Public informed on details of supervised consumption sites

By Luda Tang

The City of Somerville and Fenway Health held a community meeting concerning supervised consumption sites (SCSs) on Wednesday, June 1. Its aim was to inform Somerville residents on what a supervised consumption site is and how it could help with the fatal drug overdose situation in the community.

The event was hosted by Carl Sciortino, from Fenway Health, an organization that is missioned in serving the LGBTQ+ communities and other underserved communities, including people who use drugs. Since January, Fenway Health has served as the advisory committee to explore how supervised consumption sites can work in Somerville.

According to Somerville Mayor

Continued on page 4

‘Space Invaders’ land at the Somerville Museum

By Michael McHugh

From June 3 to July 9, The Somerville Museum will be presenting Space Invaders, a collaborative community art project curated by audio-visual artist Rook Murao, aka SRCFLP, alongside artists Hayato Kawai (Supanoba), Ian Condry (Lefroman), Charles "Charlo" Choueiri (Mr. Improbable), and Mieko Murao.

This immersive art experience explores themes of cultural programming, language, xenophobia, unfamiliarity, and more through emerging audio-visual mediums such as projection mapping and spatial sound.

The showroom has been given a deliberately alien feeling environment, with the sounds of black hole sonifications playing through numerous purposefully placed speakers and colorful,
Tonight, June 8, at 6:00 p.m. the city will hold a FY23 Budget meeting to discuss Exec. Admin, SomerStat, Arts, Elec. Provisions to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting of a City Council Committee will be conducted via remote participation. Copy & paste the following link into your internet browser to view this meeting live: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4684695113424439565. View agenda, video stream, and minutes at http://SomervilleCityMA.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_Meeting.aspx?ID=3572

**********************************

Join in for a free, outdoor dance party for all LGBTQ individuals and allies on Saturday, June 11 (rain date June 18), 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., in Union Sq. Plaza. Celebrate Pride Month in Somerville with a dance party in Union Square. Team DJ Live, drag performances by Amanda Playwith and Karisma Geneva Jackson-Tae, photobooth with Cindy Weisbart. LGBTQ+ organizations will be tabling including Resond Inc. and CHA, LGBTQ+ craft vendors including ART By Omayda, Colectiva Wellbeing and more. This event is free and open to all LGBTQ+ individuals and allies.

**********************************

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne has announced that Karin Carroll, MPH, has been hired as the City of Somerville’s Director of Health and Human Services. In addition to overseeing the ongoing work of the department, Carroll will be

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of June 8 – June 14 as provided by the National Weather Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>CONDITIONS</th>
<th>HIGH/LOW</th>
<th>PRECIPITATION</th>
<th>HUMIDITY</th>
<th>WIND</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>81°/60°</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>SW 12 mph</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>73°/56°</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>SE 16 mph</td>
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<td>June 9</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>WSW 12 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>73°/59°</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>SSE 11 mph</td>
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<td>June 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
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<td>75°/56°</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>E 10 mph</td>
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<td>June 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>69°/57°</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>S 11 mph</td>
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<td>June 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>71°/59°</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>NNE 9 mph</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14</td>
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NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

Response to: Somerville’s housing crisis: How we can achieve housing stability for our community

LAN says:
I know rents are going up in our neighborhood because the city has done nothing to help with the massive flooding that has taken out all our heating systems and hot water systems (6 of them in my building alone) TWICE! No insurance coverage and had to put up our tenants in hotels. The taxes, water & sewer bills are through the roof. So yes the city is the cause of my tenants rent going up in our case.

Barb says:
Don’t forget the impact of homebuyers driving up prices using family wealth. Makes it impossible for local working families to compete against well-heeled folks moving in.

Courtney says:
Summer, Laurel St buildings were bought by the same family as Sherbourne Court Apartments on Broadway by the Grossmans. Yes, remember them Grossman Lumber. Yes, the rents have gone up at least $500 or more during the pandemic. All down hill since the sale. Old buildings now have pets no restrictions rottweilers, pits ect. You can hear everything every step, icy during the winters and of course the RATS. It’s a shame 55 years in Somerville and getting priced out.

BMac says:
The irony of those who didn’t think twice when they displaced people in the 90s, aughts and teens complaining about being displaced now is truly epic.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments
La Ronga Bakery has been gone for a while. Now the entire building is also gone. I’ve heard that they are building a 12-story research building in its place. I don’t know if that’s true or not but it still means we lost one of Somerville’s most loved businesses, again.

La Contessa, Patsy’s, Roma and now La Ronga are all former loved bakery’s that are now history. The following are comments and memories of La Ronga bakery via social media.

“Waiting in line for rolls for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Also, their lunch specials. Miss this place.”

“Day old loaves of scali for a quarter.”

“I remember my grandfather stopping there every Sunday to get a French bread. Also, getting French rolls every Thanksgiving!”

“The warm loaf of French bread we shared with the neighborhood kids walking home after going to the ice-skating rink on a Saturday morning.”

“The aroma ahhhhh.”

“Near closing I’d stop in to get a couple slices of pizza. They would usually give me about four or what was left. As a young child when they first opened, my mother would send me there with 60 cents, six slices 10 cents each. Always friendly and looked forward to going in.”

“I surely remember the LaRonga, but I remember when it was Parziale Bakery. My brother-in-law Richie’s father was the owner.”

“Sometimes when I was young and we had pasta my dad would drive there to get a couple loaves of Italian bread. It was still warm and we would eat several slices before we even got home.”

“As a kid playing at Conway Park, if we were hungry the bakery staff always gave us free hot rolls. I can still smell them. Awesome people making an awesome product.”

“Junior High. Going skating every Friday night. Buying a warm loaf of French bread for a quarter before getting on the bus to get home. The whole night costed a dollar. Bus to and from, skating and the bread. Loved those Friday nights. And yes, now I feel very old. Lol.”

“The delicious aroma. My grade school friend Linda G worked there for a number of years.”

“Hot bread while waiting at the bus stop after spending hours at the skating rink.”

“It was 25 cents for a whole fresh hot loaf! Made waiting for the bus in the cold bearable.”

“Had their rolls every Sunday, had to have my eggs over easy so I could dip a buttered French roll in the yolk. Oh, and I always got a free scali when I bought cold cuts over $10.”

I’d give anything to see that red “hot bread” sign at Roma bakery across from the old Bradlees on Somerville Avenue. Now La Ronga becomes just another tasty memory.

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Beer can be the weapon of choice

Somerville police officers were dispatched to a Broadway location last Friday afternoon on reports of an assault.

Dispatch advised the officers that a man with a beard and a backpack had thrown beer cans at another man and that the suspect had fled down Wheatland St.

Upon their arrival, the officers recognized the suspect as Chris Hicks, who they were familiar with from past interactions.

Hicks reportedly began arguing with the officers and eventually took off running down Wheatland Street.

The officers advised dispatch of this and made chase. They were able to catch Hicks, who then was taken to the ground after striking one of the officers in the chest, just below the throat with a closed fist.

During this struggle one of the officer's shoulders was pulled from the socket. Another officer deployed his pepper spray and they were able to handcuff Hicks.

Medical aid was asked for Hicks and the assaulted officer. Water from the cruiser was retrieve to pour on Hicks' face as he was requesting it due to the pepper spray.

The victim of the initial assault stated that he had gotten out of the car in the Winter Hill Market parking lot and saw Hicks standing on the sidewalk and appeared to be "out of it."

The victim asked Hicks if he was okay and he noticed he was drinking a beer. He told Hicks that he should not be drinking out in public and walked towards the New Dragon Star Restaurant, then noticed Hicks following him.

When the victim exited the restaurant, Hicks reportedly threatened to kill him, and threw an open beer can at him, just missing and hitting the car, splashing him with beer.

When officers looked for the beer can it was not found, however the victim's shirt was wet and they could smell the beer on him.

Hicks was transported to Cambridge Hospital per his request and the injured officer was also transported there.

Hicks was subsequently booked on charges of resisting arrest, assault and battery on a public employee, assault with a dangerous weapon, and on warrant charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, indecent exposure, furnishing a false ID to arresting officer, assault and battery with a bodily substance, assault and battery on a disabled or person over 60, assault and battery, assault and battery on a correction officer, and assault.

The design of supervised consumption sites is one concrete form of harm reduction. It provides a safe and stress-free space for people who use drugs to go to while maintaining a sense of dignity. There will also be access to professionals to educate them about the potential harms brought on by substance use, and prevent fatal overdose situations.

Some community members might be concerned about whether such sites actually encourage drug uses. But this has not been the case. "In fact, it's really quite the opposite. They don't encourage young people or any other people to start using drugs," Dr. Harris said.

This program might be able to save lives and also gain opportunities to establish new relationships with people who are not accessing the current services.
Mayor Ballantyne’s first Pride flag raising as mayor

By Mina Rose Morales

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne raised the Pride Flag for the first time as mayor on Wednesday, June 1, at the City Hall Concourse. The mayor spoke about LGBTQ progress in Somerville. She reflected on how Somerville supports gender and sexuality alliance clubs in schools to create safe inclusive spaces. She also plans on expanding new existing programs and piloting new community-based initiatives. She plans on funding a full-time LGBTQ coordinator for the city.

“Oh, you know you want people to feel valued, you want residents to feel safe, and that their community supports them,” the mayor said when asked about the Somerville LGBTQ community.

After a brief pause, “Raising the Pride flag does that,” added Mayor Katjana Ballantyne.

Despite the progress in Somerville, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne acknowledged more work needs to be done and the legislative attacks on LGBTQ individuals nationwide.

After the mayor finished her speech, host Jack Treanor introduced two K-8 teachers, Jenna DiNovis and Kara Dodd. Both teachers are residents of Somerville. They spoke about how kids in the LGBTQ community are disproportionately affected by mental health.

“Fifty percent of gender queer students in Somerville reported that they thought about suicide while 25% attempted it,” said DiNovis and Dodd.

Host Jack Treanor, who is the LGBTQ liaison for the city, mentioned in a private interview that LGBTQ kids are still bullied in schools. “People have to remember that homophobia and transphobia are still very present in Somerville. We cannot stop fighting against it,” said Treanor.

Treanor’s position as the LGBTQ liaison for the city is currently part time. His position is one of the tasks Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is working to make a full-time position.

Willie Burnley, Jr., a City Councilor At-Large for Somerville who is also queer, hopes Treanor’s position becomes full time too. Burnley is one of three city councilors who is openly queer.

“If we want to help the queer community, then we need to invest our money,” said Burnley Jr.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne speaking at the Somerville Pride Flag Raising. — Photos by Mina Rose Morales

City Councilor At-Large Willie Burnley, Jr. in the Somerville City Hall after the Pride flag raising event.

The Pride flag risen at the end of the Pride flag raising ceremony.

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How to recognize elder self-neglect and provide help

By Susan Pacheco

Change is one of the few constants in life. But sometimes things change for the worse, when a friend or loved one seems to be neglecting their own needs and putting their well-being at-risk.

It’s called self-neglect, and assistance is often available if you know the warning signs.

In Massachusetts, self-neglect is defined as older adults or adults with disabilities whose health, safety, or well-being is at-risk because they are not meeting their own essential physical, psychological, or social needs.

Common signs of self-neglect include insufficient food, clothing, shelter, health care, financial concerns, or unsafe housing. Issues like these are not always easy to spot from the outside, but these are common warning signs:

- Weight loss, poor hygiene, bedsores, inappropriate clothing
- Mismanagement of medications or frequent hospitalizations
- Home safety issues, hoarding behavior, lack of proper utilities, unsafe structures
- Eviction or foreclosure
- wandering
- Unsafe behavior related to smoking, stove usage, or driving
- Unpaid bills or compulsive spending

Self-neglect is considered a form of elder abuse, and it is routinely the most common form of abuse that gets reported locally. Fortunately, there are ways to help.

What can I do to help?
- If you are concerned about someone you are close with, try talking to them to learn more about what is going on in their life. Listening without judgment and showing interest are good ways to start the conversation.
- If you think someone is in immediate danger, call 911 or the Police.
- If there is no immediate danger, but you are concerned about abuse or neglect, call the Mass Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-922-2275.

The confidential hotline is a gateway to your local Adult Protective Services program, which can help evaluate the situation and work with the older adult to help reduce risk factors. Adult Protective Services is a social work-based program that alleviates and reduces risk for people age 60 and over. Protective Service Workers work with elders, their family and community agencies to provide medical, mental health, legal and social services.

Elder Abuse Awareness Month June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. Each June Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) and the Cambridge Council on Aging (COA) work together to distribute information about elder abuse and local resources. We also distribute purple ribbons, which symbolize elder abuse awareness. Join us in spreading awareness by sharing information on social media and using the hashtag #KnowElderAbuse.

Did you know that at least 1 in 10 older adults has experienced some form of abuse, but only one in 14 cases are reported? Elder abuse is an action, or failure to act, that creates harm or significant risk of harm for someone age 60 or over. It can manifest as physical, emotional or sexual abuse as well as neglect or exploitation. Each case is unique, but these are common warning signs:

- Unexplained missing financial loss
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Isolation
- Verbal abuse
- Threats
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Rapid decline in health or mental status
- Sudden confusion
- Unexplained weight loss
- Neglecting Care Needs
- Hebrew to speak openly

Elder abuse is a silent epidemic that impacts older adults across all income levels, cultures, genders, and races. By knowing the signs of abuse and how to help, we can all do our part to help mitigate this silent epidemic.

Susan Pacheco is director of the Cambridge Council on Aging, which works to promote the health and independence of local older adults by providing meaningful social and recreational options. Norah Al-Waid is Director of Adult Protective Services at Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, a non-profit dedicated to supporting the independence and well-being of older adults, and people with disabilities.

Local residents fighting against food insecurity

By Fernando Cervantes Jr.

The COVID pandemic exacerbated food insecurity across the United States, deeply affecting communities like Somerville. According to a report from the Greater Boston Food Bank, in 2020, one in eight people in the area were expected to experience food insecurity due to the COVID pandemic.

Some locals decided to step up and help their community with community fridges and micropantries. These refrigerators and pantries, typically located outdoors for easy access, allow people to donate food and take it for free.

Eric Haines and his wife Catherine, residents of Somerville for the past eight years, are a key part of the Somerville Fridge and Micropantries database and Facebook group. In an email, Haines talked about his involvement with the project and his experiences.

“I love helping people directly share resources with one another,” Haines said. “I learned about the community fridges in Somerville through Facebook, then searched around to find those in Cambridge.”

Haines began his involvement in the beginning of 2021, while another Somerville resident Kami Ford maintained the database. Once Ford moved out of the city, Haines became the administrator of the site.

“[There are certainly more of these boxes and fridges than before COVID hit],” Haines said. “The pandemic disrupted normal large-scale food bank and pantry operations. The advantages of the fridges and micro pantries is that they’re accessible at all times.”

Looking towards the future, Haines hopes to keep community fridges and micro pantries stocked.

“My small contribution at this point is mostly getting information out. Beyond the map, there are about five boxes I can easily visit in the neighborhood and check their status, posting the contents to the public Facebook group,” Haines said. Anyone looking to donate or use their local fridges and micro pantries can find more information at http://bit.ly/bookproj and the Facebook group Somerville MA Community Fridge & Micropantries Public.”

Be sure to visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/somerville.times.
Somerville veterans asked to contribute to history project

By Michael McHugh

Somerville’s Department of Veterans Services is launching a partnership with the Library of Congress to host the Veterans History Project. This project is an effort to collect, store, and preserve the stories of American war veterans for generations by keeping these accounts in the Library of Congress forever.

The department is looking for personal accounts of veterans relating to their experiences both during and after their time in service. By creating an accessible public record of these stories, they hope to prevent this invaluable information from being lost to time.

“This really started as the way for us to connect more with veterans and get them out of the isolation that was brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic,” explains Ted Louis-Jacques, Somerville’s Director of Veterans Services. “It’s also a way for us to recount the stories of veterans, their time in service, and also what they do after service, because not only do they serve their country, but once they’re done they become police officers, firefighters, public safety, mail workers, and they just continue to serve in many different areas.”

The Veterans History Project, which was originally created by congress in 2000, reaches out to municipalities and veteran organizations across the country to tap into the wealth of knowledge in the different communities in which veterans now live. Now, through this new partnership, Somerville’s veteran community is able to share and memorialize their experiences for the public.

“Time is a huge factor in the importance of this project, but another is the meaningful insight that can be taken from their stories in relation to today’s global politics or the recent actions of the US overseas. Some folks have shared their opinion on the Russian invasion of Ukraine or the Afghanistan war.” continued Louis-Jacques.

“In order for us to preserve these stories and to take veteran’s accounts from their personal lives versus hearing it from someone like a granddaughter or another relative, we knew it was really important for us to jump on this now,” said Louis-Jacques.

Any veterans with personal accounts to share can reach out to the Department of Veterans’ Services by emailing veterans@somervillema.gov or by calling (617)-625-6600.

— Photo by Claudia Ferro
then sued Corcoran and Jenni

developers were given permission
ported that development and the
a mixed use development. I sup
of Cobble Hill, planned to build
nison and Mullens, the owners
adress this long blighted property

By Matthew McLaughlin
City Council President

I received a lot of feedback on the
proposed Public Safety Building (PSB) at 90 Wash-
ington Street. Here are a few quick points before I go into
more detail:

• The design phase of the proj-
et is on hold to facilitate more
community input

• That means any proposed
designs or cost projections are speculative

• Any vote on the PSB may be
years down the road

• All meetings are public and
recorded and stored on the city’s
website here³

I consistently advocated to ad-
dress this long blighted property
since 2014, when Corcoran Jen-
nison and Mullens, the owners of
Cobble Hill, planned to build
a mixed use development. I sup-
ported that development and the
developers were given permission
from the city to build. Mullens
then sued Corcoran and Jenni-
son, which stalled the project
for years. They still made time
to evict all of the businesses at
Cobble Hill, depriving seniors and the community of food and a
social outlet. No one would have
ever cared about their legal bat-
tles if they didn’t evict the busi-
nesses and leave the lot to ruin.

I advocated to seize the long
abandoned property by emi-
nent domain for the purposes of
building affordable housing,
open space and a new food mar-
et for seniors. I created this
video here² to outline every time
I’ve spoken about 90 Washing-
ton Street. A written timeline of
all my orders going back to 2014
can also be found here³ as well as
a letter I wrote to all Cobble Hill
residents here⁴.

The city took 90 Washing-
town Street by eminent domain in
2019, five years after the site
was abandoned, for the purpose
of building a new Public Safety
Building. I led the city council
in advocating for more uses than
a simple PSB such as affordable
housing, open space and a new
food market. I also advocated
with the council to ensure a pub-
ic/private partnership that will
offset the costs of any PSB and
ensure other community needs
are met. All of this can be seen in
the video and every meeting doc-
umented on the subject.

Residents are now receiving
letters advocating to do all the
things I’ve advocated for instead
of a PSB, as opposed to the cur-
rent plan to do it with a PSB.
I believe the goal of this mis-
information campaign, which
is led by Corcoran Jennison’s
director of development, is to
force another costly lawsuit, the
third for this site, and obstruct
any development of the site. If
that happens there will be no
PSB, nor will there be afford-
able housing, open space, a food
market, a YMCA or any of the
community benefits people are
asking for. It will also mean an
empty lot for an indefinite peri-
t of time. It is unclear to me if
the people flering the neigh-
borhood with this misinformation
are aware that they are being
used as pawns for developers,
but Corcoran Jennison certainly
know what they’re doing.

Corcoran Jennison already
suited the city twice and they
and Mullens have sued each other
for decades. A judge in the lower
court ruling between Corcor-
an Jennison and Mullens on 90
Washington Street, found here,
stated in 2017 that “the principal
business of these individuals and
their related businesses has be-
en to sue one another.” Even after
this ruling the Corcoran Jen-
nison and Mullens could have
negotiated a compromise that
would have benefited them and
the community, but they spent
two more years in litigation, tak-
ning their case all the way to the
Supreme Court, who refused to
hear their case. Given their track
record I’m certain they will have
no issue holding this property
hostage in court if given the op-
portunity. I asked Corcoran di-
rectly at a recent meeting if they
would sue us for a third time if
we don’t build a PSB and in-
stead build affordable housing,
open space, a YMCA and a pub-
lic market. He refused to answer
the question.

There are many concerns with
the proposed PSB that are legiti-
mate, such as the size and cost
of the building, cutting down
trees, parking, noise and more.
I have consistently and publicly
addressed them, as my reference
links can attest to. There is an as-
sumption among some that I am
a guaranteed vote in favor of the
PSB. I am not and my lengthy re-
cord backs that up. I do think a
PSB is an essential city function
that needs to happen. This side of
the city in particular needs a fire
station to respond to emergencies
in a timely manner. Fire fighters
at the current PSB live out of
trailers. The building is in poor
shape and is subject to flooding
and black mold breaks out. Our
first responders deserve bet-
ter. If a PSB doesn’t happen at
90 Washington Street it could
cost the city millions of dollars
and years of effort to find an
other location. This decision is
not as simple as yes or no. It will
require scrutiny and advocacy,
which I’ve consistently provided
for a decade.

I will continue to use my pos-
tion as Ward 1 Councilor to
ensure the best deal for Ward 1
residents. I am open to many
possibilities for the land and am
committed to a through com-
monwealth process. The one thing
I am not open to is acquiescing to
bad faith actors who are not con-
cerned about the community and
our needs or the consequences
of their own actions. Something
must be done with this land. I
would prefer it be used for the
good of the community.

³ https://voice.somervillema.
gov/90washington_redevelop-
ment
² https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=L4S-g_g8xQ
¹ https://docs.google.com/
document/d/1D9ZMdqSnt-
wjU7HGzdwpVPvrM0sX-
IeBQGSHKbeV1VZk/edit
⁴ https://docs.google.com/
document/d/1kmLpbXTBkX-
n4yRc45YrthC1i5a4p9sVX-
vT6bo9p9E/edit

By Diane (DiNitto)

Suffredin

The Somerville High School
Class of 2022 graduated last
weekend and kudos to all for their
accomplishments and enduring a
tough couple of pandemic years.”

The Class of 1960 is also feeling
quite proud: This is the third year
in a row that our class has award-
ed a scholarship in the amount of
$1960.00 to a deserving member
of the graduating class

In 2020, our “60th year,” we
awarded THREE SCHOLAR-
SHIPS in that amount, one last
year and this year our scholarship
went to a very deserving young
lady, Natalya Castillo-Salmeron.

Natalya is from a single-par-
ent home and had maintained a
3.61 GPA, while working an af-
ter-school job and participating in
school activities, which included
Class Secretary for 2019-2022,
and other volunteer projects. She
plans to pursue an education in
biology/genetics. We congratu-
late Natalya and wish her all the
best in the ensuing years.

The Class of 1960 is phenom-
enal in their generosity of dona-
tions towards our Scholarship
Fund. There is still “a reserve”
and we intend to keep awarding a
"$1960 Scholarship" until it runs
out!

The Class of 1960 is still send-
ing in their donations all year
long which is very heart-warming
so who knows when it will run
out! We always remember the
great education and guidance we
received during our high school
years and want to “pay it forward”
with this Scholarship Fund.
Here’s hoping other past gradu-
ating classes may decide to “pick
up the baton” and do the same.

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COMMENTARY

CHARGED WITH EXPANDING AND REORGANIZING

Theresa Wolf, Chief of Staff, is charged with expanding and reorganizing services to best serve the community and advance the Ballantyne administration’s focus on equity. Visit the city’s website to read more about Karin.

Celebrating their birthdays this week:

- **Carolyn Pedersen**
- **Suzanne Bremer**
- **Betty Casazza**
- **Beth Chamberlain**
- **Stephanie Hirsch**

Happy birthday to former Councilor At-Large Stephanie Hirsch, we hope she has a great day as well. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as Lori DePippo, Nicole Alves Bairos, Chris Argeropoulos, Elizabeth Rodrigues Fula, Charlie McCarthy, Gavin House, Len Tower, Kevin Tortorella, Rand Wilson, Al Sharpe, Amanda Esteves and Donna Amenta 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.

Our View Of The Times

You won’t get the day off from work or school or grocery shopping or ... anything, really. There’ll be no three-day weekend or big picnic to mark the occasion. But for many, the significance of the day will ring loudly in their hearts and minds.

Flag Day is not an official federal or state holiday, but June 14 is the date designated by proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson back in 1916 as a day to officially honor the stars and stripes that we solemnly revere today.

President Harry S. Truman signed a Congressional act into law in 1949 recommending a voluntary observance of Flag Week. This year, Flag Week falls on June 13–19.

Of course, as most locals know, the Colonial Army led by General George Washington was formed on January 1, 1776, and its first flag, The Grand Union Flag, was raised on Prospect Hill in what was then Charlestown, and is now part of Somerville.

Therefore, we can take pride in this special aspect of our civic heritage. As it is with so many other historic events and traditions born in this part of the country, the birth of our nation’s colors can be added to the sprawling list of firsts established by our forebears.

While some place more importance on this occasion than others, it is an indisputable fact that the flag symbolizes patriotism and love of country. Many fought and died defending the ideology and values it represents. One thing is certain, among other things, it represents unity. Something so precious and fragile, and yet so vital for our very survival.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

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Celebrating their birthdays this week:

- Happy birthday to **Carolyn Pedersen**, we wish Carolyn a great day.
- Happy birthday to **Suzanne Bremer**, of Prospect Hill. We hope she has a great birthday as well.
- Happy birthday to **Betty Casazza**, we wish her the best year ever.
- Happy birthday to **Beth Chamberlain**, we hope Beth has a great day. Finally, to former Councilor At-Large **Stephanie Hirsch**, we hope she has a great day as well.

You won’t get the day off from work or school or grocery shopping or ... anything, really. There’ll be no three-day weekend or big picnic to mark the occasion. But for many, the significance of the day will ring loudly in their hearts and minds.

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Ms. Cam’s
Olio
#830

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

1. In what year was the Boston Celtics founded?
   - Answer: 1946

2. What is the name of the Boston Celtics mascot?
   - Answer: Celtics

3. Which team was the first NBA franchise to draft a black player?
   - Answer: Philadelphia Warriors

4. What NBA team has the most consecutive NBA titles?
   - Answer: Boston Celtics

5. On Sunday June 18, 1815, which famous battle took place?
   - Answer: Battle of Lake Erie

6. Which golfer was world number 1 for a record 683 weeks?
   - Answer: Tiger Woods

7. How many times has Rafael Nadal won the French Open to date?
   - Answer: 13

8. Which two countries share the longest international border?
   - Answer: Canada and USA

9. Name the 1980 film based on the life of John Merrick?
   - Answer: The Elephant Man

10. What is the name of the main female character in The Terminator?
    - Answer: Sarah Connor

11. Where was the 1986 World Cup held?
    - Answer: England

12. What is the national dish of Spain?
    - Answer: Paella

13. Which NBA player was world number 1 for a record 683 weeks?
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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD
Winter Fun

ACROSS

1. Rope fiber
5. Mai ___
8. Russia’s Terrible one, e.g.
13. Tattled
14. Actress Reed
15. Internet share-able
16. Inwardly
17. Black tropical hardwood
18. Winged impression in winter
20. Home of the Hawkeyes
21. Investigative report
22. Chicken or this?
23. Not dense
26. Early-day supercontinent
30. Afternoon shut-eye
31. Even though
34. Picture on a coat
35. Anti-seniors sentiment
37. Jean of Dadaism
38. Crewneck alternative
40. Arm cover
42. Victoria Beckham ____ Adams
43. Lacking sense of moral standards
45. Flying high
47. Often part of disguise
48. Queen-like
50. Wood file
52. ___ ___ Plunge
56. Secret stash
57. Damien’s prediction
58. Not at work
59. Opposite of cation
60. Abbreviated seconds
61. Precedes stated rank
62. Moon pull
63. Like toddy or cocoa
64. Trans-Siberian Railroad city

DOWN

1. Shortens pants
2. Like fair share
3. Short for memorandum
4. Antebellum
5. Polynesian kingdom
6. Ten-pin establishment
7. Bucolic poem
8. Ride on runners
9. Winter building material
10. Tolstoy’s Karenina
11. R&B Charles
13. Glittery decor
14. Condescend
15. Indian black tea
16. Nibble
17. Like a Druid, e.g.
18. Like Silas of “The Da Vinci Code”
19. Decide at the polls
20. Jasmine of “Aladdin”
21. #42 Across, once
22. Stink to high heaven
23. Arctic ____ snowmobile brand-Saints of Newark”

Soulution to last week’s crossword puzzle:

SMARM LAB MELD
LAN AI ONO PILAU
AXONS OAF LEASE
GINGHAM FLANNEL
YAM JOIN
SAN PESO DAMASK
ABED BILL RANCH
TUPI ALLOT UVEA
ISAAC KITE LINK
NELSON THAW LEI
GORY CHA
TAFFETA CHIFFON
OCEAN DAY LIEGE
ERE CT AGA ORALS
DELE RON METES

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.
The 2022 MassDems Convention was held in Worcester over the weekend. Some watched virtually and others attended in person. This convention was historic in many ways. This was their first hybrid convention, making it more accessible for all to attend. They also nominated one of the most diverse slates of candidates in the Party’s history.

The endorsed candidates of the Massachusetts Democratic Party and results are as follows:

- **Candidate for Governor:** Maura Healey
- **Candidate for Lt. Governor:** Kim Driscoll
- **Candidate for Secretary of the Commonwealth:** Tanisha Sullivan
- **Candidate for Attorney General:** Quentin Palfrey
- **Candidate for Treasurer:** Deborah Goldberg
- **Candidate for Auditor:** Chris Dempsey

Former Somerville Alderman Bob McWatters attended the weekend convention. He is pictured below with Senator Diana DiZoglio, candidate for State Auditor, and former Boston City Council Andrea Campbell a candidate for Attorney General. As a delegate to the Massachusetts state convention elected in Ward 3 he pledged his support for both candidates in their bid to secure 15% to get on the ballot in the September primary. Both candidates received the necessary delegates and will be on the ballot in the primary.

Launched in 1797, the wooden navy frigate is the oldest floating commissioned war ship in the world. She fought in the first Tripolitan War and the War of 1812. She also won two domestic attempts to scuttle her. Today, she is a National Historic Landmark and has merited that distinction for over two centuries.

On June 17, 1775, at Charlestown’s Bunker/Breed’s Hill, the infant Colonial American Army lost its first major battle of the Revolution. They fought toe to toe against the British Army, the best trained in the world.

After opposing three assaults, inflicting terrible losses on the enemy and running out of gunpowder, the Americans were forced to withdraw to Winter Hill. At that time, General Washington was leery of leading the Colonials believing that Lexington and Concord were only skirmishes. Then, upon hearing of the appalling losses the New England militia inflicted on the British, he decided to lead these men.

Charlestown territory once stretched from the Charles River to the Merrimack River, mothering ten towns. It took 200 years to break up this historic old lady. Woburn was the first to break away in 1642, and Somerville was the last to leave in 1842.

What did these last two settlements? Continued on page 19.
LEGAL NOTICES

Cozy Community Pop-Up

Come sing along with Max and friends and help make our community a welcoming place for everyone! This fun-filled event full of human and puppet characters speaks to themes of friendship, inclusion, and community. Activities include: a 40-minute sing-along puppet show followed by socially distanced craft activities, meet the puppet characters, the Book Nook quiet space, and take-home resources! For Family audiences, ages 3+

Cozy Community Pop-Up is part of Cozy Arts’ ongoing commitment to thoughtful family programming through its Signature Program, Cozy Corner. This newest offering is a series of free outdoor events for family audiences, taking place in parks and public spaces throughout the greater Boston area in Summer/Fall 2022. Cozy Arts’ productions address social emotional growth, community-building, and are sensory friendly.

• Growing Center - June 12 (rain date June 18) from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. (performance at 1:45)
• West Branch Public Library - June 24 from 4 - 5:30 p.m. (performance at 4:15)
Legal Notices can be downloaded from our website: www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

Ms. Cam’s

Olio

Answers

1. 1946 6. Tiger Woods
2. Lucky the Leprechaun 7. 14
3. Boston Celtics, Chuck Cooper 8. Paella
4. Boston Celtics 9. USA, Canada
5. The Battle of Waterloo 10. The Elephant
11. Sarah Connor
12. Mexico City

JUNE 8, 2022

LEGAL NOTICES

The Somerville Planning Board (PB) will hold a virtual public hearing on Thursday, June 16, 2022, at 6:00 pm through GoToWebinar.

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to planning@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/105752199805395963
Webinar ID: 262-944-011
Phone number: 1 (213) 929-4272
Access code: 166-696-450

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

16 & 20 Medford Street Somerville Living, LLC proposes to develop a four (4) story LEED Platinum general building and establish a Household Living principle use for 41 dwelling units in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district. This proposal requires Site Plan Approval and one (1) Special Permit.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/planning-and-zoning/development-review.

Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by mail to Planning & Zoning Division, 3rd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143; or by email to planning@somervillema.gov.

6/1/22, 6/8/22 The Somerville Times

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CONTACT US BY 12 PM MONDAY
PHONE: 857-488-5138
radiating projections lighting up the room.

A central theme of the exhibition is an exploration of the meaning of the word “alien” as a term often used to describe immigrants as well as the unfamiliar or disturbing. Through parody, absurdism, and impactful imagery, the show works to redefine and recontextualize the concept of “alien” as something to be celebrated and welcomed – it being that immigrants throughout history made the US what it is in the first place.

The messages of the show go along with its untraditional setup and use of immersive art mediums, provided through collaboration with the MIT Spatial Sound Lab, as a departure from the familiar art exhibit arrangement allows for a more accessible dialogue.

“I think the allure of immersive art is that it’s accessible in the sense that we’re unlike conventional museums where they don’t let you touch or in the sense that for the visually impaired [for instance] we give sound as another aspect of the art that they can experience, and it breaks down those barriers,” explains Rook Murao. “So it’s a message for accessibility, and perhaps even inclusivity.”

The show plays with the meaning of the term alien within the American lexicon, as well as the culture of humans vs. non-humans that its double-meaning creates. “We’re all humans who are just born into this system so far,” continued Murao. “And it’s up to us to remix it or just completely overhaul it. Questioning those meanings behind a word, I think gives us a tool or a way of looking at the world.”

Through their work, each artist contributes to this interdimensional theme celebrating multicultural America and its future. Mieko Muruao’s artwork includes walls with intricate displays of flowers which are all native to countries outside of America, intended to inspire thinking of the country as a diverse ecosystem mirroring the flowers and exemplify the beauty of experimentation.

Hayato Kawai (Supanoba) provides a look into the upbringings of the Asian American community with his art that showcases a tapestry of personal heroes that the artist surveyed other Asian Americans to create, drawing upon the shared experience of being “dissed” or mocked at a young age for having their own ideas of who a hero should be.

Ian Condry (Leftroman), who launched the MIT Spatial Sound Lab, showcases some of the work that they do researching spatial sound by playing sounds including the aforementioned black hole soundscapes captured by NASA over 4,8, and 16 speakers around the room, depending on the day.

Charles “Charlo” Choueiri (Mr. Improbable) presents his Genii piece, a projected visual representation of a “genii or genius” a mythological guardian angel figure which in the art is portrayed as a mesmerizing light display that highlights the “unfamiliar” part of the term alien.

Rook Murao (SRCFLP), the curator of the exhibit, greatly contributes to this sense of unfamiliarity with his projections, sound work, as well as an abnormal mechanical mask, which he dons while performing as a musician, sitting as one of the first pieces you notice upon entering.

Part of the intention of the artists was to show that we are all active players in shaping society. By creating this art, they are playing on, interrogating, and bringing new meaning to the term “alien,” while also highlighting its societal damages.

“A word is just the meaning we give to the sound. And these meanings are what really dictates our worldview,” explains Murao. “Art is just a tool to create discourse and dialogue, right? Just an interesting way to ask questions visually, sonically and in different senses. We’re just used to our way in society, our status quo, and our protocols that are appropriate and not see these other meanings that come into play. But art is a safe space where we can explore these questions.”

Learn more by going on line to https://www.somerville-museum.org/calendar-events/space-invader-tfcke.

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Somerville Community Growing Center spring programs

Enjoy meditation, learning about garden bugs, going on a pollinator safari, and much more by visiting and participating at the Somerville Community Growing Center this spring.

Find out about these and other fun and creative spring programs at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-SWkG5gcMpt8XLHbr7WY-Qr3MV1rqj1VX/view.
Mayor Ballantyne releases first budget: Foundations for Progress

On Tuesday, May 31, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne submitted Somerville’s FY23 budget proposal, a $309 million budget that makes key investments in public education, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and quality of life issues in line with this year’s budget theme of “A Foundation for Progress.”

“This budget is the result of deep community engagement, collaboration with the City Council, and innovative thinking by City staff,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “Equity is the cornerstone of this budget, and I could not be more proud of the proposal that we have put together. This budget invests in our youth, improves delivery of daily services to residents, and makes foundational investments in our city systems that will allow us to successfully tackle the most pressing issues facing residents.”

Somerville Public Schools and School Infrastructure

Mayor Ballantyne’s FY23 budget proposes a historic $84 million, or 10%, increase in funding for Somerville Public Schools (SPS). This is the largest single increase in the history of SPS. This investment will help ensure that all students, particularly low-income students, students of color, and students with disabilities, have access to a high-quality and well-rounded education. SPS will prioritize using funds for mental health supports for all students, special education, and pay equity for paraprofessionals.

In addition, the city will invest $850,000 in improving school buildings, including the Brown School and Winter Hill School. Of these funds, $550,000 will go toward a districtwide enrollment and space needs study to develop a capital investment plan. The other $300,000 will fund new HVAC equipment and controls systems in schools across the city.

Affordable Housing Acquisition

Opening the Union Square Branch of the MBTA Green Line Extension earlier this year was a transportation-justice milestone for residents of Somerville and across the region. To help ensure the city stays on the path of inclusive growth, this budget repurposes nearly $8.3 million in funds previously allocated for the Green Line Extension to the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund for affordable housing acquisition and construction. The Green Line Extension came in under budget, and the current housing crisis calls for a significant investment in creating a substantial affordable housing stock in Somerville.

New Office of Accountability, Transparency, and Access

To help the city increase transparency in local government, this budget includes a new Office of Accountability, Transparency, and Access (OATA). Civic engagement and participation is rapidly shifting in an increasingly digital landscape, and this office will help ensure transparent and responsive government. As its first step, OATA will conduct a needs assessment of accountability, transparency, and access across the city. This office will incorporate the key functions that create a transparent government and uphold ethical governance for the residents of Somerville.

Participatory Budgeting

Another historic investment in this budget includes setting aside $1 million for participatory budgeting. This investment will allow community members to propose and vote on priority projects for funding in future budgets. Residents and community-based organizations will have the opportunity to have their voices heard in a new way as part of the city’s municipal budget process.

Additional FY23 Budget Highlights

The FY23 budget also includes:
- $100,000 for development of a pollinator action plan, which will aim to identify interventions that create the best habitat for Somerville-specific pollinators and wildlife.
- More than $400,000 for a mobility infrastructure maintenance crew within the Department of Public Works to maintain the City’s growing mobility infrastructure, including community paths, quick-build bike infrastructure, neighborways, and permanent separated bike facilities.
- Creation of a new Chief Administrative Officer position, who will increase the efficiency of internal systems that will allow City workers to focus on providing high-quality services.
- Creation of an Arts Space Planner position within the Arts Council to strategically preserve existing arts spaces and generate new arts and cultural spaces across the city.
- Creation of a Manager of Mental Health Services position, which will support frontline mental health staff.
- A new Director of Youth Services role, which will support youth priorities and services across City government.
- Increasing funding for the City’s LGBTQ+ Services Coordinator so that it is a full-time position.
- Permanent funding for a SomerBaby Home Visitor role, who will connect families with new babies to key City services to support their children from day one.
- $60,000 for an expansion of the SMART System Rodent Control to help mitigate rodent activity in Somerville.
- $75,000 for the development of a Zero Waste program to integrate conventional aspects of solid waste management with new program and statewide initiatives, including composting.
- Funding for a Clean, Green Somerville initiative that will create an energy efficiency program to assist Somerville property owners make comprehensive energy-saving improvements to their properties.
- New staff positions in the Office of Housing Stability that will help residents facing housing insecurity navigate and access resources to help them stay in their homes.
- Funding for a new Veterans Benefits Administrator, who will help veterans access financial benefits, mental health supports, housing resources, and education and job opportunities.
- A full-time Spanish-Speaking Case Manager in the SomerViva Office of Immigrant Affairs to connect Spanish-speaking residents and business owners with financial assistance, housing assistance, food assistance, and other supports the City has to offer.
- The creation of a Small Business Liaison in the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) to support small businesses as they apply for permits.
- Three new positions in the Inspectional Services Department, including a liaison who will directly support residents and businesses in navigating the permitting process, in partnership with the OSPCD liaison role.

The Mayor presented the FY23 budget to the City Council on Thursday, June 2. The City Council held a Budget Public Hearing on Monday, June 6. To see the proposed FY23 budget, watch the mayor’s presentation, and participate in the public hearing, go to somervillema.gov/fy23budget.
Capital Projects shares Public Safety Building project updates

By Luda Tang

On June 1, the Public Safety Building Project Committee meeting concerning the Public Safety Building project (PSB) was held, hosted by Committee Chair and Director of Capital Projects at the City of Somerville Melissa Woods.

According to SomerVoice, the Public Safety Building will be a new home to police, fire administration, and Engine 3. It aims to provide a modern space that can change and adapt to policing and fire administration day-to-day operations, achieve Somerville’s sustainability goals by being net zero ready, and designed to be welcoming to all Somerville residents.

Woods shared updates of the public safety building project. Capital Projects reached out to the Consensus Building Institute, a non-profit organization that is committed to solve socially, environmentally, and economically complex problems to ask for their help in guiding the process. Ona Ferguson, the Senior Manager at the Consensus Building Institute, came on board and was responsible for conducting twelve interviews of stakeholders for their opinions on the project.

Each interview chiefly focused on what the public safety building project should focus on.

The organized interview notes from the stakeholders can be divided into three parts: themes related to process, siting and design. The stakeholders brought up some suggestions for each part for consideration.

In terms of the project process, the notes included clarifying the goal and rationale of why the city is choosing to build a public safety building right now, engaging more residents, designing and executing the public meeting more carefully, and being clearer and more transparent about the decision making.

Stakeholders also think the building’s location should be suitable for the police and fire department, and the operations at 220 Washington Street should be relocated. It is also important to shed light on the legal requirements for using the sites.

It was also felt that the building’s design should take into account factors such as having flexible spaces for reimagining efforts, providing valuable services, protecting trees and outdoor greenspaces, and preventing negative impacts, like noises, traffic, among others.

In addition to the previous efforts made to public outreach, for instance, the May 25 meeting with 70 residents from Cobble Hill, Capital Projects plans to host an in-person listening session at East Somerville Community School on June 21.

The latest developments concerning the Public Safety Building project were discussed at the recent meeting of the Building Project Committee.

City employees vie for promotions

By Kyle Dante

The activities of the Somerville City Council’s Appointments and Personal Matters Committee meeting held on June 1 featured a variety of promotions. Several individuals were interviewed by the Committee for a variety of potential appointments.

Ten people appeared for the City Council, seven for the Council on Aging, one for the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change, one for the Fair Housing Commission (Somerville Housing Authority), and one for Police Lieutenant.

Police officer Kevin Shackleford is vying for the permanent role of Police Lieutenant following the retirement of the previous lieutenant.

Shackleford, a Somerville High School alumni and graduate of Western New England College, has had varied training over the last twenty years. His education includes basic crime scene investigations, DEA, SWAT, and FBI leadership, among others. He is also an instructor in taser use.

Shackleford started as a patrol officer in 2003. Awarded the 2007 Police Officer of the Year, Shackleford has assisted the Somerville community with distinction. Not only has he helped the community but also his fellow officers. Promoted to a Field Training Officer in 2008, Shackleford has trained several officers at the Somerville Police Department.

He has also stepped up as the temporary lieutenant, as of March 2021, whenever the Police Chief is unavailable.

The efforts Shackleford makes extend to the community. For example, he has led elementary schools through several programs. Activities conducted with Somerville Shape Up and the School District resulted in the Safe Routes to School Program, a safe-walking program involving the entire Somerville community.

Shackleford’s work has created a sense of collaboration and community between Somerville and its residents.

In the interview, members of the City Council asked Shackleford a few questions. These were the responses Shackleford provided during his interview:

City Council: Tell us what you most love about the city.

Kevin Shackleford: It is the diversity. My neighborhood is diverse. We love each other and get along. It is my home. I have always been part of the community.

CC: What is your biggest concern in the role?

Shackleford: Not much because I am comfortable doing the job, and I know whom to go to for assistance.

CC (Councilor Kelly): If you get called to a staffing event and see a non-SPD abusing their rights, how would you respond at the moment and afterward?

Shackleford: I would intervene as fast as possible, get proper documentation, and then go to the appropriate assistance.

CC (Councilor Kelly): Folks experience different traumas and react differently. When we discuss trauma, what does the care look like that you provide?

Shackleford: We identify individuals going through crisis from appropriate training. We come down to a communication level to talk to them, give the proper assistance, and de-escalate comfortably.

CC (Councilor Kelly): The city is going through a public safety redo. With several programs, for example, Kahoots. What do you see in the value of these programs?

Shackleford: A collaboration in mental health, police, and medical will provide the appropriate resources. We are responding as people, not law enforcement.

CC (Councilor Kelly): You will be a leader upon promotion. How will you develop respect and authority in maintaining the unarmed elements of the previous questions?

Shackleford: It is important to be an advocate. The police are changing. We need to be fluid. It is important to open communication.

The interviewees and Shackleford will receive a City Council private message concerning their potential hiring. For more information on Shackleford and other references, visit somervillema.gov.
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THE HOUSE AND SENATE. There were no roll call votes in the House or Senate last week. This week, Beacon Hill Roll Call reports local senators’ roll call attendance records for the 2022 session through June 3.

The Senate has held 69 roll calls so far in the 2022 session. Beacon Hill Roll Call tabulates the number of roll calls on which each senator voted and then calculates that number as a percentage of the total roll call votes held. That percentage is the number referred to as the roll call attendance record.

Thirty-six of the 40 senators did not miss any roll calls and have 100 percent roll call attendance records. This high level of participation can likely be attributed to the fact that under emergency rules adopted because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the vast majority of the 40 senators are not in the Senate chamber during a session. Most are watching and listening to the session from their home, business or Senate office and casting their votes remotely.

Senators’ remote votes are communicated to Senate officials during the session or prior to the session if senators are informed in advance that there will be a roll call vote. If a member wants to speak on an issue under consideration, they do so on a separate “debate phone line” and their voice is then heard in the Senate chamber and by anyone watching the broadcast online.

The number of senators who had 100 percent roll call attendance records in the four years prior to the pandemic was lower than 2022 as follows: 28 in 2019; 20 in 2018; 24 in 2017; and 17 in 2016.

It’s a Senate tradition that the Senate president only votes occasionally. Current Senate President Karen Spilka follows that tradition and only voted on 21 (30.4 percent) of the 69 roll calls while not voting on 48 (69.6 percent) of them.

Only four senators, other than Spilka, missed any roll calls. Sens. Cindy Friedman (D-Arlington) and Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem) each missed three roll calls for a roll call attendance record of 95.6 percent. Sens. Sonia Chang-Diaz (D-Boston) and Diana DiZoglio (D-Methuen) each missed only one roll and scored a roll call attendance record of 98.5 percent. Beacon Hill Roll Call contacted the four senators asking why they missed some roll calls.

Sen. Lovely responded, “I was prevented from engaging in three roll call votes while working remotely because my Internet connection was interrupted. I have participated in every other roll call vote this session and submitted a letter on how I would have voted to the Senate clerk.”

“The senator had some significant food allergies and suffered an allergic reaction to lunch that day,” said DiZoglio aide Tom Arsenukt. “However, she was grateful to have been able to get on the record with the clerk’s office regarding her position on that particular amendment and recover in time to vote in favor of the bill.”

Friedman and Chang-Diaz did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call asking them for a statement.

SENATORS’ 2022 ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE RECORDS THROUGH JUNE 3, 2022. The percentage listed next to the senator’s name is the percentage of roll calls on which the senator voted. The number in parentheses represents the number of roll calls that he or she missed.

Sen. Patricia Jehlen 100 percent (0)

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

SHOOTING AT A HOUSE OR APARTMENT (H 1803) – The House gave initial approval to a proposal that would impose up to a five-year prison sentence and/or $10,000 fine on anyone who discharges an assault weapon, firearm, large capacity weapon, machine gun, rifle, sawed-off shotgun or shotgun into a dwelling. Under current law this crime is a misdemeanor punishable by up to a 30-day jail sentence and/or $100 fine.

“I filed this legislation to create a criminal penalty for shooting into a house or building because at that time there was a string of shootings into houses in Lowell and I discovered that our police department did not have the necessary tools to enforce the law,” said co-sponsor Rep. Rady Mom (D-Lowell).

“I am very pleased that we are moving forward in making what was a misdemeanor, a felony,” said co-sponsor Rep. Colleen Gary (D-Lowell). Individuals firing guns at a residential home can kill the residents inside. It is not just shooting at an inanimate object. People should be able to feel safe in their own homes.”

Supporters also said that under current law the punishment is disproportionate to the severity of this type of incident. They noted this crime, primarily committed by gang members, is often used as an intimidation tactic without regard for the innocent people in the home.

PREGNANT AND POST PARTUM MOTHERS (S 2731) – Stuck in the House Ways and Means Committee for nearly three months, since March 7, is a measure, approved unanimously 40-0 by the Senate, designed to ensure that pregnant and postpartum mothers get necessary and potentially life-saving health care by extending MassHealth insurance coverage to 12 months after pregnancy. MassHealth is the state’s Medicaid program that provides health care for low-income and disabled persons.

“The Massachusetts Senate has taken another step to combat inequities in maternal health,” said sponsor Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem), when the Senate approved the bill in March. “By extending postpartum healthcare coverage to a full year, birthing individuals will be able to access vital physical and behavioral health resources that will decrease mortality and severe morbidity and improve the overall health of parent and child, especially for our minority populations.”

At the same time, Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland) said, “The danger of dying during pregnancy or childbirth is still far too high in the United States, particularly for Black women. But the Senate is committed to continuing our efforts to ensure pregnant and postpartum mothers and people who give birth receive the critical care they need and deserve.”

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 May 30-June 3 the House met for a total of one hour and 42 minutes and the Senate met for a total of one hour and two minutes.

Mon. May 30 No House session No Senate session.

Tues. May 31 House 11:04 a.m. to 11:51 a.m.
 Senate 11:05 a.m. to 11:11 a.m.

Wed. June 1 No House session No Senate session.

Thurs. June 2 House 11:10 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.
 Senate 11:09 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

Fri, June 3 No House session No Senate session.

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com
McGrath Highway at Mystic Avenue project progress

By Gina Ingrando

This week a Zoom meeting discussing the construction of McGrath Highway (Route 28) at Mystic Avenue (Route 38) was held. This meeting covered two specific topics that Project Manager David Shedd announced at the beginning. The main topics of discussion were Targeted Safety Improvement Projects and a Federally Funded TIP Project.

This project had previously been presented to the public in December of 2020. Since then, “various parts of the project have been removed and fast tracked to construction using state funding to address safety issues in the project area,” according to Shedd.

Doing so has allowed improvements to the project while still staying within the allotted federal amount that had previously been budgeted. Advertisements for this project have been posted in The Somerville Times, the Boston Globe, the Somerville Journal, and the MassDOT website.

A tragic crash with a pedestrian caused more urgency in this project for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Under the topic of Targeted Safety Improvement Projects, the first was the Blakeley and McGrath intersection. Before improvements to this area were made, there were no pedestrian accommodations, specifically no crosswalk to get across McGrath Highway. The improvements made allowed a crosswalk and signal to be installed for crossing McGrath. This project took about four months to complete.

The next area of focus for Improvement Projects was Kensington Crossing. One of the main hopes for this project was to reduce the speed of vehicles to reduce the likelihood of a pedestrian crash. The main feature to accommodate reducing speeds was adding raised crosswalks for pedestrians. Three raised crosswalks have been put in place to help reduce the pedestrian crashes in this area and there are still more improvements being made. This project started in August 2021 and will continue through the fall of 2022.

The third area of focus in this project was to evaluate the pedestrian infrastructure. This included looking at pedestrian crossings, curb ramps, sidewalks, and signal timings. The recommendations being looked at were adding ADA compliant curb ramps and adding sidewalks where paths are. They are also looking to add flashing beacons to improve the visibility of a pedestrian crossing. This first part of this project started in October 2021 and finished in December 2021. The second half of construction has started and will continue and be finished in the fall of 2022.

Tim McIntosh then took over the meeting to discuss details about the TIP Project and the next steps moving forward for this construction. He discussed how lane narrowing or elimination can produce improvements.

These improvements include shorter roadway crossing distances, reduced vehicle speeds, and providing space for curb extensions to be installed or to have larger sidewalks. The anticipated timeline to have these improvements made will start this Summer and continue through the fall of 2023.

Historical Fact

CONT. FROM PG 11

have in common?
• The first Governor of Massachusetts, John Winthrop, lived in both the locales of Somerville's Ten Hills and Charlestown's Winthrop Square.
• On April 18, 1775, Paul Revere began his famous ride that skirted both sides of Charlestown's Neck, the narrow strip of acreage separating the two lands. In 1803, he copper-sheathed the USS Constitution’s hull.
• One year later, heroic Captain Richard Somers, spent his last day on this famous ship. He is thought to be the namesake of Somerville.
• In 1621, Myles Standish explored both lands for the pilgrims.
• Charles Taylor, father of the Boston Globe, the Boston Red Sox and Fenway Park, lived in both cities.
• The first telephone numbers were issued in Somerville and Charlestown.
• The Powder House attack, the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Prospect Hill flag-raising and the burning of the Ursuline Convent happened in Charlestown/Somerville.
• The heart of the Bunker Hill battle was fought at its earthworks fort. Upon running out of gunpowder, they retreated toward the neck and the sanctuary of Winter and Prospect Hills. This is when General Joseph Warren was killed in Charlestown. It is thought that if he survived, he might have been our first president.
• Another of Charlestown's historic gems was its 87-acre Navy Yard, one of the best known in the country. Between opening its first berth in 1800 and its closing in 1974, its patriotic workers built more than 200 warships and overhauled and repaired thousands of others. Today, the Charlestown Navy Yard is part of Charlestown's pride and is a National Park Service site.
Somerville Kiwanis Club Award Eight Scholarships

On Thursday, June 2, The Somerville Kiwanis Club presented eight $1500 scholarships to deserving Somerville High School seniors. The eight students receiving scholarships were among 117 students who competed for the annual awards.

The scholarship committee, headed by Distinguished Past President Dave O’Brien, who is a former SHS teacher, did an outstanding job selecting these students. Five of the recipients were present at the club’s meeting at the Mount Vernon Restaurant. President Mernaysa Rivera-Bujosa congratulated the students for their hard work during these difficult years of studying with pandemic restrictions. Also receiving a $1500 scholarship were Diana Mendoza-Bernal, Katlyn Silva and Jadrianis Vega who were unable to attend the meeting.


Somerville will participate in regional gun buy back initiative 2022

The City of Somerville Police Department and the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office will partner to host the Somerville gun buy back initiative Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Somerville Department of Public Works Yard located at 1 Franey Road. The regional initiative includes several communities in the Middlesex county over the past couple of years. The focus is on providing residents with a safe and secure way of removing unwanted firearms from their homes.

The Somerville Police Department and Middlesex Sheriff’s Office ask that the following steps be taken for anyone interested in disposing their firearms at the event.

- Please bring firearms unloaded with the safety engaged in a bag, box or case.
- Leave the unloaded firearms inside the trunk of your vehicle upon arrival at the Somerville Department of Public Works Yard located at 1 Franey Rd.

Please note the following details for the event.

- Receive up to $200 in gift cards per firearm.
- BB guns/Air Guns and ammunition do not qualify for gift cards but can be turned in for disposal.

The Middlesex Sheriff’s Office and Massachusetts State Police will safely destroy all guns collected at the event. The Somerville Police encourages residents to take advantage of this opportunity to help prevent accidents and injuries in our homes and community.

Bobby’s Dad Jokes Corner
By Bobbygeorge Potaris

What invention allows us to see through walls?
Windows.

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On This Day in History
June 8

0632 – Muhammad, the founder of Islam and unifier of Arabia, dies.
0793 – The Vikings raid the Northumbrian coast of England.
1861 – Tennessee votes to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy.
1863 – Residents of Vicksburg flee into caves as General Ulysses S. Grant’s army begins shelling the town.
1953 – The Supreme Court rules against segregated lunch counters in Washington, D.C.
1968 – James Earl Ray, the alleged assassin of Martin Luther King, Jr., is captured at the London Airport.
1969 – President Richard Nixon meets with President Thieu of South Vietnam to tell him 25,000 U.S. troops will pull out by August.
SomerStreets: Carnaval

SomerStreets Carnaval returned to East Somerville on Sunday, June 5. The weather turned out to be perfect for the outdoor festival. Plenty of food, entertainment and activities, the streets were full with something for everyone to enjoy. SomerStreets is Somerville’s annual series of street festivals that close busy streets to cars and open them to the community. SomerStreets: Carnaval was hosted by the Somerville Arts Council and East Somerville Main Streets.

— Photos by Bobbie Toner

Don't forget to visit Somerville's farmers markets. Every Wednesday through November 23, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. visit the Davis Square Farmers Market, across from American Flatbread at 44 Day St. Visit: https://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/davis. Every Saturday through October 29, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., the Union Square Farmers Market takes place at 66-70 Union Sq, visit: https://www.unionsquaremain.org/2022-fmseason. Every Sunday through November 20, the East Somerville Farmers Market takes place at 115 Broadway, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Visit: https://www.eastsomervillemainstreets.org/market. There is a $15 SNAP match at all Farmers Markets across Somerville.

Annual Middle Grades Musical Production, June 9, 10, 11. All City Theatre of Somerville presents the musical HONK! Jr. based on the Hans Christian Andersen story The Ugly Duckling. The cast and crew are 6 – 8th grade students. This show is for everyone. Presented with the support of Somerville Arts for Youth. June 9 and 10 at 7:00 p.m. and June 11 at 2:00 p.m. at the Centennial Auditorium at Somerville High School, 81 Highland Ave.
Kentucky native CD Collins is the author of three books, a collection of short stories, Blue Land (Polyho Press), a poetry collection, Self Portrait with Severed Head (Ibetsion Street Press), and a novel, Afterbeat (Empty City Press). Her fiction has appeared in numerous literary magazines including StoryQuarterly, Phoebe, Salamander and The Pennsylvania Review. Her work is represented in five compact discs, one of which won Best Spoken-Word album at the Boston Poetry Awards. More information at www.cdcollins.com.

Miss Ludie

This woman with the mineral breath knows you still speak to the forest animals, that you once tried to make fireworks with flowers and precious sand, thought you could walk off the chicken coop and fly.

She will hold all of you tenderly in your little desks, Will free you as often as she can, because your body craves tearing through the playground, sliding onto third base, gathering as much dust as possible, because you thrive in the dirt you’re made of. She knows you need to stride to the pencil sharpener just to relieve that spring inside you.

Her breath is silver with the frost of the mountain, she has climbed down from, to teach you letters and numbers, which sacks have seeds you can plant, which ones are too heavy a burden for your small bones to bear.

Her work and (Polyho Press), a poetic collection, Self Portrait with Severed Head (Ibetsion Street Press), and a novel, Afterbeat (Empty City Press). Her fiction has appeared in numerous literary magazines including StoryQuarterly, Phoebe, Salamander and The Pennsylvania Review. Her work is represented in five compact discs, one of which won Best Spoken-Word album at the Boston Poetry Awards. More information at www.cdcollins.com.

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She will hold all of you tenderly in your little desks, Will free you as often as she can, because your body craves tearing through the playground, sliding onto third base, gathering as much dust as possible, because you thrive in the dirt you’re made of. She knows you need to stride to the pencil sharpener just to relieve that spring inside you.

Her breath is silver with the frost of the mountain, she has climbed down from, to teach you letters and numbers, which sacks have seeds you can plant, which ones are too heavy a burden for your small bones to bear. She will teach you that it not important to count the polished dimes in the storm you got caught in, but to watch them flashing from the sky, under whatever shelter you can find. She will show you to decipher letters and words so that you can learn the stories of other children, their small hands in the fur of the creatures that walk beside them.

Once, she dissolved a tiny square of paper in her mouth Ate breakfast at dawn in the diner, scented with the seductive oils of the Fryolator. Saw the towers spring up and down like accordions, The birds in the trees outside the library chattered excitedly; she understood them.

And may divine you, too, if you allow her. Miss Ludie’s eyes are the blue of the hyacinths she brought in one day, setting the vase on her oak table. Gaze into her eyes, that unfathomable blue. The color of the sea under a shimmering dome of sky. You’ve never seen a blue like that before.

— CD Collins

To have your work considered for the Lyrical send it to: Doug Holder, 25 School St; Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu

OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Somerville’s Rajiv Raman:

Transit Maps as a means to teach equality to children

I had the pleasure to speak with Rajiv Raman about his work, and his new children’s book Last Stop: A Story of Transit Equality.

Doug Holder: As a sculptor and a digital artist, how has the Somerville experience been for you?

Rajiv Raman: I used to do more sculpture, mainly in wood and metal, but that’s been a bit rough recently with the space constraints of living in Somerville (and having kids!). I still dabble in 3D occasionally, but my main artistic pursuits are in digital art now. Somerville has been a great place to grow as an artist. There’s a vibrant artist community, as exhibited by the successful Open Studios event we just had! Almost 300 artists were showing! I’ve been a proud Open Studios volunteer for many years now. Unfortunately, our community is under threat primarily due to gentrification. Today’s Somerville is very different from the one I first moved to in the 90s. Many artists have been able to adapt and I hope that this city can continue to be an interesting place for the arts.

DH: You describe your work as a kind of narrative that has a universal quality. Explain.

RR: My digital work which I call “Mapuccino’s,” resemble subway maps. They fall into two categories: edition prints and commissions. My edition prints cover a variety of topics from local cities and towns to politics to the environment. My commissions tell a story about a particular person (or couple). Why subway maps? I’ve always been fascinated by them. The way that they distill complexity down to a simple bold geometry is mesmerizing. The story told through each map isn’t immediately obvious at first glance. There’s an element of surprise in my pieces that captivates viewers when they realize they aren’t just looking at an “ordinary” subway map.

Recently, I’ve been doing a lot of “subway-style sketches” and posting them on Instagram (www.instagram.com/rajivpraman). My sketches are usually narratives about current events. Trying to translate something as complex as the Ukraine conflict, for example, into the language of subway maps is an immersive challenge for me.

DH: You have an interest in subways, particularly subway maps. And in fact you make personal subway maps for people. How do you determine what a person’s map will look like? Has the new Union Square line inspired you?

RR: I call my commissions “interactive art” because the customer provides me with a list of places that are special to them. I’m just the composer! I take what they give me and build a beautiful subway map out of them. In that way, I’m more like a city planner! Every single commission is different and unique. They make great gifts for birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations … you name it.

I use basic tools of the trade like Adobe Illustrator. The final result is a signed digital print. They’re easy to order and you can find out more about them at www.mapuccino.com.

Before the Assembly stop was built, there hadn’t been a new stop in Somerville in decades. Now Union Square is open and we have many more coming soon. These are exciting times! There’s been a renewed interest in my work due to these popular transit projects. The downside of these projects is that they also spark gentrification and income inequality, which happen to be topics I cover in my work. Public transit has always had the power to be equalizer. People of all walks of life use it. But it has to be done right and that starts with making

Continued on page 15

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O F F T H E S H E L F

by Doug Holder

Somerville’s Rajiv Raman:

Transit Maps as a means to teach equality to children
sure new projects don’t push longtime residents out.

**DH:** You have written a children’s book, *The Last Stop*, that allows parents to explore with their children prejudice, through the “lens of transit and equality.” You use subway maps here as well. How do you make the connection with transit maps to the issues with equality and equity?

**RR:** My book, available at www.aRRtworks.com/last-stop, is illustrated in the style of subway maps. The story is about a neighborhood called Colorville that has been ignored for too long by city planners. The proud People of Colorville (pun intended) make a lot of noise and finally get the subway stop they’ve long desired. Only then do all of the other neighborhoods take notice in the beauty that Colorville has to offer. My book is meant to instill in children the idea that public transit is an equalizer that is meant for everyone. It provides the means to explore new places, meet new people, and build connections. Some adults who’ve read my book have commented that it ends on a positive note and does not address the gentrification that often arises from a new subway stop. That’s for a follow-up discussion between a parent and their child, or maybe a second book about gentrification! People sometimes get jaded about public transit planning because it’s not always done right. In my opinion, there should’ve been massive affordable housing initiatives surrounding every new GLX stop. But that’s a bigger discussion for another day.

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**Somerville Police investigate report of shots fired on Paulina St.**

On Wednesday, June 1, at 9:44 p.m., the Somerville Police responded to 34 Paulina Street for a report of shots having been fired at the rear of the residence. On arrival, Officers learned the shooting incident occurred this same date between 5:00 a.m. – 5:15 a.m. Witnesses heard what sounded like four shots fired and soon after a fleeing vehicle but did not call the police at the time the shots were heard. There were no injuries reported.

The image here is of two unknown subjects who are considered persons of interest police at this time. Anyone with information regarding this incident is urged to call the Somerville Police Department at 617.625.1600 ext.7226. This matter is a very active investigation.

— Somerville Police Dept.

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**Off The Shelf**

CONT. FROM PG 14
CUSTOM LINKED
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