 14			
		12:10 AM	SHS Boys’ LAX vs Medford
		1:30 AM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		3:00 AM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
		8:00 AM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game
		9:30 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		11:00 AM	HTCs Much Ado About Nothing
		12:30 PM	Boys’ Middle School Intramural Futsal Final
		2:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		3:30 PM	MSBA Logo Award Ceremony at SHS
		4:00 PM	Middle School Track and Field Meet
		5:00 PM	SHS SomerStars 2025
		8:00 AM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25
		11:00 AM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology
		11:30 AM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		1:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
		2:30 PM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game
		4:00 PM	SHS Jazz Band Live at the Burren
		5:00 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Revere
		6:30 PM	School Committee Meeting 4-7-25
		9:30 PM	Future In Focus-CTE at SHS: Cosmetology
		10:00 PM	SHS Boys’ Volleyball vs Malden
		11:30 PM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Medford
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16			
		1:00 AM	SHS Staff vs Student Basketball Game
		2:30 AM	SHS Jazz Band Live at the Burren
		3:30 AM	SHS Girls’ LAX vs Revere



Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week

Q: Can my apartment complex ban kids from playing outside?

A: The short answer is no. Children should generally be allowed to play in the common areas. For a more detailed answer, see the article by Molly Current from March 12, 2017: Fair housing laws say let the children play – Los Angeles Times.

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 University Wind Ensemble

The Tufts University Department of Music presents “Tufts University Wind Ensemble” in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Wednesday, April 9, at 7:00 pm.

TUWE performs under the direction of Ray Daniels. This event will be livestreamed at 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 or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.




Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Detour... — Photo by Denise Provost

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



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On This Day in History

April 9

0193 – In the Balkans, the distinguished soldier Septimius Severus is proclaimed emperor by the army in Illyricum.

1682 – Robert La Salle claims lower Mississippi River and all lands that touch it for France.

1770 – Captain James Cook discovers Botany Bay on the Australian continent.

1865 – General Robert E. Lee surrenders his rebel forces to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse, Va.

1916 – The German army launches its third offensive during the Battle of Verdun.

1940 – Germany invades Norway and Denmark.

1942 – In the Battle of Bataan, American and Filipino forces are overwhelmed by the Japanese Army.

1950 – Comedian Bob Hope makes his first television appearance.

1963 – Winston Churchill becomes the first honorary U.S. citizen.

1970 – Paul McCartney announces the official break-up of the Beatles.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

which explores the profound connections that shape life across generations. Connecting these two collections as well are the names of the photographers’ subjects, Helen and Eleni. Both names translate to “light” and “the bright one.” This exhibit will feature both digital and silver gelatin prints, with several works on view for the first time. Exhibition dates: **March 28 – April 25**. Gallery hours: Saturdays 12 – 4 p.m. or by appointment

April marks the start of **construction season** in Somerville. From sidewalks on Holland Street to the Clock Tower at City Hall there is a lot of work to keep up with. The city’s monthly construction newsletter is one of the ways we work to make sure you know what is happening, where it’s happening, and how it ultimately benefits our city. <https://www.somervillema.gov/construction#newsletter>.

The **City of Somerville** will celebrate the **Nepali New Year** by raising the **National Flag of Nepal** at **City Hall** on **Sunday, April 13**, at 12:30 p.m., **City Hall Concourse**, 93 Highland Ave. **Mayor Katjana Ballantyne** will be attending the ceremony, raising the Nepali National Flag, and delivering wishes for a **Happy New Year 2082** to the Nepali community in the city.

Massachusetts has a thriving **zine scene**, and you’re invited to check out as many zine libraries in the Greater Boston area as you can. During **the month of April**, complete your **Zine Library Crawl passport** for the opportunity to win prizes. Zine Library Crawl passports are available at participating libraries. The Zine Crawl takes place **throughout the month of April**, all day, at the **Central Library**, **East Branch**, and **West Branch**. No registration required. Questions? Contact **Tim**: tdevin@somervillema.gov.

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 for more information.

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

Municipal scholarships are available for **high school seniors**. Seven \$1,000 municipal scholarships are available for high school seniors graduating in 2025 through the **City of Somerville Municipal Scholarship Committee**. Applicants must be residents of Somerville who have been accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution. Students are asked to complete a profile and answer three short essay questions by **March 31**. Learn more and apply: <https://www.somervillema.gov/somerville-municipal-scholarship-2025>.

All **Youth Summer programs** will drop on the **Somerville Recreation website** on **April 15**. From sports to arts and crafts to outdoor adventures, they have something for you. Don’t miss out, check their website at www.somerville.com at 12 p.m. for new programs to join for the summer.

Drum Your Heart Day, Saturday April 26, at **Gilman Art Park**, Medford St., Somerville. Bring a bucket or metal or a drum and everyone will drum together led by a core of drum artists. Beginning around 1 p.m. Celebrate, protest, express yourself to the universe the good we know we need to overcome hate and prejudice from our neighborhoods across America. Gilman Art Park has been and continues welcoming artists to show Temporary Public Art until June, possibly through this Summer. On the first Saturday of June there will be a celebration honoring all the artists who have contributed their works to this temporary field of free expression.

On **Friday, April 25**, **GLOWBALL** will transform the **Armory Performance Hall** into an immersive **Glow-in-the-Dark Rave** created by DJ **Adam Gibbons** with hypnotic visuals by **Jay Medina**, all in support of **The Center for Arts at the Armory**. GLOWBALL is an anti-gala. There will be no speeches, formal presentations or auction. There will be

pop-up performances by **Samba Viva** and **Sidy Maiga** on djembe. This year’s honorees: **Rachel Strutt**, Lifetime Achievement Award; **Clay Fernald**, Community Arts Advocate; and **Nelson Salazar**, Outstanding Artist. GLOWBALL tickets include complimentary international bites, glow-in-the-dark accessories and face painting by **Arty Mari**. This will surely be Somerville’s most illuminating party of 2025. <https://artsatthearmory.org/glowball/>.

The **Somerville Arts Council’s ArtBeat 2025 Calls for Talent** are now available. The Somerville Arts Council invites musicians, street performers, circus artists, installation artists, buskers, craft vendors, and more to participate at ArtBeat 2025. Festival date and new time: **Saturday, July 19**, 1 – 9 p.m. (Rain date: Sunday, July 20), Davis Square, Somerville.

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**.

East Somerville’s Spring Clean-up will take place on **April 26**. Pastries and coffee are provided by **Ola Cafe**. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., 115 Broadway, **East Branch Library**.

Community Health Worker Division Hours are held **every other Thursday** at **Connexion** (149 Broadway, Somerville, MA) from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. They will provide hygiene kits, snacks, and referrals to internal and external partners for the following services: ESL, Housing, SHC, SNAP and MassHealth.

Registration for **SPS free summer programs** is now open. They have a wide range of programs open to any SPS student at different grade levels. Check out the summer webpage to learn more: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/summer> . Registration runs **from Monday, March 24 through April**.

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**, 22 Vinal Ave, will host **Microgreens with Ceilidh**, on **Saturday, April 12**, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Join **Ceilidh Peden-Spear** to learn how to grow microgreens at home. A limited supply of starting kits will be available. **Introduction to Nature Monitoring in the City**, **Saturday, April 12**, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. The **Earthwise Aware naturalist team** introduces how to document and help the Growing Center’s plant and insect communities. All welcome to join, beginners welcome. Register for limited spots and for background information and suggestions for downloading free data recording apps. <https://www.thegrowingcenter.org/>

Somerville High School students are invited to bring their SHS ID to the **Somerville YMCA** on **Fridays** from 7 to 9 p.m. and **Sundays** from 2 to 4 p.m. for free. There are free movie nights. On Sundays, students will have access to the basketball and exercise areas (including the weight room). Visit their website to learn more. <https://somervilleymca.org/news/somerville-teens-after-hours/>. Somerville YMCA asks that students go to their website to register before visiting. This program is for ages 14 to 17 years.

City Alerts are a great way for those who live, work, or own a business in Somerville to receive important city information that affects your



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

'Capital's Grave' by Jodi Dean,
The New Era of Lords and Serfs*Capital's Grave*

by Jodi Dean

Verso Books, London, 2025. 169 pages.

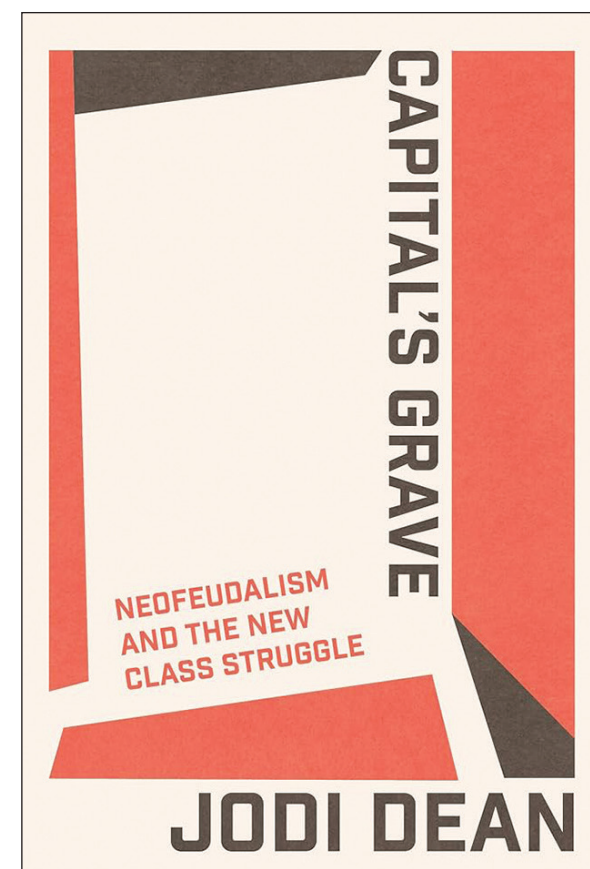
The New Era of Lords and Serfs

Review by Off the Shelf Correspondent Ed Meek

Jodi Dean, an American political theorist and professor in the Political Science Department at Hobart and William Smith College, made the news last year when she lost her position because she expressed her pro-Palestinian stance on campus. She has since been reinstated. Although Bernie, AOC and the Squad, and other progressive democrats, are characterized by Republicans as radicals, they are really center-left politicians willing to work within the system to enact change. Jodi Dean is a radical who wants a different system. She is not alone. Many Americans on the left and right want major changes. Hence the return of Trump.

In the light of the recent election, it seems like an apt time to consider what exactly has gotten us to this state of affairs. A majority of American voters asserted their displeasure with the status quo and voted for the candidate who promised change including among other things, lower inflation, the deportation of undocumented immigrants, cracking down on crime, tariffs on imports, an America-first foreign policy, banning trans-persons from sports teams and bathrooms, allowing states to determine policies on abortion, and cutting government jobs. The first three of these objectives are the salient ones for his supporters according to polls. Whether Trump will make headway on any of them is up in the air. In any case, Americans, like many other voters in the world, expressed their unhappiness and anger with the government by voting in the opposition.

Jodi Dean in her short book makes an interesting argument as to why this has occurred and what she thinks should be done about it. The title refers to the end of capitalism and the advent of a new era of feudalism. Dean explains that capitalism is based on the premise that we produce goods and sell them for profit. As a company develops, productivity should rise and the company should reinvest to create bet-



ter products. Workers will be rewarded as profits increase. But global trade destroyed much of American manufacturing, and although it brought cheap goods, it wiped out many jobs. In addition, automation has reduced the need for factory workers. What we are left with is mostly services. Jobs are plentiful in healthcare, education, restaurant work, sales, law. And they include the new "gig" economy of drivers, food and product deliverers, air B&B landlords, influencers, etc. These jobs are touted as side-hustles that afford practitioners freedom and choice, but the workers have few rights and no benefits. The big winners in our winner-takes-all economy are the owners. Meanwhile, the workers are serfs who suffer "catastrophic anxiety" constantly worried about bankruptcy or losing their job or finding the rent raised or dealing with a pandemic. Service jobs are dependent on the economy and the workers are what Marx calls surplus people, needed when the economy is robust and laid off during a slowdown.

In addition, companies no longer invest profits in research and development. Instead, *Continued on page 23*

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Our poet writes: "I am Sahiba Mohammady, a poet and writer from Nuristan Province, Afghanistan. Currently, I am majoring in biotechnology with a minor in English at Endicott College. I work independently on poetry and journal writing, and I published two of my poems during high school at Governor's Academy.

Through my writing, I explore themes of identity, culture, and the experience of injustice, whether I have experienced it myself or have witnessed it in others."

**My Baby Girl Jesus**

Do you know when a baby is born?
The father said, "She's not my baby. I haven't touched her mum."
Do you know this is a girl? A Baby Girl Jesus.
You don't believe me? Come, see her in Nuristan.
She is bright and beautiful,
She is light and sunny.

But the people don't see her, because they don't believe in Baby Jesus.
Do you believe it?
She is adorable and beautiful.
When she smiles, it is the ascent smile of the world.
But the people don't believe,
They wanted to kill her before she was born.
Do you believe it? Or are you one of them?

She is tiny, with a cute little face,
But the people say, "Don't kiss her, because she doesn't have a father."
Don't you kiss a cute little baby?

I do.
Because she is a Baby Girl Jesus.
She doesn't have a father.
She was born without the approval of the world,
A miracle in the eyes of the faithful,

Yet rejected by those who don't believe.
They want to erase her before she grows.
But, here she is, and she shines
Like the sun that refuses to hide behind the clouds.
Do you believe it now?

She is a light in the darkness.
She is a Baby Girl Jesus,
And she is here to light the darkest hearts.

— Sahiba Mohammady, 4/2/2025

Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 16

of state. The other four members would be chosen by the above three members from a list of candidates nominated by the House Speaker, House Minority Leader, Senate President and Senate Minority Leader.

Supporters of the proposed commission say the Legislature has abused its redistricting power and often gerrymandered districts to protect incumbents. They said this antiquated, partisan system allows the majority party to control the process and permits “legislators to choose their voters.” They noted that the idea of an independent commission has been endorsed in the past by the League of Women Voters, Common Cause and former Govs. Michael Dukakis, Mitt Romney and Deval Patrick.

“The measure strengthens transparency and objectivity in the redistricting process by prohibiting recent elected officials from serving and by including public comment periods and reporting requirements,” says amendment sponsor Sen. Jamie Eldridge (D-Marlborough). “By adopting best practices already used in other states, this reform ensures that Massachusetts moves toward a fairer and non-

partisan redistricting process.” Opponents of the commission say elected members of the Legislature, who are accountable to the voters, should be responsible for the important job of redistricting. They said the task should not be undertaken by an appointed commission with unknown members who would not have direct accountability. They cited studies showing that these so-called “independent” redistricting commissions are no more or less independent than commissions established by Legislatures.

HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK’S SESSION?

Beacon Hill Roll Call tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature’s job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief

length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session. During the week of March 31-April 4, the House met for a total of nine minutes while the Senate met for a total of 34 minutes.

Mon. March 31	House 11:02 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. Senate 11:21 a.m. to 11:25 a.m.
Tues. April 1	No House session No Senate session
Wed. April 2	No House session No Senate session
Thurs. April 3	House 1:00 a.m. to 11:06 a.m. Senate 11:13 a.m. to 11:43 a.m.
Fri. April 4	No House session No Senate session
Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com	

Newstalk

CONT. FROM PG 21

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 and click on the button for your preferred language. Step-by-step sign-up instructions are available at: somervillema.gov/alerts. Having trouble signing up? You can call 3-1-1 (617-666-3311) for assistance.

The Somerville Winter Farmers Mar-

ket is back at the Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave., on Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. from November 2 to April 12. The Center for the Arts at the Armory is proud to offer a weekly winter market with 71+ local food vendors with the best locally grown and regionally produced foods, including fresh produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, tamales, pastries, chocolate, skincare products, and more. The market accepts SNAP/EBT and HIP benefits. They also offer a \$15 SNAP match to customers each week. More info is available on

their website: <https://www.somwintermarket.org/>.

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 equip-

ment. We currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies, and Transport Wheelchairs. For additional information or for an application, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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Off The Shelf

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they buy back their own stock raising dividends for themselves, and they use profits to lobby politicians for favorable tax laws. They find no-tax zones like Ireland and move their headquarters there. Amazon gets tax breaks from cities and states for the promise of providing jobs. The latest scam by Musk and Trump involves investing in cryptocurrency and inviting others to do so to increase their own net worth. Sarah Kendzior (Hiding in Plain Sight) describes this as kleptocracy. The point is, this isn’t actually capitalism; it’s the extraction of wealth.

Dean refers to the owners as lords and the workers as serfs in what she calls neo-feudalism. The Trump administration, staffed with billionaires including Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, and Trump himself, a reputed billionaire, are our lords and we are their serfs. The characterization is apt for those millions of Americans who rent an apartment, purchase a car with

loans, get health insurance through Obamacare, and live paycheck to paycheck with credit card debt and/or college loans to pay off each month. With an average household income of 80K in the US, this would fit the 50% of the country earning less than the average. With inflation and high interest rates, even Americans earning more than the average income find it difficult to keep up with the bills.

Wealth continues to become more and more concentrated with the top 1% holding 30% of the total net worth. The top 10% holds 60% of the wealth. The bottom half controls less than 3%. Dean’s position is that capitalism just doesn’t work for most of us and needs to be replaced.

The answer, she tells us, is communism with “Universal Basic Services” providing healthcare, housing, education, and good jobs bolstered by unions. Unpaid “reproductive

labor” like motherhood and caring for family and elders, and housework, would be included in what constitutes work. A key element of communism is the abolition of private property. Nearly all land is now privately owned: “in the US 100 families own about 42 million acres” according to Dean. How the abolition of private property would work out is puzzling. “From each according to his ability to each according to his needs,” said Marx. Dean claims we will have to make such a radical change to address climate change and thrive in the future.

In the next four years, it will be interesting to observe how Americans deal with the many changes Trump and friends are promising. Whether Americans are ready to demand the government provide us with universal basic services, and whether service jobs will evolve into good jobs with adequate wages and benefits is a big question. Jodi Dean’s new book gives us plenty to talk about.

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