



### Inside:



**It's Howdy Doody Time**

page 3



**Fair Housing talk**

page 9



**Cultural Event at COA**

pages 12-13

## 200 Braille and raised-text street signs installed at Somerville intersections



The crosswalk sign initiative brings more accessible street navigation to Somerville residents.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is pleased to announce that more accessible signage is coming to streets around Somerville. As part of ongoing work to make Somerville's streets safer and more accessible, the city will be installing new signage featuring braille and raised text at intersections around Somerville. A total of 200 new signs will be installed at crosswalks with pedestrian signals and accessible push buttons to make them easier to navigate for people with visual impairments.

"Making our streets work for everyone means designing them in ways that are inclusive of all the different ways people receive and process the information they need to move around the city safely and comfortably," said Mayor Ballantyne. "This is another great example of teams working across departments to deliver important services to our community. I especially want to thank our Parking, Engineering, Mobility, and ADA staff for collaborating to make our streets more accessible."

The new signage will alert people walking or wheeling to the presence of a button they can push to activate an audible and vibrotactile (vibrating to enable perception through touch) signal that lets them know when *Continued on page 4*

## Jef Czekaj illustrates his story

By Norah Doyle

If you caught the "Might Delete Later" reading event the other week on Thursday, August 7, at Remnant Brewing, then you may be familiar with children's book author and illustrator, Jef Czekaj.

Czekaj is a Somerville native, having resided here for more than 20 years, and moved to Arlington during the pandemic.

"I still kind of consider Somerville my 'creative' home," said Czekaj. "I love to do my creative work (drawing and writing) out in public, so you'll often see me at the Somerville Library or a coffee shop like Diesel."

Czekaj started writing and creating at a very young age. He wrote and illustrated his first story, *The Magic Car*, when he was in first grade. Though his mother did not save the original copy of *The Magic Car*, he does still have a memo from his elementary school principal thanking him for *Continued on page 4*



Children's book author and illustrator, Jef Czekaj, with a couple of friends.

— Photo by Jacy Edelman

### Bring business back to your business!

Reach out to local customers who want to support local businesses. We can help you do that with our **bring back business ad specials.**

email **Bobbie** to learn about this advertising special!

[bobbie@thesomervilletimes.com](mailto:bobbie@thesomervilletimes.com)

### Bay State Skating School

LEARN TO SKATE CLASSES for Recreational • Figure • Hockey Skating Skills



Over 50 Years Experience Children (4-18 years)



The safety of our customers and staff is our #1 priority! Cambridge, Brookline, Cleveland Circle, Medford, Newton-Brighton, Quincy, Somerville, Waltham, West Roxbury, Weymouth

781-890-8480 • [www.BayStateSkatingSchool.org](http://www.BayStateSkatingSchool.org)



## T.J. SILLARI, INC.

Over 50 Years Experience

Plumbing • Heating • Gas Fitting • Industrial Work • Water Heater Replacement • Complete Drain Service

Residential - Industrial - Commercial

**625-9877**

Proud to be a Somerville resident

Master Plmb. Lic. #6106



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

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the Somerville Arts Council, in partnership with producer Yvette Wilks of Wilks Productions Consultancy, invite community members to the eleventh annual *Evolution of Hip Hop Festival* on Saturday, August 23 (rain date: August 24), from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m. in Union Square Plaza. Evolution of Hip Hop is an annual ArtsUnion festival and is free for all to attend. This year's event is building an intergenerational community of those who love music, beats, and storytelling, which are part of the many components of Hip Hop.

\*\*\*\*\*

Somerville's new Davis Square Neighborhood Council is holding its first election for its Board of Directors. Ballots can be cast at the Somerville Library West Branch on Saturday, August 23, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., and Monday, August 25, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Votes will be tallied on the evening of August 25. Eligible voters include those who work, receive services, operate a business, regularly volunteer at an organization/agency, or own real estate within the Davis Square business district, and those who reside within a half mile of the boundary of the Davis Square business district. A map of the district is available here: <https://map.davissquarenc.org/>. Important information, such as polling site hours, candidate backgrounds, etc., will be available at the following link: <https://sites.google.com/view/DavisSquareNC>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy *Continued on page 7*

## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of August 20 – August 26 as provided by the National Weather Service

| DAY                           | CONDITIONS    | HIGH/LOW | PRECIPITATION | HUMIDITY | WIND       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------|---------------|----------|------------|
| <b>Wednesday</b><br>August 20 | Partly Cloudy | 71°/58°  | 10%           | 6%       | E 11 mph   |
| <b>Thursday</b><br>August 21  | Partly Cloudy | 70°/55°  | 6%            | 3%       | ENE 12 mph |
| <b>Friday</b><br>August 22    | Sunny         | 80°/59°  | 3%            | 2%       | NE 10 mph  |
| <b>Saturday</b><br>August 23  | Partly Cloudy | 82°/65°  | 2%            | 1%       | SW 13 mph  |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>August 24    | Partly Cloudy | 80°/65°  | 21%           | 15%      | SW 13 mph  |
| <b>Monday</b><br>August 25    | Rain          | 80°/59°  | 32%           | 22%      | SW 11 mph  |
| <b>Tuesday</b><br>August 26   | Partly Cloudy | 79°/57°  | 11%           | 7%       | W 9 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: *East Somerville's Foodie Crawl: Every Bite Tells a Story*

Eric says:

Unclear, does the ticket price include food?

Katie says:

Yes, the ticket price includes food from all the participating restaurants. It is a very fun event... food, music, and a lively atmosphere up and down Broadway. Be sure to get your ticket before the price increases on September 1st!

### Response to: *Ballantyne Administration brings braille and raised text street signs to 200 Somerville intersections*

John B says:

It's so heartening to see this story. Somerville is the best city to live in!

### Response to: *Bicycle Committee weighs in on Somerville Ave. project*

TheoNa says:

Why does Somerville only have a Bicycle Advisory Committee and not a Motorist Advisory Committee to ensure all stakeholders receive the appropriate representation?

Log onto [TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://TheSomervilleTimes.com) to leave your own comments

## The Somerville Times

news@thesomervilletimes.com

www.thesomervilletimes.com

Phone: 857-488-5138



Publisher – Somerset Valley Publishing Inc.

Editor – Jim Clark

Assignment Editor – Bobbie Toner

Advertising Director – Bobbie Toner

Arts Editor – Doug Holder

Writers: Jim Clark, Harry Kane,  
and Cathleen Twardzik

Contributors: Jimmy Del Ponte,  
Dorothy Dimarzo, Bob Doherty  
Photographer: Claudia Ferro

The Somerville Times is published every Wednesday

A proud member of the following newspaper organizations:

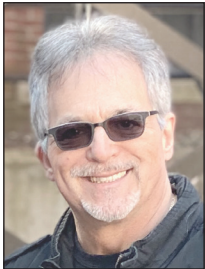


**Want to write local Somerville stories?**  
**Call 857-488-5138**  
**and speak to the Assignment Editor**

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

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

# It's Howdy Doody time



Buffalo Bob Smith, Clarabelle the clown, and a wooden puppet named Howdy Doody entertained all of us members of the peanut gallery in the early days of television. They don't make TV shows like they used to, do they?

Did you know the first person to play Clarabelle was none other than Bob Keeshan, who went on to play Captain Kangaroo? Remember the Captain's friends, Mr. Moose, Dancing Bear, Mr. Green Jeans, and Bunny Rabbit? Remember his dungeon master key ring and huge pockets full of carrots?

I have done stories on TV shows before, and they were so much fun that I decided to do another. Fall is when we get the new lineup of TV shows. Once again, I asked my Facebook friends for their thoughts on their favorite shows of all time, and here

they are. Of course, I will start and finish with my favs.

Leave it to Beaver and The Andy Griffith Show are at the top of my all-time favorite old-time shows. Beaver in particular, since I have two sons. F Troop, McHale's Navy, Car 54, Sgt. Bilko, and My Three Sons were right up there with the best. I Love Lucy and The Beverly Hillbillies still make us laugh today. Do you remember the black and white Flintstones commercial for Winston cigarettes? Fred and Barney were actually smoking and describing the filtered smoothness. Right alongside our friends from Bedrock were the futuristic Jetsons. I had a thing for Judy. The Donna Reed Show and Father Knows Best were among the earliest shows on my pre-color favorites list.

I can't believe I sat for hours watching Mr. Ed, a talking horse. Maybe it was because Wilbur's wife, Carol, was so pretty! Then came the magical shows like Bewitched and I Dream of *Continued on page 11*





**LA POSADA RESTAURANT & TEQUILA BAR**

617-776-2049

505 Medford St, Somerville, MA 02145

laposadasomerville





• Craft margaritas • Taco Tuesday special • Mexican cuisine



## Are You Sitting On A Fortune?

Call Our Team at CRG To See What Your Home Is Worth.

617-764-4342

699 Broadway Ave, Somerville, MA 02144



**Marlon's Barbers**

160 Broadway, Somerville

617-869-0195



Student discount \$5 OFF

Bring a buddy for half of on all cuts

Monday and Tuesday special for tints and Brazilian Keratin

## Somerville Police Dept Crime Log August 5 – 11

### Assault

25047169: On 8/5/25 at approximately 6:34 p.m., Somerville Police responded to Willow Ave. for a road rage incident. Upon arrival, officers spoke with two male parties who stated they got into a traffic dispute then began fighting each other.

### Residential Breaking and Entering

25048690: On 8/11/25 at approximately 5:43 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Elm St. for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated someone entered his garage and stole a bicycle.

### Residential Breaking and Entering

25048615: On 8/11/25 at approximately 1:16 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Jaques St. for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated someone reached through an open window of her apartment and stole a laptop.

### Residential Breaking and Entering

25048708: On 8/11/25 at approximately 6:46 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Lexington Ave. for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated someone entered his garage and stole a bicycle.

### Residential Breaking and Entering

25047910: On 8/8/25 at approximately 2:39 p.m., Somerville Housing Police responded to a residence on College Ave. for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated there was damage to his apartment door and several items inside were tampered with.

**Other Crimes:** 5 MV thefts + 8 Bike thefts + 3 Car breaks + 2 Vandalisms + 1 Package theft

— Somerville Police Department



# Crime Tip Hotline: 617-776-7210

Help Keep  
Somerville Safe!

## Jef Czekaj illustrates his story CONT. FROM PG 1

sharing his “latest” book (*The Magic Car*). Czekaj shows this memo when he does author visits to elementary schools now.

“I tell kids that when I became an author,” said Czekaj.

Czekaj attended Binghamton University, which was called SUNY Binghamton when he was there, and graduated in the early 90s. He majored in Linguistics, which was discontinued as a major after he left.

Czekaj began self-publishing zines and mini-comics in the mid-90s.

“Zine culture was thriving, so you could send your creation to punk zines like *Maximum Rocknroll*. If people thought your zine sounded good, they would put two dollars in an envelope and send it to you,” said Czekaj. “Eventually, I started going to comic conventions and selling my mini-comics that way. I consider those mini-comics, which were about R2-D2 in a rock band, to be my first published works.”

His first “real” published book, however,

was a book he illustrated about the digestive system, *The Quest to Digest*, written by Mary Corcoran. The book was published in 2006.

“I honestly never even thought about making children’s books, but a children’s book editor who lives in the Boston area saw a poster that I had made and tracked me down,” said Czekaj. “She told me that she thought my style would be perfect for a book she was editing, and that book became *The Quest to Digest*.”

Czekaj has published 14 children’s books, including: *Hip Hop & Don’t Stop*, *The Circulatory Story*, *Unite or Die*, *Grandpa and Julie Shark Hunters*, and many more. His favorite book to read to children is *Cat Secrets*.

“To read the book, kids have to pretend to be cats,” said Czekaj. “So, as the book goes along, kids have to meow, purr, and do other cat-like things to try to convince the cats in the book that they are cats.”

Currently, Czekaj is concentrating on

doing a weekly comic strip called *Thought Leaderz* (<https://czekaj.com/thoughtleaderz.php>), which is about “2 alley cats that find a pair of glasses in the trash and are then mistaken for business and technology experts. Things quickly spin out of control.”

Czekaj grew up loving newspaper comic strips like *Bloom County* and *The Far Side*, and considers this series his attempt at doing a good old-fashioned comic strip. He hopes to publish them in a book format one day, but is focused on getting new episodes of the comic out weekly right now.

*Thought Leaderz* is what Czekaj presented at Remnant Brewing’s “Might-Delete-Later” event.

“I was a little nervous about it since it was the first time I was presenting the comic in public. Plus, I was the only visual artist,” said Czekaj. “I was relieved when people laughed at things that I thought were funny.”

Want to see more of Jef Czekaj and his work? Good news! He will be holding an

event on September 27. at the Somerville Museum called: *Escape From The Somerville Museum*.

“It’s going to be a bonkers combination of puppets, videos, music, and local history,” said Czekaj.

During the pandemic, Czekaj started making a bi-monthly children’s show that was aired on the Somerville Public Library’s YouTube Channel. The show was a combination of puppets, music, art demonstrations, and animation.

As part of the show, Czekaj started making music videos for songs, many of them specifically about Somerville.

“For example, I wrote a Guns-N’-Roses-style song called *Who Wrote ‘Mary Had A Little Lamb’?* about the possible connection between that iconic poem and Somerville,” said Czekaj. “The director of the museum, Stephanie Marlin-Curiel, came across the videos online and thought that they would be a great thing to present there. It should be fun for people of all ages!”

## 200 Braille and raised-text street signs installed at Somerville intersections CONT. FROM PG 1

the walk signal is active and it is safe to cross the street. Where possible, the new signs will also include street names in Braille and raised text. This makes street name information accessible for people

who are blind or visually impaired and unable to read street names posted on traditional signage, providing important way-finding information.

“Having new signage and updated walk

signals not only increases accessibility for persons with disabilities but everyone who wishes to access our streets and crosswalks safely. It’s improvements such as these that make Somerville truly accessible and

inclusive for all,” said Adrienne Pomeroy, ADA Coordinator

Crews are already installing the 200 new signs around the city and expect to complete this project over the coming weeks.



Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is pleased to announce:  
**Three (3) Income-Restricted Condos Available for Sale at 125 Lowell St.**

**Unit Information**

- Unit 4A** is a 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom unit with a sales price of **\$245,433**, estimated condo fee of \$217 and minimum downpayment of \$7,363.
- Unit 2D** is a 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom unit with a sales price of **\$299,622**, estimated condo fee of \$399 and minimum downpayment of \$8,989.
- Unit 1A** is a 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom unit with a sales price of **\$354,286**, estimated condo fee of \$301 and minimum downpayment of \$10,629.



**Open house dates**

**Wednesday, August 27 from 5 PM to 7 PM**  
**Sunday, September 14 from 11 AM to 1 PM**

**Who can apply?**

There is a minimum of 1 person per bedroom (only households of 2 or more can apply for a 2-bed).\*

You can apply if all adults in your household earn up to:

| Income Limits                       | 1 person               | 2 people                | 3 people                | 4 people                | 5 people                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>80% AMI** (Unit 4A)</b>          | \$92,650               | \$105,850               | \$119,100               | \$132,300               | \$142,900               |
| <b>110% AMI (Units 1A &amp; 2D)</b> | \$92,651-<br>\$127,358 | \$105,851-<br>\$145,552 | \$119,101-<br>\$163,746 | \$132,301-<br>\$181,940 | \$142,901-<br>\$196,495 |

\*Exemptions and restrictions may apply. All the information you need is in the application packet.

\*\*There is no program minimum income for 80% AMI units.

**How to apply:**

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Download the application online at <a href="http://somervillema.gov/inclusionaryhousing">somervillema.gov/inclusionaryhousing</a> | To request a paper application<br>Call: (617) 625-6600 X 2566<br>Email: <a href="mailto:inclusionary@somervillema.gov">inclusionary@somervillema.gov</a> | Pick up a paper application at any city building |
|---|--|--|

**Return applications by:**

- Email: [inclusionary@somervillema.gov](mailto:inclusionary@somervillema.gov)
- Fax: 617-591-3235
- Mail or drop off: City Hall Annex, 50 Evergreen Ave., Somerville, MA 02145

**The last day to apply is September 22, 2025 by 12PM.**

**When is the lottery?**

There will be a lottery to decide who has the first opportunity to qualify to purchase this unit on **September 30, 2025 at 11 AM on Zoom**. View the lottery here:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87047009940>

**Do you have questions about a property or the income-restricted housing program?**

We can answer your questions during our weekly office hours:

Every Thursday from 5:30-7:30 pm on Zoom

Online:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81106664399>

Call in: +1 (305) 224-1968  
 Access code: 811-0666-4399

*These units are available to income eligible, first-time homebuyers through the City of Somerville's Inclusionary Housing Program.*

*The City of Somerville can provide you with an interpreter in your language for free. To request an interpreter, please contact us at [somerviva@somervillema.gov](mailto:somerviva@somervillema.gov) or call 311 (617-666-3311) at least 7 days in advance of this event.*



*Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings, should contact the ADA Coordinator, Adrienne Pomeroy, at 617-625-6600 x2259 or [apomeroy@somervillema.gov](mailto:apomeroy@somervillema.gov).*



Visit us online at [www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)  
 Facebook at [www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1](http://www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1)

## COMMENTARY

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

## Candidate Questionnaire 2025, Somerville Fair Housing – Part 1

Fair Housing means no discrimination! Candidates for Mayor and City Council had the chance to present their views on non-discrimination in housing by answering a questionnaire from the Somerville Fair Housing Commission, a nonpartisan group of volunteers. We are sharing all the answers we received. The Commission hopes you, the voters, will use the candidates' answers as you decide how to vote in the September 16 primary and the November general election.

Answers from incumbents (officeholders) are below; answers from challengers will be published next week.

### Incumbents

Candidates who are running for re-election this year discussed their views on Fair Housing before, in 2023, or in 2021, or both. You can find their answers from those years at the bottom of the Commission page on the City of Somerville website: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/fair-housing-commission>.

This year, the questions for incumbents were:

1. Now having served multiple terms, what advice would you give to first-time candidates about protecting residents from housing discrimination?

2. Are there any institutional structures in Somerville that you feel are barriers to fair housing? Is there anything that you would like to re-imagine or update?

Here are all the answers we received from incumbents:

1. Now having served multiple terms, what advice would you give to first-time candidates about protecting residents from housing discrimination?

### Mayoral candidates

#### Katjana Ballantyne, current Mayor of Somerville:

In my four years as mayor and eight years as city councilor, I have both sponsored and voted for many initiatives aiming to make housing in Somerville more affordable as well as more accessible to our most vulnerable residents. These initiatives have included, for example, A 20% affordability requirement for new residential construction, The 2000 Homes Program, The strengthened Condo Conversion Or-

dinance, The Office of Housing Stability, The Jobs Creation and Retention Trust Fund, The Talent Equity Playbook, The Community Land Trust, the work of the Fair Housing Commission and more. As mayor, I have continued my leadership on these and more initiatives to make housing more affordable and more fairly accessible.

The most common reasons for being denied housing in Somerville are economic, which disproportionately affect immigrant communities, people of color, and people with disabilities. Local market rates for housing exceed what many people with disabilities and low-income, and middle-income earning residents and their families can afford. The local market rate for housing is driven by renters who are often unrelated, young professionals or students who can pay a high price to rent for the short time they need to live here, usually two to four years, and sometimes less. Households, with only two wage-earners, and especially single-parent households simply cannot afford to pay what a group of unrelated young professionals or students can pay. In addition, the percentage of residential units owned by out-of-state investors has grown substantially. Long-time owners who may have had good relationships with their long-time tenants and imposed only reasonable rent increases are now commonly replaced by investor/owners seeking maximum financial return for their investment.

All of these factors along with rapidly rising rents and housing prices more generally have left many residents struggling to afford and/or access housing. Exacerbating these monetary access problems are the challenges in ensuring that vulnerable tenants do not experience unlawful discrimination in violation of local, state and federal anti-discrimination.

As indicated in the recent survey that I initiated as mayor, conducted by Somerville's Anti-Displacement Task Force and supported by other research, the two most frequent types of unlawful housing discrimination reported by Somerville residents are source of income/housing voucher discrimination and discrimination against persons with disabilities in-

cluding refusal to provide required reasonable accommodations.

The question of how to prevent unlawful discrimination is complex so the advice that I would offer a new candidate is multi-faceted and is informed by the work of my administration's Office of Housing Stability and its Housing Division's fair housing compliance staff. I believe that the primary components of a strong strategy to prevent housing discrimination in rental housing includes, but is not limited to, the following: (a) robust training and education of tenants, landlords, realtors and others about landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities under relevant Anti-Discrimination laws; (b) well trained city staff that can assist tenants in enforcement of Anti-Discrimination laws through direct advocacy with landlords, management companies and realtors and through the filing of formal fair housing complaints with HUD or MCAD where appropriate; (c) making available legal representation for tenants to pursue fair housing objectives for legally viable claims; (d) staying connected to area resources such as the Suffolk University testing program to maximize the effectiveness of fair housing interventions; and (e) the creation of programs that both assist tenants to afford the upfront costs of housing AND that incentivize landlords to rent to tenants with Section 8, MRVP, HomeBase or other tenant based rental assistance. While enforcement is critical, we need to use our creativity to employ both carrot and stick approaches to ensure maximum access to housing for our residents, especially those who are most vulnerable to discrimination.

I would also want new candidates to understand that it is unfortunately often the case that tenants are unsurprisingly reluctant to file formal discrimination complaints related to housing denials as they do not wish to start off on a negative foot with a new landlord and because they are often far too busy with their housing search to focus on potential fair housing enforcement which may or may not be successful in achieving successful rehousing. It is critical that tenants are empowered to make the best and most informed

decisions available to them regarding their enforcement options and their housing search. It is also imperative that tenants receive this critical information in a format and language that is fully accessible to them and through staff that understand the incredible stress that an involuntary housing search can place on a vulnerable family, older adult, immigrant or person with disabilities.

I would also note that, at the present moment, immigrant households face an additional set of unique housing challenges. At the present time, the Trump administration has begun a process of serving some landlords with subpoenas seeking complete information about immigrant tenant households. While it is unclear if such a subpoena has been served in Somerville yet, it is only a matter of time. Immigrants are well aware of their vulnerability and many are highly reluctant to pursue litigation or other claims that might bring them to the attention of ICE or force them to appear in Court or at administrative agencies. For this reason, my administration has made it a priority to ensure that it is providing critical housing resources to this highly vulnerable sector of Somerville residents.

#### Jake Wilson, current City Councilor At Large:

I've found that fair housing is something a lot of people just assume is a reality, until you start hearing stories from Somerville residents about discriminatory landlords or realtors not showing apartments to families with small children.

City councilors have constituents come to us with fair housing questions, so it's critical that every councilor knows the proper protocols for reporting fair housing complaints and the resources available locally and at the state level. Every municipality has their own way of handling fair housing complaints, so it's vital that councilors familiarize themselves with the Fair Housing Commission's online complaint and referral form, the Fair Housing Commission in general, our Inclusionary & Fair Housing Program Specialist in the Housing Division, and then the Massachusetts Fair Housing Center *Continued on page 16*

# COMMENTARY

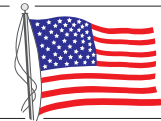
## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



City Hall goes purple in support of Overdose Awareness Day and Recovery Month.

### Our View Of The Times



This September, purple flags will once again be placed on the front lawn of Somerville City Hall to honor residents whose lives were lost to opioid-related overdose in 2024 and in years past. The annual display is part of the city's recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day and Recovery Month.

On Thursday, August 28, Mayor Ballantyne will host an Overdose Remembrance

Event to remember the eight Somerville residents who passed away from a substance use-related overdose in 2024.

This event will include the planting of eight purple flags on the Highland Ave. side of City Hall, and one larger flag representing all those lost in prior years. Attendees are welcome to bring a small item of memorabilia to honor their lost loved one. The event will conclude with a mo-

ment of silence and candle lighting. City Hall will be lit with purple lights in recognition of Recovery Month. The flag and light displays will remain for the entire month of September.

Somerville Health and Human Services staff will host free Narcan Distribution Events and Overdose Prevention trainings. These trainings teach people the signs of an overdose, how to respond

to an emergency, and how to use Narcan. Harm reduction supplies will also be distributed, including the overdose-reversing nasal spray naloxone (often referred to as Narcan), Fentanyl test strips, CPR face shields, and syringe disposal boxes.

For more information about this and similar events, please contact Director of Prevention Services Tina Los at [tlos@somervillema.gov](mailto:tlos@somervillema.gov).

### Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Birthday to our own **Bob "Monty" Doherty**, who is celebrating this week. You can enjoy his historical columns in our paper every other week. We wish him the best. Happy birthday to **State Representative Christine Barber**, who is also celebrating. We hope she has a great day. Happy Birthday to former **City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld**, who is also celebrating. We hope she enjoys her day. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Valerie Mitchell, Lauren DeBrase, Amy Sarro, Pat Lane, Pam Keith, Deb-bi Hession, Alicia Marie, Arthur Cope-land, Bob Osborne, and Kathleen Goss**, 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

You're invited to join an in-person **Somerville Mayoral Forum on Arts and Culture** at **Warehouse XI** in Somerville on **Monday, August 25**, at 6:30 p.m. (doors at 6:00 p.m.). Learn more and register at <https://www.mass-creative.org/events/2025-somerville-mayoral-forum>.

This election is a chance to show that arts and culture are not optional; they are essential. Hear directly from **Katjana Ballantyne, Willie Burnley Jr, and Jake Wilson** about how they'll support

Somerville's artists, cultural spaces, and creative economy. The forum will be moderated by **Amelia Mason**, Senior Arts & Culture Reporter at **WBUR**. Online registration closes on **Friday, August 22**, at 12 p.m. They are not taking live questions from the audience – only questions that are submitted in advance through the online registration form will be considered for the forum.

\*\*\*\*\*

The second annual **Get Ready for School Fair**, open to all **SPS students and families**, **August 20**, from 4 to 6:00 p.m., followed by a **Welcome to High School event** from 6 to 8 p.m. Both events take

place at the **Somerville High School**, 81 Highland Ave. This event is for all **SPS students and families**, from PK to Grade 12. Join them for a district-wide fair and talk to school staff, participate in fun activities, eat a free frozen treat, climb aboard a Somerville fire truck, engage with some of our great community partners, and learn more about Somerville Public Schools.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **City of Somerville** is planning to build a new **PK-8 public school building**, and the **Construction Advisory Group (CAG)**, **Mayor Ballantyne**, and **Somerville Public** *Continued on page 21*

# FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

# Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#985

- Which pop band was called Kara's Flowers up until 2001?
- What film set did Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively meet on?
- Which lollipop has a chewy surprise in its center?
- Who became the youngest heavy-weight champ at age 20?
- Who was Paul McCartney referring to in *Hey Jude*?
- What country does *The Jungle Book* take place in?
- What was Cary Grant's birth name?
- Which actor was known as The King of Hollywood?
- What causes the heat in chili peppers?
- How many sides does a tetradecagon have?
- Actor Steve Carell plays what character in the TV series *The Office*?
- Which three zodiac signs are water signs?

Answers on page 14

## The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

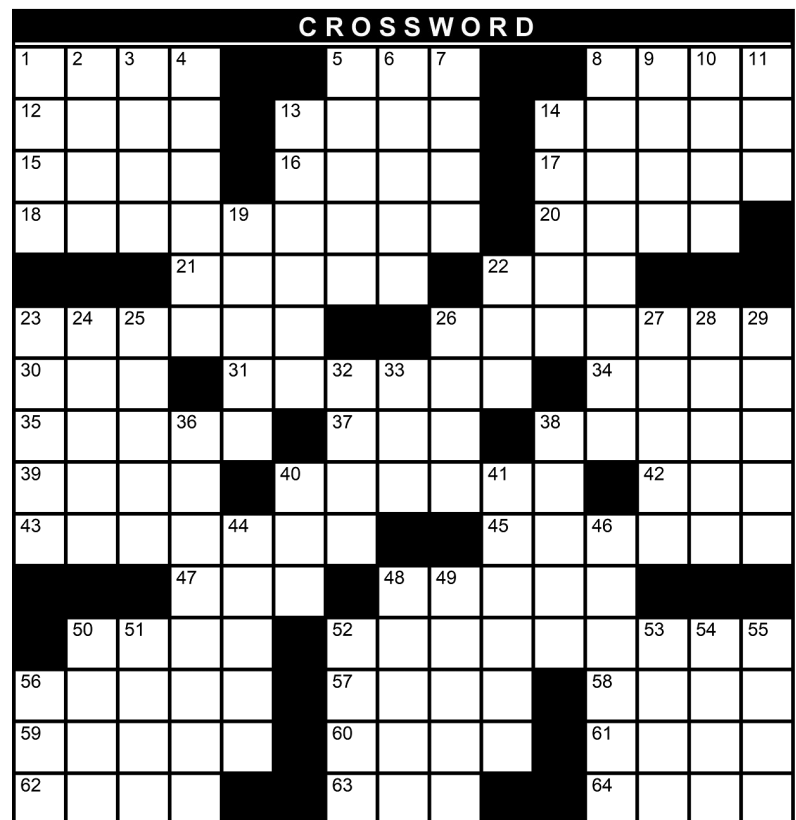
- Pogonophobia is the fear of beards.
- Edgar Allan Poe married his thirteen-year-old cousin.

### STATEPOINT CROSSWORD FOOTBALL

#### ACROSS

- The Coaches \_\_\_\_ or The AP Top 25 \_\_\_\_
- Super Bowl halftime performer Kendrick Lamar's genre
- 1/168th of a week
- Purse to match a gown
- Karl of politics
- Model builder's wood choice
- YDS, TD or INT
- Black like certain tree
- Last season's NFL MVP
- Worth 6 points
- Way, way off
- Owl cries
- Come and \_\_\_\_ it
- Ape
- Stucco or aluminum on a house wall, pl.
- "Wheel of Fortune" request
- Bette Green's "Summer of my \_\_\_\_ Soldier"
- Stag, not doe
- Like an uncomfortable mattress
- European Economic Community
- NFL Hall of Famer Greene or comedian Hart
- Seed coat
- Cylindrical flower cluster
- Stir or fuss
- City in Illinois
- #10 Down's counterpart
- Small dog's bark
- Adams of "Summer Of '69" fame
- Point value of a safety in football, pl.
- Worth 3 points in football (2 words)
- Behind a stern
- Raise the roof
- Classroom parasites
- Blooper
- Actor and singer Kristofferson
- Some are slippery
- Scraps
- Ballpark fig.
- Dark loaves

- #### DOWN
- Bothersome one
  - Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Graham
  - Molokai party
  - Leechee, alt. sp.
  - R2-D2, e.g.
  - Declares to be true
  - College, home to football's Nittany Lions
  - Football intermission
  - Paella pot
  - Addict
  - What the NFL's Jim Brown famously did
  - Fixed up
  - Bleated
  - Hoagie, alt. sp.
  - Bathtub hooch
  - Green side
  - Accustom
  - Imitate
  - Quarterback's downfall
  - The N of U.S.N.A.
  - Move smoothly
  - Mister in Madrid
  - \_\_\_\_-view mirror
  - What Harry and Sally did
  - Pre-championship games
  - Work the dough
  - High tea vessel
  - Bucolics
  - Gustatory sensation
  - Hook, line and sinker person
  - Coffin holders
  - Rekindled
  - Type of ski lift
  - Drift like aroma
  - Type of fish net
  - Like acne-prone skin
  - Climber's destination
  - It's more, to some \_\_\_\_"



**SWITCH & GET \$25**

**Off First Month of New Service!**  
USE PROMO CODE: **GZ590**

**Consumer Cellular**

CALL CONSUMER CELLULAR **888-804-0913**

© 2023 Consumer Cellular Inc. For promo details please call 888-804-0913

© StatePoint Media

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



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

# Fair Housing Commission talks elections, deleading, and discrimination

By C. Scott Morris

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission discussed how to inform voters, reduce barriers for housing voucher holders, and address criminal record discrimination in an online public meeting last Thursday.

The City of Somerville aims to hold the Preliminary Election on September 16, followed by a Municipal Election on November 4. Voters can pick candidates for mayor, councilor at large, councilor Ward 7, and school committee Ward 3, according to the city's web page [1].

Commissioners Patrice Faulkner and Dennis Fischman sent questionnaires to mayoral, ward, and city council candidates to clarify where they stand on fair housing issues. This year's responses, along with responses from years before, are on the City of Somerville's Fair Housing Commission web page [2] now.

"We wanted to spur thinking about fair housing among the candidates and provide information on those issues to voters," Fischman said. "Some of them responded at great length, and some of them responded very tersely," but, he added, "we did not edit

anybody's responses."

Shannon Lawler, a program specialist in the city's housing division, suggested the commission start working closely with the city's Home Improvement Program [3] to address challenges for housing voucher holders.

She said case managers at the Somerville Homeless Coalition [4] noticed landlords denying voucher holders. The landlords are attributing the rejections to prior evictions or poor credit scores, she said. But, "what the case managers are seeing," she added, "is that it's really based on the fact that they have a voucher."

Lawler said case managers also saw voucher holders struggling to lease units that require deleading.

The Permanent Supportive Housing Program [5] at the coalition requires a lead inspection. That inspection makes older family-sized units, many of which still have lead paint, difficult to lease to voucher holders.

Lawler said that deleading is costly for landlords, "especially if they're not in the Home Improvement Program [6], which has a limited amount of money." The



The Fair Housing Commission recently held an online community meeting to discuss several issues of public interest.

program gives loans to property owners to help them cover lead abatement costs, but it prioritizes hazardous scenarios, like pregnant occupants and children under 6.

Commissioner Rona Fischman added that deleading takes a long time, during which landlords are stuck with vacant space. She said, "When there's a barrier that actually has real-world consequences,

we do want to make it easier for landlords."

The commission also considered options for protecting housing applicants who have criminal records. Lawler laid out three options.

The commission could refrain from making changes.

They could add criminal record holders as a protected class into

*Continued on page 10*

## Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



### The Buzzin' Bean

Tucked into the heart of Teele Square, The Buzzin' Bean is a cozy vegetarian café that delivers far more than just a good cup of coffee. With a warm, welcoming atmosphere and standout customer service, this local gem has quickly become a favorite of mine.

The café offers an impressive selection of specialty coffees and teas—each drink prepared with care and often accompanied by a friendly smile from the baristas. Whether you're grabbing a creamy oat milk latte or a fragrant herbal tea, the quality is consistent and top-notch.

The menu is thoughtfully curated, everything is vegetarian, gluten-free, and can be made vegan upon request, making it a go-to for plant-based eaters. Don't miss the rotating selection

of house-made pastries, which pair perfectly with a mid-morning coffee or afternoon tea.

The two items I tried on the lunch menu were the Southwest Sizzle and the Peri Peri Paneer Quesadilla. Both dishes were made to order with fresh ingredients and packed with great flavor. Looking forward to trying their dinner plate selections soon.

Overall, The Buzzin' Bean strikes that perfect balance between neighborhood charm and freshly prepared quality. It's the kind of place where you can catch up with a friend, or just enjoy a quiet moment with something warm in hand.

237 Holland Street  
Somerville, MA 02144  
(617)996-9170  
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Every day except



Monday  
[www.thebuzzinbean.com](http://www.thebuzzinbean.com)

<https://ddimarzo2002.wixsite.com/thymethief/chef>

## LEGAL NOTICES

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

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

**THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)**

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, September 2, 2025** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

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

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Registration URL:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_3262GZZJSq2lrhxNffnwA](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_3262GZZJSq2lrhxNffnwA)

Webinar ID: 837 3455 1853

**TO CALL IN**

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

**ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT**

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

**HP25-000061 - 29 Lowell Street**

Applicant: 29 Lowell St LLC  
Owner: Anne Marie Noone

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

**HP25-000063 - 15 Oak Street**

Applicant: Adam Dash and Associates – Adam Dash  
Owner: Hope and Prospect Development LLC

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

**HP25-000064 - 17 Oak Street**

Applicant: Adam Dash and Associates – Adam Dash  
Owner: Hope and Prospect Development LLC

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Case documents reviewed by the HPC are available on the City website at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>.

Cases may be continued to a later date; please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note:** Written comments due to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) **NO LATER THAN NOON** one week prior to the meeting date. Email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) with inquiries.

8/13/25, 8/20/25 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, August 28, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.** using Zoom software to consider the removal of the following public shade tree:

- **9 Taylor Street** – One Norway maple tree, 13 inches in diameter, fair condition

Tree is proposed for removal to allow for the installation of a driveway at 9 Taylor St. More information on the project will be provided during the hearing.

The tree identified above has been posted for public inspection. **In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 87, any objections to the removal of this tree 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](mailto:trees@somervillema.gov), or mailed to: David Jackson– Tree Warden, City of Somerville, 1 Franey Rd, Somerville, MA 02145.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, 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](mailto:trees@somervillema.gov).

Registration URL: <https://qrly.io/r/ehcbzBNctA>

Webinar ID: 897 5133 5921

8/13/25, 8/20/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
IFB #26-07**

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

**Rodent Capturing Services, Data Collection and Reporting**

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) 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, August 20, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **3:00 pm, Wednesday, September 3, 2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email [fgarate@somervillema.gov](mailto:fgarate@somervillema.gov) for more information

**Felisa Gárate**  
Procurement Analyst  
617-625-6600 x3406

8/20/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB 26-08**

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

**Sewer Bricks and Concrete Supplies**

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, August 18, 2025**. 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, Thursday, September 4, 2025**.

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](mailto:jremy@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Jordan Remy**  
Senior Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3400

8/20/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS  
IFB #26-09**

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

**Repairs, Service & Parts for FORD Fleet Vehicles: Gas, Diesel, and Hybrid (Gas & Electric)**

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, August 20, 2025**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Thursday, September 3rd 2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Logan Carroll [Lcarroll@somervillema.gov](mailto:Lcarroll@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Logan Carroll**  
Procurement Manager  
617-625-6600 x3407

8/20/25 The Somerville Times

## Fair Housing Commission talks elections, deleading, and discrimination

CONT. FROM PG 9

the Fair Housing Ordinance.

Or, they could create a Fair Chance Ordinance that puts criminal record holders into a protected class for both housing and employment, but it would be separate from the Fair Housing Ordinance.

We're really only at the beginning of exploring the options, Dennis Fischman said.

He added that landlords can prejudicially look for criminal records in applicants

with a certain race, transgender or veteran status, while not looking into applicants from different groups.

"Like the high school slogan says, 'Somerville leads the way,'" he said. "Whether or not we're in a position to enforce things, we can be in a position to set a norm."

The Fair Housing Commission plans to talk with Gloria Huangpu, a community engagement planner, in the next meeting

on Sept. 25, to further address housing barriers and discrimination.

For weekly updates about fair housing, visit the Somerville Fair Housing Commission Facebook page [7].

**Links:**

[1] <https://www.somervillema.gov/news/somerville-voting-information-city-preliminary-election>

[2] <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/fair-housing-commission>

[3] <https://www.somervillema.gov/homeimprovementprogram>

[4] <https://somervillehomelesscoalition.org/>

[5] <https://somervillehomelesscoalition.org/supported-housing/>

[6] <https://www.somervillema.gov/homeimprovementprogram>

[7] <https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleFairHousingCommission/>

## LEGAL NOTICES

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



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
IFB #26-10**

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

**165 Broadway Slab Remediation**

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com), <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **8/20/2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

**Filed Sub-Bids** with certifications for the DCAMM categories of Masonry Work, and Miscellaneous and Ornamental Iron are due by **9/9/2025 at 2:00pm**.

**Sealed General Bids** with DCAMM certification in General Building Construction are due by 9/17/2025 at 3:00pm.

5% Bid Deposit required. Prevailing wages apply.

Please email [fgarate@somervillema.gov](mailto:fgarate@somervillema.gov) for more information

**Felisa Gárate**  
Procurement Analyst  
617-625-6600 x3406

8/20/25 The Somerville Times

## Somerville staff member honored by Massachusetts House of Representatives

On Friday, July 25, Somerville's own Bonny Carroll was awarded a special citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives for her work as a dedicated leader in tobacco prevention and longtime champion for youth and families in Somerville.

A lifelong Somerville resident, Carroll serves as the City's Director of Tobacco Control in the Health and Human Services Department. Her work has been instrumental in shaping tobacco prevention efforts across the city. Bonny's legacy continues to inspire colleagues, youth, and community members alike. Her decades of service have shaped policies, strengthened partnerships, and uplifted lives throughout Somerville and the State. "It's always moving to see our city staff recognized for their work," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. "It speaks to the real impact they make every day. Bonny's work is a model of what compassionate, community-driven service looks like."

"I was so honored to award a citation to Bonny Carroll for dedicating over two decades of service to advancing the health and well-being of youth and families in Somerville and across Massachusetts," said Representative Barber. "Her tireless advocacy and unwavering commitment to protecting youth from nicotine addiction have made our community stronger and ensured a healthy path for future generations."

Carroll was previously recognized with an appreciation award during the Somerville Cares About Prevention (SCAP) Annual Celebration on May 29. This is an annual event where Somerville Positive Forces youth leaders and community members gather to celebrate efforts supporting the health and well-being of young Somerville residents.

"Bonny has poured her heart into building a healthier city," said Lovelee Heller-Bottari, SCAP Program Director, who presented the award. "She leads with integrity, warmth, and an unwavering determination to make a difference. Her impact can be seen in our city's tobacco policies, and it is felt in the lives of countless individuals and families who have been touched by her care and determination."

For more information on Somerville's Prevention Programs, please contact Director of Prevention Services Tina Los at [tlos@somervillema.gov](mailto:tlos@somervillema.gov).

## It's Howdy Doody time

CONT. FROM PG 3

Jeannie. *Bewitched* was the first show we watched on our first color TV. As far as variety shows go, *The Dean Martin Show* had the rest beat.

Locally, we had our own lineup of Boston-based shows. I was on two of them, namely *Major Mudd* and *Big Brother, Bob Emery*. We also had *Romper Room* (are you a dooby or a don't-be?). There was also *Captain Bob*, the art show, and, of course, *Boomtown*. Rex Trailer is a local treasure, and he was

also a teacher when I went to Emerson College. Each week, one of the lucky kids got to be the sheriff and one got to be the bad guy. Frank Avruch played Bozo the clown for years. Were you ever Butch for a day?

*Shindig*, *Hullabaloo*, *Dance Fever*, and *Solid Gold* got us shaking our groove things. *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* brought a new kind of sketch comedy to the small screen. Remember the go-go girls dancing in the cages? Here is a

barrage of some of our favorite shows of yesteryear. *The Man* (and girl) from U.N.C.L.E., *Batman*, *The Banana Splits*, *Sigmund The Sea Monster*, *The Outer Limits*, *Disney's Wonderful World of Color*, *Seahunt*, *Bonanza*, *Gunsmoke*, *Have Gun Will Travel*, *The Real McCoy's*, *Candid Camera*, *Dobie Gillis*, *Gilligan's Island*, *The Ed Sullivan Show*, *My Favorite Martian*, *Sonny and Cher*, *The Brady Bunch*, *The Partridge Family*, *The Monkees*, *Lassie*, *Fury*, *Flicka*, *Star Trek*, *Kimba the White*

*Lion*, *The Avengers* (featuring Emma Peel!) *Rat Patrol*, *The Gallant Men*, *Combat*, *Patty Duke*, *The Flying Nun*, *All in the Family*, *Dark Shadows*, *Adam 12*, *Dragnet*, *The Munsters*, *The Addams Family*, *The Honeyymooners*, *The 3 Stooges*, and many more. Nick at Nite and TV Land are two channels where you can still see a lot of the great shows from the past.

So as Major Mudd said at the end of his show, IBBY! I'll Be Blasting You! (and stop flipping that channel dial so fast!)

## Davis Square Neighborhood Council is holding its first election

Davis Square Neighborhood Council (DSNC) has been working towards 501.c-3 status for the past year. We are pleased to get to the point of electing our first Board. DSNC priorities and projects:

• Improving the Davis Square Plaza • Elm St. Development • Zoning for more housing • Community Pathway finding and art • Pedestrian safety • Community-building

Board members will be key players in shaping Davis Square's future:

• Building projects are likely to be planned and started in Davis Square. Board members will be key players in negotiating with developers to ensure that the community gets concessions through a Community Benefits Agreement.

• Based on the Community Benefits Agreement, other improvements to our Square will be funded.

Ballots can be cast at the Somerville Library West Branch on August 16 (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.), 23 (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.), and 25 (9 a.m. – 6 p.m.). They will be tallied on the evening of August 25.

Eligible voters include those who work, receive services, operate a business, regularly volunteer at an organization/agency, or own real estate within the Davis Square business district, and those who reside within a half mile of the boundary of the Davis Square business district. A map of the district is available here: <https://map.davisquarenc.org/>

Important information, such as polling site hours, candidate backgrounds, etc., will be available at the following link: <https://sites.google.com/view/DavisSquareNC>.

# Cultural Series Event at Dilboy Post with the Council on Aging

On Tuesday, August 12, Standard Deviation shared jazz standards from the 1920s through the 2020s, but also played oldies from the 60s and beyond, as well as folk, Americana, a bit of bluegrass, and a few originals. Sponsored by the Council on Aging and held at the Dilboy Post.

— Photos by Claudia Ferro





# CLASSIFIEDS

Place your classified ad today – only \$1 per word! E-mail: [ads@thesomervilletimes.com](mailto:ads@thesomervilletimes.com)

## AUTOS WANTED

**CASH FOR CARS!** We buy all cars! Junk, high-end, totaled-it doesn't matter! Get free towing and same day cash! **NEWER MODELS** too! Call 1-866-258-6720

## FINANCIAL

**WESLEY FINANCIAL GROUP, LLC** Timeshare Cancellation Experts. Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free Consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 855-428-7954

## FOR SALE

**YOU'LL WANT TO USE THIS TIMESHARE.** Orange Lake, Florida. Near Disney. Weeks 8 & 9 (February) One floor living with 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, full kitchen, laundry. Purchase both for \$19,000. Call 978.371.2442 or email [carol@actionunlimited.com](mailto:carol@actionunlimited.com)

## HEALTH & FITNESS

**VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS!** 50 Generic Pills SPECIAL \$99.00. 100% guaranteed. 24/7 CALL NOW! 888-445-5928 Hablamos Español

## HOME SERVICES

Ageing Roof? New Homeowner? Got Storm Damage? You need a local expert provider that proudly stands behind their work. Fast, free estimate. Financing available. Call 1-888-878-9091

Water damage cleanup & restoration: A small amount of water can lead to major damage and mold growth in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-888-872-2809

## MISCELLANEOUS

**4G LTE HOME INTERNET** Now Available! Get GotW3 with lightning fast speeds

plus take your service with you when you travel! As low as \$109.99/mo!

**CARING FOR AN AGING LOVED ONE?** Wondering about options like senior-living communities and in-home care? Caring.com's Family Advisors are here to help take the guesswork out of senior care for you and your family. Call for your FREE, no-obligation consultation: 1-844-556-4158

**DISH NETWORK \$59.99** for 190 Channels! Blazing Fast Internet, \$19.99/mo. (where available.) Switch & Get a FREE \$100. Visa Gift Card. FREE Voice Remote. FREE HD DVR.

**DISHTV \$64.99** For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some Restrictions Apply. Promo Expires 01/31/2024. 1-877-494-7039

**ELIMINATE GUTTER CLEANING FOREVER!** LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 15% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-723-0883

**FREE HIGH SPEED INTERNET** for those that qualify. Government program for recipients of select programs incl. Medicaid, SNAP, Housing Assistance, WIC, Veterans Pension, Survivor Benefits, Lifeline, Tribal. 15 GB internet service. Bonus offer: Android tablet FREE with one-time \$20 copay. Free shipping and handling. Call Maxsip Telecom today! 1-877-559-8698

**HUGHESNET SATELLITE INTERNET** Finally, no hard data limits! Call Today for speeds up to 25mbps as low as \$59.99/mo! \$75 gift card, terms apply. 1-877-459-1615

**SAFE STEP** North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime

warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available.

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 7-Year warranty with qualifying purchase\* Call 1-855-948-6176

**BATH & SHOWER UPDATES** in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 855-761-1725

**HughesNet** - Finally, super-fast internet no matter where you live. 25 Mbps just \$59.99/mo! Unlimited Data is Here. Stream Video. Bundle TV & Internet.

Become a published author. We want to read your book! Dorrance Publishing trusted since 1920. Consultation, production, promotion & distribution. Call for free author's guide 1-877-729-4998 or visit [dorranceinfo.com/ads](http://dorranceinfo.com/ads)

**DISHTV \$64.99** For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply.

**Safe Step.** North America's #1 Walk-in tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our free shower package & \$1600 off - limited time!

Free high speed internet if qualified. Govt. pgm for recipients of select pgms incl. Medicaid, SNAP, Housing Assistance, WIC, Veterans Pension, Survivor Benefits, Lifeline, Tribal. 15 GB internet. Android tablet free w/one-time \$20 copay. Free shipping.

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Sched-

ule free LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase.

Bath & shower updates in as little as 1 day! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & military discounts available. 1-877-543-9189

**Safe Step.** North America's #1 Walk-in tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our free shower package & \$1600 off

**Wesley Financial Group, LLC** Timeshare Cancellation Experts Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt & fees cancelled in 2019. Get free info package & learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. 833-308-1971

**DIRECTV Stream** - Carries the most local MLB Games! Choice Package \$89.99/mo for 12 mos Stream on 20 devices at once. HBO Max included for 3 mos (w/Choice Package or higher.) No contract or hidden fees! Some restrictions apply.

*Reader Advisory: The National Trade Association we belong to has purchased the above classifieds. Determining the value of their service or product is advised by this publication. In order to avoid misunderstandings, some advertisers do not offer employment but rather supply the readers with manuals, directories and other materials designed to help their clients establish mail order selling and other businesses at home. Under NO circumstance should you send any money in advance or give the client your checking, license ID, or credit card numbers. Also beware of ads that claim to guarantee loans regardless of credit and note that if a credit repair company does business only over the phone it is illegal to request any money before delivering its service. All funds are based in US dollars. Toll free numbers may or may not reach Canada.*

Ms. Cam's

From page 8

# Olio

Answers

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Maroon 5          | 7. Archibald Alec Leach        |
| 2. The Green Lantern | 8. Clark Gable                 |
| 3. Blow Pops         | 9. Capsaicin                   |
| 4. Mike Tyson        | 10. 14                         |
| 5. Julian Lennon     | 11. Michael Scott              |
| 6. India             | 12. Cancer, Pisces and Scorpio |

# Book review: 'Trouble in Queenstown' by Delia Pitts

By Dennis Fischman

Some readers of mysteries will pick up any book with a murder to be solved (or even a burglar to be found and forced to fork over!). Other readers find themselves drawn to a particular sub-genre of mystery: the cozy [1], the noir, the hard-boiled detective, the murder cabin [2], the police procedural, or the thriller.

I read all types, but usually a pure thriller doesn't thrill me. I'm less interested in chase scenes or hairbreadth escapes from death than I am in the process of investigation ... and the secrets it uncovers in people's lives.

The nice thing about *Trouble in Queenstown* [3] is that it combines a good private detective character with a thriller plot. You get to know and care about the character, follow her logic, and see her out of danger before all is done.

Vandy Myrick is a private investigator in a small town in New Jersey, returned home after

tragedy ends her previous life as a wife and mother. So, she now lives among people she grew up with. Not only her father Evander (a Black retired cop suffering from dementia, now living in a memory care hospital), but also: the man who mostly attends Evander in the memory care unit, the Queenstown Chief of Police, her pharmacist, her bartender, the lesbian couple who are her partners at her agency, and a set of racist thugs who used to be on the football team but now work security for Mayor Josephine Hannah.

The mayor's nephew, Leo, comes to Vandy ostensibly to protect his wife, whom he fears is being threatened by a stalker. All is not as it seems, however. It becomes clear Leo thinks his wife, Ivy, is cheating on him and possibly about to leave him. Then, she turns up dead in their home, along with a man (Hector Ramirez) that she's met doing volunteer work. And Leo is there.

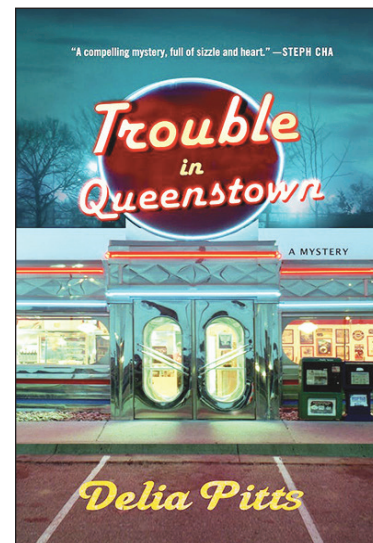
Did Hector kill Ivy and Leo

killed him in self-defense? That's what the town wants to conclude: case closed. Did Leo kill both of them, out of jealousy or for any other reason? That's what Ivy's dad hires Vandy to find out. And that's what Hector's teenage daughter thinks, too.

Or is something else going on, something that means neither Hector nor Leo are the real killers and the motive lies deep in the past? Vandy has gotten in over her head. Will she come out alive?

If you're in the mood for a dark thriller, with political intrigue and family secrets, set in a small town, this is the book for you. You will get as bonuses a smart woman PI with a complicated family and a vivid sense of the rural New Jersey landscape, hauntingly described.

You will also absorb some insights into the way being a Black woman in a predominantly white community gives our heroine perspectives that her white neighbors lack. (I haven't enjoyed



*Trouble in Queenstown*, by Delia Pitts  
Minotaur Books, 2024

a Black detective so much since *Blanche on the Lam*. [4])

I'm looking forward to reading #2 in the series [5], which was just recently published, and perhaps the author's previous series, the *Ross Agency Mysteries* [6], too.

Links:

[1] <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/131574>

[2] <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/138646>



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

[3] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/195790826-trouble-in-queenstown>

[4] [https://goodreads.com/book/show/23269388.Blanche\\_on\\_the\\_Lam\\_\\_Blanche\\_White\\_\\_1\\_](https://goodreads.com/book/show/23269388.Blanche_on_the_Lam__Blanche_White__1_)

[5] <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/217387649-death-of-an-ex>

[6] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/311891-ross-agency-mystery>

## Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

**Q: Are there preparations I can make regarding end-of-life decisions that could affect my own finances—and the finances of my loved ones after I'm gone?**

**A: Absolutely!** One of the most thoughtful financial decisions you can make is to get your end-of-life documentation in order – not just for yourself, but for the peace of mind of those you care about most.

Here are a few key areas to consider:

- + Choose a healthcare proxy – Appoint someone you trust to make medical decisions if you're unable to.
- + Document your wishes – Things like resuscitation, life support, and organ donation can be recorded in a living will or advance directive.
- + Organize your financials – Make it easy for a trusted person to access account info, insur-

ance, or estate plans if something happens.

+ Reduce stress for others – When you document your preferences now, your loved ones aren't left guessing or navigating complex choices under emotional strain.

**Bottom line:** Getting these documents in place isn't just about what happens someday – it's about making today more peaceful for you and the people you love..

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

I'm Vincent Hicks, CPA, based in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Reach out at [vhicksconnect@gmail.com](mailto:vhicksconnect@gmail.com) or (859) 553-0788.

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



Visit us online at [www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)  
Facebook at [www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1](http://www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1)

# Candidate Questionnaire 2025, Somerville Fair Housing – Part 1

CONT. FROM PG 6

and Mass Legal Help.

The City Council expanded Somerville's Fair Housing Ordinance during my time on the council, so candidates should make sure they are up to speed with the current ordinance and the protected classes. It's also a good opportunity to consider whether there are any additional updates to the ordinance that would make sense to consider.

As with other multiple-member bodies, I would recommend candidates attend a Fair Housing Commission meeting to see what the meetings are like and to better understand what commissioners are working on.

**Willie Burnley, Jr., current City Councilor At Large:**

The unfortunate reality is that housing discrimination persists throughout our nation and within our community. In addition to being based on systemic forms of discrimination, such as racial discrimination or national origin, Somerville particularly has issues where people who receive Section 8 vouchers face difficulty finding housing. This is a violation of people's right against housing discrimination based on source of income. I've also heard of families with young children being less likely to hear back about apartments. An important thing to keep in mind is that, in addition to having the law on its side, the City needs the capacity to and determination to tackle housing discrimination. This means increasing staff capacity, reviewing the annual reports that the city council receives about the number of housing discrimination complaints that the City receives, and having the administration set a plan for how we will lower the overall instances of this discrimination locally until it is eliminated. Although the council has limited power in terms of implementation and the budget, it is a powerful platform to ask questions of our staff and elected leaders to determine whether truly ending housing discrimination is a priority.

**City Council candidates**

**Kristen Strezo, current City Councilor At Large:**

It's an honor when someone entrusts their personal experiences to you. I would advise all candidates to listen to Somerville residents when they share their thoughts and concerns. These stories will help guide and shape your decisions on housing policy and more. Protecting residents from housing discrimination starts with listening, and continuing to fight for them. It puts a face to the issue that needs solving.

Follow up with residents with resources on their rights.

**Will Mbah, current City Councilor At Large:**

I am running for a fourth term on the City Council and in my previous five and a half years, I have both advocated for the work of the Commission and conducted oversight of its operations and performance. It has been gratifying to me to observe the Commission working cooperatively with the Office of Housing Stability, which was newly created in 2018. Together the two agencies have strengthened support and protection for the city's renters and home-buyers by combining legal enforcement and legal services with financial assistance and relocation services.

The question today is whether there are additional steps to be taken to make these services more effective and to expand their reach to individuals and families, who still may lack knowledge and access. In particular, we have not yet made a decision on whether to pursue a Home Rule Petition, allowing the Somerville Fair Housing Commission to become a "substantially equivalent agency" with the state Commission (MCAD). This would give the city authority to undertake administrative and court enforcement proceedings on behalf of applicants. Now all complaints must be referred to MCAD or other legal aid or federal and state enforcement agencies, facing delays and backlogs.

I would favor a City Council order that would require the Mayoral agencies to complete the study of the legal and practical questions and bring forward the text of an appropriate Home Rule petition within a six or nine month time period.

I would advise new candidates and office holders that their most important role will be to keep the issues and work of Commission routinely in their discussions of housing needs and their outreach to constituents. They should recognize the fair housing activities as an integral part of the full program of housing development, housing stability, and the programs of financial support for low income households.

Actions of fair housing discrimination are one more symptom of the high-cost, high-demand and limited-supply housing market in the Boston region. In many cases, discriminatory actions do arise from genuine bias or hostility, but many other actions are the sloppy practices of landlords or real estate professionals, trying to avoid the paperwork of voucher rentals

or the awkwardness of conversations with non-English language clientele.

Thus the most effective remedies to discrimination are likely to result from the programs that expand the housing supply and the component of affordable units available on the market. Strengthening the linkage between the services and resources of Housing Stabilization with Fair Housing investigation and enforcement should be a key part of the strategy. Similarly, the recent initiatives to amend the Condo Conversion Law should also be considered as an element of fair housing policy. It will provide a longer period of notice to tenants when a landlord/owner proposes to convert and it will raise the levels of relocation compensation for displaced tenants, in particular senior citizens.

**Ben Ewen-Campen, current Councilor, Ward 3**

Housing affordability is the issue that first inspired me to get involved in the local political process, and has been my top priority in office since day one. I have either led or been deeply involved in creating many laws, administrative changes, and state-wide advocacy campaigns, and my experience has been very consistent: this sort of work can only be accomplished as part of a meaningful coalition. While all of us play important roles on the Council, no single local politician is a lone savior on housing issues, we can only accomplish things when we work together. We all take direct motivation from communities around the State and Country who are developing creative solutions, as well as from the talented professionals who work as City staffers and our non-profit partners, who work directly with people facing housing discrimination or other housing crises. We also recognize that the big changes we need (transfer fee, tenant right to purchase, rent stabilization) require action at the State House, and that meaningful changes there can only be accomplished with a massive and powerful coalition.

A few examples: I helped to co-found the Somerville Community Land Trust and have served as a board member ever since. But the SCLT was not the brain child of a single person, it was something that many of us in the community pushed for for years, and it began as a diverse working group supported by the Mayor and the City Council, and has always been an organization that depends on both hard-working insiders on the Board as well as broad-based community support.

Similarly, one of the issues that myself

and others first ran on in 2017 was the creation of the Office of Housing Stability - which has turned out to be one of the single best decisions this City has ever made. But the idea of an OHS had already been pioneered by Boston and other cities, and of course relied heavily on the professional and organizational expertise that was brought by the OHS founding Director and many other City staff. The list goes on: always be open to learning about good ideas and ways to support them from the people who have been doing this work for years, and also don't be afraid to contribute new ideas.

When it comes specifically to how to best protect residents against housing discrimination, the best tool we have is public education. There are in fact many laws, both local, State and Federal, that protect tenants against various forms of discrimination, but all too often landlords know that residents aren't aware of them or don't know how to protect themselves. So, spreading the word about resources as far and wide as possible - make sure that people know about the best place to contact is always the Office of Housing Stability, and that there are lots of other legal supports available (for example the Cambridge Somerville Legal Services and Greater Boston Legal Services.) Having these resources widely known in our community goes a long way to helping residents learn to identify and fight back against housing discrimination.

**Jesse Clingan, current Councilor, Ward 4**

Listen to those most impacted—immigrants, low-income tenants, and communities of color—and let their experiences shape your policies. Housing discrimination isn't always obvious; it's embedded in zoning, application processes, and access to legal resources. Use your platform to fight for equity, push back against powerful interests, and make sure vulnerable residents are protected and heard.

2. *Are there any institutional structures in Somerville that you feel are barriers to fair housing? Is there anything that you would like to re-imagine or update?*

**Mayoral candidates**

**Katjana Ballantyne, current Mayor of Somerville:**

As we seek to ensure fair housing in Somerville it is critical that we look at ALL our programs and policies and institutional structures to identify any unintended consequences relating to fair housing. For example, while increasing the stock of new rental housing in

*Continued on page 17*

# Candidate Questionnaire 2025, Somerville Fair Housing – Part 1

CONT. FROM PG 16

Somerville and throughout the region and state is critical, it may also be the case that new zoning may increase the incentives for landlords to renovate and increase the number of units and floors in their buildings with the unintended consequence of displacing existing residents. We must be bold as we look for supply side solutions to increasing housing but we cannot do so at the expense of driving up displacement. Finding ways to address both the need for increased supply and to proactively address any possible displacement pressures is critical to any successful and equitable housing strategy.

We must always be open to new ideas to decrease the costs of developing new housing without compromising important labor, tenant or environmental protections. Most recently my administration hired a consultant to help us evaluate whether there are any components of our zoning, permitting and other housing development processes which could or should be streamlined to make the development process less burdensome. I am looking forward to learning from and considering their recommendations. Last, my administration has also played a key role in local and statewide efforts to enhance tenant protections seeking passage of legislation for rent stabilization, the right for tenants to seal eviction records where warranted, the formation of a state Access to Counsel program to help undue the imbalance of power caused by disparities in legal representation, the passage of a real estate transfer fee to fund affordable housing and the elimination of most tenant paid broker's fees. In order to see "fair housing" advanced in Somerville in a meaningful way we must conceive of this concept broadly and seek bold and innovative strategies that address a wide range of "fair housing" challenges in our present housing market.

**Jake Wilson, current City Councilor At Large:**

From attending a Fair Housing Commission meeting and speaking with commissioners outside of meetings, I know how crucial it is for the commission to have support from the staff liaison. The turnover in the staff liaison role and the resulting vacancy periods have made it more difficult for the commission to do its work.

Improving employee retention would help, and we need to make sure there's good backup coverage of the staff liaison duties in the event of a staff vacancy.

I've seen firsthand the work the commission puts into education and public awareness campaigns, particularly during Fair Housing Month each April. The City can and should lift up this work by coordinating a robust public education campaign using videos produced by CityTV, social media, and signage in high-visibility locations around the city.

Ultimately some complaints about discrimination can be difficult to substantiate. That's where audits can be really helpful. A "secret shopper" program could be the answer, where different applicant profiles are submitted for the same rental listings and then any difference in responsiveness or answers about availability are documented.

I feel like we always can do better as a city at partnering with community groups to make sure we're getting the message out about things like fair housing to all residents – and also connecting the community with the staff, commissions, and resources available to them.

Finally, it's not technically an institutional structure in Somerville, but ensuring that complaints of discrimination are investigated in a timely fashion by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) is extremely important. I know the Fair Housing Commission named the backlog of complaints with MCAD in their most recent annual report as a challenge facing fair housing in Somerville, and this is something I've heard about from commissioners on other multi-member bodies, as well as from constituents. So working with our state delegation and potentially forming coalitions of municipal leaders to advocate for not allowing these backlogs to occur could make a real difference.

If MCAD proves unable to take up Somerville complaints in a timely manner, I like the idea of empowering the Fair Housing Commission to enforce federal fair housing law as a "substantially equivalent agency" to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Willie Burnley, Jr., current City Councilor At Large:**

One of the key ways to follow up on reports of housing discrimination is to conduct fair housing checks. These are operations in which individuals with different backgrounds undergo an application process with the same qualifications in order to see if they are offered higher prices, are not told about certain amenities, are not given the chance to put in an offer, and overall gauge whether they are being discriminated against simply for their identity, their source of income, or (in Somerville) due to their family or relationship structure. However, during this year's budget season, when I asked a representative whether the City currently conducts these checks or works with organizations to do so, she said no. During my time as an intern at the Equal Rights Center, a civil rights nonprofit that deals primarily in public accommodations, employment discrimination, and housing discrimination, I learned how to carry out these checks and about their utility for enforcing non-discrimination ordinances. As mayor, I would seek to either bolster staff to conduct these checks on landlords or brokers accused of housing discrimination or partner with nonprofits that could do so in order to root out these illegal activities.

**City Council candidates**

**Kristen Strezo, current City Councilor At Large:**

Quickly enacting change at the city level is sometimes hindered by having to ask permission via Home Rule Petition (HRP). I would love for us to be able to give the Somerville Fair Housing Commission more power to investigate fair housing violations like Boston or Cambridge's Fair Housing Commissions can. While we are proactively exploring what we can do as a city in Somerville, the Commissions in Boston and Cambridge gained that ability decades ago. It may take years to win and enact a HRP for Somerville.

Another barrier to fair housing in Somerville is a lack of awareness around resources for residents. We need to make sure that Somerville residents know their renters' rights and also, that they feel safe to report violations. Many residents may not know they have housing rights and some may be too afraid to report fair housing violations because they are afraid of

landlord or management retaliation.

Some renters may be certain that they are being discriminated against, but may not know that they have rights or the ability to report Fair Housing violations—or how to report violations. I applaud the Somerville Fair Housing Commission for the work the Commission is doing.

**Will Mbah, current City Councilor At Large:**

I do not see the existing barriers to fair housing to be the results of overtly established structures or practices because we have already identified these and put into place the laws and procedures that have required them to change. But again, as noted above, I see the persistence of discriminatory practices as a symptom of the pressures of a tight housing market and of lax practices to avoid the tasks of careful compliance. Thus, our efforts at housing development, housing stabilization, support for tenants/buyers, and assistance to the industry to minimize burden and delay of process must work together.

**Ben Ewen-Campen, current Councilor, Ward 3**

The City of Somerville has made truly extraordinary progress on housing justice over the past eight years, much of it inspired originally by the Sustainable Neighborhoods Working Group and the foundation of the Office of Housing Stability, and the various laws and policies that we have passed since 2018. However, the housing crisis remains completely out of control, and the cost of housing remains absolutely unaffordable to far too many residents. To be quite honest, if I was aware of existing institutional barriers in the Somerville government itself to fair housing I would already be working to change them, but I am always open to hearing feedback from residents, staff, or advocacy groups to learn how I can best support improving these systems.

**Jesse Clingan, current Councilor, Ward 4**

Yes. We lack sufficient tenant protections, legal aid, and language-accessible resources. I'd like to reimagine a housing system rooted in community control—expanding public and social housing, supporting land trusts, and treating housing as a human right, not a commodity.

— Somerville Fair Housing Commission

Visit us online at [www.TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://www.TheSomervilleTimes.com)  
Facebook at [www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1](http://www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1)

# Beacon Hill Roll Call



Volume 50 - Report No. 33 • August 11-15, 2025 • Copyright © 2025 Beacon Hill Roll Call. All Rights Reserved. By Bob Katzen

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

**THE HOUSE AND SENATE:** There were no roll call votes in the House or Senate last week. This week, *Beacon Hill Roll Call* reports local representatives' roll call attendance records for the 2025 session through August 15.

The House has held 72 roll calls so far in the 2025 session. *Beacon Hill Roll Call* tabulates the number of roll calls on which each representative 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.

Oftentimes a representative is not able to attend only one or two sessions during which roll calls are held, but since there are sometimes multiple roll calls on each one of those days, the number of roll calls they missed can be high even though they only missed one or two sessions.

One hundred and seven (66.9 percent) out of 160 representatives did not miss any roll call votes and had a 100 percent roll call attendance record.

Fifty-three (33.1 percent) out of 160 representatives missed one or more roll call votes.

The representative who missed the most number of roll calls is Rep. John Lawn (D-Watertown) who missed 22 roll calls (69.4 percent roll call attendance record). Lawn did not respond to repeated requests from Beacon Hill Roll Call asking him why he missed so many roll call votes.

Rounding out the top 16 representatives who missed the most roll call votes are:

Reps. Nicholas Boldyga (R-Southwick) who missed 20 roll calls (72.2 percent roll call attendance record); Christopher Flanagan (D-Dennis), Chynah Tyler (D-Roxbury) and Judith Garcia (D-Chelsea) who each missed 19 roll calls (73.6 percent roll call attendance record.)

John Gaskey (R-Carver) who missed 17 roll calls (76.3 percent roll call attendance record); Patrick Kearney (D-Scituate) who missed 16 roll calls (77.7 percent roll call attendance record); and Mary Keefe (D-Worcester) and Tram Nguyen (D-Andover) who each missed 15 roll calls (79.1 percent roll call attendance record.)

James Murphy (D-Weymouth) and Alyson Sullivan-Almeida (R-Abington) who each missed 14 roll calls (80.5 percent roll call attendance record.)

Natalie Blais (D-Deerfield), Richard Haggerty (D-Woburn), Erika Uytterhoeven (D-Somerville), Susannah Whipps (I-Athol) and Kathleen LaNatra (D-Kingston)

who each missed 11 roll calls (84.7 percent roll call attendance record.)

*Beacon Hill Roll Call* contacted all 16 representatives and asked them why they missed some roll calls.

Reps. John Lawn, Christopher Flanagan, Chynah Tyler, Patrick Kearney, Mary Keefe, Tram Nguyen, James Murphy, Alyson Sullivan-Almeida and Erika Uytterhoeven did not respond to repeated requests asking them to explain their absences.

Here are the representatives who responded:

Nicholas Boldyga: "A couple of days were missed due to health-related issues in my immediate family. My responsibilities as a father of three young children came first on those days. Unfortunately, unlike the Senate that allows for fully remote participation on all levels, House rules make it difficult to even vote remotely."

Judith Garcia: "I missed two days due to illness and two days on official business with the Chelsea delegation, participating in the National All-America City competition in Denver, Colorado, which Chelsea won. One of those four days included 13 roll calls, so it's important for readers to know that multiple roll calls in a single day do not equal multiple absences."

John Gaskey: "[Thirteen roll calls] were on the same day. I was out of town and unavailable. [Three more roll calls] were on the same day [that I was] involved with a delicate constituent issue and chose not to attend, determining it was more important to assist constituents in need than to throw a 'No' vote at something I don't think should be legal."

Natalie Blais: "I was unable to be present in the House chamber for the sitting held on February 6, 2025, due to a family conflict ... My missing of roll calls that day was due entirely to the reason stated."

Richard Haggerty: "I missed a single day of voting this session on February 6, 2025, when I was unfortunately not able to attend a session due to a family commitment."

Susannah Whipps: "The missed votes all pertained to the engrossment or amendments to one bill, H 57, a supplemental budget. I headed out to Boston early but turned around after observing the conditions of the road. Schools across my district were also closed that day - February 6, 2025. In the ten years prior, I had only missed one vote."

Kathleen LaNatra: "I missed those roll call votes because

my husband was in the hospital undergoing emergency brain surgery. While I take my responsibility to be present and vote very seriously, during that period my priority had to be with my family. I have since returned to full participation in the House's work."

## REPRESENTATIVES' 2025 ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE RECORDS THROUGH AUGUST 15, 2025

Here are the 2025 roll call attendance records of local representatives through August 15.

The percentage listed next to the representative's name is the percentage of roll call votes on which the representative voted. The number in parentheses represents the number of roll calls that he or she missed.

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Rep. Christine Barber   | 94.4 percent (4)  |
| Rep. Mike Connolly      | 100 percent (0)   |
| Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven | 84.7 percent (11) |

## ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

**LANDLORD MUST PAY REAL ESTATE BROKER'S FEE** – A new law that took effect on August 1 requires landlords, instead of renters, to cover the cost of broker fees unless a renter is the one to hire the broker first. The law was part of the \$60.9 billion fiscal 2026 that was signed by Gov. Maura Healey in July.

"This is about saving you money, thousands of dollars you can now spend on whatever you need or put it away for the future," said Healey. "And this is just one way I'm lowering costs and getting after high housing prices."

"Between first and last month's rent, a security deposit and a broker's fee — moving to a new apartment was breaking the bank for far too many Massachusetts residents," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll.

**ALCOHOL DONATIONS FOR CHARITIES (H 442)** – The House gave initial approval to legislation that would allow local licensing authorities to issue temporary licenses to charities in order for the charities to accept donations of wine, beer and alcohol for their charitable events.

Supporters said these licenses were previously allowed under 1997 legislation but the authorization has since expired.

"Today, more than ever, nonprofits are in need of charitable donations to stay afloat," said

*Continued on page 18*

# Beacon Hill Roll Call CONT. FROM PG 18

sponsor Rep. Joan Meschino (D-Hull). “This bill would allow for safe and regulated alcohol licensure for nonprofits in order to raise revenue at charity events by partnering with alcohol manufacturers.”

**FIRST RESPONDERS MUST HAVE NARCAN AVAILABLE (S 1410)** – The Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery will hold a hearing on September 15 on legislation that would require government entities to supply first responders with Narcan, also known by its generic name naloxone, or another opioid antagonist which is used as an emergency treatment used for the complete or partial reversal of an opioid overdose. The bill also incorporates existing Department of Public Health-regulated naloxone training into the first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation training first responders already undergo.

Sponsor Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem) said the bill would require the opioid antagonist to be carried either by the responder or in their emergency response vehicle, or both. “Delays in the administration of opioid antagonists can be deadly,” said Lovely. “We cannot be sure which category of first responder will be the first to arrive on the scene, and training and providing all first responders with opioid antagonists will ensure we are able to effectively treat overdoses and save lives.”

**LOWER COST OPTIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS** – Secretary of State Bill Galvin’s Citizen Information Service has compiled information about new financial aid programs available to Massachusetts students at public colleges and universities.

The new informational brochure, “Low and No Cost Options for Higher Education,” highlights several new programs available through the state’s public colleges. Detailed information is provided about the state’s free community college program, free tuition at state schools for lower income students and scholarships available for high-achieving community college students transferring to one of the UMass campuses.

“In the last few years, Massachusetts has created several new pathways to affordable learning, but students and their parents may not be aware of these options,” Galvin said. “This publication is meant to educate the public about grants and scholarships that may be available, to help alleviate the burden of student loans.”

More information and details are available at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/cis/education/low-no-cost-options.htm>

**\$46 MILION FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING** – The Healey Administration announced

a package of \$46 million for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support the buildout of EV chargers across Massachusetts. Supporters said that the funding will help address gaps identified by the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinating Council, including the need for more chargers along secondary corridors and to support medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

“We’re making it easier for everyone to get around as more Massachusetts residents choose to drive electric,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. “Not only are these vehicles fun to drive but they are typically less expensive to maintain than their gas- and diesel- powered counterparts. We are committed to building a cleaner environment and vibrant economy for everyone.”

“Expanding our robust network of public EV chargers will enable electrification of passenger vehicles as well as highly polluting medium- and heavy-duty vans and trucks,” said Mass Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “This funding allows MassDEP to cut air and noise pollution in communities across the state — driving real change for a healthier Massachusetts.”

**QUOTABLE QUOTES**

“Massachusetts has over 25,000 culverts, most of which are undersized. By replacing these outdated culverts with larger, safer structures, we can better prepare our communities for severe weather. Investing in these projects now will save our cities and towns money on disaster recovery in the future.” — *Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper announcing \$2.9 million in grants to support ecological restoration projects across Massachusetts to strengthen resilience against extreme weather events, improve water quality, reduce flood risk and restore crucial wildlife habitat.*

“Our audit identified a number of issues that undermine and negatively impact the Cannabis Control Commission’s mission to equitably and effectively oversee the cannabis industry in Massachusetts. Our team appreciates the commission’s cooperation throughout this audit, which serves to identify areas for needed improvements to better serve the residents of the commonwealth. We encourage the Cannabis Control Commission to adopt our office’s recommendations for improvement and will be revisiting the commission’s progress in roughly six months as part of our post-audit review.” — *Auditor Diana DiZoglio upon releasing an audit of the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) – the independent agency responsible for developing and enforcing regulations over the marijuana industry in Massachusetts. Among the audit’s findings is that the CCC’s mismanagement of prorated fees for license extensions resulted in revenue loss, procedural inequity, noncompliance with*

*state regulations and the appearance of potential favoritism and/or impropriety with respect to some being required to pay fees, while others inexplicably did not need to do so.*

“Massachusetts is narrowing the digital divide by working with communities to deliver digital training and education services to residents statewide. The Municipal Implementation Program offers a road map to local leaders through a planning exercise and puts dollars on the table to implement the communities’ top priorities to close the digital divide.” — *Massachusetts Interim Economic Development Secretary Ashley Stolba announcing \$555,747 in grants as part of the Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Program designed to support a broad range of activities across the state including expanding digital literacy instruction, digital education and access, digital navigation services, laptop and tablet distribution and public Wi-Fi networks.*

**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 August 11-15, the House met for a total of 26 minutes and the Senate met for a total of 27 minutes.

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Mon. August 11   | House 11:01 a.m. to 11:12 a.m.<br>Senate 11:12 a.m. to 11:31 a.m. |
| Tues. August 12  | No House session<br>No Senate session                             |
| Wed. August 13   | No House session<br>No Senate session                             |
| Thurs. August 14 | House 11:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.<br>Senate 11:01 a.m. to 11:09 a.m. |
| Fri. August 15   | No House session<br>No Senate session                             |

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at [bob@beaconhillrollcall.com](mailto:bob@beaconhillrollcall.com)



## Somerville Fair Housing Commission

### Question of the week



**Q:** How long after moving out should I expect my security deposit back?

**A:** Upon your moving out, your landlord should do an inspection of your unit. If there are any damages beyond normal wear and tear, he/she will get an estimate of the cost of repair. Within 30 days of the date you moved out or the last day of your lease, whichever is later, the landlord must send you a check for the full security deposit plus interest minus the cost of repairs, along with a receipt for any repairs. If they do not do so, you may sue them in Small Claims Court for up to three times the original security deposit. The Small Claims Advisory Service can also help you file your claim if you choose to do so (617-497-5690). Contact the Housing Division at 617-625-6600 x2564 for more information.

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

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

To donate visit:

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

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

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

# Somerville through the eyes of Denise



The cat's meow... — Photo by Denise Provost

## BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



I threw a boomerang months ago.  
Now I live in constant fear.

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

To advertise in  
**The  
Somerville  
Times**  
call  
**Bobbie Toner**  
**857-488-5138**

## On This Day in History

### August 20

- 0917 – A Byzantine counter-offensive is routed by Syeon at Anchialus, Bulgaria.
- 1619 – The first group of twenty Africans is brought to Jamestown, Virginia.
- 1741 – Danish navigator Vitus Jonas Bering, commissioned by Peter the Great of Russia to find land connecting Asia and North America, discovers America.
- 1904 – Dublin's Abbey Theatre is founded, an outgrowth of the Irish Literary Theatre founded in 1899 by William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory.
- 1913 – 700 feet above Buc, France, parachutist Adolphe Pegoud becomes the first person to jump from an airplane and land safely.
- 1940 – Radar is used for the first time, by the British during the Battle of Britain.
- 1953 – USSR publicly acknowledges it tested a hydrogen bomb eight days earlier.
- 1964 – U.S. President Lyndon Baines Johnson signs the Economic Opportunity Act.
- 1974 – U.S. Vice President Gerald Ford assumes the Office of the President after Richard Nixon resigns.
- 1998 – The Supreme Court of Canada rules Quebec cannot legally secede from Canada.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Schools want to hear from you. To learn more about the project and take the survey offered in seven languages, please visit [somervillema.gov/newpkto8](http://somervillema.gov/newpkto8).

Somerville's Preliminary Election takes place on Tuesday, September 16. This election will narrow the candidate pool before the Municipal Election on Tuesday, November 4. Offices on the ballot include: Mayor, Councilor At Large, Ward 7 Councilor, and Ward 3 School Committee. Register to Vote. The last day to register to vote is Friday, September 5. Election Day: September 16. Vote at your designated polling location. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. To look up your polling place, get instructions for voting by mail, review a sample ballot, or for other election info, please visit [somervillema.gov/elections](http://somervillema.gov/elections) or call 311 by dialing 3-1-1 or 617-666-3311.

We have a new tab on our website, "Campaign Releases." Go there to see the latest endorsements, campaign info for this year's election candidates.

Outdoor Movie Nights at Aeronaut, Saturday, August 23, 9 – 11 p.m. at Aeronaut Brewing Company. Head to Aeronaut on Saturday nights over the summer for outdoor movie nights on the patio featuring some favorites. Admission is free. Weather permitting. 8/23 *Mean Girls*, 8/30 *Clueless*, 9/6 *Jaws*, 9/13 *Zoolander*. 14 Tyler St, Somerville.

Join the Somerville Museum for a Tavern Talk with Dan Breen: *The March from Prospect Hill to Quebec: America Invades Canada, 1775*. Wednesday, September 3, 7 – 8 p.m., Aeronaut Brewery, 14 Tyler Street. "250 years ago this September, Benedict Arnold led a thousand members of Washington's army to the north, away from the lines around Boston, in an attempt to drive the British out of Quebec. On the way, they battled trackless bogs, debilitating hunger, bone-chilling cold, and the ravages of disease – and that was the easy part! Join in as we relate the story of this, the first, and in some ways the most remarkable, military expedition in United States history."

High heat and humidity are expected during the summer; these weather conditions can cause heat illness if precautions are not taken. Visit [www.somervillema.gov/keepcool](http://www.somervillema.gov/keepcool) for heat safety tips, which

are also available in multiple languages, and more ways to keep cool in and around Somerville this summer.

The City of Somerville is bringing back "Citizenship Day" in collaboration with Project Citizenship to provide Free Legal Help for Green Card Holders who are ready to apply for U.S. Citizenship. To schedule your eligibility screening or visit the following link: <https://outlook.office365.com/book/ProjectCitizenship1@projectcitizenship.org/?ismsaljs-authenable=true>. Saturday, August 23, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. The location will be provided once eligibility is determined.

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

Visit the Growing Center for some relatively quiet time during the weekly Red Fire Farm CSA distribution window, Wednesdays, through October 15, 3:30 – 6:30 p.m. Relax, read, write, sketch, draw, or paint while enjoying a green setting in the city. Limited garden/nature books and art supplies will be available for use on-site. 22 Vinal Ave, 3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Join Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Somerville's Council on Aging for the annual Mayor's Senior Picnic at 11:00 a.m. at Trum Field on September 9. Call Connie Lorenti at 617-625-6600 ext. 2319 for a free ticket by September 5.

The Somerville Flea Market is now open for its 13th year. Vintage vendors, Artisan makers, Farm stand, Live DJ, plus treasures you didn't even know existed. Sundays, August – October. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., 18 Holland St.

The city is seeking one member for the

Community Preservation Committee. Application deadline August 29, 2025. Are you a Somerville resident who cares about affordable housing, history, open space, and accessibility? Would you like to help guide community investment? Fill out the online form here: <https://cityofsomerville.jotform.com/251825134332046>.

Save the Date: *What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation* is a madcap festival honoring the invention of Marshmallow Fluff. It celebrates Somerville's long-standing tradition of innovation with live music, fluffalicious feasts, sticky games, and so much more happening Saturday, September 20, from 2 to 6 p.m. in Union Square (severe weather date Sunday, September 21). Interested in becoming a vendor at this year's What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation? The Fluff vendor application is live: [www.unionsquaremain.org/fluffvendors](http://www.unionsquaremain.org/fluffvendors). Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until spots are filled. Are you a non-profit or community group looking to get the word out about your work? Fill out the Fluff Fest Community Group Application: <https://form.jotform.com/251685124532152>.

The Rock + Roll Yard Sale is coming to Union Square this fall, curated by What Cheer?. Taking place on Sunday, September 7, with a rain date of Sunday, September 14. This event will feature 40 to 50 carefully selected local vendors offering an eclectic mix of vinyl records, vintage clothing, handmade goods, artwork, and more. 12 – 5 p.m., Union Square Plaza.

SYS is proud to announce that TOPSoccer will be coming to our community beginning in September. This program for players with mental and physical disabilities will make an incredibly positive impact on our families. The registration link and other information will be available at [www.somervillesoccer.org](http://www.somervillesoccer.org). For more information on TOPSoccer, please visit <https://mayouthsoccer.org/events-and-programs/topsoccer/>.

*P'alante: Stories Moving Somerville Forward* is an art exhibition by local photographer Mario Quiroz, in collaboration with Somerville Media Center and CAAS, and with support from the Somerville Department of Racial and

Social Justice and the Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs. Photographs will be on display from August 1 to September 30 at the East and West Branches of the library, and from August 1 to August 30 in the Central Library Auditorium. <https://www.somervillepubliclibrary.org/>.

On September 13, the Gilman Square Arts & Music Festival will be back to highlight local artists, makers, performers, and food vendors. This event is supported by the Somerville Arts Council and is made possible by an LCC grant, the generous support of local businesses, and volunteers from the Gilman Square Neighborhood Council. Saturday, Sept. 13, from 12 to 5 p.m. (Severe weather date: Sunday, September 14), located on Pearl St. from Marshall to James Street.

The Somerville Mobile Farmers Market has returned for the 2025 season. The market will be open Thursdays through Saturdays, and will run through November 1. All produce is sourced from local farms and priced affordably to make healthy, fresh food accessible to all. The mobile market accepts cash, debit, and credit cards, SNAP, Fresh Connect, WIC Farmers Market Coupons, and Senior Farmers Market Coupons. For locations and the full schedule, weekly produce updates, and more information about programs and events, visit the market's website at [somervillemobilefarmersmarket.org](http://somervillemobilefarmersmarket.org).

The Somerville High School Class of 1980 Reunion Social is taking place Saturday, October 4, from 7 to 10 p.m., 230 Mishawum Rd., Woburn, MA. Checks should be made out to SHS Class of 1980, c/o Mary Ellen Melaragni, 9 Churchill Circle, Winchester, MA 01890, [wasmith1492@gmail.com](mailto:wasmith1492@gmail.com).

The Somerville Museum presents *Kaleidoscope: Reflecting the Moment* through August 23. *Kaleidoscope: Reflecting the Moment* is an immersive, multi-sensory exhibition by multidisciplinary artist Flor Delgadillo that invites us to reflect on shifting ideas of home, family, neighbors, and community in a rapidly changing world. Blending opportunities for pause and reflection with moments of interaction and creation, *Kaleidoscope* explores how light transforms space, *Continued on page 22*

# Tavern Talk with Dan Breen

The March from Prospect Hill to Quebec: America Invades Canada, 1775

The Somerville Museum's next Tavern Talk at Aeronaut Brewery concerns Benedict Arnold's ill-fated invasion of British-held Canada, which embarked in September of 1775. That episode actually began here in Somerville, when detachments from General Greene's command at Prospect Hill left those lines to gather in Cambridge, where they would meet other detachments from New England and Virginia.

From there they made their way to Newbury and then to the Kennebec River—where absolutely everything began to go very, very wrong. In this presentation, we will tell the story of an expedition—the first in US military history, in fact—that despite numerous privations, very nearly captured the great citadel of Quebec in the teeth of a driving snow-storm on New Years Eve, 1775.

September 3, 7:00pm

Aeronaut Brewery

14 Tyler Street, Somerville

Ticket available via Eventbrite.

Tickets \$18 (non-members), includes one drink ticket

Members \$14 (members), includes one drink ticket



## Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

how sound carries memory, and how collective experience deepens our sense of belonging, connection, and resilience. For more information, visit: <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Join **Union Square Main Streets** and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the **21st Annual Union Square Farmers Market**. Shop local **Saturdays through October 25**, except September 20, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the **Union Square Plaza**. Thanks to their partnership with the **City of Somerville** and the **Somerville Farmers Market Coalition**, they are proud to continue to offer our SNAP match. For more info, visit [unionsquaremain.org/2025-season](http://unionsquaremain.org/2025-season).

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Davis Square Market** is open for the **2025 Season**. The market will run **every Wednesday from 12 noon to 6 p.m., through November 26**, at **44 Day St.,**

Somerville. This long-running market features over two dozen Massachusetts farmers and food producers offering a vibrant selection of delicious produce, protein, baked goods, ready-to-eat meals, alongside a host of other locally made products. The market accepts cash, credit/debit cards, WIC/Senior coupons, and EBT cards, and offers a weekly \$15 SNAP Match. Visit <https://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/davis>.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Street sweeping** in Somerville resumed on Tuesday, April 1. Somerville's street cleaning program is an essential public works program that not only keeps our city cleaner but also reduces the risk of flooding and icing due to clogged storm drains. The street sweeping season runs **from April 1 until December 31** each year. On designated street sweeping days, vehicles must be moved from the side of the street being swept, as noted on signs posted on

each street. The penalty for not complying with street sweeping parking regulations is a \$50 fine. Check the signs on the streets where you park and visit [www.somerville-ma.gov/sweeper](http://www.somerville-ma.gov/sweeper) for more information.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

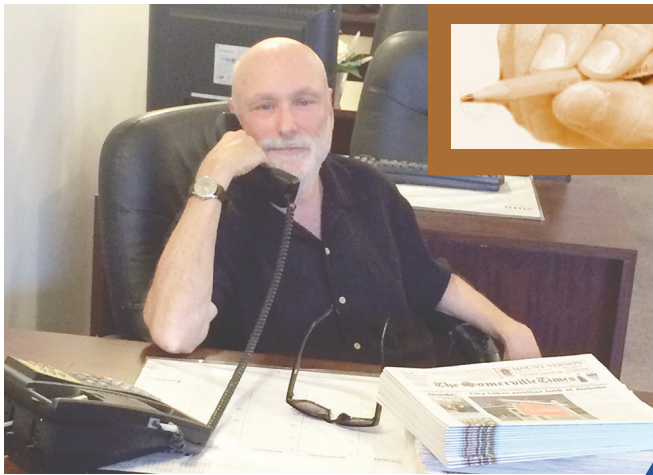
\*\*\*\*\*

Through the generosity of the Ameri-

**can Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** and under the direction of **Mayor Ballantyne**, the **Council on Aging** can provide **Durable Medical Equipment** at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60 or have a permanent disability, and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. They currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies, and Transport Wheelchairs. For additional information or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

\*\*\*\*\*

Don't forget, if you would like to subscribe to receive a **digital edition** of our paper, go directly online to our website, over to the right side, and fill out your email address to receive a free, full PDF copy of the paper.



# OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## 'Owned' by Eoin Higgins

*Owned*  
by Eoin Higgins  
Bold Type Books, Hachette, New York, 2025

By *Off the Shelf* correspondent Ed Meek

Eoin Higgins writes about journalism and media. Higgins is a successful journalist who has written for the NYT, the Washington Post, Counterpunch, and The Huffington Post. In *Owned*, he delves into the rightward turn taken by the tech industry and billionaires like Elon Musk, Marc Andreessen, and Peter Thiel. He focuses on two formerly liberal star journalists: Matt Taibbi and Glen Greenwald. Higgins details Musk's acquisition of Twitter (now X) and the negative effects Musk has had on the platform. He explains how the libertarian world of Silicon Valley is apolitical as long as the tech bros are getting money and being left alone by the government. Higgins posits that they decided Trump would keep the money coming without requirements like DEI.

If you reacted with surprise at the turn to the right by high-tech, corporate CEO's and Elon Musk and wondered what happened to Matt Taibbi, who covered politics for *Rolling Stone*, and Glen Greenwald, who wrote in support of WikiLeaks and Chelsea Manning, Higgins provides an explanation by digging into their transition to the right.

Higgins' theory is that it's all about the money. Taibbi was able to leave *Rolling Stone* and build a higher-paying audience on Substack. Greenwald found a platform on Fox and The Intercept. Musk took over Twitter, ostensibly to promote free speech, but he has instead pushed conspiracy theories like Tucker Carlson's "great replacement theory" that claims Democrats are pro-immigration in order to import voters and undermine the culture and identity of America (yet in the last election, Trump received almost half of the Latino vote). Musk also censors the left with the help of all the MAGAs who have joined X. Lately, Musk has been calling for a new political party after attacking the Big Beautiful Bill as irresponsible for increasing the deficit and steering America toward financial collapse.

Many of us were puzzled by the rightward turn of Taibbi and Greenwald. Taibbi wrote scathing articles about the Trump campaign leading up to 2016. Just before the election, he insightfully realized that Trump could win after witnessing his cult like support at rallies. You may remember the NYT, on the other hand, predicted Hillary Clinton had a 90% chance of winning. Taibbi also wrote a series of articles about the 2008 crash arguing, (over-simplistically) that it was caused by corruption. Glen Greenwald was a brave voice support-

ing Chelsea Manning and WikiLeaks and always willing to take positions outside mainstream media.

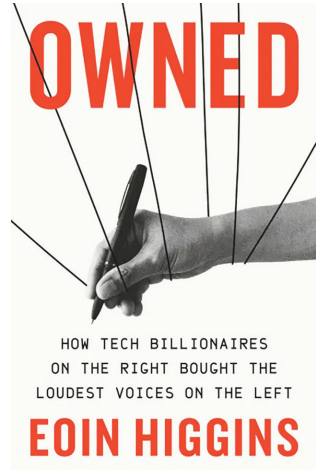
Higgins follows Taibbi's investigation into Hunter Biden's laptop (a favorite target of the MAGAS). The Biden administration, with twitter's cooperation, may have suppressed information about Hunter Biden's corruption, but Taibbi never really found anything. Meanwhile, he was attacked by the left relentlessly for investigating. This led to his move to Substack, where he has a big following.

Higgins points out that Substack was created by Marc Andreessen (founder of Netscape) and Thiel (PayPal) as a way to move liberal journalists out of mainstream media publications. Higgins argues that the right wing has been very effective at manipulating and creating new media to influence Americans to support Republicans.

Higgins is on solid ground in that argument, and the details make for interesting reading. At the same time, Higgins glides over the excesses of the left from the resistance movement through the Biden years. Although Biden was elected as a moderate, he embraced DEI and pressure from nonprofits and academia to regulate business and big tech. At the same time, academia was forcing the adoption of alternative pronouns, terms like LatinX, trans rights, and revisionist history like the 1619 Project.

Part of the reason Greenwald, Taibbi, and high tech turned against the left was due to the oppressiveness emanating from positions taken by the left wing of the Democratic Party, and although the libertarian party is insignificant as a political organization, many Republicans are libertarians. *Yellowstone*, at one point the most popular show on television, is a libertarian dream of a rancher so rich and powerful that he can do whatever he wants, regardless of the law. Andreessen also had an interest in cryptocurrency, and the Biden administration blocked crypto, whereas Trump decided to endorse it because he could make money from it. Now laws have been passed to legitimize it.

Higgins' *Owned* is a provocative take on our shifting politics and the role the media plays. Higgins doesn't offer a solution to the rightward lurch the country has taken, other than to point out that no one should be rich enough individually to take control of the media to influence politics.



# Lyrical

## SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Denise Provost is the former co-president of the New England Poetry Club. Her work has been included in numerous publications.



### Enforcement

This morning, a verified ICE vehicle runs its engine just outside our library, a place known to be filled with concealed ideas.

It's a Chevy Tahoe (though I keep thinking taco.) I don't dare reveal its plate number (we all know why.) ICE agents are prepared

to seize books by foreign authors, shelved without a proper papers check. Tactical vests protect against assault by words.

Black masks filter out an atmosphere filled with the whispers of history. Perhaps ICE agents haven't come to check out books?

— Denise Provost

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

# The Somerville Times

To advertise in our Business Directory,  
call 857-488-5138.

Let your customers find you in  
Somerville's most widely read newspaper!

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

## LEARN TO DRAW AND PAINT

Artist and art teacher Geoffrey Halverson



[www.geoffreyhalverson.com](http://www.geoffreyhalverson.com)

Flexible Schedule - 2 hour classes  
Perfect for beginners and intermediate students  
Location of classes in North Cambridge (Huron Village)  
Call: 617-501-6217 • halverson12g@yahoo.com

## Monica Calvo Realtor®

Real Estate Professional  
Cell: 617-605-3308



Email: [mcalvo@relocationnewengland.com](mailto:mcalvo@relocationnewengland.com)  
Web: [remaxpartnersrelocation.com](http://remaxpartnersrelocation.com)

**RE/MAX**  
PARTNERS RELOCATION  
44 Park ST  
Andover MA 01810  
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated



**ENCOMPASS**  
PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

## BUY - SELL - JOIN

CALL US FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS!

### BOBBIE TONER

REAL ESTATE CONSULTANT

✉ [BOBBIETONER@AOL.COM](mailto:BOBBIETONER@AOL.COM)  
☎ 857-488-5138

### JOHN RAPOSO

BROKER

✉ [JOHN@ENCOMPASSPROPS.COM](mailto:JOHN@ENCOMPASSPROPS.COM)  
☎ 617-665-8866



WWW.ENCOMPASSPROPS.COM  
ENCOMPASSPROPS



Cleaning. Restoration. Construction.

SERVPRO® of Arlington,  
Somerville, Charlestown

**617-629-5331**

Independently owned and operated



**BRENEVILLE**  
LAW OFFICES, LLC

**FREDLER BRENEVILLE, Esq.**

*Attorney at Law*



Immigration • Accident-Injury  
Family Law • Estate Planning  
Landlord-Tenant

*Nou pale Kreyol  
Nous parlons Français*

**(617) 448-6037**

[INFO@BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM](mailto:INFO@BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM)  
500 N. MAIN ST. STE. A 2ND FL., RANDOLPH  
55 BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE  
[BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM](http://BRENEVILLELAWOFFICES.COM)

## Wedding & Event Photo & Video

— Harry Kane —



KANE FILMS  
[www.KaneFilms.net](http://www.KaneFilms.net)  
860-840-3737  
[HarryKaneFilms@gmail.com](mailto:HarryKaneFilms@gmail.com)

## The Law Offices of Richard G. Di Girolamo

**Richard G. Di Girolamo, Esquire**  
**Anne M. Vigorito, Esquire**  
**Breanna L. Rolland, Esquire**

ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW

**Real Estate Law**  
**Zoning**  
**Civil Litigation**  
**Criminal Defense**  
**Family Law**  
**Personal Injury**

TELEPHONE: (617) 666-8200  
FAX: (617) 776-5435  
EMAIL: [digirolamolegal@verizon.net](mailto:digirolamolegal@verizon.net)  
424 BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE, MA 02145

## Alibrandi's Barber Shop

Men & Boys Haircuts

**"Best Somerville Barber"**



194 Holland St, Somerville, MA 02144  
617-628-4282 Closed Wednesday

## T. J. SILLARI, INC.

Over 50 Years Experience  
Proud to be a Somerville Business Resident



- Plumbing • Heating
- Gas Fitting • Industrial Work
- Water Heater Replacement
- Complete Drain Service

Residential - Industrial - Commercial

Master Plmb. Lic. #6106

**625-9877**

Telephone:  
(617) 625-2244  
(617) 625-4344

Fax:  
(617) 625-4350

**EDWIN J. SMITH**  
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW  
**RUMERY & SMITH**

403 HIGHLAND AVENUE  
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144

[edsmithlaw@gmail.com](mailto:edsmithlaw@gmail.com)

**clarkarts**  
PUBLISHING  
COLORING BOOKS • QUIZ BOOKS • MORE  
[www.clarkarts.net](http://www.clarkarts.net)