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Spring Hill Sewer Separation project to be discussed at meeting



Update on the progress of the Spring Hill Sewer Separation project will be provided during a virtual meeting set to take place on Wednesday, May 15,

The Spring Hill Sewer Separation project is well underway, and Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Ward 3 Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen invite you to join a virtual community meeting to learn about construction progress and upgrades to come. The project aims to reduce water pollution, address flooding, and modernize Somerville's infrastructure. Once utility work on Highland Avenue (including Eversource's Gas Main upgrade project) is done, interim paving of eastern Highland Avenue can begin.

The meeting will take place Wednesday, May 15, at 6:00 p.m. Visit to learn more and attend the meeting. For those unable to attend, a recording of the presentation will be available on the project website, as well as on City YouTube and the City's GovTV channels.

At the meeting, city staff will *Continued on page 4*

Union Square Farmers Market blooms for a 20th season

Union Square Main Streets celebrates the opening of the 20th season of the Union Square Farmers Market in Somerville this Saturday, May 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the Union Square Plaza. The market will be open rain or shine Saturdays through October 26, except September 21.

Since 2005, shoppers from all over Greater Boston have filled their reusable bags with high quality, fresh, nutrient-dense foods from local vendors at the Union Square Farmers Market. This annual neighborhood event continues to serve as a catalyst for vibrancy, economic opportunity, and community connection in Union Square, Somerville.

"Twenty years of our community gathering, of enabling economic opportunity for the market's diverse vendors, and of positioning Union Square as a favorite Saturday morning *Continued on page 4*



The Union Square Farmers Market launches its 20th season this Saturday at Union Square Plaza.

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Somerville's porches, yards, and stoops are once again set to host free mini-concerts across the city as part of the city's annual **Porchfest** hosted by the **Somerville Arts Council**. This celebration of local, live, homegrown music offers something for everyone at drop-in home-based shows. Participants can simply stroll from house to house to enjoy the open-air entertainment. More than 300 bands are set to participate across wide-ranging musical genres from youth playing classical music to electronica groups, karaoke, and – a first this year – stand-up comedy. The 2024 Porchfest is scheduled for **Saturday, May 11**, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. it will take place in three 2-hour blocks (Rain date Sunday May 12). For map, times and resources visit somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest. Be considerate to porch hosts, neighbors, and residents.

Somerville community members are invited to the "Slice of the City" **spring meet-up series**. This new series of family-friendly pizza parties in the park offers attendees a new way to connect and engage with city leaders and staff, local elected officials, as well as neighbors, all while enjoying Somerville's parks. Events in each of the city's seven wards will occur throughout the month of May from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. For more information and to find all event locations, visit somervillema.gov/slice.

To those celebrating their birthdays this week: Happy birthday to **Melissa Hurley**, who is celebrating this week. *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of May 1 – May 7 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 Wednesday May 8	Rain	57°/47°	81%	67%	SE 8 mph
 Thursday May 9	Rain	56°/45°	50%	33%	N 10 mph
 Friday May 10	Rain	50°/45°	49%	36%	NE 12 mph
 Saturday May 11	Cloudy	58°/44°	22%	17%	NE 11 mph
 Sunday May 12	Cloudy	59°/44°	23%	18%	SE 13 mph
 Monday May 14	Rain	66°/50°	39%	24%	SW 12 mph
 Tuesday May 14	Partly Cloudy	70°/50°	21%	16%	SSW 12 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: **Socialists in office denounce violent suppression of student protesters at universities**

Daniel M Kimmel says:

Glad to hear you are "firmly opposed to antisemitism" because it was hard to tell with the false accusations of "genocide" and "apartheid" hurled at Israel, neither of which is true. You know who committed genocide and is publicly committed to continuing it? Hamas. Yet these brave souls do not condemn Hamas or even mention them, do not demand the release of the hostages (going on six months now), and don't seem to feel the need to speak out against other atrocities, like Russia's genocidal campaign against Ukraine.

The other word missing here is one that applies to this entire statement: hypocrisy.

Response to: **Davis Sq. merchants get double dose of distressing news**

Sean Cryts says:

I have lived in Somerville for over twenty years and I am frequently disappointed in what I see is unfortunately not a public process. The City of Somerville claims that it is taking a "data driven approach" but I think that there is data that the city commonly collects is from only the population that they see will put forth their agenda. I love Somerville and as a military veteran & proud resident I am disappointed in the city elected officials as what I see as not a democratic process that goes on with changes to our city. We should go back to the days of meeting at city hall in person for these proposals. I have spoken with many long time residents and if you don't have a social media account you don't or can't participate. Where are the mailers to residences. Sadly I think the city has a PR & team of strategists to by design keep certain people out of the democratic process.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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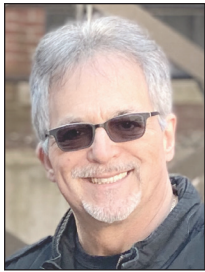
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Life in the  by Jimmy Del Ponte

Bicycles



A relative of mine was killed on a bicycle last week. With more and more bikes on the road, I asked my Somerville friends what could be done to make biking safer. Comments are in quotes.

“We used to ride against the traffic, so we seen them open a door or turn a corner, the problem is there all racing fast, not paying attention.”

“By adding ‘how to drive safely near bicyclists’ and ‘how to bike safely near moving vehicles’ to driver’s ed?”

“Not by putting them in the bus lane and they should abide by the laws just like everyone else pay bike tax too.”

“Drivers need to slow down and pay attention to what’s happening on the road. Bicyclists need to pay even more attention.”

The death of Uncle Donald was a horrible shock to our family. He was 76 years old and a loving father and grandfather. Let’s all be more vigilant about traffic safety.



Free Bike Check Up Clinic at Union Square Station Plaza

Calling all riders! To celebrate National Bike to Work Week, USQ and Prospect Union Square have teamed up with Landry’s Bicycles to offer a free Bike Check Up Clinic at Union Square Station Plaza.

Open to the public on a first come first serve basis and at no cost, each 15-minute Bike Check Up consists of an overall safety check of the bike, an inspection of the “ABCs”, Air (Inflation of tires), Brakes (Ensure the front and rear brake function safely), and Chain (lubricate and ensure the chain moves freely).

Time permitting, the team will then focus on adjusting a major system on the bike, such as adjusting the gear shifting to work better or fine tuning the brakes. The team will also be on hand and available to answer any bicycle-related questions while working. A great way to kick off the season of biking.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 15, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: Union Square Station Plaza, Somerville, MA

HOW: Sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C-0B4AA8AC29A7F8C07-49333319-landrys#/>



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Spring Hill Sewer Separation project to be discussed at meeting

CONT. FROM PG 1

review progress made to date and present an overview of the work planned for this upcoming spring and summer. Featured updates include a review of recent sewer/drainage utility upgrades along Summer Street between School Street and Bow Street and a look ahead to streetscape improvements beginning later this spring on Central Street. Following the presentation, residents will have the opportunity to ask questions about the project and construction process.

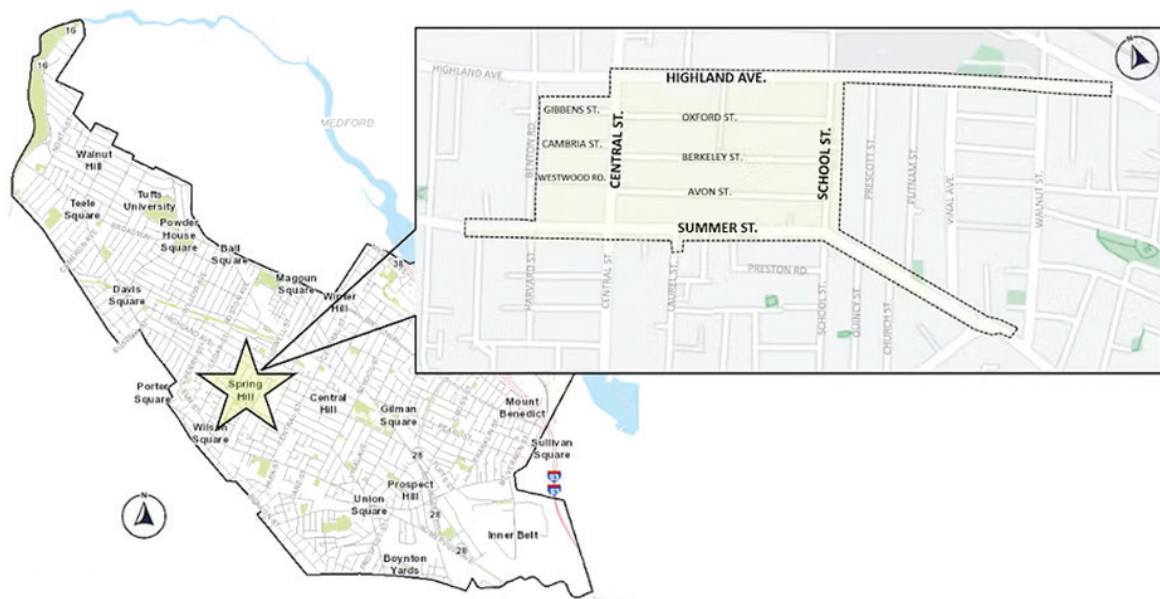
Somerville's Spring Hill neighborhood is currently served by a combined sewer system, which collects both wastewater and stormwater runoff in the same pipes. Through the Sewer Separation project, the City is working to upgrade these systems by

installing new storm drains that separate stormwater from the existing combined sewer.

In addition to the underground utility improvements, this project will also install street safety improvements and green infrastructure throughout the neighborhood. Green infrastructure includes trees as well as drainage features designed to mimic natural processes such as irrigated planting areas, bioretention basins with select soils and plants that catch and filter stormwater.

This project is one in a series of actions the City is undertaking to reduce water pollution, address flooding, and modernize Somerville's infrastructure. Construction began in 2022 and is expected to continue through 2025.

Highland Avenue Interim Paving



Following completion of utility work on Highland Avenue, the City will be paving the two travel lanes of the roadway (approximately 28-foot wide). This partial paving, which does not

include the parking areas next to the curbs, is intended to restore the road surface travel areas. This is an interim measure to support safe travel for all users of the road until the full redesign and recon-

struction of Highland Avenue. Paving is on schedule to occur in early summer of 2024. This interim paving is expected to extend from roughly McGrath Highway to Benton Road.

Union Square Farmers Market blooms for a 20th season CONT. FROM PG 1

destination is exciting to celebrate," said Jessica Eshleman, executive director of Union Square Main Streets, the nonprofit that produces the market.

"This tradition is the fruit of so many people coming together to perpetuate an inclusive, healthy oasis in the densest city in New England. Kudos to businesses who share the plaza; sponsors, the City of Somerville, and individual donors who help make the market and its SNAP match possible; and neighbors who make the Square the place to be on Saturdays. They are the superstars behind two decades of sustaining open-air access to locally grown and produced healthy food - and vital community connections."

Thousands of shoppers including award-winning chefs, local business leaders, and neighbors near and far make the Union Square Farmers Market

a delectable destination each Saturday during the season. Returning for a 20th year, 50+ local farms and food producers welcome shoppers with open arms, outstanding goods, cooking tips, and recipe suggestions, creating a culinary community where all are welcome.

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) shoppers are valued customers at Union Square Farmers Market. The market is proud to continue to serve a critical role in Somerville's food security system by offering a dollar-for-dollar SNAP match up to \$15 per market. While providing SNAP customers with a match has been a priority for the market since it opened in 2005, it is thanks to a partnership with the City of Somerville and the Somerville Farmers Market Coalition (in collaboration with Mass Farmers Markets, Somerville Winter Farmers

Market, and Somerville Mobile Farmers Market) and customers investing in their neighborhood through the annual Good Food For All campaign that has sustained this important community resource year after year.

Union Square Farmers Market proudly boasts that businesses as local as Somerville itself round out the vendor roster. With businesses such as Somerville Arts Council's Nibble Kitchen, Chappy's Pickles, Deano's Pasta, and Tex Mex Eats, customers can eat easily knowing their dollars will directly benefit Somerville's local economy.

While at the market, customers will be right at the doorsteps of some of the most historic, diverse, and popular businesses in Somerville and the Greater Boston Area. Customers are encouraged to grab a friend, family member, or pet to make each Saturday a "Shop the Square Saturday," and visit local businesses before or after they stop in. These elements in particular resonate with the 2024 Union Square Farmers Market Season Sponsor, Boynton-Yards, a DLJ and Leg-



gat McCall Project.

The Union Square Farmers Market is made possible for a fifth year thanks to generous support from its 2024 Season Sponsor Boynton Yards, a project of DLJ Real Estate Capital Partners and Leggat McCall Properties; the City of Somerville; and donors who contribute to help make the SNAP Match possible.

"Boynton Yards is pleased again to be USMS's social impact partner in bringing healthy produce and social opportunities to the Somerville community," said John Fenton, managing partner of DLJ Real Estate Capital Partners, on behalf of the Boynton

Yards development team.

"There is no substitute for the grassroots collaboration that USMS has demonstrated with the Farmers Market and other neighborhood events, and we look forward to supporting their remarkable efforts again this year."

The Union Square Farmers Market is made possible for a fifth year thanks to generous support from Boynton-Yards, a DLJ and Leggat McCall Project, its 2024 Season Sponsor; the City of Somerville; and donors who contribute to help make the SNAP Match possible.



A wonderful summer memory with our 1980 Super Stars 'The Sunsetters'



By Mayor Emeritus Eugene C. Brune

With summer coming, I feel like this is a suitable time to talk about one of my favorite programs and that is the Sunsetters. Our summer program was always one of the hits of the city, thanks to two exceptionally talented guys, Kenny Lonergan, and sad to say now deceased David Testa in running the program. Others. Included, from my office, was Grace Abruzzio to oversee all details with the assistance from Donna Wade, Maureen (Fennessey Bernis, Frank Dillworth, and Paul DiPasquale.

Many of our kids, started out in middle school, and continued throughout high school. Some I do remember were Jill Doncaster, Michelle Grace, Susan and Mary Beth Mangan, Lisa and Linda Thompson, Pam DiPasquale, Lauren Bakey, Arthur Mahoney, Stephine Leonard, Charline Tierney and so many others that I wish I could remember. Over thirty-five volunteered every summer. During the seventies and eighties Howie Carr was giving Somerville a lot of whacks on the radio, so David Testa decided to write a song just for Howie and the title was called, "Who do you think you are Howie Carr." It became a great hit at every show, and we also had a fake Boston Herald Newspaper printed with the saying "Who do you think you are Howie Carr" on the front page. I also remember Arthur Mahoney singing the song at every show and he was great. It was even better when we invited Howie to Somerville to watch the Sunsetters and listen to the song. Surprisingly not only did he come, but he also brought his then young daughter. While the Sunsetters was singing his song, his daughter jumped out of her seat and joined the group and when they sang the words "Who do you think you are Howie Carr" they would all point their fingers at Howie, his daughter joined them singing and pointing her

finger at her father. Everyone got a kick out of that, as did Howie.

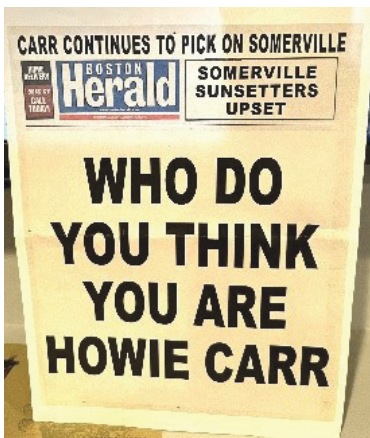
Word got round as to just how good our Sunsetters were, and we were pleased and surprised that then Boston Mayor Kevin White's office called, asking me if I would bring our kids to Boston and have them put on a noon time show on the Boston City Hall concourse. When we told the kids about the invite, they were so excited as well as I was. The kids did a wonderful job, and they received a great ovation from many of the people in the audience with many of them being from all over the state and country.

That afternoon, I received another call from Mayor White's office. They wanted to tell me that they received so many great calls from the people who watched the show that the mayor would like to invite the kids back to now perform at Faneuil Hall Market. Once again, they pleased the crowd and received so many compliments.

Later during the week, I received the call from the then Governor Dukakis. Asking me to bring the kids to the statehouse to perform. A large crowd was on hand and all including the governor really enjoyed the show, especially the Howie song.

I want to thank the more than 250 plus Sunsetters, the staff as well as our stagehands, volunteers, supporters, and parents that were a part of our program during my ten years as mayor. You all brought so much joy to the neighborhoods, nursing homes, elderly centers, and to all for whom you perform. I also miss the pizza, and soda parties in my, and other backyards after a performance as well as all the great memories that are hard to forget.

I want to particularly thank



Kenny Lonergan and the late David Testa. They both had so much talent. I also allowed them to perform the then major hit musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*. It was such a great hit that we extended the show for three weeks. Some nights we had crowds of over two hundred people, many from neighboring towns, all sitting outdoors at the city hall concourse. Again, I am pleased that other mayors have continued with the Sunsetters program

with the talented Jimmy Del Ponte, who always does a fantastic job. Also, if you investigated our city's history past and present you would learn of all the great and wonderful talent that we had, and all a part of the wonderful "Spirit of Somerville."

Note: This, and many other stories are in my book, *The Spirit of Somerville*, and can be purchased at the Somerville Museum, with all proceeds donated to the Museum.

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com



Beacon Hill Roll Call

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THE HOUSE AND SENATE: *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local senators' and representatives' votes on roll calls from recent sessions during the week of April 22-26. There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

TAX CREDITS FOR CONSERVATION LAND (H 4600)

House 154-0, approved a budget amendment that would expand the existing Conservation Land Tax Credit (CLTC) by raising the annual cap for this program from \$2 million to \$5 million over a three-year period, beginning on January 1, 2026.

The increase would remain in place until December 31, 2034. This state tax credit provides an incentive for land with significant conservation value to be donated to public and private conservation agencies. The tax credit is equal to 50 percent of the fair market value of the donated property, up to a maximum credit of \$75,000.

Supporters said that raising the cap will help the state address the growing demand for participating in the program, which currently has a waiting list of more than two years.

"The CLTC program plays a critical role in conserving land and creating more accessible and open public space," said amendment sponsor House Republican Minority Leader Rep. Brad Jones (R-North Reading). "To date, the program has helped Massachusetts conserve 15,505 acres of land across 154 municipalities, and in 2023 alone helped protect 558 acres of land. Raising the annual cap will allow for increased participation in the program and promote the conservation of critical natural resources in the state."

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment.)

Rep. Christine Barber	Yes
Rep. Mike Connolly	Yes
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven	Yes

PRIORITIZE 12-MONTH RESIDENTS (H 4600)

House 27-131, rejected an amendment that would give priority consideration for inclusion in the emergency housing assistance program, when space becomes available, to residents who have resided in the state for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and are on the waitlist for the program.

"With a growing number of people on the waitlist for emergency housing assistance, we need to set clear priorities to better manage the demand and eliminate the waitlist," said House GOP Minority leader Rep. Brad Jones

(R-North Reading). "When doing so, it's only fair that longtime residents of the commonwealth in need of services should take precedence over someone who has just arrived here from out of state."

Amendment opponents said the amendment might be unconstitutional. They also noted that people from around the world who are the victims of rape, violence and oppression are coming to Massachusetts and the state should not impose residency requirements on these suffering migrants.

"I would also just like to underscore ... that no families – whether they are longtime Massachusetts residents or families that are new to the state – are being put out on the street," said Rep. Alice Peisch (D-Wellesley) who opposed the amendment. "We do have these overflow shelters. I don't want anyone to be operating under the assumption that we have Massachusetts residents who are being left out on the street, so once again, I ask you please ... to reject the residency requirement."

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment giving priority to 12-month residents. A "No" vote is against the amendment.)

Rep. Christine Barber	No
Rep. Mike Connolly	No
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven	No

ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS (S 2738)

Senate 34-4, approved and sent to the House a bill that would bar electric suppliers from enrolling new individual residential customers in contracts, beginning on January 1, 2025.

Supporters said the measure would protect residents from unfair and deceptive practices in the competitive electric supply market. They noted that according to the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Public Utilities, data analysis shows that consumers lost more than \$577 million to competitive electric suppliers between July 2015 and June 2023.

They added that low-income residents and residents of color are disproportionately affected by the industry by being more likely to sign up, and subsequently being charged higher rates.

"Each year, the broken and predatory residential competitive electric supply industry harms consumers across Massachusetts – particularly in low-income communities and communities of color and fails in its promise to consistently provide consumer savings," said

Attorney General Andrea Campbell a sponsor of the original version of the bill. "I now urge the House to take up and pass this legislation so that Massachusetts residents are protected from this deceptive and harmful industry."

"The market would benefit from total reform, not elimination of newer energy suppliers/brokers," said Sen. Patrick O'Connor (R-Weymouth) who opposed the bill. "A competitive market is healthy for the economy and by implementing strategy that would hold these energy suppliers accountable, it would be beneficial to all parties involved."

(A "Yes" vote is for the bill. A "No" vote is against it.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen	Yes
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HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK'S SESSION?

Beacon Hill Roll Call tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature's job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session.

During the week of April 29-May 3, the House met for a total of 24 minutes and the Senate met for a total of 17 minutes.

Mon. April 29	House 11:01 a.m. to 11:12 a.m. Senate 11:08 a.m. to 11:12 a.m.
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Tues. April 30	No House session No Senate session
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Wed. May 1	No House session No Senate session
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Thurs. May 2	House 11:03 a.m. to 11:16 a.m. Senate 11:08 a.m. to 11:21 a.m.
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Fri. May 3	No House session No Senate session
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Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#922

1. When is National Mental Health Provider Appreciation Day?
2. Who founded Motown Records?
3. What variety show featured Harvey Korman and Vicki Lawrence?
4. What is the smallest prime number?
5. What is the capital city of South Africa?
6. Where will the 2024 Summer Olympics be held?
7. Which gas do plants absorb during photosynthesis?
8. Who wrote To Kill a Mockingbird?
9. Which planet is known as the "Morning Star" or "Evening Star"?
10. Who is the Norse god of thunder?
11. What is the largest bird in the world?
12. What is the currency of India?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. Oscars awarded during World War II were made of wood.
2. Thumbnails grow the slowest and middle nails the fastest.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THINGS WITH WINGS

ACROSS

1. Country alliance
5. Fish of liver oil fame
8. Stingy pollinator
11. Prefix in levorotary
12. Dark home to #33 Down
13. Sudden growth
15. Like certain Steven
16. Symphony member
17. Type of feather
18. Comfy seat (2 words)
20. Don't put these into one basket?
21. Full nelson is ____ wrestling ____
22. Santa ____, Orange County
23. Puts down
26. Et cetera (3 words)
30. Pen point
31. With signs of wear and tear
34. Beyond natural, in U.K.
35. Messes up
37. Chitchat
38. Willow twig
39. Evening purse
40. Win a race
42. Tucker of "Modern Family"
43. Army bathroom
45. Eucharist plates
47. Opposite of WSW

48. French composer Erik Alfred Leslie ____
50. "Back to the Future" antagonist
52. Beatle with Wings
56. Poodle minus d
57. England's medieval royal house
58. Rabbit's cousin
59. Nymph chaser
60. Genealogist's creation
61. Blackhearted
62. George Gershwin's brother
63. "For ____ a jolly..."
64. It often goes with a rod

DOWN

1. What the Big Bad Wolf did
2. First name in jeans
3. "Pop it in the ____!"
4. Cuban drums

CROSSWORD														
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
16						17				18				
19						20			21	22				
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72						73				74				



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

H	O	M	E	R		E	S	T		P	A	Y	E	
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5. Secret clique
6. Roundish
7. Chronic wasting disease carrier
8. Plug for a barrel
9. As opposed to urns
10. Pilot's estimate, acr.
12. Herb for treating menopausal symptoms
13. Shop till you drop, e.g.
14. Flying stallion
19. "The Queen's Gambit" game
22. Take your pick
23. Biblical Gabriel, e.g.
24. All plants and animals
25. Approximately
26. Shortened word, abbr.
27. Drink request
28. Home to largest mammal
29. Socially acceptable behaviors
32. Malaria symptom
33. Nocturnal mosquito eater
36. Lightning beetle
38. Recording studio sign
40. Next to nothing
41. Same as intake
44. Reason by deduction
46. Restraint
48. Academy Award for Best Original ____
49. Chunks of 43,560 square feet
50. Wild hog
51. Itty bit
52. Urban legend
53. Part of cathedral
54. Great Lake
55. Holler
56. Tire meas.

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

OBITUARY

William L. Conrad

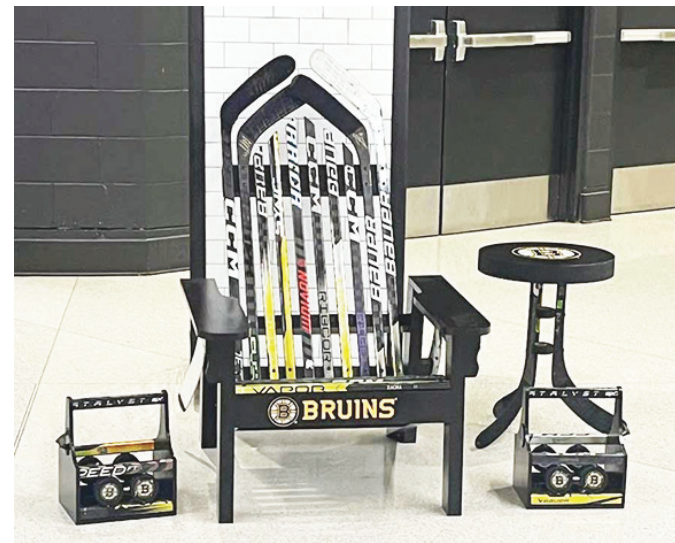


William L. Conrad, 85, a life-long Somerville resident, passed away on April 23, surrounded by his many friends. Born on October 17, 1938, Bill was the son of Leo A. Conrad and Mildred H. Conrad, and brother of the late Robert Conrad. He graduated from Somerville High School in 1957, served in the Army Medical Corps in Verdun, France from 1959-1961, and lived in San Francisco and Denver. He traveled throughout Europe and spent considerable time in Canada with his relatives. However, Union Square was his home where he was affectionately known as "Mister Mayor."

Passionate about music, Bill worked as a manager at Orpheus, the music shop near the Berklee School. He was part of the Boston's club scene in the 1960s-1990s, introducing classical music to Sporter's, the club for which he made a historical video in 1982. He supported various musicians, producing a CD for the Boston-based singer Donald Wilkinson, and most recently created a collection of vocal music. A lover of opera, and of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Bill also had the uncanny ability to identify and assess just about any vocalist, or for that matter, any actor, you could name.

Although the phrase "to know him is to love him" is hackneyed and often an exaggeration, in Bill's case, it is true. Throughout his life, his interest in the people around him, his skills as a story teller, his receptivity to new ideas, his grounding as a listener and confidant, and his wicked humor made him a much beloved and trusted friend. To so many younger friends, he was "Papa" and "Uncle Bill." His neighbors will remember him in part through the endless Rose-of-Sharon bushes and other lovely flowering plants he installed, with or without our permission, in our yards. Those of us lucky to have known him will carry his voice in our heads and his moral compass in our hearts. In lieu of flowers, please contribute to The History Project, 565 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02116. To send online condolences, please visit www.vertucciosmithvazza.com. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the care and direction of the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, Revere.

Boston Bruins and Bosch reimagine hockey sticks into incredible creations for the skilled trades



Students at Somerville High School had the opportunity to recreate donated Bruins hockey sticks into an Adirondack chair, toolbox and table using donated power tools from Bosch. The projects feature autographs from key players like Hampus Lindholm, Pavel Zacha, Charlie McAvoy and Jeremy Swayman.

This activation continued Bosch's effort to champion the future generation of skilled trades workers.

On May 1, Bosch and The Boston Bruins Foundation auctioned the creations during the play-off game, raising \$6.3K to benefit the school's program, which will further support students' development and education.

Dorothy's Corner **BY DOROTHY DIMARZO**



Not Your Average Chicken Salad

Once you read the first ingredient listed, you may be thinking, is she seriously using canned chicken? Yes, yes I am. The only thing I regret is not using it sooner. The meat is lean and very tender. And not only that, it's a quick meal prep. The flavors and textures of this savory, sweet, and crunchy chicken salad are exactly what you're looking for in a great sandwich.

- 1 - 12oz Can of Lean Meat Chicken (drained) yield approximately 7oz.
- 1 Cup of Grapes Halved (red or green)
- 1 Celery Stalk Thinly Sliced
- 2 Tablespoons Finely Minced Red

- Onion
- 2 Tablespoons Plain Greek Yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon Mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons Chopped Tarragon (dried is fine)
- 2 Tablespoons Finely Chopped Fresh Parsley
- 1/4 Cup Chopped Candied Pecans or Slivered Almonds
- Salt and Pepper to Taste

Add the yogurt and mayonnaise to a mixing bowl mix until well blended. Add the remaining ingredients and toss until well coated. Always taste and adjust seasoning. This will be enough for 3 sandwiches. Place a couple of Boston lettuce leaves to the bread of your choice and pile 1/3



of the chicken salad. I've also added a scoop to my regular mixed greens salad.

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

LEGAL NOTICES

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NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage dated November 8, 2022 by Edge Real Estate Investments, LLC to Steven A. Ross, Trustee of QS Lending Three Trust u/d/t dated October 25, 2022 (recorded with Middlesex County (South) Registry of Deed in Book 80884, Page 355), said mortgage recorded with the Middlesex County (South) Registry of Deeds in Book 80926, Page 372, and which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at **9:00 a.m. on the 16th day of May, 2024** at 42 Sargent Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage.

To wit:
Property Address: **42 Sargent Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts**

A certain parcel of land with the buildings thereon situated in said Somerville, being the same premises now known and numbered 42 Sargent Avenue, and being shown as the Lot marked No. 42 on a Plan of Land on Sargent Avenue, Somerville, belonging to Eveline M. Duseault, dated August 1, 1919, James E. Stone, Eng., and recorded with Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds, Book of Plans No. 275, Plan 24, and bounded and described as follows:

SOUTHWESTERLY by Sargent Avenue, forty-eight and 4/100 (48.04) feet;

SOUTHEASTERLY by land of Smith, seventy and 88/100 (70.88) feet;

NORTHWESTERLY by land formerly of Skilton, fifty and 50/100 (50.50) feet;

NORTHEASTERLY and by land of Dimond, seventy-one and 4/100 (71.04) feet.

Containing 3597 square feet of land.

For grantors title, see deed recorded herewith [Book 80926, Page 369].

Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens and rights of any tenants and parties in possession, if there be any, or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed. The successful bidder will pay all costs of recording the foreclosure deed and any other foreclosure documents including, without limitation, all state and county excise stamp fees, and shall also be responsible for any Title V inspection and repair requirements.

Terms of sale: A deposit of One Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$100,000.00) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check to Baker, Braverman & Barbadoro, P.C., 1200 Crown Colony Drive, Suite 610, Quincy, MA 02169 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

Steven A. Ross, Trustee of QS Lending Three Trust
u/d/t dated October 25, 2022
Present holder of said mortgage
By his Attorneys,
Baker, Braverman & Barbadoro, P.C.
1200 Crown Colony Drive, Suite 610
Quincy, MA 02169

4/24/24, 5/1/24, 5/8/24 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 16, 2024, at 6:00pm** through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_d96X5Ru9Qz0QEGAtlpKevg
Webinar ID: 813 4687 4400

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:

350 Assembly Row Street Retail, LLC seeks to extend the validity of a previously issued Special Permit (P&Z 21-137) in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use (ASMD) district.

17-27 Holland Street Green Soul Organics proposes to establish a Cannabis Retail Sales use in the Mid-Rise 4 zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

290 Revolution Drive Liberty Mutual Insurance Company seeks a Major Amendment to a previously issued Special Permit (PB 2018-12) in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use (ASMD) district.

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

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

Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov.

5/1/24, 5/8/24 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP#24-77

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement & Contract Services Department invites sealed proposals for:

Virtual Reality for Older Adults

The RFP package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, May 8th, 2024**. Sealed proposals will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:30 PM, Wednesday, May 22nd, 2024**.

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

Please email tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



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 15, 2024, at 6:00pm** through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_i3grD0BhTfGiZ2s3ZtT0Nw
Webinar ID: 897 0699 0477

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:

97 Orchard Street Richard Roy seeks zoning relief from the sum of side yard setbacks for front driveway access, which requires a Hardship Variance.

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.

5/1/24, 5/8/24 The Somerville Times



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, May 16, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.** using Zoom software to consider the removal of the following public shade tree(s):

- **217 Somerville Avenue on Rossmore Street**
1. Two Callery pears- 10" in diameter, fair condition

Trees are proposed for removal as part of a Somerville Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF) park project. Both trees will be removed and replaced.

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: 1 Franey Rd., Somerville, MA, 02145.

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.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL: <https://tinyurl.com/mr364jhj>
Webinar ID: 814 2410 4857

TO JOIN VIA AUDIO

US +1 305 224 1968 or +1 309 205 3325

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**SOMERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
EQUITY, GENDER, SENIORS, FAMILIES,
AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS
PUBLIC HEARING**

There will be a Public Hearing before the City Council's **Committee on Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families, and Vulnerable Populations** on **Wednesday, May 15, 2023, at 6:30 PM**, regarding the following order:

How increases in water and sewer rates are affecting Somerville residents.

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

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue.
2. 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_HjYINim_RG62H21wtDiyCA
3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.

KIMBERLY M. WELLS
CITY CLERK

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB #24-76**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, Invites Sealed Bids For:

City Tree Pruning and Removal

A bid package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, May 8, 2024**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **Thursday, May 22, 2024 at 3:00pm**.

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.

Prevailing wage rates apply. 5% bid deposit required.

Please email Jordan Remy at jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

Jordan T. Remy
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3409

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB 24-74**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement & Contract Services Department invites bids for:

Summer Meals

The IFB package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Monday, May 6, 2024**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Wednesday, May 22, 2024**.

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

Please email jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

Jordan T. Remy
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3409

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of Alteration of Premises Indoors for Crave & Co Inc d/b/a Crave & Co Cafe at 198 Holland St.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KveyuAsTQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#/registration

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of All Forms Alcohol License, Entertainment by Devices Indoors, and Sunday Hours for Fooddy's Kitchen LLC d/b/a FoodDy's Kitchen, 235 Holland St.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of Alteration of Premises, Outdoor Parklet Patio Seating for Rei da Picanha & Events Inc d/b/a Rei da Picanha at 129 Broadway.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmKcQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#registration>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

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ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of Change of Officers and Transfer of Stock for New Reliable Market Inc d/b/a Reliable Market at 45 Union Sq.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmKcQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#registration>

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of Alteration of Premises, Outdoor Public Sidewalk Seating for Rincon Mexicano Inc d/b/a Rincon Mexicano at 99 Broadway.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmKcQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#registration>

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5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of All Forms Alcohol License, Entertainment by Performers Indoors, Sunday Hours and Outdoor Public Parklet Seating for Hot Tomatoes 77 Bow Street LLC d/b/a Hot Tomatoes at 77 Bow Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
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5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of Transfer of an All Forms Alcohol License, Common Victualer, Entertainment by Devices Indoors and Outdoors and Performers Indoors, Private Outdoor Patio, and Pledge of License for GCTFF LLC d/b/a Tall Order at 70 Beacon Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmKcQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#registration>

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THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD

ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

5/8/24 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s): Application of All Forms Alcohol License, Common Victualer, Entertainment by Devices Indoors, Sunday Hours, Outdoor Public Sidewalk Seating, and Outdoor Private Seating for Soundsouth Somerville LLC d/b/a Soundbites at 704 Broadway.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmKcQ5SJKog-q02PTQ#registration>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to licensing@somervillema.gov. Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

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5/8/24 The Somerville Times

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PROFESSIONAL/HELP WANTED

Curriculum Dev't Specialists sought by The Little Butterfly dba WorldSong Schools Winter Hill in Somerville, MA to coordinate the planning, design, and dev't of the curriculum for toddlers and preschoolers. Master's degree in Edu., Teaching, ECE or related, + 6 mon. full-time work exp. in the ECE field. Email resume to wenrui@whill.worldsongschools.com. Attn: Wenrui Li. Ref#CDS04.

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Ms. Cam's

From page 8

Olio

Answers

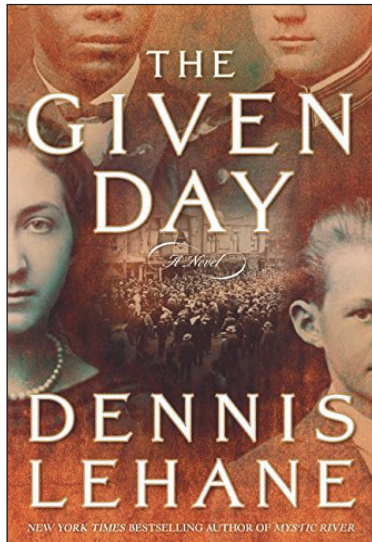
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|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. May 12 | 7. Carbon dioxide |
| 2. Berry Gordy Jr. | 8. Harper Lee |
| 3. <i>The Carol Burnett Show</i> | 9. Venus |
| 4. 2 | 10. Thor |
| 5. Pretoria | 11. Ostrich |
| 6. Paris | 12. Indian Rupee |

Book review: 'The Given Day' by Dennis Lehane

By Dennis Fischman

Dennis Lehane is well known in the Boston area. A Dorchester native, he began his career with the well-written but more conventional mysteries featuring private detectives Patrick Kenzie and Angie Gennaro [1]. Then, he reached beyond the genre, still holding onto the dark vision of his original series.

Mystic River [2] was a psychological thriller and a literary journey into the secrets that tight-knit communities can hide. (Remarkably, the movie was just as good as the book!) Shutter Island [3] was a similarly taut horror story set in the 1950's.



The Given Day by Dennis Lehane. William Morrow, 2008, 704 pages.

And then Lehane jumped back to 1919 for *The Given Day* [4] and wrote his masterpiece.

What was happening in Boston in 1919? In short: everything. There was the Great Molasses Flood [5], something that sounds like a joke until you read actual accounts of the disaster. There were police being deployed to put down striking workers, and then police going on strike themselves. Babe Ruth was still playing in Boston. Calvin Coolidge was still Governor of Massachusetts. Socialists and anarchists like Sacco and Vanzetti were making a serious bid at revolution in the U.S. All this while the nation was still reeling from the so-called Spanish Flu, which was no more Spanish than the coronavirus was Chinese.

In the midst of all this, you see young policeman and son of a police captain Danny Coughlin going undercover to sniff out plans for violence by the growing labor movement. Will he succeed, and if he does, will he really be able to turn on the people whose cause moves him more and more (including the woman he is obsessed with)?

Just as important, you see a young black man, Luther Laurence, on the run after a dead-

ly confrontation with a crime boss in Tulsa (two years before the Tulsa Race Massacre [5] would destroy "Black Wall Street"). Luther works for the Coughlin family, and his point of view throws them into better perspective. It also allows us to learn of the early NAACP in Boston and what civil rights struggles looked like when Rosa Parks was just a girl, and a decade before Martin Luther King was even born.

I reread this book while Somerville and most of the country were still reeling from the coronavirus pandemic in Spring 2020. It was almost eerie to read the early sections of the book that dealt with the influenza of 1918-9. Our systems are better, but we are not. We still reel and totter in the direction of certain death – suffering it and dealing it out – and that is a major theme of this book.

On second reading, *The Given Day* is still a marvel, evoking the time and place like no other book I know. Lehane writes about Irish men, barely holding onto their claim to whiteness, unself-consciously claiming as their own a city and a country that had grudgingly accepted them not that many years ago. He portrays

Black men in a convincing way, too. Luther Laurence starts out less shallow than Danny Coughlin, and he ends up with a better life (though it takes an unexplained act of grace from a gangster to get him there).

Two things bothered me about this book. First, we never get the interior dialogue of any of the women. They are distinct people, and at moments I can feel for them, but I never really get to know them from their own point of view. (Tessa is especially opaque. Is it because she's Italian? Does Lehane have sympathies across the color line but not across the Irish-Italian divide?)

The other thing that bothers me is the lyrical quality of the scenes of violence in this book. It's not that the author romanticizes violence. Far from it. But he keeps coming back to it as if it were an unanswered question in his life. I'd rather be around men who can't imagine such things in such detail.

The Murder Mystery Book Club of the Somerville Public Library will be discussing *The Given Day* by Zoom on Wednesday, May 29, at 7:00 p.m. Come and discuss it, whether you've finished the book or not! Register here: <https://somervillepublicli->

[brary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/mystery-book-group-31/](https://www.goodreads.com/series/40548-kenzie-gennaro) Links:

[1] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/40548-kenzie-gennaro>

[2] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/21671.Mystic_River

[3] https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/21686.Shutter_Island

[4] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2830067-the-given-day>

[5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Molasses_Flood

[6] <https://www.tulsahistory.org/exhibit/1921-tulsa-race-massacre/>



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

Opera on Tap Boston brings Flowers and Opera to Bow Market

Opera on Tap Boston and Simons Shoes present *Flowers and Opera* on Friday June 7, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Bow Market in Somerville. Free and open to the public, *Flowers and Opera* is sponsored by the Somerville Arts Council and the Mass Cultural Council, and will feature live opera singers, free flowers from Nellie's Wildflowers, and a food drive.

The *Flowers and Opera* performance series emerged in partnership with Simons Shoes at the height of the pandemic as a way to safely bring music and community to neighborhoods during a time of isolation and uncertainty. It has since grown into an immersive community-focused event that includes a collection of charitable donations for local food pantries. The concert is set against a backdrop of flowers which are passed out to attendees at the concert's conclusion.

Opera on Tap Boston presents performers from their roster of professional classical singers whose credits include work with top companies like The Metropolitan Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, The Boston Pops, Boston Symphony Orchestra and more. They'll be having a drink, letting their hair down, and welcoming audiences into what feels like an after-hours backstage party. The performer line-up will include singers Jessica Graves, Kathryn McKellar, Erin Merceruio-Nelson, Arielle Rogers-Wilkey, Nicola Santoro, Kathryn Tolley, Isabelle Zeledon, and pianist Sally Naredla.

Executive Director Kathryn McKellar says, "These concerts feature local performers in an innovative local venue, raising awareness and funds for local organizations." As for the program of music, she says, "We'll have a mix of famous arias, pieces not found in the standard canon, and cabaret and musical theater songs that audience members can hum along to."

About Opera on Tap Boston

Opera on Tap Boston is a Boston-based organization dedicated to bringing opera and classical music to diverse audiences in unconventional and accessible spaces. Through innovative programming and engaging performances, Opera on Tap Boston strives to make classical music an inclusive and enjoyable experience for all.



Somerville Open Studios 2024

Somerville Open Studios 2024, 25th Anniversary took place on Saturday and Sunday, May 4 – 5, each day at artists' studios and homes throughout Somerville. Over 350 artists in 90 locations citywide opened their studios to the public. Photos taken at a few locations including the Arts at the Armory





Photos By Claudia Ferro



Artwear: The SOS 2024 Fashion Show

In past years, SOS has provided the public with a fashion show titled Beyond the Pattern to kick off open studios weekend. This show made it possible for textile artists to be included in open studios in a way that was more conducive to their art form than a studio opening or a gallery. This year, the SOS fashion show was held at the Crystal Ballroom in Davis Square on Thursday, May 2. The event was free for the public to view original textile art by Somerville artists such as Consuelo Perez, DX2, Eleanor Ramsay, Ella G., and Jennifer Koerber, Grace Du Val, Elsa Ramsay, Layla Gillick, Jessamy Shay, Jim Baab, Lexie Hofer Griffith, Martha Friend, Megan Kilcoyne, Stephanie Shields, Lenni Armstrong.

— Photos by Denise Provost



SomerNightStudios celebration

SomerNightStudios presented by Somernova and Also Does Stuff took place on Saturday, May 4. The event celebrated 25 years of Somerville Open Studios with performances from Esh Circus Arts and several local performers, community-based art vendors, roller skating, black light art, and much more. — Photos by John Lee

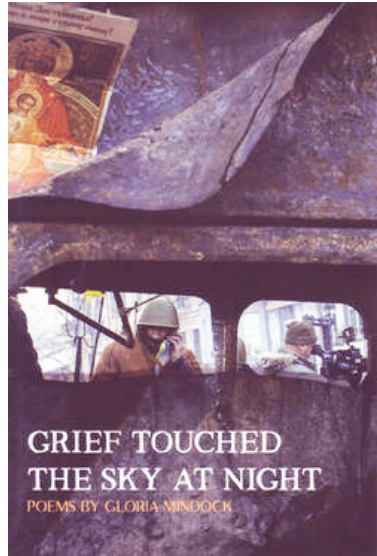


The Somerville Public Library to host a poetry reading with local poets

The Somerville Public Library will host a Poetry Reading with Local Poets on Wednesday, May 8, at 7:00 p.m. West Branch Community Room, 40 College Ave. Join local poets Holly Guran, Gloria Mindock, and Timothy Gager as they read from some of their recent work.

Featuring readers:

George Kalogeris has noted of each poem in Holly Guran's new book *Now Before and Ever*, "a time capsule of poignancy and visceral memory." She is also the author of *Twilight Chorus*, *A River of Bones* and two chapbooks. Curator of the well-known series *Rozzie Reads*, Holly's poems have also appeared in numerous journals including *Salamander*, *Poet Lore*, *Poetry East* and *The Aurorean*.



2017 and 2018 Somerville Poet Laureate, Gloria Mindock is the editor of *Červená Barva Press*. Her poems have been published and translated into eleven languages, comprising six award-winning poetry collections, including her recent books *Grief Touched the Sky at Night* (Glass Lyre Press, 2023) and *ASH* (Glass Lyre Press, 2021), Find her at: <https://www.gloriamindock.com/>

Nick Flynn has praised the boldness of Timothy Gager for "capturing the chaos, the confusion, the despair, and the existential strangeness of our time." Gager has published 18 books of fiction and poetry, hosting the successful *Dire Literary Series* in Cambridge and starting a weekly virtual series in 2020. His writing has been read on National Public Radio. In 2023, *Big Table* published an anthology of twenty years of his selected work, with 150 pages of new material: *The Best of Timothy Gager*.

Somerville through the eyes of Denise



A happy valve!...

— Photo by Denise Provost

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



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On This Day in History

May 8

- 1541 – Hernando de Soto discovers the Mississippi River which he calls Rio de Espiritu Santo.
- 1794 – The United States Post Office is established.
- 1846 – The first major battle of the Mexican War is fought at Palo Alto, Texas.
- 1886 – Atlanta pharmacist John Pemberton invents Coca Cola.
- 1919 – The first transatlantic flight by a navy seaplane takes-off.
- 1933 – Mahatma Gandhi begins a hunger strike to protest British oppression in India.
- 1945 – The final surrender of German forces is celebrated as VE (Victory Europe) day.
- 1967 – Boxer Muhammad Ali is indicted for refusing induction in U.S. Army.
- 1984 – The Soviet Union announces it will not participate in Summer Olympics planned for Los Angeles.
- 1995 – Jacques Chirac is elected president of France.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Join the People's History Walk of Davis Square and Ball Square as part of May Preservation Month. Journey through personal stories and local history to learn how the once-dubbed "Slummerville" has transformed into a trendy, gentrified city. Led by a local guide, you'll witness the resilience of Somerville's spirit amidst demographic shifts and changing trends. Location details and sign-up links can be found here: somerwillemuseum.org/preservation-month. The walk takes place Saturday, May 11, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All Preservation Month events can be found at somerwillemuseum.org/preservation-month. All are open to the public and ADA accessible.

Somerville Rotary Club is planning an event to celebrate 100 Years of Service to the Community. The celebration will take place Tuesday, May 14, 6:00 p.m., at George Dilboy VFW Post 529, 351 Summer Street, Somerville. Individual Event tickets are \$75, purchase tickets at somerwillerotary.org. For any additional event information, contact David Worzala at dworzala@gmail.com or 608-695-3278.

Join the Mystic Learning Center's Casino Night for the 14th Annual Spring for Children Fundraiser on Friday, May 10, from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Hosted at Somernova (8 Tyler St., Somerville), The Casino Night themed event will include Casino Gaming Tables (Black Jack, Craps, Roulette, and Poker), raffle baskets, live music, delicious food, and a limited open bar – all in support of Mystic Learning Center, Inc.'s mission to improve the lives of low-income children and families who live in the Mystic Public Housing Development and surrounding neighborhoods. 100% of all ticket sales and sponsorships will go directly towards the Mystic Learning Center, Inc. scholarship program for low-income youth and programming experiences for youth and community members. Tickets and more information can be found at mysticlearningcenter.org.

George L. Doherty Funeral Service is seeking family members of Jeremiah O'Leary. Mr. Jeremiah O'Leary passed away on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at the Cambridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Cambridge, he was 84. He was a former resident of Capen Court Senior Housing, 1 Capen Court

Somerville, MA before being admitted to the Cambridge Rehabilitation Center. He was born on April 10, 1940, unfortunately not much else is known on Mr. O'Leary. It is believed he has surviving siblings in the local area. If there is anyone who might be related to Mr. O'Leary, they need to speak with a blood relative, and respectfully ask someone to please reach out to the funeral home at 617-625-4320.

Join the Somerville Growing Center for a few of their upcoming events. Introduction to Plant and Wildlife Monitoring for Conservation with Earthwise Aware, Saturday, May 11, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Join Claire and Earthwise Aware (EwA) citizen scientists and learn how to observe and record the plants, insects, and animals of the Somerville Growing Center. Contact: Claire O'Neill at claire.oneill@earthwiseaware.org and Festa Junina Prep @ CultureHouse. Sunday, May 19, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. For all ages. This crafting session will take place at the CultureHouse pop-up in Union Square, at 64 Union Square. Help prepare materials for the June 15 Festa Junina at the Growing Center. Just show up and have fun. Portuguese language-friendly activity. Contact: Yumi at yumiisu65@gmail.com.

Somerville High School proudly presents the 2024 Music and Art Spring Showcase, Thursday, May 16. The Art Exhibit opens at 5:00 and the Concert begins at 6:00 p.m. Enjoy music performed by the Somerville High School Chorus, Orchestra, Band, World Percussion Ensemble, Jazz Band, and Guitar Class. Artwork from current High School art students and select 7th and 8th grade students will be on display. All staff, family, and friends of the Somerville Public Schools community are invited to join us for an evening celebrating the arts.

JoyFest will be a block party/festival in Somerville at Prospect Hill Park on Saturday, May 18, from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. (rain date May 19). JoyFest is a celebration of local arts and culture, highlighting local artists and organizations that support artists and musicians and advocate for affordable spaces for living and playing. Five bands are lined up to perform, with an open mic hour and DJs between sets. Community organizations will be tabling at the event, and artists will be there to share and sell their

work. A few local organizations are hosting some in-person workshops. They will have food available for folks throughout the day. For more information visit their event page https://partiful.com/e/o0C4VXs4IcCDKiGg2rIB, sign-up for open-mic, etc., here https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ohR6S4L2mZIPVQX-LyxmKcFkITtUm-mCWgA0EkAfi1mc/viewform?edit_requested=true

On Sunday, May 19, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., the Somerville Bike Kitchen is hosting its annual Bike Pageant at Somernova in the Aeronaut Brewing Courtyard at 14 Tyler St., or, in case of rain, at The Dojo at 15 Properzi Way. Somerville Bike Kitchen's Somerville Bike Pageant is a celebration of unique, fun, creative, colorful and/or otherwise one-of-a-kind bikes. The event will have a handful of prize categories, ranging from self-explanatory to entirely unserious. The pageant is an excuse to come out, meet people and look at other people's great, beloved, funny, wacky, rusty, stylish, mostly safe bikes. Anyone with a bike they want to share can enter it in the pageant. The event is free to attend and participate. For more information on categories, or to pre-register your bike, visit somervillebikekitchen.org.

A reminder that yard waste pickup has begun. 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 311updates@somervillema.gov.

Applications are now available for an income-restricted homeownership lottery for four affordable condominium units through the city's Inclusionary Housing Program at 71 Bow Street. Two 2-bedroom units will be offered to households with an annual gross income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). One 1-bedroom unit plus study and one 2-bedroom unit will be offered to households with an annual gross income between 81% and 110% AMI. Applications should be submitted by Wednesday, May 15, at 5:00 p.m. Learn more and apply at somervillema.gov/inclusionary

The 2024 street sweeping season has

resumed and will continue through December 31. Check signs in your neighborhood for sweeping days. Visit somervillema.gov/sweeping for a full schedule and to sign up for complimentary street sweeping reminders by text, email, or phone. For more information on street sweeping procedures, visit park-somerville.com.

Somerville's Memorial Day parade will return this year on Sunday, May 26. It will begin at 11:00 a.m. from the Davis Square Rotary (9/11 Memorial Granite Circle Site), and end at Broadway and North Street. The city's annual remembrance ceremony will be held at 10:00 a.m., Monday, May 27, at the Somerville Veterans' Memorial Cemetery to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while in service to our country. To learn more, visit somervillema.gov/memorialday.

Join Union Square Main Streets and 50+ of your favorite local food producers for the 20th Annual Union Square Farmers Market, 66-70 Union Square. Shop local Saturdays from May 11 to October 26, except September 21, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the Union Square Plaza. The market provides visitors and residents with top-quality, fresh, and local produce at fair prices; encourages active lifestyle values; educates consumers about farming and locally sourced foods; and gives customers opportunities to interact directly with farmers. For more information about the Union Square Farmers Market, visit unionsquaremain.org/2024-fmseason.

Visit ROOTED Armory Café, 191 Highland Ave., for their upcoming events: Tunefoolery Coffee House, Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 p.m., Pub Sing, Thursday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m., Red Cross Blood Drive, Wednesday, May 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Make your appointment here: https://www.redcrossblood.org, Strummerville Ukelele Club, Wednesday, May 22 at 6:30 p.m.

This May, join the Somerville Public Library and the City of Somerville Health and Human Services Department to "Paint Your Pride!" in a joy-filled series of community art events. For a list of upcoming "Paint Your Pride!" events visit https://somervillepubliclibrary.org.

Cambridge Savings Bank partners with Food For Free to box food for those in need

On April 24, Cambridge Savings Bank employees spent the morning boxing fresh produce and pantry staples for neighbors in need through Food For Free's Just Eats grocery box program. Volunteers formed a production line to fill 320 grocery boxes, each adding an item, such as sweet potatoes, collard greens, bags of rice, or apples, to each Just Eats box. Food For Free then loaded the boxes onto trucks for delivery to food programs across eastern Massachusetts communities.

For over 15 years, Cambridge Savings Bank has been a strong corporate partner of Food For Free. The Foundation and the bank have donated over \$335,000 in grants and sponsorships to Food For Free throughout the partnership.

"At Cambridge Savings Bank, our heritage is built on a commitment to focus on the needs of our under-resourced neighbors, caring for our customers, and supporting our colleagues," says Jeri Foutter, First Vice President, Community Partnerships & Foundation Officer at Cambridge Savings Bank. "We are dedicated to strengthening our relationships with the

communities we serve and the people within them. Since the establishment of our Charitable Foundation in 2003, we have awarded over \$15.5 million in grants, making a meaningful impact in areas such as food security, affordable housing, and community development. We are proud to continue our tradition of giving back and look forward to making a positive impact in the years to come."

This corporate volunteer day provided a special opportunity for employees to make a positive impact while working together to give back to the community in a tangible way, getting their hands on the nutrient-dense food that will make its way to the plates of community members who need it most through food pantries, low-income housing sites, and other food programs. Each box contains enough fresh produce and pantry staples to make an estimated 21 meals.

"At Food For Free, we are thrilled to join forces with Cambridge Savings Bank in our shared mission to alleviate food insecurity in our community," said Jessica Cantin, Food For Free CEO. "This partnership signifies a powerful collaboration between



L to R: Jessica Tretina, of Food For Free; Amelia Hoffman, Lucie Cormier, Debbie Corrado, Edith De Almeida, Anita Maharjan, Lisa Bonanno, Meghan Brunet, Rima Abdel Kader al Jazairi, Karine Mkrtychyan, of Cambridge Savings Bank; Adrienne Dunlap, of Food For Free.

two organizations that are deeply committed to making a positive impact. With Cambridge Savings Bank's support, we are able to expand our reach and amplify our efforts, ensuring that no one in our community goes hungry. We are grateful for Cambridge Savings Bank's dedication to making a difference and look forward to seeing what impact we can have

towards a healthier, more resilient community as our partnership continues."

Food For Free's Just Eats grocery box program was developed during the pandemic to meet an increased demand for food in the community that has not diminished. The program relies on 125 volunteer hours to pack boxes each week and delivers over

65,000 grocery boxes annually.

As one of the nation's first food rescue organizations, Food For Free now serves more than 150,000 Massachusetts residents who are food insecure and distributes over 6.2 million pounds of nutritious fresh and prepared foods annually. For more information, visit: www.foodforfree.org.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

The COA is offering **free taxi rides** to Somerville residents over the age of 60. Rides are available to go to the grocery store, farmer's market, and pharmacy in Somerville and routine medical appointments in the surrounding communities. To best accommodate the needs of everyone in the city and to maximize the use of our funding, they will be capping the number of rides per week. To ensure the health and welfare of every resident of Somerville, exemptions will be made for chemotherapy and radiation appointments. To find out more information or to schedule your ride, please call **Connie Lorenti** at 617-625-6600 ext. 2319. All rides must be booked two business

days in advance. This program is funded through **ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funding**.

Are you a member of **Somerville High School's class of 1974**? The **class of 2024** is looking for participants for this year's **Class Day festivities** which will take place on **Friday, May 31**, beginning at 8:00 a.m. at **Somerville High School**. They are looking for 50 graduates in total from 1974 to participate. The Class of 2024 looks forward to seeing you. Email any questions to **Irma Calderon** at icalderon@k12.somerville.ma.us.

Through the generosity of the **Ameri-**

can Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and from the direction of **Mayor Ballantyne**, the **Council on Aging** is now able to 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. They currently have available: Commodes, Bath Chairs, 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 appli-

cation, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Review of 'A Strange Loop'

A play by Michael R. Jackson

Review of *A Strange Loop*

A play by Michael R. Jackson

Joint production of SpeakEasy Stage and Front Porch Arts Collective, at the Calderwood Pavilion through May 25, 2024

By Andy Hoffman

The musical, *A Strange Loop*, winner of both a 2019 Pulitzer and a 2022 Tony for Best Musical, takes the audience deep into the confused, proud, and self-loathing mind of Usher, an ambitious young man wrestling with a plague of Thoughts, personified and set to music. Overweight, black, and gay, Usher wonders if he can ever succeed in the creation of a musical.

While the book-and-music originator Michael R. Jackson asserts that *A Strange Loop* isn't autobiographical, he acknowledges that "I have felt everything that Usher has felt." Like Usher, he worked as an usher on Broadway after graduating with a degree in musical theater while working on what would become *A Strange Loop*. The distinction between autobiography and a play entirely set in the mind of a younger writer remains more hopeful than actual.

Jackson has created a compelling story, filled with hummable music and memorable characters, masterfully recreated at the Calderwood Pavilion in a joint production between the SpeakEasy Stage and the Front Porch Arts Collective. Maurice Emmanuel Parent has directed Jackson's story to take its own course with unobtrusive staging and beautifully subtle touches in props, costumes, and set design.

The play rests heavily on the performance of Kai Clifton as Usher and he carries it with extraordinary grace. The funny, bawdy songs keep your toes tapping, even if the lyrics would get you arrested if you sang them aloud on the street. The music recalls what Jackson terms his Inner *White Girl* in one of the songs. He even name-checks Tori Amos, Liz Phair, and Joni Mitchell – all artists who turned their internal conflicts into art.

A Strange Loop derives its title from a Liz Phair song of the same name. Usher says at one point that he wanted to license the song for the show he's writing but that Phair's people declined. Phair's song title itself comes from Douglas Hofstadter, whose seminal 1979 book *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*, which looks at the recursive works of these three figures as symbolic of internal neurological structures common to all people. It's this recursive and self-referential process Hofstadter calls a strange loop, where internal thoughts eventually return to the self, no matter what other person, object or con-



cept they seem to be about.

In this musical, in which Usher imagines conversations with his parents, sexual experiences, visits to the doctor, consultations with his agent, and expressions of self-loathing, challenges the audience to maintain the hard connection between what we see on the stage and Usher's internal workings. Usually we recognize what we see performed – while clearly a product of the playwright's imagination – we accept as real within the confines of the play. In *A Strange Loop*, everything happens inside Usher's mind and none of it is 'real' except as a representation of Usher's own struggle with identity.

A Strange Loop opens with Usher's "Thoughts" – all the play's characters other than Usher are just Thoughts – neatly arranged in a grid around him. As the musical progresses, these Thoughts emerge from their boxes and harangue Usher about his weight, his creativity, his gayness, his uncertain gender, his job, his parents, and the size of his genitals. Like most people in their twenties, Usher's Thoughts return frequently to sex with questions about what's normal and how close Usher himself comes to that uncertain measure.

Usher struggles not only with his Thoughts but also how to end the play he's writing in the play. As he tries out one ending after the other, invariably with Usher's back to the audience, one of the Thoughts points out that the ending isn't only about resolving Usher's conflicts; it's also about the audience. "They have to know when it's time to go home." Kai Clifton records an extraordinary performance as Usher at the center of *A Strange Loop*, but the Thoughts – played by Grant Evaen, Davron S. Monroe, Jonathan Melo, Aaron Michael Ray, De'Lon Grant, and Zion Middletown – appear in rapid sequence as a bewildering array of characters from Usher's mind, from his mother (caught between love of her son and love of Jesus) to Harriet Tubman (reminding Usher of his obligations to his ancestors). They deserve as much credit for representing what passes through Usher's mind as Clifton does for presenting Usher himself. It's an extraordinary evening of theater. While some sequences could afford to be cut or tightened, overall the musical brings the audience face-to-face with the unexpected. That's a rare accomplishment in itself.

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Every great while I put a poem of my own in the Lyrical. I read this at a recent gathering of Somerville poets at the Arts Armory. I think this is a subject we can all relate to.

Gentrification

Maybe not seeing the sun's
rise and fall
because of the damning exclamation points
of concrete towers
is not important.

The world should
have a dark predator
shark's grin.

Everything is a flash
in the proverbial pan
after all.

Wipe away the old brick
and cobblestone
the sawdust from the wooden
floors from the corner pub.

Let the battalions
of bull dozers
and Mack trucks
wipe the slate clean.

Look out of your
luxury condo
to the asphalt Alzheimer's
of a parking lot.

And,
There is not one errant stain
on your stainless steel
kitchen....

— Doug Holder

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