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## 'No Mow May' in Somerville is underway



The "No Mow May" initiative is intended to provide sustained support for vital pollinators in the area.

Noticing the grass is growing taller than usual? It's intentional. During the month of May, mowing of city-owned passive-use grassy areas is paused as part of the international "No Mow May" initiative.

The intent is to support biodiversity and provide vital food sources for reemerging pollinators – like bees, beetles, and butterflies – this spring. During this time, the exception is athletic fields and cemeteries, which are regularly mown per usual.

The city is participating because although pollinators may be tiny creatures, they have an outsized impact on agriculture and the food supply, and they are deemed to be under threat. Roughly one-third of the food you eat needs insect pollination to reach your plate, and pollinators are in decline.

"No Mow May" is encouraged because pollinators wake up from winter in the early *Continued on page 4*

## Somerville's 'Salute to Service' parade

The City of Somerville Department of Veterans' Services is proud to host Salute to Service, a parade honoring all who serve our country and our community and the nation's 250th anniversary as a free and independent democracy.

The parade will take place on Armed Forces Day on Saturday, May 16, pulling forward the annual Memorial Day parade observance and transforming this year's parade into a special observance of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and a recognition of all who serve our nation and in civic life locally.

The city's Memorial Day remembrance ceremony will take place Monday, May 25, at Somerville Veterans' Memorial Cemetery, as it does every year, to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

Veterans, veteran-owned businesses, community organizations, and local groups are *Continued on page 4*



The city invites veterans, community groups, and local organizations to join a Salute to Service parade on Saturday, May 16.



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Celebrate Somerville's Haitian community and honor Haitian Flag Day by joining a Haitian Flag raising ceremony on Monday, May 18. Hosted by the City of Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA), in partnership with the Haitian Service Providers Coalition (HSPC), all are invited to attend. The event celebrates Somerville's Haitian community and honors the history and enduring spirit of Haiti. Attendees will hear from Mayor Jake Wilson and SOIA and HSPC staff. Where: City Hall Concourse (93 Highland Ave.) When: 3 p.m., Monday, May 18. For more information, please contact 311 (617) 666-3311.

\*\*\*\*\*

Somerville's Elections Department recently sent its second round of census forms to residents. Annual participation in the census is essential for keeping an accurate population count, and it updates or maintains your status as an active voter for upcoming elections. Completed census forms can be returned via the postage-paid return envelope included in the mailing, by scanning the form and emailing it to census@somervillema.gov, or in person at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.). Please call 311 (617-666-3311) with questions.

\*\*\*\*\*

Celebrating their birthdays this week: Happy Birthday to local attorney Ed Smith. Ed is a great guy, and we wish him the very best year ahead. Happy birthday to Feargal O'Toole. We wish him a great birthday. Happy birthday to Vinny Vicente. We wish him the best. Happy birthday to Brian Roche. *Continued on page 7*

## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of May 13 – May 19 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
<b>Wednesday</b> May 13	Cloudy	63°/54°	23%	15%	SSW 16 mph
<b>Thursday</b> May 14	Rain	59°/49°	90%	71%	ESE 11 mph
<b>Friday</b> May 15	Rain	55°/48°	76%	62%	NNE 12 mph
<b>Saturday</b> May 16	Sunny	73°/60°	9%	4%	WSW 12 mph
<b>Sunday</b> May 17	Sunny	80°/59°	4%	2%	W 12 mph
<b>Monday</b> May 18	Partly Cloudy	70°/57°	5%	2%	SE 11 mph
<b>Tuesday</b> May 19	Partly Cloudy	84°/60°	22%	16%	SW 15 mph

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

## Announcing the Kickball Connect Community Event

The Union Square Neighborhood Council is excited to invite local organizations, nonprofits, artists, makers, volunteers, and neighbors to join us for our upcoming Kickball Connect Community Event on Saturday, May 30, at the Lincoln Park softball field, starting at 2:30 p.m.



They are putting together a fun, welcoming community day centered around a kickball tournament, neighborhood connection, and local organizations coming together in one shared space.

The event will include:

- A community kickball tournament
- Local nonprofit and community tables
- Art-making and banner activities
- "Tell Your Story" conversations
- Popsicles and refreshments
- Opportunities for neighbors to meet and connect

They would love to have your organization involved. Whether you would like to host a table, share resources, promote upcoming programs, volunteer, or simply come hang out and support the community, they would be excited to have you join us. This event is meant to be informal, collaborative, and community-driven. Bring materials if you'd like, or just bring yourselves.

Kickball registration is also open here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeclx-PFWpwwjHnSWWbq6kr-TZ55RudDILvF1zoGyRYNLRvNQ/viewform>. It is \$30 per team (minimum 7 players, maximum 15 players per team; at least 2 women and 2 men per team; one member designated as captain) or \$5 if you'd like to individually sign up and be placed on a team.

## The Somerville Times

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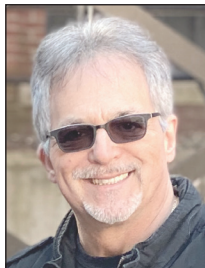
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

# Street games



Last week's Porchfest, with huge numbers of people crowding the streets, brought back memories of when I was a kid and played in the neighborhoods.

There were kids everywhere. Most streets were two-way back in the 60's and 70's. We played games like buck buck and Relieve E O.

I posed the question, what games and activities do you recall playing outside with the other neighborhood kids in the 60's and 70's? Not counted are walking while looking at your phone while listening to music!

We see basketball hoops on some low traffic streets. There are also hockey nets on a few streets.

Here are some responses from our fellow Somerville folks:

"Red light green light and dodge ball!"  
 "All those songs we sang as we jumped rope, drawing our dream houses on the

ground at Burns School in chalk. Hi- low, medium wavy, walkie talkie blindsies pepper ... red light, green light, so many."

"MI - SS - I - SS - I with a double P - I."

"4 corners."

"Simon says, hide and seek."

"Tag."

"Building go-carts out of doll carriage wheels and scrap wood with you and Joey and riding them down the hill of Hall Ave. No helmets. Good times!"

"Red rover, rattlesnake, dodge ball, hop scotch, jump rope, tag, jacks so lucky to have been a child when I was!"

"Stickball at the old post office (now the parking office) and also at the Powder House School schoolyard."

"Whiffle ball down at MW Carr. Basketball at the Western Jr. High School"

"Wiffle ball."

"Street hockey."

"Red Rover, dodge ball, hide and seek, hop scotch, Jax and, as a teen, cards (whist) at the park."



"Statue man, hide the belt, Chinese jump rope, 4 square, kick the can."

"Basketball at Trum field. We were all short girls but we loved playing hoops."

"Pitching pennies."

"Jump rope. Marbles Jack's hope scotch"

"Street baseball with a rubber ball and a

broom handle for a bat. The door handle of two cars were 1st and 3rd base. Chalk on the street were Home and 2nd base."

"So many, red rover, buck buck, how many fingers do I have up, dodge ball, baseball, jacks, tag, jump rope, hop-scotch endless."

*Continued on page 10*

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## Book review: 'All the Sinners Bleed' by S.A. Cosby

By Dennis Fischman

S.A. Cosby, a multiple-time winner of the Anthony Awards [1] at the World Mystery Convention, grew up in Virginia. He was influenced by Southern Gothic literature, and it shows. Another Southern writer, William Faulkner, famously wrote, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." That's certainly true in this book, where both the hero, Sheriff Titus Crown, and Charon County, VA, his territory, are haunted by shades of racism, violence, and death.

The book shows why Cosby deserved his awards. It's tense, tightly plotted, and revealing of racial relations in small-town rural areas in a way that only someone who knows them intimately can express.

As I have mentioned before in my reviews, the serial killer subgenre [2] is not my favorite type of mystery. This one was particularly grim, with the number of young people sexually abused and murdered – and then the number of adults killed in ritualistic ways – mounting over a dozen, with at least nine named. I put up with that death toll: I didn't enjoy it.

I also didn't enjoy the virgin/whore dichotomy that the current and past women in Titus' life fall into, nor the way some motivations in the book went unexplained. "Hurt people hurt people" is just not enough, because there are plenty of former victims who don't victimize others.

I've read a couple of books lately (*Escape Artist* [3] being

the other one) where I had the same criticism: if you're not returning to the location, there are too many characters in this book! At least 75 characters appear by name, and honestly, only Titus' family and lover, his police officers, some of the high school students and teachers, a couple of church leaders and business owners, and a few people from his Indiana days were necessary.

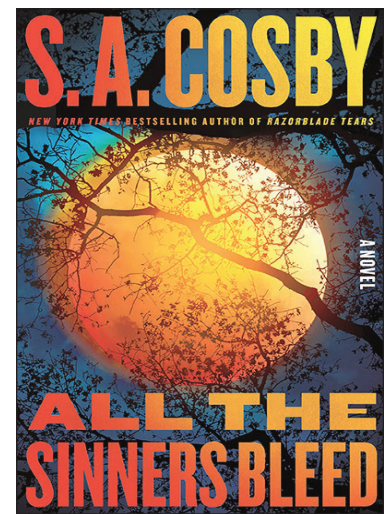
When you have somebody stumble across a body (his only appearance in the book), and you not only get his name and that of the dog he was walking but the names of his wife and three children, that is too much!

What I DID like was getting to know Titus. Complicated, anguished, he is at base a good and

highly moral man. Too good, in fact, to remain a law enforcement officer out in the field. By the end of the book, he is giving up being Sheriff and taking a job teaching criminology in a university. Which is a relief in some ways: maybe he and Darlene will get back together someday? And a terrible disappointment, too, because a) if all the good ones get out of policing, what will the remaining police do to us?, and b) it means we will probably not see a sequel to this book.

All that being said, I will probably go back and read one of S.A. Cosby's other books, when I have the stomach for it. The writing, the plot, the characters, and the setting all make for a gripping read.

**Links:**



All the Sinners Bleed by S.A. Cosby  
Flatiron Books, 2023.

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony\\_Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Awards)

[2] <https://www.thesomerville-times.com/archives/145770>

[3] <https://www.thesomerville-times.com/archives/130337>

## Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

**Q: Could spring cleaning help improve my finances?**

**A: Yes** — absolutely!

Spring cleaning isn't just about organizing your home. It can also create meaningful financial opportunities by helping you identify unused assets, reduce clutter, and potentially generate both cash and tax advantages.

**Here's how:**

• **You may uncover items with resale value.** Unused furniture, electronics, clothing, collectibles, and household goods may be worth selling through platforms like Face-

book Marketplace, Craigslist, eBay, or local consignment shops.

• **Selling unused items can create extra cash.**

Many households hold hundreds — or even thousands — of dollars in underused possessions that could be converted into savings, debt reduction, or investment capital.

• **Donating can still create financial value.**

While tax benefits depend on what you donate and how you file, charitable giving may still provide federal or Massachusetts tax advantages in certain situations — while also helping others.

• **Even when items aren't highly valuable, clearing them out has benefits.**

Reducing clutter can improve organization, simplify your living space, and help you better understand what you truly use and value.

**Bottom Line:**

Spring cleaning can do far more than tidy your home — it can improve organization, create financial opportunities, support charitable giving, and potentially reduce taxes. Clearing out what you no longer use may be one of the simplest ways to create both physical and financial space.

**Any questions?** I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area. Reach out at [vincent@hickscpasolutions.com](mailto:vincent@hickscpasolutions.com)



com or (859) 553-0788.

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

## 'No Mow May' in Somerville is underway CONT. FROM PG 1

spring and need something to eat, but the flowers they rely on may be hard to find. Letting flowers in lawns grow in April and May gives pollinators an important food source.

While the grass grows, Somerville's Department of Public Works (DPW), along with our Public Space and Urban Forestry division, is focusing those freed-up labor

hours on spring cleaning and planting in parks and open spaces citywide.

Residents and businesses can do their part too by waiting to mow their own lawns as flowers continue to bloom. Grass mowing enforcement will be relaxed on private property throughout the month for "No Mow May." Please note that overgrowth violations

that impede sidewalk passage or excessive overgrowth from long-term unmanaged vegetation that could contribute to rodent harborage will still be subject to enforcement.

Get "in the weeds" on why pollinators matter and other ways the city is working to do its part to protect them by checking out Somerville's Pollinator Action Plan.

It's a first-of-its-kind plan created specifically for an urban environment. Designed for broad use, the plan highlights local pollinators and provides recommendations, plant lists, and design guidance that community members can use to build habitats. To review the full plan, visit [somervillema.gov/pollinators](http://somervillema.gov/pollinators).

## Somerville's 'Salute to Service' parade CONT. FROM PG 1

invited to take part in the parade or volunteer during the day's events.

**Salute to Service**

The parade will step off at 11 a.m. from City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) and proceed west via Highland Ave., Cedar St., and

Franey Rd., ending at Trum Field.

Veterans, veterans and related organizations, first responders, Somerville community groups, organizations, and veteran-owned or local businesses are encouraged to join the parade. Marching

bands, color guards, marchers and walkers, wheelers and rollers, vehicles with riders, motorcycles, dance and drill teams, honk bands, and more are all welcome.

Volunteers are needed to provide day-of event support.

Attendees, mark your calendar now to come show your support and gratitude to those who serve and to celebrate 250 years of democracy. For more information, visit [somervillema.gov/salute](http://somervillema.gov/salute) or call 617-625-6600 x4700.

# Somerville brings art into City Hall

Somerville is bringing art into City Hall with the new Community Collections series of rotating art exhibits. The program puts the halls and walls of City Hall to use as a mini-gallery to feature community and student artwork.

The series launched on Wednesday, April 29, with the RE-discovering Somerville Open Studios exhibit featuring artwork by Somerville Open Studios (SOS) artists, photos of SOS artists in their studio spaces by photographer Aram Comjean, and vintage SOS posters from the past few decades. An art reception for the show and series will be held on Monday, May 18, and all are invited.

Artwork in the show includes prints of works on display at the Somerville Arts Council's Inside Out Gallery in the CVS window in Davis Square. The series is hosted by the city's Somerville Arts Council (SAC) with support from the City Communications team, and the opening show was co-curated by City Art Coordinator Heather Balchunas and Hilary Scott,



President of Somerville Open Studios.

"As a central gathering place in our city – and in a community that takes so much pride in its art and culture scene – it makes sense to share local art on the walls of City Hall for all to see. Now, when you come by to pay a bill or join a meeting, I hope you will take a moment to also be inspired by some art made by your neighbors," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "In Somerville, we believe you shouldn't have to only seek out art; art should find you."

The Community Collections series will offer roughly three rotating local art exhibits per year. Artwork is on view in the halls during regular business *Continued on page 13*

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# Somerville's PorchFest 2026

Despite the rain, thousands of people came out Saturday to enjoy a day of free, live musical performances throughout the city. Hundreds of bands at more than 500 locations performed music ranging from indie, punk, and hip hop to Latin, jazz, country, and world music. To see more photos from the event, go to our website: [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com).

— Photos by Bobbie Toner, Denise Provost, and Will Mbah



# COMMENTARY

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Farmers markets season is kicking off in Somerville.

## Our View Of The Times



It seems as though we cannot get enough of the farmers market scene in Somerville. They have become time-honored traditions and perennial mainstays of alternative commerce in the city.

There is something special about shopping for fresh produce, discovering unique arts and crafts vendors, and enjoying live entertainment in the open air. We feel a sense of camaraderie, too, as we gather to

take in the sights, sounds, flavors, and aromas that permeate each market site.

The first markets of the season are beginning to open, and there is no better time to experience what they have to offer than in the high summer months to come.

The Union Square Farmers Market, operated by Union Square Main Streets, takes place every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Union Square Plaza and

will run until October 31.

The Davis Square Farmers Market kicks off on May 20 at the intersection of Day St. and Herbert St., every Wednesday from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m., ongoing until November 25. The market accepts cash, credit/debit cards, WIC/Senior coupons, and EBT cards and offers a weekly \$15 SNAP Match. SNAP users can earn additional benefits through the Healthy Incen-

tives Program (HIP) at the market. Spend \$20 per month on fruits and vegetables at participating vendors, and the money will be put back on your EBT card.

The Davis Square Farmers Market is a Mass Farmers Market-managed market.

So you see, there is no shortage of good, old-fashioned style trading available for all of us here in the city. Be sure to check them out and enjoy the feeling.

### Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

We hope he enjoys his day. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Ann Kane-Peters, Mary Ellen Myhr, Jordan Harris, Diane Murphy Sullivan, Donny Caprigno, Beth Foley Delacruz, Ken McIntyre, and Kevin D. Downey**, a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities** invites you to **Red Sox Disability Pride Game Night** on **Tuesday, May 26. Red Sox vs. Atlanta Braves** at 7:10 p.m. Somerville residents

with disabilities can request: 1 free ticket, 1 guest ticket. Families are welcome to attend. Free charter bus transportation from **City Hall Plaza, 93 Highland Ave** (optional). Free MBTA train/bus pass (optional). Meal delivered to your seat. Free Disability Pride shirt (Adult sizes only). Tickets are limited. If you attended in the past 2 years, you will be waitlisted until **May 18**. More tickets will be released starting **May 19**. To request tickets, email [ADACommission@gmail.com](mailto:ADACommission@gmail.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

Somerville's **RSJ Fund** is making up to **\$100,000 total in community programming grants** available for residents, advo-

cates, and local service providers working to advance racial and social justice work. Individual applicants may request between \$250 and \$9,999. Applications are open now until 11:59 p.m. on **Friday, May 29**. <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/department-racial-and-social-justice/rsj-fund>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Join **Somerville Media Center** in honoring former **Mayor Joe Curtatone** with their **Public Service Award** on **Thursday, June 4**, from 7 to 9 p.m. at **Arts at the Armory, 119 Highland Ave**, in Somerville. The celebratory evening will feature cheeses and specialty bites provid-

ed by **Formaggio Kitchen** and more, tasty drinks from **Arts at the Armory**, live music by **Revolutionary Snake Ensemble**, raffles, and a special presentation honoring **Joe Curtatone's** longstanding advocacy for community media and Somerville Media Center. Proceeds from the event will directly support SMC programs. Tickets are available online: <https://tinyurl.com/joecurtatone>

\*\*\*\*\*

Apply for a table at the **Big Gay Dance Party** by **Monday, May 18**. Share your organization's mission and connect with the community in this vibrant celebration of pride. Tabling is free! *Continued on page 13*

# FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

# Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1022

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Is Mother's Day on the same date every year?  | clowns called?  |
| 2. What is the most common birthdate in the year?  | 8. What is the northernmost capital city in the world?                                    |
| 3. On a standard computer keyboard, what is the only vowel that isn't on the top row of letters? | 9. What kind of car does Prince sing about in his 1983 hit?                               |
| 4. What B-52s singer joins R.E.M. on the song <i>Shiny Happy People</i> ?                        | 10. What Irish band spent 24 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 with the song <i>Linger</i> ? |
| 5. Who wrote <i>Catch-22</i> ?   | 11. Who was the posthumous Oscar winner as the <i>Joker</i> (2008)?                       |
| 6. What does the Roman numeral "D" represent?  | 12. What is the Hollywood sidewalk with star plaques called?                              |
| 7. What is the fear of   |   |

Answers on page 10

## The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The tallest bamboo sculpture is more than 164-feet high.
2. Messages from your brain travel at up to 200 mph.

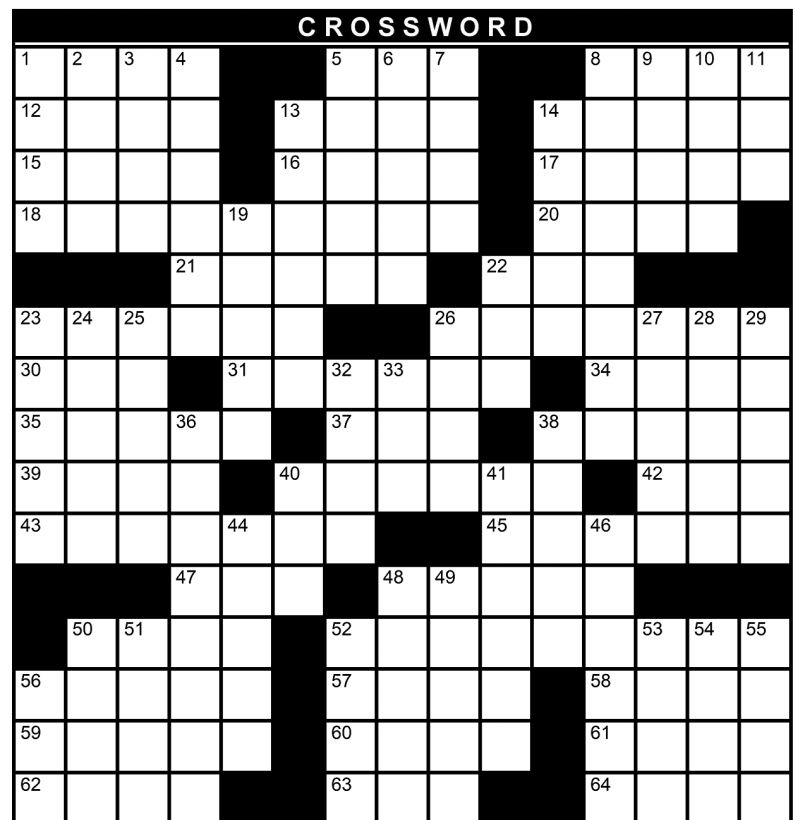
### STATEPOINT CROSSWORD MOUNTAINS

#### ACROSS

1. Ill-considered
5. Mate
8. "I didn't get the \_\_\_\_"
12. Biblical preposition
13. Down in the dumps
14. Rodgers of NFL fame
15. Proofreader's mark
16. Get bacon?
17. Any mountain over 3,000 feet, in Scotland
18. Mount Everest mountain range
20. Research facil.
21. Itsy-bitsy bits
22. Forensic evidence, acr.
23. Relating to sacrum
26. What Cupid did (2 words)
30. Amazement interjection
31. Not victory
34. Eurozone money
35. Whisky measure, pl.
37. Dot-com address
38. Birth-related
39. Auricular
40. Volcanic ash, e.g.
42. Pro baseball's "Master Melvin"
43. Borat's swimsuit
45. Cruel treatments
47. It would
48. Munchausen's title
50. Supernatural life force
52. Mountain inspiration for a pen name (2 words)
56. You will
57. Icelandic epic
58. Double reed woodwind instrument
59. Like a good singer (2 words)
60. Not quite an adult
61. Matterhorn site
62. Like a busybody
63. Commercial break contents
64. Coloring substances

#### DOWN

1. Mount \_\_\_\_ more, South Dakota
2. A in ABS
3. Opposite of stern



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### Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 4. Balloon filler (2 words)                     | 29. Sheds skin, as in snake                |
| 5. "Vamos a la ____"                            | 32. World's most climbed mountain          |
| 6. Sainly glows                                 | 33. Before, poetically                     |
| 7. Carl Zeiss' product                          | 36. Denali, 1917-2015                      |
| 8. Tallest mountain from base to peak (2 words) | 38. British East India Company millionaire |
| 9. European sea eagles                          | 40. Fairy tale's last word                 |
| 10. Dead, in France                             | 41. Scottish clan identity                 |
| 11. Yoko of music fame                          | 44. Vesuvius location                      |
| 13. #11 Down's late husband, e.g.               | 46. Take care of cargo                     |
| 14. Kind of acid                                | 48. Foreshadowed                           |
| 19. Dump truck quantities                       | 49. World's longest mountain range         |
| 22. Email period                                | 50. As opposed to stereo                   |
| 23. Bible's wicked city                         | 51. Puffins and guillemots                 |
| 24. Blood circulation artery                    | 52. Facebook's parent company              |
| 25. ____ gang                                   | 53. Competently                            |
| 26. Baby powder ingredient                      | 54. Uh-uh                                  |
| 27. Sting Rays and Mustangs                     | 55. British tax                            |
| 28. Angry                                       | 56. Old-fashioned "far"                    |

Soultion in the next edition of *The Somerville Times*.

# Mayor Wilson chats with Chief Sustainability Officer: Open Door Chats

By Harry Kane

Creating a sustainable community and fighting climate change were at the forefront of Somerville's agenda last week.

During SustainaVille Week – the annual celebration of sustainability and climate action in Somerville – Mayor Jake Wilson interviewed Chief Sustainability Officer Steven Nutter at Open Door Chats to reintroduce folks to Somerville's plan to protect the community from pollution and climate impacts.

"We're in a climate crisis," said Mayor Wilson. "As our federal government abdicates its responsibility to move on these goals meaningfully, it's increasingly falling to the state and local level. That's where we come in here in Somerville. It's a time for action."

Nutter has lived in Winter Hill since 2010. He says climate work is part of his DNA. Since childhood, he has grown up seeing the effects coal mining and chemical production have had on communities.

"I'm just really blessed that I can do environmental work right here in the community that I live," said Nutter, who joined the City of Somerville as the Chief Sustainability Officer and Director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment in January.

The community is the main pillar of climate work, he says, and working together is the key to dealing with challenging climate-related concerns. It requires community members to think globally and act locally.

Somerville's Climate Forward plan – a community plan built on equity principles – includes goals for 2030, 2040, and 2050, explained Nutter. Its 77 actions across five different topic areas include buildings and energy, community health and resiliency, natural resources and waste, transportation and mobility, and leadership.



Chief Sustainability Officer Steven Nutter sat down with Mayor Wilson and outlined Somerville's sustainability plans for the immediate future.

Building emissions are a top priority for the team, and the city has hired an energy adviser to administer a microgrant program to give residents up to \$2,000 for their own energy efficiency projects. "We're not talking about big renovations here," explained Nutter. "We're talking about smaller things that really make a difference."

Somerville's energy manager is doing a comprehensive analysis in school buildings and is working toward decarbonization, which will not only reduce emissions but also save taxpayers money, he said.

The city is expanding the number of electric vehicle charging stations, and has received three grants over the past year, said Nutter. "We expect to have almost 50 charging stations by the end of the year, including a level 3 fast charger over at Foss Park."

In the goal for cleaner energy, Nutter said that the Somerville Community Choice Electricity (CCE) program allows residents to "opt up to 100 percent renewable ... which is amazing."

But he said it's a "critical time" because the State House wants to cut \$1 billion dollars from the Mass Save efficiency program, which Nutter says is "nuts." Nutter encourages residents to contact the State Senator to save the program.

OSE is working with Ever-source to figure out the "pain

points" around neighborhood electrification. Nutter says they will continue to request to be included in the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program.

The Commonwealth initially allowed up to 10 cities to be involved in this pilot program, which aims to restrict fossil fuel use in new construction and major renovations, but Somerville didn't make it into the program this round.

One of the goals of the city is to increase the amount of green space, and de-paving would allow for more. Currently, some 87 percent of Somerville is either paved or has a building on it, according to Nutter. The removal of asphalt or concrete is a critical strategy utilized to reduce stormwater problems.

A pilot program for curbside municipal composting in East Somerville may eventually lead to a citywide program. "We've diverted 35,000 pounds of food waste since we started the pilot last fall. We have more than 350 families involved in the pilot right now. We have room for up to 1200 families," said Nutter.

At the neighborhood level, Nutter says, curbside municipal composting can help reduce the rat population by removing the food waste from trash.

As part of SustainaVille Week, the city held its first-ever book club event on May 4 to build and strengthen

Continued on page 13

## The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



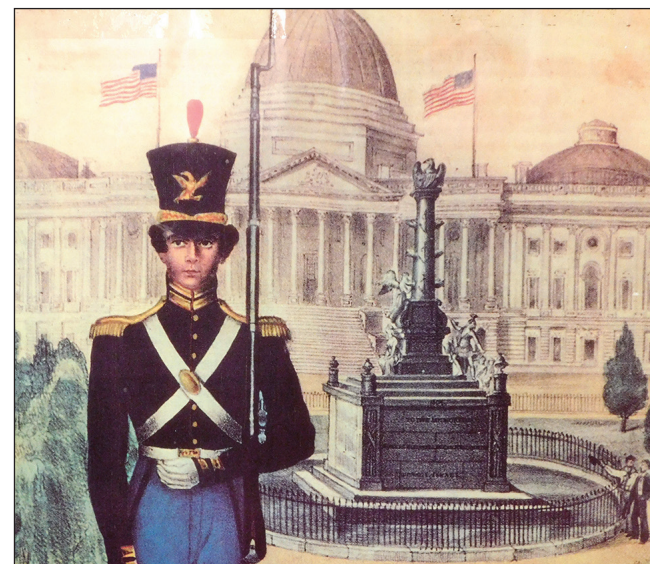
### Eagle feathers #354

This article first appeared in the January 22, 2020, edition of The Somerville Times.

### Our Tripolitan Hero

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

In 1808, a 20-foot-tall Italian marble monument was erected just inside the gates of the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. The U.S.S. Constitution delivered it from Italy via Boston. It was the city's first outdoor memorial, the first American monument approved by Congress, and the only one for decades to follow.



During the War of 1812's attack and ransacking of Washington D.C., the British severely damaged the sculpture. After being repaired in 1831, it was moved to the front of the Capitol Building on its West Wing. Massachusetts' Representative Edward Everett, a Winter Hill resident, fought to have it located at this most impressive location.

Originally called the Somers Memorial in honor of Tripolitan War hero Captain Richard Somers and his crew, today it is named the Tripoli Monument and lies on the grounds of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Tripoli was the first country to declare war on the infant United States.



James Fenimore Cooper was America's first-born novelist. In 1842, Somerville's first year, Cooper wrote a biography of Captain Somers. He also then called for the remains of Somers and his crew to be returned home from Tripoli. To this day, the intrepid heroes lie in unmarked graves on its beach.

Boston's Charles Bullfinch, America's first native-born architect and draftsman for the United States Capitol, designed the grounds for the Somers Memorial. He also drafted drawings for Somerville's Barrell Mansion and the Mclean Hospital on Cobble Hill.

Continued on page 15

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

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, June 2, 2026**, at 6:45pm through Zoom.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_AAo0yA3VRDeu36fc8par8A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AAo0yA3VRDeu36fc8par8A)

**TO CALL IN**

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

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

**Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties**

**56 Meacham Road** Applicant: Jackie Nice  
Owner: Sun Sasongko  
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing an existing rear deck with a smaller deck in the same location. The proposed deck is almost entirely screened by a cedar gate.

**158 Central Street** Applicant: Michael Pettit  
Owner: Michael Pettit and Nicole Black  
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by adding a shed to the backyard of the property visible from the public street.

**42 Spring Street** Applicant: Garth Goldstein  
Owner: Eleanor Schmidt  
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by adding a basement canopy, rear dormer pediment, and install a new driveway.

**DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)**

**282-284 McGrath Highway** Applicant: Law Office of Michael LaRosa LLC - Michael LaRosa  
Owner: Walter Tauro, Trustee of Brant Realty Trust  
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

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

5/13/26 The Somerville Times



**Advertisement**

Miscellaneous Masonry Repairs to stairs and seat walls at Mystic River apartments located at 500 Mystic Ave Somerville. Project Walkthrough on Wednesday 5/20/26 at 11:00 AM at SHA Modernization Office located at 30 Memorial Road Rear Somerville, Ma. Walkthrough or appointment for walkthrough is mandatory. This is not a Bid. This is a Request for Quotes. Prevailing Wage Rates apply. Estimate \$ 35,000.00

5/13/26 The Somerville Times



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

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Somerville Planning Board (PB) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, May 21, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_0T2klfbjRVKpYxABJLAZBw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0T2klfbjRVKpYxABJLAZBw)

**TO CALL IN**

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

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

**32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital proposes to develop an Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires Site Plan Approval.

**32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital proposes to establish residential housing in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

**32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital seeks to construct a mechanical penthouse that exceeds the maximum height in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

**120 Middlesex Ave** DWCH Assembly Row, LLC, LLC proposes to develop a 19-story lab building in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District (ASMD), which requires Site Plan Approval.

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

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

5/6/26, 5/13/26 The Somerville Times

**NOTICE OF ACTIVITY AND USE LIMITATION**

16-20 Medford Street

Somerville, MA

RELEASE TRACKING NUMBER 3-36581

A release of oil and/or hazardous materials has occurred at this location, which is a disposal site as defined by M.G.L. c. 21E, § 2 and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, 310 CMR 40.0000. On April 24, 2026, Somerville Living, LLC with the Middlesex South County Registry of Deeds and registered with the Land Registration Office of the Middlesex South Registry District filed a NOTICE OF ACTIVITY AND USE LIMITATION on the disposal site, pursuant to 310 CMR 40.1070 through 40.1080.

The NOTICE OF ACTIVITY AND USE LIMITATION will limit the following site activities and uses on the above property:

- (i) Any subsurface activity including, but not limited to, soil excavation, utility work, construction and/or demolition which is likely to result in contact with, disturbance of, and/or handling of soil and/or groundwater at depths beneath paved areas and/or the building footprint to 13 feet below surface grade without prior preparation of a Groundwater Management and/or Soil Management Plan prepared by a Licensed Site Professional and the preparation of the Health and Safety Plan. The Health and Safety Plan should be prepared by a certified Industrial Hygienist or other qualified individual appropriately trained in worker procedures and requirements;
- (ii) Relocation of soil from depths beneath paved areas and/or the building footprint to 13 feet below surface grade and/or groundwater from within the disposal site boundaries to areas outside the disposal site boundaries without prior development and implementation of a Groundwater Management Plan and/or Soil Management Plan prepared by a Licensed Site Professional;
- (iii) Use of the property for growing food for human and/or animal consumption;
- (iv) Any use of the property where the soil vapor barrier, hardscape (pavement and concrete) and 3 feet of soil cover does not meet the requirements set forth in Section 3.0 Obligations and Conditions (i)-(iii) below;
- (v) Use of the property for use of a private well as a drinking water resource;
- (vi) Single family residential use of the property; and
- (vii) Use of the ground floor level of the multi-use building or a sub-level for residential dwelling.

Any person interested in obtaining additional information about the NOTICE OF ACTIVITY AND USE LIMITATION may contact Ugo Dibiasi, owner of Somerville Living, LLC of 62 Foundry Street, Wakefield, Massachusetts 01880, 781-580-9159.

The NOTICE OF ACTIVITY AND USE LIMITATION and the disposal site file can be viewed at MassDEP website using Release Tracking Number (RTN) 3-36581 at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/portal#/search/wastesite> or at MassDEP, 150 Presidential Way, Woburn, MA 01810, Phone No. 978-694-3499.

5/13/26 The Somerville Times

## Street games CONT. FROM PG 3

“Hitties out, relievio, stickball and half ball, kick the can, touch football.”

“Little League baseball and Pop Warner football.”

“Making necklaces out of gum wrappers, makings fortune tellers with folded paper with numbers and colors.”

“Also putting holes thru chestnuts and feeding twine thru. Having wars to see whose would fall apart first.”

“And of course, catching flying grasshoppers and fireflies.”

“Kick ball.”

“Putting playing cards and balloons in the spokes of our bikes to make a motor sound.”

Along with joggers, walkers, and bicyclists we now see many parents with kids especially pushing baby carriages. Could it be that our new Somerville will see more and more kids taking the streets back? In closing, I wish we could establish the correct spelling of Relieve E O.

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

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. No. It's always on the second Sunday in May | 7. Coulrophobia        |
| 2. September 9                                 | 8. Reykjavik, Iceland  |
| 3. A   | 9. Little Red Corvette |
| 4. Kate Pierson                                | 10. The Cranberries    |
| 5. Joseph Heller                               | 11. Heath Ledger       |
| 6. 500   | 12. The Walk of Fame   |

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**City of Somerville  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_22TUCh01QqiTvY24Mk4YbQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_22TUCh01QqiTvY24Mk4YbQ)

**TO CALL IN**

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

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

**24 Berkeley Street** Thomas Higdon seeks an Administrative Appeal of the Building Official's issuance of Building Permits B25-001643 and B25-001644.

**29a Windsor Road** Claire Grace & Sasha Krushnic seek relief from SZO 2.4.3.d.v in order to install a heat pump that is less than 2 ft from a side property line.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov).

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

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**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
Somerville  
OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR OF TAXES  
NOTICE OF TAX TAKING**

TO THE OWNERS OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LAND AND TO ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT on **Friday, the 22nd day of May, 2026**, at **10:00 o'clock A.M.**, at **Treasury, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143**, pursuant to the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 60, Section 53, and by virtue of the authority vested in me as Collector of Taxes, IT IS MY INTENTION TO TAKE for the City of **Somerville** the following parcels of land for non-payment of the taxes due thereon, with interest and all incidental expenses and costs to the date of taking, unless the same shall have been paid before that date.

*Linda Dubuque, Treasurer/Collector of Taxes.*

**LIST OF PARCELS TO BE TAKEN**

**Property Address:** 109 College Ave  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 109 College Ave LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 020-F.00003-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 12384075  
**Square Footage:** 6,984 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 64167, Page: 376

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 25,653.97  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 12,298.17  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 38,215.14

5/6/26, 5/13/26 The Somerville Times

**Property Address:** 59 Bow Street  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 59-61 Bow Street LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 063-C.00029-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 13445140  
**Square Footage:** 3,000 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 77404, Page: 408

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 11,038.98  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 5,295.87  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 16,597.85

5/6/26, 5/13/26 The Somerville Times

**Property Address:** 357 Somerville Avenue  
**Assessed Owner(s):** Manhar Rana and Priti Rana, Trustees, Rana Family Revocable Trust  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 074-C.00027-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 18563041  
**Square Footage:** 4,386 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 66814, Page: 442

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 4,409.27  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 1,872.19  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 6,544.46

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**Property Address:** 28 Cross Street  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 28 Cross Street LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 090-D.00028-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 09200081  
**Square Footage:** 2,737 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 71770, Page: 451

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 11,984.45  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 5,720.93  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 17,968.38

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CONTACT US BY 12 PM MONDAY • PHONE: 857-488-5138**

## Lights, Camera, Joe Curtatone!

Please join Somerville Media Center in honoring former Mayor Joe Curtatone with their Public Service Award on Thursday, June 4, from 7 to 9 p.m., at Arts at the Armory, 119 Highland Ave., in Somerville.

The celebratory evening will feature cheeses and specialty bites provided by Formaggio Kitchen and more, tasty drinks from Arts at the Armory, live music by Revolutionary Snake Ensemble, raffles, and a special presentation honoring Joe Curtatone's long-standing advocacy for community media and Somerville Media Center. Proceeds from the event will directly support SMC's programs and services.

**About the Honoree**

Throughout his 18 years as mayor of Somerville, Joe Curtatone was a steadfast champion of local media and community storytelling. He supported each renewal of SMC's grant agreement with the City of Somerville and frequently appeared on programs produced at SMC and Somerville's CityTV.

In 2007 and 2011, Curtatone testified before the Massachusetts Committee of Telecommunication, Utilities, and Energy to oppose proposed rule changes that would have weakened local control of cable systems and diminished support for community and government access television.

Speaking as Chair of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Curtatone said, "As the home of the Commonwealth's first independent non-profit, community access television corporation... Somerville finds this completely unacceptable."

Joe Curtatone continues his support for the community media movement as a guest and speaker at national and regional Alliance for Community Media conferences and the star of numerous Community Media Day campaigns. He has always demonstrated that community media is essential infrastructure for civic engagement, and his leadership helped protect and strengthen the resources that allow Somerville residents to share their stories and participate meaningfully in local democracy.

Tickets are available online: <https://tinyurl.com/joecurtatone>.





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



**Q:** What can my landlord use my security deposit for?

**A:** The only things your landlord can use your security deposit for is any unpaid rent at the end of your lease or the cost of damages beyond normal wear and tear. Normal wear and tear includes the need for repainting, broom cleaning and replacing worn flooring. In addition, you should not be charged for the costs of repairs for normal wear and tear in common areas either. Your landlord should give you a receipt of every repair paid for by your security deposit within 30 days of the end of your lease.

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

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

To donate visit:

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

Share with your friends and neighbors!  
Let's keep local news alive, together.

And to advertise in The Times, call **857-488-5138**

**Want to write local Somerville stories?**

Call **857-488-5138**

and speak to the Assignment Editor

**BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER**

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why did the graduate wear sunglasses?  
Because their future was so bright!

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

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**The Somerville Times**  
call  
**Bobbie Toner**  
**857-488-5138**

**Somerville through the eyes of Denise**



Do not enter... — Photo by Denise Provost

*On This Day in History*

**May 13**

- 1607 – English colonists land near the James River in Virginia.
- 1648 – Margaret Jones of Plymouth is found guilty of witchcraft and is sentenced to be hanged.
- 1779 – The War of Bavarian Succession ends.
- 1846 – The United States declares war on Mexico after fighting has already begun.
- 1861 – Britain declares its neutrality in the American Civil War.
- 1864 – The Battle of Resaca commences as Union General William T. Sherman fights towards Atlanta.
- 1888 – Slavery is abolished in Brazil.
- 1912 – The Royal Flying Corps is established in England.
- 1913 – Igor Sikorsky flies the first four-engine aircraft.
- 1968 – Peace talks between the United States and North Vietnam begin in Paris.
- 1981 – Pope John Paul II survives an assassination attempt.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Apply now: [www.somervilleartscouncil.org/events/big-gay-dance-party-3/](http://www.somervilleartscouncil.org/events/big-gay-dance-party-3/). The Big Gay Dance Party will take place on **Saturday, June 27**, in Union Square.

This week, appointed members were announced for the **Somerville Armory Advisory Board**, a new body that will play a key role in advising on programming, partnerships, and long-term vision as the city advances plans to revitalize the Armory as a multi-use, public hub for arts, culture, and community gathering. The inaugural board includes professionals with deep experience across creative industries, live events, and cultural strategy. Board members include: **Jaina Cipriano, Martin Gohary, Bryan MacAuslen, Hester Tittmann, and Ellen Waylonis.**

The public is invited to attend an **informal art reception** with **SOS artists, Arts Council staff, and the mayor** to celebrate the **SOS show** and the launch of **Community Collections**. The reception will be held at **Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., 2nd Floor**, on **Monday, May 18**, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

Make a splash this summer with **Somerville Parks and Recreation**. Their swim lessons have a class suitable for everyone of all ages and abilities to build skills and confidence in the water. Classes will run **from June 1 to July 9**, and class times will vary depending on the specific level. **Resident Registration** will be at 10 a.m. next **Monday, May 18**, and **Non-Resident Registration** will be at 10 a.m. on **Monday, May 25**. Check out the website for more infor-

mation: [www.somervillerec.com](http://www.somervillerec.com).  
**Somerville Music Mixer**. Meet, mingle, and connect with others in the **Somerville Music Ecosystem**. Join the **Somerville Arts Council** on **Sunday, May 17**, 4 – 6 p.m. at **Portico Brewing**, 101 South Street, in Union Square. Bring flyers and cards. Hosted by **Somerville Arts Council, Music Ambassador Ajda Snyder** and **#ARTSTAY-SHERE**. RSVP is appreciated, <https://maymusicmixer.eventbrite.com/>.

**Pints for a Purpose: Gilman Square Arts & Music Festival**. Treat yourself and support the Gilman Square Arts & Music Festival with a special edition ice cream collaboration with **Gracie's Ice Cream**. For a \$15 donation, you can reserve one custom pint of ice cream created just for our community. If you would like to donate and not reserve a pint of ice cream, please use our 2026 Festival Donation form: <https://givebutter.com/GSNCg26>.

**Help Save Buddy's Diner!** Buddy's has received **Historic Preservation Committee approval** for a **\$75,000 grant** from Somerville's **Community Preservation Act funds**. This is mood-shifting news for us at Buddy's, but it's not enough to open our doors. They help close the gap of \$100,000. This is all they need to dish out everyone's favorite diner fare once again. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-save-buddys-diner>.

**Garden workshops on the library lawn**. Join staff and patrons at the **Central Library** in the demonstration garden beds

as they group delicious food and herbs throughout the seasons. Farmers from **Green City Growers** will lead hands-on workshops designed to teach you when and what to plant, and how to maintain, fertilize, and harvest successful crops. Learn more at [somervillepubliclibrary.org](http://somervillepubliclibrary.org).

Somerville community members are invited to the **"Slice of the City"** spring meet-up series. This new series of family-friendly pizza parties in the park offers attendees a new way to connect and engage with city leaders and staff, local elected officials, as well as neighbors. Events in each of the city's seven wards will occur **throughout the month of May** from 5 to 7 p.m. Next meetings will take place **Tuesday, May 19: Ward 7 at Lou Ann David Park** (1060 Broadway) and on **Wednesday, May 20: Ward 4 at Healey School Playground** (5 Meacham St.) For more information, visit [www.somervillema.gov/slice](http://www.somervillema.gov/slice).

The **Metro Boston Youth Climate Summit** is aimed at engaging high school students in discussions about climate change and its impact on the region. The summit will take place on **Saturday, May 16**, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:45 PM at **Somerville High School**, 81 Highland Ave. It is a free event, but pre-registration is required. The summit will feature opportunities to network, hear from speakers, and share solutions through an interactive poster session. The event is open to high school students (grades 9-12) from across the Metro Boston area.

A reminder that **yard waste pickup** be-

gan the week of April 13. Yard waste should be put out with your trash and recycling on your normal pickup day and be in either a paper bag or a trash barrel with a "Yard Waste Only" sticker. Get stickers free of charge at the **DPW building** (1 Franey Rd.), at the entrance desk at **City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.), or by emailing [311requests@somervillema.gov](mailto:311requests@somervillema.gov).

Sign up for the city's **Planning, Preservation, and Zoning (PPZ) Newsletter**. Stay informed on the updates shaping your neighborhood and city. Sign up now and explore other cities and department newsletters at [www.somervillema.gov/subscribe](http://www.somervillema.gov/subscribe).

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

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## Somerville brings art into City Hall

CONT. FROM PG 5

hours. Support for framing materials and light refreshments for a reception will be provided to curators. Curators, artists, nonprofits, and community members looking to propose a show may contact

[media@somervillema.gov](mailto:media@somervillema.gov). Proposals are welcome from all and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

The public is invited to attend an informal art reception with SOS artists, Arts

Council staff, and the mayor to celebrate the SOS show and the launch of Community Collections. The reception will be held at **Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., 2nd Floor**, on **Monday, May 18**, from

5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

More information on Community Collections exhibits is available at [media@somervillema.gov](mailto:media@somervillema.gov).

## Mayor Wilson chats with Chief Sustainability Officer: Open Door Chats

CONT. FROM PG 9

relationships with sustainably minded residents. Somerville resident, activist, and author, Cate Mingoya-LaFortune, discussed her book, *Climate Action for Busy People*.

We're working with the school department on standardizing the climate curric-

ulum, he explained. Somerville was recently awarded a Bloomberg Youth Climate Action Award that Nutter says will fund a whole host of different youth-led initiatives happening across the city.

To sum things up, in terms of the resilience and climate preparedness work hap-

pening at the city level, Nutter says there are three main climate vulnerabilities: stormwater, coastal flooding, and heat.

"Our office is working on all three of those," he explained, noting the city is focusing on stormwater flooding concerns by upgrading infrastructure to separate

a combined sewer system into separate stormwater and wastewater pipes.

And to improve resilience to upcoming extreme heat events, Nutter highlighted a community-driven strategy to mitigate urban heat through resilience hubs and resilience corridors.



## OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## Poet/ Bartender Christopher Reilley has made many 'pour' decisions

Recently, I caught up with Christopher Reilley about his new book of poetry *Pour Decisions*. Reilley writes: "Whether you come for the poems, the drinks, or the stories, this is a celebration of bars as civic spaces and bartenders as witnesses to contemporary life." I think I will hoist one for this fine collection.

**Doug Holder:** Did you work as bartender for any length? of time?

**Christopher Reilley:** Over thirty years off and on as an adult, but I also grew up in a dive bar on Grand Street in Worcester. I've worked in just about every bartending experience imaginable, from corporate to backyard barbecues, hotel and restaurants of every size and description. I was also Back of the House working in kitchens. I've supplemented my income in the Hospitality industry pretty much all of my life.

**DH:** I always found bars as a great source of material to write about. They can be sort of dark cathedrals that house the 3a.m. of the soul. Your take?

**CR:** Humans are social creatures, we gather and collect, share mutual pastimes, engage in group recreation. Bars, taverns, and pubs are where we go to "belong." This is addressed a couple of times in the book, *Where We Gather*, and *At the Corner of Local and Familiar*. Bars are a civic and social requirement, in one form or another.

**DH:** You write in one poem of a "great conspiracy" among denizens of a bar. They are sort of diplomats with treatises, secret agendas, etc. Explain.

**CR:** It is kind of a dive bar thing, where you have regulars. Really regular, almost daily. Folks with a long shared history have remembered slights, alliances of convenience, mutually agreed upon "no-fly" zones. You might be expected to move over one seat because Charlie is coming in, and he always sits there. Or never play that song on the juke because it makes Barney crazy sad. Or don't mess with Darlene if she comes in with her hair up.

Large or small, shared history binds folks together, makes them feel part of the fabric of their place. Every bar worthy of the name has its own lore, stories, and even legends.

**DH:** In the poem *In the Glass Between* you put a microscope into the process of a man getting drunk, and his Jekyll and Hyde personality. In the end, the booze turns into a monster that consumes him. But at first it is described turning up, "the dimmer switch of the soul." Too bad he couldn't stop at the first drink. Your take?

**CR:** Well, like I say in the Notes for that poem, it is the bartender's job to not let that happen, but the only way to be good at not letting it happen is to have it happen to you a couple times. Hey, people forget to eat, or are super stressed, or whatever, it can get away from you. But I would instead refer you to the poem



*The Sweet Pull*. Sometimes it really is an addiction.

**DH:** I always felt the bar scene in *The Shining* was probably the greatest one in modern cinema. Of course there is Billy Joel's *Piano Man*. Bukowski wrote a lot of drinking and bar poems. Did these guys inspire you?

**CR:** Well, Bukowsky is the reason I got into poetry in the first place. Growing up, I had a blue collar guy's understanding of poetry. But then I found Bukowski, and I realized the poem doesn't have to be just one type of thing, it could be whatever the writer wanted. Changed my perception of poetry altogether.

But the great thing about bars is the variety. Both of those you mentioned, as well as *Cheers*, or *Archie's Place*, or brass and fern yuppie bars, or Chinese restaurants, etc.

**DH:** Two of my favorite bars are gone, the "Wursthaus" in Harvard Square, and "Jake Wirth's" in Boston. What bars did you haunt, and did they work their way into the collection?

**CR:** I'm not really a big drinker. I prefer the craft of mixology. I worked at so many different bars, I was not a frequent visitor. Most of these poems I actually wrote standing behind the bar. I spent hours in that environment, and I was usually leaving with a pocket full of cash, so I learned long ago I was better off getting in my car and going home.

That being said, I was a huge fan of the long-gone Gilrein's, a blues bar on Main Street, and I'm still a big fan of the still ever-eclectic Ralph's Chadwick Square Diner, which is stuck on the *Continued on page 15*

# Lyrical

## SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Keith Tornheim, a biochemistry professor at Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine, has six recent books, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*; *I Am Lilith*, *Dancer on the Wind*; *Spirit Boat: Poems of Crossing Over*; *Can You Say Kaddish for the Living?*; *Fireflies*; *Spoiled Fruit: Adam and Eve in Eden and Beyond*. His poems have appeared in *Ibbetson Street*, *The Somerville Times*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Muddy River Poetry Review* and *Poetica*.



### Rhyming Bane

The source of this ditty I deign to explain:  
While I was waiting for the subway train  
in this morning's autumn rain,  
it did not seem insane  
or even oh too vain  
to compose this over-rhymed refrain—  
though in the main  
my thoughts were going down the drain  
or stayed in bed where I had lain.  
So, dear reader, please don't crane  
your neck or strain  
your eyes to parse in pain  
as the hours wane.

I fear more insight you will not gain  
in glancing more than minutes twain  
at these words this sheet now stain  
in lines that trickled from my brain.

— Keith Tornheim

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

Doug Holder, 25 School St., Somerville, MA 02143. [dougholder@post.harvard.edu](mailto:dougholder@post.harvard.edu)

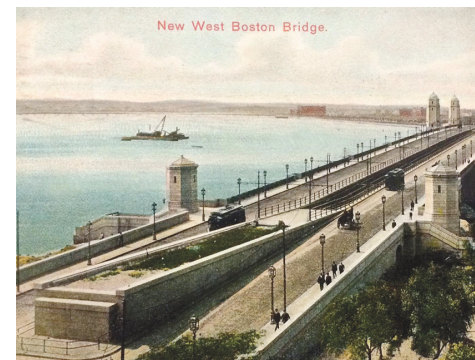
**Historical Fact** CONT. FROM PG 9

The Longfellow Bridge spans the Charles River, connecting Cambridge to Boston. Recently restored, it is thought to be one of the most beautiful bridges in New England. It honors the renowned poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Henry's mother named him after his uncle, Lieutenant Henry Wadsworth, who died with Captain Somers at Tripoli.

Charles Miller came from a patriotic Charlestown family and initiated the meeting to name a newly formed town. He suggested Somerville. Miller's great-grandfather was the Revolutionary martyr of April 19, 1775, James Miller, whose famous last words were, "I am too old to run." His brother was the well-known patriot naval Captain Daniel Waters. All present at the meeting favored the name,

and it was accepted.

Various Somerville records cite that the town was named as being "purely fanciful." Other numerous encyclopedias, reference books, and historic societies from the 1800's to the current day claim that Somerville was named after Master Commandant Richard Somers ... I agree with those who believe it was named after Somers!



**Off The Shelf** CONT. FROM PG 14

side of a warehouse converted to a terrific music venue, and they have great burgers, as well as a weekly poetry open mic.

**DH:** Did you ever have a drinking problem?

**CR:** Thankfully, no. My old man did, and he was nothing if not a great example of a bad example.

**DH:** Why should we read this book?

**CR:** *Pour Decisions* is a book about work – the kind that happens late, quietly, and in public – written by someone who actually did the job. It doesn't romanticize bar life or turn it into spectacle. It listens. These poems treat bars as civic spaces and bartenders as witnesses to contemporary American life. If you care about labor, voice, or how people really talk when the night gets thin, this book belongs on your shelf.

**WHERE WE GATHER**

We meet in the middle,  
between the jukebox and the door,  
between the clink of glasses and the spill of laughter.  
This is where stories loosen their collars,  
where strangers lean closer,  
where love wears no crown, but sits,  
cross-legged, at a sticky table.  
Taverns are cathedrals without pews—  
here we pray into stained glasses of another kind,  
confess in slurred whispers,  
forgive with a touch on the shoulder.

Here, you can break and no one will sweep you away.  
Here, you can build again  
with borrowed hope and the last of your change.

In these walls,  
we are not titles, not troubles, not ticking clocks—  
we are the shared breath of a song half-remembered,  
the arm around your back when you didn't ask.

Love in a bar is not always forever,  
but it is real in the moment—  
and sometimes,  
a moment is what saves us.

— Christopher Reilley

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