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Somerville Preliminary Election unofficial results



Willie Burnley, Jr. and Jake Wilson will be on the ballot for the next Mayor of Somerville.

By The Times Staff

In what some consider a stunning upset, incumbent Mayor Katjana Ballantyne was edged out of her bid for reelection by challengers Willie Burnley, Jr. and Jake Wilson, who will face off for the office in the upcoming Municipal Election on Tuesday, November 4.

The unofficial results of the Preliminary election are as follows:

Mayor votes

- Willie Burnley, Jr. – 4,036
- Katjana Ballantyne – 2,738
- Jake Wilson – 5,018
- Write-in – 38
- Blank – 91

Councilor at Large votes

Continued on page 22

City deliberates over municipal elections statute

By Harry Kane

Registered voters need all the information they can get before making decisions during election season, which is why City Councilors are debating the adoption of a state statute that would inform voters by mail about binding questions on the ballot.

However, the adoption of the statute referred to as Chapter 53, Section 18B of Massachusetts General Laws has stalled in the Somerville City Council as a result of logistical concerns, and was sent back to the Legislative Matters Committee for discussion.

"This is simply a voter information provision, which says that any ballot measures that will go out would need to have an informational packet sent by the city explaining what the measures are that are going to be on the ballot," said City Councilor *Continued on page 4*



A state statute aimed at informing voters by mail about binding questions on the ballot was a key topic of discussion at the recent Somerville City Council meeting.

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

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the City of Somerville Department of Veterans' Services invite the community to join the 4th Annual Health and Wellness Day on Saturday, September 20, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lincoln Park (290 Washington St.). This free, family-friendly event is designed to promote wellness for all ages and to connect Veterans, first responders, and their families with health and wellness resources. For questions or more information, please contact the Department of Veterans' Services at 617-625-6600 x 4700 or veterans@somervillema.gov.

Somerville's Fluff Fest is turning 20, and all are invited to celebrate the famous treat in Union Square on Saturday, September 20, from 2 to 6 p.m. (rain date: Sunday, September 21). This year's milestone theme, Forever Fluff: 20 Years of Sticky, Sweet Somerville, marks two decades of celebrating the invention of Marshmallow Fluff in Union Square with zany games, music, fluff-filled snacks, and more.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to Mary Jo Rossetti, who is a lifelong resident and a former Councilor At-Large. We wish her a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to Conor Brennan, the owner of PJ Ryan's in Teele Square. We wish him the very best on his birthday. Happy birthday to the now-retired Somerville Homeless Coalition Director, Mark Alston-Follansbee. We wish him a happy *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of September 17 – September 23 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday September 17	Cloudy	74°/59°	13%	10%	WSW 14 mph
Thursday September 18	Sunny	76°/57°	12%	8%	SW 18 mph
Friday September 19	Sunny	81°/54°	6%	3%	SW 10 mph
Saturday September 20	Partly Cloudy	66°/50°	7%	4%	SW 11 mph
Sunday September 21	Partly Cloudy	70°/55°	22%	16%	SE 9 mph
Monday September 22	Partly Cloudy	71°/55°	43%	33%	W 9 mph
Tuesday September 23	Partly Cloudy	71°/56°	49%	36%	NE 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: Letter to the Editor – September 10

Joseph says:

I support the calls for your resignation Jason! If not for your Islamophobia and re:re:re:Boomer humor then for the fact that the VC company of which you are a Co-founder and general partner directly invests in the AI companies supporting the genocide in Gaza! Ward 5 deserves better than you.

Response to: Statement from Mayor Katjana Ballantyne on Local ICE Activity

William Cronin says:

I grew up in Somerville. We had lots of immigrants, but they came to the United States legally. The illegal aliens are illegal and should be removed. If you hate Donald Trump, that's your business. But don't ruin your country, state, or city by supporting illegals. They are illegal and need to go.

Slaw says:

When my family came here there was nothing like the border regime there is today. They came legally because nothing prevented them from doing so. (Some people namely the Chinese and immigrants from Africa have faced specific exclusions for a lot longer).

People are not illegal. Acts are illegal like violating due process, refusing to grant asylum, deporting visa and green card holders. You don't care about the law, you care about stigmatizing immigrants. The simplest solution to undocumented immigration isn't erecting a vast deportation apparatus, it is mass amnesty (just like Ronald Reagan did btw).

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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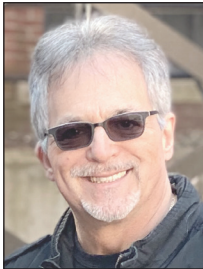
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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

Birthday parties, 1960's style



Chuck E Cheese, Laser Tag, and movie theaters like Chunky's were where we usually held my two youngest kids' birthday parties in the 90's and early 2000's.

My older daughter's tenth birthday in 1992 was at the McDonald's playground that used to be in Davis Square, and her twelfth birthday was a pool party at The Holiday Inn off Washington St. in Somerville. The boys had some parties at a place called Kids Playground and Laser Quest in Danvers for laser tag.

Children's parties have become elaborate and expensive ordeals. Even if you have a party in your backyard you will pay a lot, especially if it's a theme party. My grandkids have had Cat in The Hat, Toy Story, and Disney Princesses themed parties. Every related item possible can be purchased either at places like Party City or online. Cha-Ching \$! It can be a car payment

when you're through, but that's what we do for our kids. Not so in the old days.

In 1960 The Flintstones had just premiered on TV, JFK was our new President and life was good for a kid having a birthday. If mom didn't just make one from scratch, she would go down to the A&P, or Johnnie's Foodmaster and buy a Pillsbury or Betty Crocker cake mix. If we were lucky, she would let us lick the mixer beaters. Most of the time she would shut the mixer off first! That was a big deal. Then she would make the frosting and decorate it.

Of course, there was also plenty of Sealtest ice cream and snacks for all. For beverages, there was Zarex, or Kool Ade, or soda. My Uncle Chick worked at Cott's Bottling Comp any in Somerville, so all my family parties had Cott's beverages (it's Cott to be good!).

Our birthday parties were held at the kitchen table as shown in the photo. The table and chairs were well made thick wood, and lasted forever. We actually just threw that very table *Continued on page 16*





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Somerville Police Dept Crime Log September 2 – 8

Residential Breaking and Entering

25054381: On 9/3/25 at approximately 5:59 a.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Quincy St for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated he was sleeping and awoke to an individual standing over him. The suspect then fled out of the house. Nothing was reported missing.

Residential Breaking and Entering

25054261: On 9/2/25 at approximately 4:13 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Wallace St for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated a lock on his door was damaged and he believes someone broke into his home. Nothing was reported missing.

Commercial Breaking and Entering

25054457: On 9/3/25 at approximately 11:12 a.m., Somerville Police responded to a business on Columbia St for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the owner who stated the business is permanently closed and when he entered, observed two males sleeping inside. Nothing was reported missing.

Residential Breaking and Entering

25055243: On 9/6/25 at approximately 11:23 a.m., Somerville Police responded to a residence on Alewife Brook Pkwy for a breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the reporting party who stated he entered his mothers apartment and noticed that several pieces of jewelry were missing.

Assault

25055363: On 9/6/25 at approximately 7:47 p.m., Somerville Police responded to a business on Canal St for a shoplifting. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated a group of juveniles entered the store and proceeded to steal various items. Two of the juveniles then assaulted the clerk while leaving.

Assault

25055467: On 9/7/25 at approximately 3:50 a.m., Somerville Police responded to Davis Sq for an assault. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated he was walking through Davis Sq and a male party began throwing bricks at him then hit him in the head with a stick.

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

— Somerville Police Department



Crime Tip Hotline: 617-776-7210

City deliberates over municipal elections statute

CONT. FROM PG 1

Councilor J.T. Scott, during the September 11 City Council meeting.

This packet would include a summary prepared by the city solicitor's office with written arguments by principal proponents and opponents, so that citizens have an opportunity to learn about what will be on the ballot before voting.

"Without this provision, the city cannot actually spend the money to send a mailer out to residents in the city," said Councilor Scott.

Councilors said these mailers may cost \$40,000, according to the committee report.

"After considering it, I continue to be inclined to support the adoption of this, simply because I think more information in the hands of voters is generally a good thing," said Councilor Scott. "And frankly, at this point, I'd like to have as much democracy as I can get for as long as we can keep it."

But logistical concerns stalled the adoption of the statute, explained City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen.

"I am convinced that it is too late for

this particular election cycle," said Ewen-Campen, but stated that he is "fully supportive" of moving forward with the statute adoption.

City Councilor Wilfred N. Mbah said there are implications to adopting the provision. "There are nuances in this process that we don't know," and "we also don't want to place any undue burden on our city."

Councilor Mbah admitted that there was "probably an oversight" during the charter review process, which "we also have to acknowledge publicly."

City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin said that he wishes the City Council had adopted the statute several months ago. "I think this does make plenty of sense to me. I think a lot of cities do it ... the money is not an issue."

Other councilors echoed that same sentiment, expressing concerns that rushing the process for adopting the statute would be a mistake.

"Everyone here supports transparency, everyone here wants people to know what they are voting on," said City Councilor Jake Wilson.

While most of the City Councilors have accepted postponing the adoption of the statute, former Alderman Jack Connolly says that not letting people know about the substantive changes in the new city charter is at the crux of the matter.

As a result of the Somerville City Council not adopting Chapter 53, Section 18B, "Somerville voters will be deprived of the opportunity to be notified in writing prior to the November 4 election of the proposed new city charter right up until the moment they must decide whether to vote for it," explained Connolly. "The new charter is being proposed after 126 years, and disregards the right of voters to be fully and fairly informed of both sides of the argument in the new city charter ballot question."

Connolly calls this a "travesty of transparency" and says it's a "betrayal of the public trust."

A city spokeswoman at the City Council meeting on September 11 explained that the city "shares the desire to have an informed electorate," and is working within the confines of state law to release infor-

mation in a legal way.

Somerville's charter review began back in 2020, under the Curtatone Administration, with then City Council President Matthew McLaughlin, according to the City of Somerville website. The Charter Review Committee, composed of residents and elected officials, helped make the majority of the changes to modernize the charter. On May 5, 2025, the new charter language was approved by a council vote.

"Our updated city charter just passed the State Legislature and is heading to Governor Healey's desk for final approval," wrote Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne on Instagram. "This is a huge win for our community – we're bringing our 1899 charter into the 21st century with more transparency, more opportunities for your voices to be heard, and even a pathway to ranked choice voting. Thank you to everyone who participated in this years-long community process and to the City Council, State Representative Barber, and Senator Jehlen for building this with us. When we work together, we make Somerville stronger."

Residents offer mixed reactions to Memorial Drive project

By C. Scott Morris

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) drew praise and criticism from the public during a meeting last Tuesday, Sept. 9, about a new construction project.

In the meeting, DCR said the Memorial Drive Phase Three [1] project would begin the following day. From Eliot Bridge to John F. Kennedy Street on Memorial Drive, the state-funded project spans slightly over a mile. It's part of the DCR Parkways Master Plan [2], creating walkway and bikeway improvements across the region, including parts of Somerville.

Green Transportation Director Dan Driscoll, who led the meeting, said it will cost roughly \$1.3 million to complete. With a two-year construction schedule, the project will eliminate two of the four traffic lanes across 70% of the project, according to Driscoll.

Some improvements include creating

three new road crossings and an 11-foot shared-use path for bikers and walkers. It will also make a 5-foot unpaved path exclusive for pedestrians. They aim to plant new London plane trees and native plants across the site. When complete, the project will expand the parkland by 1.16 acres, according to the presentation.

Lawrence Adkins, with the group Principles Impacted Riverside Residents (P.I.R.R.), voiced concerns about the project's single lane operation impacting traffic, air quality, and the neighborhood's density.

"I think DCR has a selective process for engagement because it's not everybody," he said. Moving forward, he added, "I will most expectedly think and hope that you will vigorously reach out to the impacted neighbors, neighborhood leaders, organizations, and get them at the table of decision."

Denise Haynes added that P.I.R.R. "has brought a lot of things to light but has not been a part of the conversation."



The recent public meeting held by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) yielded many pro and con responses from those in attendance.

"We did have years of outreach, and we're sorry you missed it," Driscoll told Adkins. "We have a record of thousands of comments that aren't from the groups you listed." He added, "We'll try to include you moving forward."

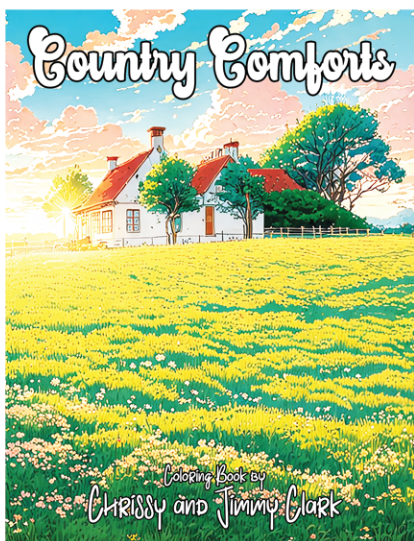
A self-described Ash Street resident with the username Judith Dortz said Me-

morial Drive already has heavy traffic, and the project could make it worse. "Cars seem to be eliminated from any of this plan," she said. "I mean, no consideration is to traffic."

"At certain times, especially rush hour, it may take a little bit longer," Driscoll said. But, he added, it would only be a slight delay compared to the large

Continued on page 11

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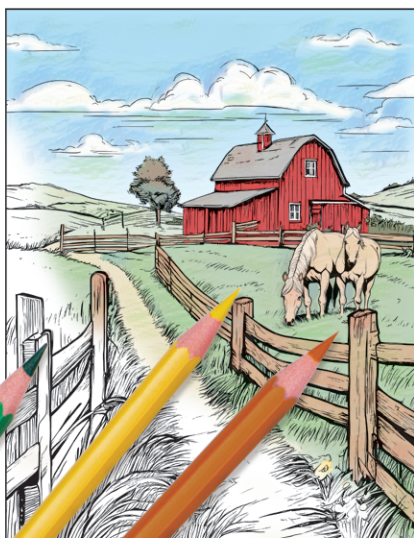
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COMMENTARY

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.

Somerville needs a centralized meeting system for the sake of local democracy

By Jeffrey Shwom

As a resident and writer, I'm advocating for a centralized information system for all civic meetings in Somerville for the benefit of all of us ... and selfishly, for me as a journalist.

Our government is coming back from summer break in 2025. Fall is in the air, and so are back-to-school and back-to-work routines. September is also here, and with it, a month of renewal, new habits, and new starts. Maybe someone new or old wants to learn about our government and go to a meeting or become informed locally. It is an election year, too! This is my palette to paint with, to inform my fellow residents and visitors. I cherish it ... until I remember the information is all over the place.

Before we start yawning about seemingly mundane resolutions and ad nauseam orders to have city staff visit with the council, I want to share what is truly at stake. Our mayor and our civil servants operate a \$380 million government in four square miles. The same government is trying to defend our values as a community, like by suing the federal government for its stance on immigration enforcement, trying to replace miles of sewer pipes, fix a rat problem, and figure out the magic solution to solve the housing crisis. The small inner workings of those items are at these meetings, and unless we make the agendas and meeting

notes more accessible and easier to find, our belief in how our local government serves us, the underserved, underrepresented, and vulnerable populations, can be challenged.

Sounds big and grand, right? It is. But using one week earlier this month as an example, here is the maddening process of figuring out what's going on civically.

I had identified nine civic meetings of interest over a seven-day period. Of nine, five are missing agendas. To even find a meeting date and time, I use at least four separate city webpages - Somerville Legistar calendar [1], Somerville city website calendar [2], the city Agendas, Minutes, & More page [3], and the Public Library calendar [4]. If pickings are slim, and the past few weeks have been tough, I also use Somerville Times' legal ads [5] to find agendas for commissions and department meetings like licensing and historic preservation, to name a few.

To get the most up-to-date information, I usually must wait until the day before to feel confident. My work starts a few days or weeks ahead, and if a posted agenda is unclear, like say the monthly assessor's meeting, I ask questions. Though I got a response from the chief assessor, I missed the deadline for getting that information to print.

To be fair, state public meetings laws dictate that agendas need to be posted 48 hours in advance [6], and they are. The city government is just getting back into more

robust action after getting its summer tan at Dilboy pool in West Somerville. But what finance items are the city councilors discussing and potentially recommending for approval next week? Will the construction advisory group be talking on Monday about preliminary results from a second survey about whether to build the Winter Hill school in the same or a different place, and with expansions? Not sure...there is no agenda up yet.

Many committees and commissions do post ahead of time, and the government has made a lot of strides. Changing the open meeting law to allow video conferencing like Zoom was essential during the pandemic and now allows folks to watch meetings from home and afterwards. It's essential to how I write and I'm grateful for it. Plus, our wonderful city officials, councilors, volunteers, and staff do great civic work daily. They volunteer, sometimes paid, sometimes unpaid, to make this city better. To give back. To do good. We should be lifting all of them up and ourselves, too.

In the 12 years I've lived here, I've never seen so much excitement about being civically engaged as I have this year. Look at the total number of people running for at-large councilor or the rally for Rumeysa Ozturk at Powderhouse Park. As silly as this all sounds, if I, a steward of sharing all of these meetings, can't find information to share with the public, it makes it hard for me to share the good work.

Here's my ask: I'm calling on our city counselors and the executive branch of our government to have a meaningful discussion about how to centralize this information for the benefit of all. Furthermore, I'm advocating for the best practice to be posting preliminary agenda items at least one week before a meeting, and any minutes or results should be posted within 48 hours after a meeting.

If these suggestions become internal best practices, I think the whole community benefits.

Jeff Shwom is a local journalist and former staff writer for The Somerville Times. He organized the Ball Square District Association during the pandemic and is a Magoun Square resident, too. Follow him on Reddit at u/jeffshwom.

Links:

- [1] <https://somervillema.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>
- [2] <https://www.somervillema.gov/calendar>
- [3] <https://www.somervillema.gov/meetingdocs>
- [4] <https://somervillepubliclibrary.org/calendar/>
- [5] <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/legal-ads>
- [6] [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-open-meeting-law#:~:text=30A%2C%20%2C%A7%2020\(c\),.state.ma.us](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-open-meeting-law#:~:text=30A%2C%20%2C%A7%2020(c),.state.ma.us)

Legislature passes new Charter for the City of Somerville

On September 11, the Massachusetts House and Senate passed legislation filed by Rep. Christine Barber and the Somerville delegation entitled An Act establishing a charter for the city of Somerville.

This bill was filed on behalf of the City of Somerville to replace the city's current charter. The existing charter dates back to 1871 – the year Somerville became a city – and aside from minor changes, the last significant update was in 1899. In 2020, the Mayor and City Council established a Charter Review Committee, comprised of both residents

and elected officials, to conduct a comprehensive review and propose updates to strengthen and modernize the city's government structure. After 16 months of work – including 32 committee meetings, over 10 public events, 85 public comments, and more than 1,000 survey responses – the Committee released its recommendations in August 2022.

The proposed new charter includes improvements such as increased transparency, enhanced public participation, expanded support for the City Council, and other updates to city operations.

The Act includes two ballot questions: one asking voters to adopt the new charter. The second is whether to extend the mayor's term from two years to four years. If approved, the extended term would begin no earlier than the 2028 election. The recommendation to extend the mayoral term from 2 years to 4 was included in the Charter Review Committee's final proposals.

The Committee believed a longer term would offer several key benefits, such as:

- More time for mayors to advance and implement their policy agendas

- Greater stability within City administration

- Increased appeal for a broader pool of candidates to consider running for mayor

These reforms will deliver on key priorities for Somerville and were developed by a process that prioritized community voices. The legislation is now on the Governor's desk, awaiting signature, and will appear on the November ballot, where voters will decide on two measures: the adoption of the new charter and the extension of the mayoral term.

— Office of Representative Christine Barber

COMMENTARY

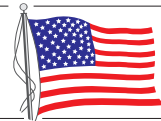
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Get ready for the Fluff Festival!

Our View Of The Times



The “What the Fluff?” festival hits Union Square once again soon, an event that has grown in the hearts of so many here.

For all these years Marshmallow Fluff has been a favorite snack food for many, while others could, frankly, take it or leave it. Either way, few would argue that the annual festival itself is chock full of fun and frivolity for everyone who attends.

A lot of public events come and go over

the course of each year: road races, music festivals, family events ... you name it. What is it though about the celebration of this sweet stuff that kindles a spot of warmth in so many of our hearts? Is it the generally whacky nature of the event itself? The overall tongue-in-cheek nature of each event within the event?

It is certainly a unique affair, with a rich history and heritage that sparks the imag-

ination and brings out the kid in all of us.

The timing of it may have some influence on our affection towards it. As we bid farewell to the summer months and ring in the beginning of autumn, we may view the festivities as a last hurrah of the high season. One last fling in the warmth of the sun as we gently roll along towards the darker days of winter.

Whatever mysterious forces may exist

that compel us to smear, spread, consume or bathe in the stuff, most of us have a real good time at it.

That’s what it’s all about in the end. Enjoying the day. So, happy birthday, Marshmallow Fluff!

What the Fluff? Festival 2025 takes place on Saturday, September 20, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. in Union Square Plaza, 66-70 Union Square.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Gay H. Sheldon, Carol Clements, Kimberly Vicente, Jackie Shepardhancock, Ed Grandmont, Debra Lawson Kennedy, Ellen Gagliardi, Stephen Green, Jonathan O’Connell, Adele Changer, and Kimberly Barnett,** 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.

Community members are invited to join **Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, the City Council, and the School Committee** at the **2025 City Hall Community Meet-**

ings. These meetings are held every fall in each of Somerville’s seven wards to share the latest city and neighborhood updates – and more – with community members. The in-person meetings kick off with a social half-hour with free pizza and healthy kid-friendly snacks, where you can chat one-on-one with elected officials, including the mayor, your Ward and At-Large City Councilors, and School Committee members, as well as staff, about issues important to you. The Fall 2025 meeting cycle kicks off next week with a meeting in **Ward 3 on Wednesday, September 17,** at the **Somerville High School Cafeteria** (81 Highland Ave.) and in **Ward 4 on**

Thursday, September 18, at the **Arthur D. Healey School Cafeteria** (5 Meacham St.). All meetings start at 6 p.m.

Do you live in Somerville? Have you graduated from high school yet? **Scrapheap Showdown** is coming ... time to get your teams together. Get two more friends and register your team. Choose a crazy name for the team and then all come on **October 19** to **Breed Memorial Hall on Tufts University** at 51 Winthrop St, Medford – a new location last year.

This fall, the **Somerville Museum** is offering programs for kids, young and old,

on select **Friday and Saturday mornings.** On **September 27,** they start with special songs and puppetry with **Jef Czepak,** with lyrics matching up with many of the exhibits in the **History on the Line** exhibition. Kids can stay afterwards for a scavenger hunt. The museum is also starting its next exhibition, **Barcode Journeys** with **Barbara Jo,** which opens on **September 18.** Join them for an opening reception to celebrate from 6 to 8 p.m. and exciting panels, lectures, dance performances, and more throughout the run. Visit www.somervillemuseum.org

Are you an artist or *Continued on page 22*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#989

- On the morning on September 11, 2001, at what time did the FAA order every plane in American airspace to land?
- Losing My Religion* was a hit for which alternative rock band?
- What do the witches in the 1993 film *Hocus Pocus* fly on?
- Which continent is home to the Andes Mountains?
- Which famous AI voice assistant was first released by Apple in 2011?
- What actor starred in *The Quiet Man* and *The Shootist*?
- Which actress said, "Fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy night," in the film *About Eve*?
- Which garden is considered to be among the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World?
- What color is a Himalayan poppy?
- What sport was featured on the first curved U.S. coin in 2014?
- Which country hosted a Formula 1 race for the first time in 2011?
- Which chess piece can only move diagonally?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- People spend up to two weeks kissing in their lifetime.
- Adult spend more time on the toilet than they do exercising.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

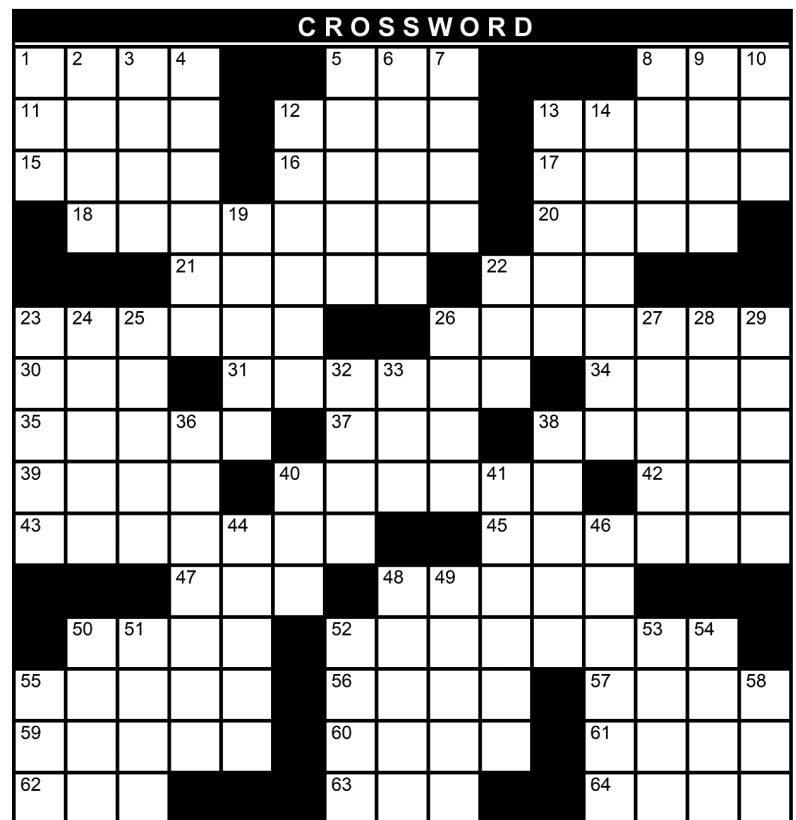
AUTUMN VIBES

ACROSS

- Maze plant
- Wharton degree, acr.
- Special effects in "Avatar," acr.
- Dwarf buffalo
- "On Golden Pond" bird
- Isolated
- Atomizer output
- Enthusiasm
- Pueblo people, pl.
- Pre-game party (2 words)
- Doomsayer's sign
- Perfume bottles
- Tombstone acronym
- Construction binder
- "____": The Movie," 2002 comedy
- Genetic info carrier, acr.
- Dorsa, sing.
- "He's Just Not That ____ You"
- Like some sweaters
- Earth Day mo.
- Opposite of cation
- "Que Sera ____"
- Approved
- Denotes middle
- Assess pro rata
- Lorraine's neighbor
- Doctor Dolittle, e.g.
- Temporary stay
- Chicago's Navy _____, tourist destination
- *Popular fall spectator sport
- Hutu's opponents, 1994
- Quinceanera or bat mitzvah
- Biblical captain
- Rocky ridge
- Having wings
- Russian parliament
- Diamond or ruby
- An affirmative
- Dog command

DOWN

- Cameron, to friends
- The Fonz: "Sit _____!"
- Civil rights icon Parks
- Richard Wright's "____ Son"



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- Relating to mole
- Whatever rocks them!
- "Green Gables" protagonist
- Walking helper
- Smiley face
- "____ Now or Never"
- Smooth, in music
- Before appearance of life, geology
- Patch purchase
- ____ Hop dance
- Ewe's mate
- *Like air in fall
- Keyboard key
- Introduction to economics
- Twelve angry men, e.g.
- Carl Jung's inner self
- Indifferent to emotions
- Type of probe
- Leaf collector
- R&R stop
- Bushels of apples, e.g.
- Impromptu
- Over the top, in text
- Time for an egg hunt
- Falcon's home
- Uses two feet
- Bridal veil fabric
- Smidgins
- Unadulterated
- Individual unit
- Brawl
- Clod
- Tibetan priest
- Chasing game
- *Cushion on a fall ride

Soultion in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

'What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation' festival turns 20 this weekend

What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation presented by *The Boston Globe's Camberville & beyond* returns for the twentieth year this Saturday, September 20, from 2 to 6 p.m. (severe weather date September 21).

This zany, madcap festival honors the invention of Marshmallow Fluff by Archibald Query in Somerville in 1917 and salutes the spirit of innovation that thrives throughout the city today.

Every September since 2005, Marshmallow Fluff has taken over Union Square to instigate all kinds of sticky situations. That's 20 wild, wacky, sweet years of artists, businesses, and community coming together in the name of Fluff. This year's theme, *Forever Fluff: 20 Years of Sticky, Sweet Somerville*, commemorates the endurance of this endlessly unique and unexpected celebration.

If anything's proved true over these 20 years, it's that folks don't Fluff around for just one day. Fluff tattoos? Been there. Fluff "I dos"? Done that. In Somerville, Fluff is so much more than just a culinary confection—it's a time-honored tradition.

Festival-goers love to devour deliciously

diverse food, shake it alongside toe-tapping performances, feud in family-friendly games, visit with 100+ vendors that know what Fluff is all about, and explore Union Square, which was named the 38th coolest neighborhood in the world last fall.

Whether this will be your 1st, 5th, or 20th Fluff Fest, Forever Fluff has something for Fluff fans of all ages:

- Take part in hilarious antics with sticky activities like Fluff Musical Chairs, Fluff Limbo, a Fluff Hairdo Contest, and Fluff Jousting (yes, jousting!) on the Shenanigans Stage and hosted by Fluff Fest's longtime Archibald Query impersonator
- Groove with emcee Saba Wahid Duffy of Kush by Saba on the Fluff'N Jam Stage, with electric performances from: Wyn + The White Lights, Paul Willis, Yellow-Shed, and Grooversity
- Honor this year's Mayor Joe Flufftastic Innovation for Impact Award honoree, Fluff Fest Founder and *Fluff: The Sticky Sweet Story of an American Icon* author, Mimi Graney
- Get inspired at Somernova's Innovation Alley, where ideas stick, robots roam, marshmallows tower, and attendees enjoy



What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation takes place this Saturday, September 20, in Union Square.

hands-on fun

- Challenge yourself or friends to navigate a flufftastic parkour course hosted by Somerville pros Parkour Generations Boston
- Try your hand at old-school, board-walk-style games, including Fluff Bowling, Fluff Ring Toss, and more at the Midway Games Area (free to play, free

to win prizes)

- Strike a pose with colorful cutouts and co-create a community paint-by-number masterpiece of your favorite Fluff characters by local artist Nathaniel Devarie
- Snag your official Fluff Fest merch: t-shirts, sweatshirts, trucker hats, koozies, stickers, tote bags, and more at the Fluff Stuff merch booth

Continued on page 13

Dorothy's Corner BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Breakfast Sandwiches

These make ahead breakfast sandwiches will save you plenty of time during the week whether you're off to work or school. They can also be frozen if you want to make extra.

- 6 English Muffins
- 6 Eggs
- 6 Slices Cheese, Cheddar, Swiss...
- 6 Slices of Canadian Bacon, 12 Slices Bacon, Sausage Pattie or Ham
- Salt & Pepper

Precook the bacon and or sausage patties and set aside. Toast the English muffins. To cook the eggs, I use individual silicone rings to keep the shape uniform, of course this is optional. Place the prepared silicone rings in the

bottom of the nonstick frying pan.

In a small bowl, scramble the eggs, season with salt and pepper, and evenly pour the egg mixture into each silicone ring and cook. Assemble the sandwiches. Place the cooked eggs on the bottom half of the English muffin, add the cheese slices, place the bacon, or sausage on the eggs, then If you're going to eat them right away, no need to scramble the egg, just crack it in the silicone ring, season with salt and pepper to taste and leave the yolk runny if you prefer.

If you plan on freezing, wrap each one individually in wax paper and store in the refrigerator for a couple of hours to make sure they are totally cooled down before placing them into a ziplock bag and storing in the freezer. They should be good for up to a month.

To reheat, place the sandwich in the



microwave and heat for 45 seconds to 1 minute or longer.

Enjoy!

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

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**NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS
FOR TIERED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS**

On or after October 1st, 2025, the City of Somerville will submit a request to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake the following project:

Tier 1 Broad Review Project/Program Title: Small Business Resiliency

Purpose: Provide technical assistance to small businesses in the East Somerville and Union Square areas.

Location: Income eligible areas including East Somerville, Winter Hill, and Union Square. Specific addresses and locations will be subject to environmental reviews once identified.

Project/Program Description: This is a technical assistance program, and will support small businesses in the East Somerville and Union Square areas. The technical assistance will provide small businesses that provide direct services to clients of whom a minimum of 60% reflect the target populations that follow: women/minority owned businesses, non-native English speaking, and low-moderate income entrepreneurs. The businesses may receive things such as: one-on-one consulting, coaching, and mentoring, direct financial assistance to help do things such as acquire property/clear structures/build, expand, or rehab a building/purchase equipment, provide operating capital or lease negotiations, or train new/existing entrepreneurs to understand fundamental business concepts.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)(2)

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review: Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(1) & 58.5(i)(2)], Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973], Explosive and Flammable Hazards [24 CFR Part 51 Subpart C], Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988], Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966], Noise Abatement and Control [Noise Control Act of 1972], Wetlands Protection [Executive Order 11990], and Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898].

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Once sites are selected, tier 2 reviews will be conducted to ensure that they: are not located in a FEMA designated flood area; are not near or containing hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials; do not suffer from adverse environmental conditions; will not be adversely harmed by the proposed action as well as the surrounding neighborhood; do not adversely affect a Massachusetts historically significant site; do not have an adverse effect on endangered or threatened species, or critical habitats; are not subject to adverse noise levels; are in the proximity of explosive/flammable hazards. If the described Tier 2 review does identify any of these scenarios, HUD guidelines will be followed to best mitigate the concern.

Estimated Project Cost: HUD Funding: \$150,000 Estimated Cost: \$150,000

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)(2). An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA and may be examined or copied Monday - Wednesday 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. or Friday 8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. or can be requested through an email to mrubin@somervillema.gov.

Tier 1 Broad Review Project/Program Title: Parks and Open Space Improvements

Purpose: Enhancing urban environment through additional and improved recreational spaces.

Location: Income eligible areas including but not limited to East Somerville, Winter Hill, and Union Square. Specific addresses will be assessed in the site-specific reviews.

Project/Program Description: This project will create and revitalize quality recreational open spaces in the city's most densely populated and underserved neighborhoods. The City will focus its parks and open space activities on the low-to-moderate-income neighborhoods that demonstrate the greatest need and lack of suitable green space and recreational amenities.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review: Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)], Endangered Species Act of 1973, Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988], Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966], Wetlands Protection [Executive Order 11990], and Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898].

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Tier 2 reviews will be conducted to ensure projects comply with the above listed federal regulations. Sites will be reviewed to ensure they are not located in FEMA designated flood area and that there are not on-site or nearby hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials that could harm the health and safety of occupants. Project sites will be evaluated to determine that the site and surrounding neighborhood do not suffer from adverse environmental conditions and that the proposed action will not create an adverse and disproportionate environmental impact or aggravate an existing impact. The Massachusetts Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Officer will be consulted to ensure the project does not adversely affect a historical site and when relevant, Tribal Historical Preservation Officers will also be consulted. Sites will be reviewed to ensure projects do not have an adverse effect on endangered or threatened species or critical habitats. Due to potential ground disturbances, potential effects on endangered species, important farmland, and wetlands will also be reviewed. If adverse conditions are identified related to the above listed regulations, HUD guidance will be consulted to ensure proper mitigation occurs for each project site.

Estimated Project Cost: HUD funding: \$245,000, Total estimated project cost: \$245,000

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1). An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA and may be examined or copied Monday - Wednesday 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. or Friday 8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. or can be requested through an email to mrubin@somervillema.gov.

Tier 1 Broad Review Project/Program Title: Neighborhood Infrastructure and Improvements

Purpose: The project will focus on making improvements in underserved and income eligible areas.

Location: Income eligible low- to moderate-income census tracts.

Project/Program Description: The project will focus on making infrastructure, streetscape, and multi-modal safety improvements including traffic calming, ADA improvements, and utility improvements in underserved and income eligible areas. The activities identified will be aimed at benefitting areas that serve a minimum of 800 low- to moderate-income residents. As a result of the densely populated nature of Somerville's neighborhoods, OSPCD is confident that most activities will serve a much higher number of low- to moderate-income persons. It is likely that this tiered review will cover no more than three different infrastructure projects.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)(2)

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review: Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(1) & 58.5(i)(2)], Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973], Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988], Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966], Noise Abatement and Control [Noise Control Act of 1972], Wetlands Protection [Executive Order 11990], and Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898].

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Once sites are selected, tier 2 reviews will be conducted to ensure that they: are not located in a FEMA designated flood area; are not near or containing hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials; do not suffer from adverse environmental conditions; will not be adversely harmed by the proposed action as well as the surrounding neighborhood; do not adversely affect a Massachusetts historically significant site; do not have an adverse effect on endangered or threatened species, or critical habitats; are not subject to adverse noise levels; are in the proximity of explosive/flammable hazards. If the described Tier 2 review does identify any of these scenarios, HUD guidelines will be followed to best mitigate the concern.

Estimated Project Cost: HUD Funding: \$25,000 Estimated Cost: \$25,000

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)(2). An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA and may be examined or copied Monday - Wednesday 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. or Friday 8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. or can be requested through an email to mrubin@somervillema.gov.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development c/o Miranda Rubin, on the 3rd floor of city hall or via email to mrubin@somervillema.gov. All comments received by October 1st, 2025, will be considered by the City of Somerville prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

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

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

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

Alan Inacio, OSPCD Director of Finance and Community Development, City of Somerville, Certifying Officer

LEGAL NOTICES

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NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR TIERED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

On or after October 1st, 2025, the City of Somerville will submit a request to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake the following project:

Tier 1 Broad Review Project/Program Title: Housing Acquisition and Rehabilitation

Purpose: Create and Preserve Affordable Housing

Location: This program will be conducted citywide, and once specific homes/addresses have been identified, further environmental review will be conducted for those specific sites.

Project/Program Description: The goal of this program is to assist low-income households that will participate in the 100 Homes program. CDBG funds will primarily be used to undertake rehabilitation work for income eligible residents, but funds may also be used to fund housing acquisition on a limited basis. The housing rehab program assists low- and moderate-income residents across the city in creating cleaner/safe housing, addressing code violations, and critical rehab needs, and lowering housing costs through energy efficient upgrades.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: CFR Part 58.35(a)(3)

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review: Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994, Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR Part 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)], Explosive and Flammable Hazards [24 CFR Part 51], Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988], National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Noise Control Act of 1972, and Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898].

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Once sites are selected, the following process will occur to ensure compliance with all relevant federal regulations: sites will be reviewed to ensure they are not located in FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard area and that there are not on-site or nearby hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials that could harm the health and safety of occupants; project sites will be evaluated to determine that the site and surrounding neighborhood do not suffer from adverse environmental conditions and that the proposed action will not create an adverse and disproportionate environmental impact or aggravate an existing impact; the Massachusetts Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Officer will be consulted to ensure the project does not adversely affect a historical site, and when warranted, relevant tribal historical preservation officers will be consulted; site noise and proximity to explosive/flammable hazards will also be reviewed when warranted by federal regulation. If review identifies areas that require mitigation to address any of the federal regulations reviewed during the Tier 2 review, HUD guidance will be followed to ensure best mitigation practices.

Estimated Project Cost: HUD Funding: \$500,000. Estimated Cost: \$500,000.

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per CFR Part 58.35(a)(3). An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA and may be examined or copied Monday - Wednesday 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. or Friday 8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. or can be requested through an email to mrubin@somervillema.gov.

Tier 1 Broad Review Project/Program Title: Green Infrastructure

Purpose: The City will Operate a tree planting program.

Location: Income eligible low- to moderate-income census tracts.

Project/Program Description: The City will operate a tree planting program in eligible low- to moderate-income census tracts. Activities identified will be aimed at benefitting areas that serve a minimum of 500 low- to moderate-income residents. Given the densely populated nature of Somerville's neighborhoods, OSPCD is confident most activities will serve a much higher number of low- to moderate-income residents. This program is operated citywide, but CDBG funds are only used for trees planted in CDBG-eligible areas. The planting process for city trees may involve some ground disturbances.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review: Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)], Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973], Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988], Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966], Noise Abatement and Control [Noise Control Act of 1972], Wetlands Protection [Executive Order 11990], and Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898].

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Once sites are selected, tier 2 reviews will be conducted to ensure that they: are not located in a FEMA designated flood area; are not near or containing hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials; do not suffer from adverse environmental conditions; will not be adversely harmed by the proposed action as well as the surrounding neighborhood; do not adversely affect a Massachusetts historically significant site; do not have an adverse effect on endangered or threatened species, or critical habitats; are not subject to adverse noise levels; are in the proximity of explosive/flammable hazards. If the described Tier 2 review does identify any of these scenarios, HUD guidelines will be followed to best mitigate the concern.

Estimated Project Cost: HUD Funding: \$75,000 Estimated Cost: \$75,000

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per CFR Part 58.35(a)(1)(2). An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, City of Somerville, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA and may be examined or copied Monday - Wednesday 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. or Friday 8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. or can be requested through an email to mrubin@somervillema.gov.

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OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

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Alan Inacio, OSPCD Director of Finance and Community Development, City of Somerville, Certifying Officer

9/17/25 The Somerville Times

Residents offer mixed reactions to Memorial Drive project CONT. FROM PG 5

public safety improvements.

Driscoll said it was not DCR's first time reducing lanes. Referencing prior projects, he said, "There was a lot of concerns from people thinking that this [lane reduction] was going to be a traffic nightmare on Greenough Boulevard, and that never happened."

He added, "We have a lot of success stories doing similar projects. And based on the same kind of traffic analysis and engineering, we take it very carefully and seriously to try to get this right."

Dan Totten, a Central Square resident, said, "I get that not everybody is completely satisfied with it." He said, "But I think

overall, it's just going to be such a transformative project for the region, for people who live both in Cambridge and outside Cambridge."

He said he uses the current path daily for walking and running. He added, "It's hard to overstate how incredible this day is, and to jump on here and hear that this is beginning

tomorrow is like, 'I'm just over the moon.'"

Links:

[1] <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/memorial-drive-greenway-improvements-phase-iii>

[2] [https://www.mass.gov/guides/dcr-master-plans#-dcr-parkways-master-plan-\(2020\)-](https://www.mass.gov/guides/dcr-master-plans#-dcr-parkways-master-plan-(2020)-)

LEGAL NOTICES

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**City of Somerville
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, October 1, 2025**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_22vLiExThuREImYIC-JcQ
Webinar ID: 894 6353 1296

TO CALL IN

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

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

872 Broadway 872 Broadway LLC seeks relief from SZO § 2.4.3.d.v to allow mechanical equipment in the frontage area of a lot, which requires a Hardship Variance.

872 Broadway 872 Broadway LLC seeks relief from SZO § 4.1.7.d. ground story primary facade fenestration requirement for a General Building in the Mid-Rise 3 (MR-3) zoning district, which requires a Hardship Variance.

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

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

Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov.

9/17/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP# 26-15**

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

Real Estate and Personal Property Tax Bill Services

The RFP package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, September 17, 2025**. Sealed responses 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, October 8, 2025**.

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

Please email tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

9/17/25 The Somerville Times



Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.149 Over \$150K

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Unit Modernization - Bryant Manor at Bryant Manor (667-4) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **REVERSE ARCHITECTURE**.

The Project consists of but not limited to: Bryant Manor is a 5-story "section 8 new construction" elderly housing apartment building located in Somerville, MA. The building was originally constructed in 1977 and has 134 1- bedroom units and first floor common area amenities. The building has a concrete structure and is noncombustible construction. The project consists of interior renovations to 3 units, including one accessible unit. The work includes dry-wall patching and selective modifications to walls, ceilings and soffits, new finishes, fixtures, cabinetry, lighting, plumbing, and electrical work. New electric heaters will be added to bathrooms. New shelving and rods in closets. Replacement of door hardware and selective door replacement. Flooring materials require asbestos abatement. The accessible unit shall meet the requirements of ADA and 521 CMR for Group 2B dwelling units. The units will be vacant during construction, the building will be occupied.

The work is estimated to cost **\$284,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 10/03/2025 at 12:00PM EDT for filed sub-bids and by 10/17/2025 at 12:00PM EDT for general bids. Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, **General Building Construction**, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

General Bids will be received until **24 October 2025 at 2:00PM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

Filed Sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received until **09 October 2025 at 2:00PM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

Filed sub-bidders must be DCAMM certified for the trades listed below and bidders must include a current DCAMM Sub-Bidder Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Sub-Bidder's Update Statement.

TRADES

Plumbing
Electrical Work

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled
Date and Time: 10/02/2025 at 10:00AM EDT Address: 75 Myrtle st, Somerville, MA 02145 Instructions: Meet at the front door.

Pre-bid Conference / Site Visit is MANDATORY for General Contractors.

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

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Hudson, MA 01749
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**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, October 7, 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.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:
https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_9nb1LluQmeCeff7PR5Z5Q

Webinar ID: 876 9314 6692

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

Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties

HP25-000076 - 76 Highland Avenue

Applicant: Li Liu
Owner: Li Liu

The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing a total of twenty-nine (29) windows.

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

HP25-000075- 382 McGrath Highway

Applicant: Nicholas Tan
Owner: 382 McGrath NT 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 to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. Note: Written comments due to historic@somervillema.gov NO LATER THAN NOON one week prior to the meeting date. Email historic@somervillema.gov with inquiries.

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB 26-13**

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

Vector Truck Repairs, Services, and Parts

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, September 15, 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, October 2, 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 for more information.

Jordan Remy
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer
617-625-6600 x3400

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Statement from Mayor Katjana Ballantyne on local ICE activity

September 12, 2025

These are profoundly difficult times for all in our community. I recognize the fear and suffering that residents are experiencing as federal immigration enforcement activities have increased in Somerville, the greater Boston area, and the nation. As an immigrant myself, I understand this fear personally.

Let me be clear about our commitment: Somerville will continue to do everything within our legal authority to support all residents. We are providing Know Your Rights trainings, connecting families to legal services, helping with guardianship preparations, and offering wraparound supports for those impacted by detentions and their families. We maintain our lawful sanctuary policies because they keep our entire community safer. We are stepping up to meet the needs of our community in a time of crisis.

To those who are afraid: we see you, we stand with you, and we will continue using every legal tool available to support you. Our values of inclusion and justice remain unwavering, especially during these uncertain times. Our call for humane immigration reform that respects the dignity and the contributions of immigrants stands firm.

Below are some supports and information that may be helpful to you:

- 1.The MA Attorney General's Guidance: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: ICE Enforcement, A Guide for Immigrants, Families, and Communities can be found at: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.mass.gov/doc/ago-ice-guidance-05292025/download>
- 2.For help finding a loved one who has been detained, the National Immigration Law Center put together a step-by-step guide, which can be found at: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/How-to-Locate-a-ICE-Disappearance.pdf>
- 3.Individual supports: The City of Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA) is able to support people who live or work in Somerville with referrals to city, state, and non-profit services; referrals to immigration legal services; and provision of resources and information, including Know Your Rights information. To connect with SOIA, email SOIA@somervillema.gov or visit SOIA's website for more ways to contact.
- 4.Information and general resources: The City and Schools also maintain a Know Your Rights resources page at www.somervillema.gov/onesomerville.
- 5.For business owners: The city's Economic Development Division is able to provide businesses with information and resources on business owners' rights and responsibilities. To contact the Economic Development division, email economicdevelopment@somervillema.gov.
- 6.Somerville Public Schools: SPS staff are ready to assist families and connect them to resources, services, and to help answer questions. Please reach out to school staff, teachers, liaisons, or counselors for assistance.

Attend a School Committee Meeting

Dates and times for school committee meetings are listed on the Somerville Public School district website calendar: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/events/calendar>. Visit the School Committee website (<https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-leadership/somerville-school-committee>) for information and find meeting details on the City of Somerville Events page: <https://www.somervillema.gov/meetingdocs>

'What the Fluff? A Tribute to Union Square Innovation' festival turns 20 this weekend

CONT. FROM PG 9

Browse 100+ vendors whipping up sweet and savory Fluff-inspired dishes, creating oodles of Fluff-themed items, and connecting festival-goers with the vital work of community groups who serve Somerville's diverse community.

Shop scores of local businesses who open their doors to Fluff lovers in the lead up and during the festival for you to enjoy scrumptiously sticky treats, buy limited edition Fluff goodies, and take advantage of other flufftastic specials.

"Twenty years of Fluff Fest is so much more than just a sweet, rocking good time – it celebrates what makes Somerville unique," said Jessica Eshleman, Executive Director of Union Square Main Streets, the nonprofit that produces the festival in partnership with the Somerville Arts

Council. "Innovation, the arts, small businesses, and strong community connections are what make Union Square the place to be on September 20."

The endlessly entertaining What the Fluff? Festival is made possible by the generosity of its sweet sponsors: The Boston Globe's Camberville & beyond, GBH, The Hamilton Company, Somernova, Event-Them, Kerbey Harrington Pinkard LLP, Liberty Cannabis, Rockland Trust, USQ, The Goods Cannabis, Coast Cannabis, Cambria Boston Somerville, Life Alive, Middlesex Federal, Nicewicz Family Farm, Raising Cane's, Renewal by Anderson, MassBike, Parkour Generations Boston, Confetti Friends, Parenting Journey, The Durkee-Mower Company, and Teddie Peanut Butter.

Festivities are expected to attract 20,000 Fluff fans, and traffic will be rerouted around Union Square to accommodate festival activities. Revelers are highly encouraged to walk, bike, boogie, or take public transit.

Free bike valets by MassBike can be found on Somerville Avenue at the eastern festival entrance near Gracie's Ice Cream and the western entrance near Market Basket.

What the Fluff? is produced by Union Square Main Streets and the Somerville Arts Council.

Date: Saturday, September 20, from 2 to 6 p.m. Severe weather date: Sunday, September 21

Where: Somerville Avenue from Warren Street near Gracie's Ice Cream to

School Street near Market Basket in Union Square, Somerville, MA 02143

Cost: Free

Fluff details: www.flufffestival.com

Union Square Main Streets

Union Square Main Streets works to strengthen the dynamic neighborhood of businesses and people in Union Square. More information is available at www.unionsquaremain.org.

Somerville Arts Council

The mission of the Somerville Arts Council is to cultivate and celebrate the creative expressions of the Somerville community. Through innovative collaborations and quality programming, we work to make the arts an integral part of life reflective of our diverse city. More information is available at www.somervilleartscouncil.org.

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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

From page 8

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 9:42 a.m., for first time in history | 8. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon |
| 2. R.E.M. | 9. Sky blue |
| 3. Vacuum cleaners | 10. Baseball, commemorating the 75th anniversary of baseball's Hall of Fame |
| 4. South America | 11. India |
| 5. Siri | 12. Bishop |
| 6. John Wayne | |
| 7. Bette Davis | |

Councilors condemn masked ICE agents

By The Times Staff

At the latest meeting of the Somerville City Council held on September 11, lawmakers condemned the use of face masks by immigration agents, requesting identification standards and submitting a resolution that, while mostly symbolic, may assist with the eventual ban of masks worn by ICE agents.

A resolution submitted by Councilor J.T. Scott asked the mayor to update the City Council on any plans to prevent ICE agents from wearing identity-concealing masks and issue a requirement for agents to provide identification upon request.

"This is a measure that was actually inspired by what we are hearing about from Chicago," said Councilor Scott.

Masked agents have caused fear and mistrust in immigrant communities during recent abductions, resulting in confusion and anxiety.

"At the very least, the activity of abductions of our neighbors by masked people could be reduced," said Councilor Scott.

Immigration agents cannot be directly prevented by the City of Somerville or Massachusetts state laws because the state law does not govern federal law enforcement.

Councilor Matthew McLaughlin read aloud a statement made by Terrence M. Cunningham, who is the Deputy Executive Director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), during an All Things Considered interview with Ari Shapiro that aired on August 19 on National Public Radio.

Cunningham said in the interview that "face coverings are inappropriate in most cases in policing in a democratic society in 2025."

Councilor McLaughlin says residents of Somerville are not okay with these tactics used by immigration agents. "People who know better, who know the job, know that this is wrong."

ICE agents were "trolling City Hall," taking selfies and mocking city officials, and "intentionally putting terror into the community," said Councilor McLaughlin.

Councilor McLaughlin added that the agents' behavior is inappropriate and dis-



A resolution submitted by Councilor J.T. Scott requests updates from the mayor on measures to curtail the use of identity-concealing masks by ICE agents.

respectful. "To know that is being allowed and encouraged from the highest levels of government is very disheartening," said Councilor McLaughlin. "This is not an

occupied country, you're not trolls, you are representatives of our government, and you should conduct yourself that way when you are in any city in America."

Co-Response Pilot program to support residents in mental health crisis

As a significant step in realizing the city's commitment to Public Safety for All goals, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Police Chief Shumeane Benford announce that the city is preparing to launch a Co-Response Pilot Program this spring. The initiative will pair Somerville Police Department officers with trained public health professionals who will respond together to calls involving residents experiencing mental health crises.

The new program will be the first of its kind in Somerville, designed to provide a proactive, effective, and health-centered response to real-time behavioral health crises. Advantages of co-response include additional de-escalation capacity protecting the safety of all on scene – both individuals and officers – as well as swift service referral support for residents in need of a range of resources.

"Too often, people in mental health crisis are left without the right kind of support in their moment of greatest need," said Mayor Ballantyne. "This pilot recognizes that an effective public safety approach encompasses care, dignity, and connecting people to resources. By bringing police officers and public health profes-

sionals together, we can provide the kind of response that our community has called for and that our residents deserve."

Chief Benford added, "Police officers are not always the best first responders for mental health emergencies, and they know that too. Working side-by-side with public health professionals will make our response more effective and safer."

The pilot builds on recommendations from the city's Public Safety for All process, a multi-year initiative led by the Department of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ) to reimagine public safety in Somerville.

Through surveys, listening sessions, and task force reports, residents voiced strong support for non-police or combined responses to incidents and emergency calls involving potential behavioral health crises. A clear majority said they want social workers/public health professionals involved in these calls, a finding that directly shaped the City's decision to move forward with this pilot.

To turn these recommendations into action, the city recently hired its first Public Safety for All Manager, a role dedicated to implementing the community-driven reforms outlined in the Public Safety for All



reports. Advancing the co-response model is one of the first major cross-departmental steps under this new leadership.

The initiative will also build on the City's long-standing Community Outreach Help & Recovery (COHR) jail diversion program, which embeds social workers and public health professionals within the Somerville Police Department to connect

individuals with services and supports that help them avoid the criminal justice system. The new pilot represents a next step, moving from follow-up and outreach to direct co-response in real time.

Further details about the program's structure, staffing, and community partners will be announced in the coming months, with a launch expected in spring 2026.

Somerville SEPAC presents report on Special Education to DESE and City Council

On the evening of September 11, the Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC) publicly presented for the first time its 25-page report to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) before the Somerville City Council. The presentation was introduced by City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezio, who underscored her concern that the voices of special education families are too often excluded from critical decision-making processes across city government.

SSEPAC Chair Liz Eldridge addressed the Council, outlining the report's findings and warning of systemic failures affecting one-fifth of Somerville's student population.

"Our report is based on district data, public records, and extensive testimony from both parents and teachers," Eldridge said. "It compiles multiple sources into one accessible document to ensure transparency and accountability. The gap between the district's stated vision and the lived reality for students with disabilities is enormous. In practice, services are delayed or denied, evaluations are overdue, and IEPs are sometimes written based on staffing shortages rather than student needs. This

is illegal."

Key findings highlighted by Eldridge include:

- Urgent accountability concerns: In May, DESE designated Somerville Special Education as "Needs Assistance," citing non-compliance issues and low MCAS performance.

- Student outcomes far below peers: In 2024, only 12% of students with disabilities in grades 3–8 were proficient in English Language Arts (vs. 46% of peers), and only 10% in math (vs. 39%).

- Structural barriers: Understaffing, insufficient training, inconsistent planning, weak implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and budget priorities that fail to meet legal requirements.

- Systemic inequities: Educators forced to triage services, and parents left to fight for rights guaranteed under federal and state law.

Eldridge stressed that meaningful corrective action requires more than compliance "on paper."

"Every child in Somerville has the right to a free and appropriate public education under IDEA and Massachusetts regula-

tions. Corrective action must mean full

implementation of IEPs (individualized education plans for students with disabilities), staffing classrooms appropriately, ensuring timely evaluations, and equipping all educators with the training and resources to succeed," she said. "Families must be engaged as state law requires. Our students cannot wait any longer."

The report, available at www.tinyurl.com/SSEPACreport, has already shaped the citywide conversation. It was cited multiple times during the Mayoral Forum on Libraries and Schools on September 5th at East Somerville Community School, and has been formally shared with DESE, the Somerville School Committee, all current elected officials and candidates, Senator Pat Jehlen, State Representatives Erika Uytendhoeven and Christine Barber, and the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.

Councilor Strezio concluded:

"It is a critically important report. It's not just a report. It is a data assessment and accountability plan that has been submitted to DESE, that, frankly, our city should be using as a roadmap for what we should be doing."

"The Somerville Special Education Par-



ent Advisory Council is an incredible organization, and they are here to work with us. And I am asking my colleagues to take a serious look at this report, because it's not only critically important for the future of our city's buildings but for the future of all of our students."

About Somerville SEPAC

The Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC) is a volunteer-led, state-mandated advisory body advocating for the rights and educational outcomes of students with disabilities. SSEPAC works to ensure accountability, transparency, and collaboration between families, educators, and the district. Visit SSEPAC's website at <https://somer-villesepac.wixsite.com/sepac> or follow them on Facebook at Somerville SEPAC - Special Education Parent Advisory Council and on Instagram at @SomervilleSEPAC.

Birthday parties, 1960's style CONT. FROM PG 3

pictured out last year.

The party goes were the kids from the neighborhood and/or your siblings and cousins. In the photo shown from my birthday party in 1960, there were kids from four neighbor families on Pearson Ave. Four kids lived across the street, three lived next door, two lived upstairs, and me, my brother and sister. Can't get any any closer that.

And it was a fun time in our lives. We were with our first friends. We played in the street together, we all went to the same school, and our parents were friends. But after eating all that cake and ice cream and soda, there was the danger of the dreaded sugar rush. 12 kids all hopped up on mega sweets could get messy!

I remember one party when me and my cousin Butch got in trouble for squishing cheese puffs on each other's foreheads and flicking ice cream at the girls. And where were the parents during these 60's kids' parties? Mom kept watch over the kids

while the other parents were in the living room smoking their brains out. No one cared about our clean, young healthy lungs back then. No one thought of the hazards. Every so often dad would come in the kitchen and grab a few more cans of Schlitz or Ballantine Ale from the fridge for the adult guests.

Now let's look at some of the presents that I would have gotten for my seventh birthday party in 1960. We didn't get gift cards, we got actual stuff. An Aurora Frankenstein model, a Tonka Toy truck, or maybe a Popeye Colorforms set. There was always at least one gift that came from Davis Square's Bargain Center. You could tell because it either smelled like smoke or it was singed from a fire.

Fast forward to modern day. A couple of my grandkids' parties were held at farms. Kids could pet the animals, and there would be a hayride. My butt hurt from sitting on the floor of that crowded horse drawn wagon and I'd be pulling strands

of hay out of my socks on the ride home, not to mention smelling like a horse. But everyone had a blast. One year the theme was unicorns and my daughter hired a horse that they actually "turned into" a unicorn (see photo) Hope they didn't use super glue!

Today there are trampoline parties, parkour parties, and a slew of clowns, magicians, singers, and other performers for hire for your kid's birthday party. If you have a trampoline or parkour party I'd probably invite an EMT or have an ambulance ... parkoured outside, just to be safe.

My birthday party in 1960 was bitter-sweet. It was in July, and my family was moving in September to our new home near Davis Square. We went from being around the corner from Ball Square to being a stone's throw from Davis Square, but it seemed a world away.

Moving was very traumatic for me at age 7, my sister who was 8, and my 4-year-old little brother. It took us a

while to get used to the new street. Our new house was scary. The new neighborhood kids were mean. My cousin Butch had to come over and straighten out the bully next door. We missed our Pearson Ave. friends.

Today, I just pop over to Lyndell's Bakery (where I worked when I was 16) and pick up a cake for the small family birthday parties we now have for me, mom, the boys, or grandma. As far as the grandkids are concerned, I know there will be lots more wonderful, exciting, themed parties that my daughter loves throwing.

I'll never forget those birthday parties we had many years ago when we were kids. They were some very special and warm times. Simple, fun and memorable. And even though we didn't have a magician who pulled a rabbit out his hat, my dad and uncles could pull a cold Narraganset Ale out of the fridge and make it disappear. I miss those magical times.

Stay safe my friends.

Rock and Roll Yard Sale cultivates community in Union Square

By Jordan Pagkalinawan

On Sunday, September 14, residents trekked to Union Square Plaza to check out the Somerville Rock and Roll Yard Sale, a longstanding market offering a variety of vintage goods.

Couples, families, and young adults perused the lines of tents that featured clothes, mugs, signs, and vinyl records, pulling out cash or scanning Venmo QR codes to support local businesses. Some made small talk with store owners, eager to learn more about their products or inquire about a specific book or record.

Founded by Christopher and Jennifer Daltry of What Cheer Records and Vintage, the event originated over two decades ago in Rhode Island.

“We started this in Providence in 2003,” Christopher Daltry said. “At one point, pretty soon after, a friend of ours, Dave Sakowski, was mutual friends with people who run the Somerville Arts Council. And they were starting the ArtsUnion program, which was bringing markets like this to Union Square.”

Daltry explained that ArtsUnion offered a stipend for the yard sale, which decreased every year, with the goal of creating a self-sufficient marketplace.

“We sort of replicated what we were doing in Providence, but this automatically had a different feel because of the different population and community,” he added. “And it still does because of the way this city has changed over time.”

Daltry believes one of the yard sale’s most unique features is that it combines aspects of other markets into one event.

“There are record sales, vintage sales, and the maker markets. We just decided

at one point, why not combine them all into one?” he said. “And that gives everyone something to dig through. People come as a couple, and one might like records and the other might like vintage clothes or something homemade.”

He also emphasized the “incredible” support from the Somerville Arts Council and the presence of the Boston music community.

“WMBR, our host DJs, they bring their own flavor of weirdness,” Daltry added. “I think today, for hours on end, they’ve been playing different versions of the same Beatles song, *Norwegian Wood*. So for hours on end, you’ll hear and you’ll see things maybe you won’t elsewhere.”

Over the course of the decades-long journey, one of the most rewarding aspects for Daltry is the community the yard sale has fostered.

“I was just talking with someone, he was saying that for the past eight years, he’s come and it’s something he looks forward to every year,” he said. “Doing this for two decades, the vendors are different in some cases. Some are the same people who have been doing it all along. So, we have friendships that come and sell and buy here, and again, also with the Arts Council. It’s a cool way of pulling people together.”

Among the Rock and Roll Yard Sale’s longtime vendors was Eric Bouvier of My-Buzz Records, who has sold at the event for five years, and also highlighted the camaraderie among sellers and the “communal” aspect of the event.

Bouvier believes the Rock and Roll Yard Sale is important for the arts, particularly in divisive times.

“It doesn’t matter what you believe in, you come here [and] everyone’s buying



The Rock and Roll Yard Sale, curated by What Cheer?, took place last Sunday in Union Square Plaza.

records, everyone loves music,” he said. “It really does unite people, and we really need that these days. We love it, and we love our customers. It’s been a great experience for us.”

First-time vendors also felt that connection, including Kyle Kegerreis, who sold books, CDs, and DVDs he collected over the course of 25 years.

“I used to travel a lot for work,” Kegerreis explained, “and I would always hit up used bookstores and just buy books that I thought were cool and wanted to have. And now, I’ve got so many, I’m just passing them on [and] trying to sell some.”

Kegerreis echoed the importance of the Rock and Roll Yard Sale, particularly the in-person connection in an age of online shopping.

“It’s a more personal experience than just buying things on eBay and Amazon, which

is obviously where a lot of bookselling has gone,” he said. “Human contact, right? It’s a nice thing. I think it’s really cool.”

Though Daltry says he and Jennifer “sort of have the formula down,” they hope to keep up with the times and promote future markets through social media to draw new faces to the yard sale. Daltry described the current promotional practices as “old school” and “very grassroots,” noting how he and his wife use a staple gun, posters, and postcards to advertise the event.

“We’re from Rhode Island, but we’ve learned the different neighborhoods and whatnot, but we need to continue to bring new faces here, new generations of people,” he added. “Otherwise, we have a great relationship with the Arts Council and the city.”

“And so as long as people want to come, we want to keep doing it every year.”

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Is emotional spending really a common problem?

A: Yes— and it can quietly create major setbacks in your finances! Emotional spending means making purchases as a response to feelings rather than needs, and it’s more common than most people realize.

How to recognize it:

- Impulse purchases triggered by stress, boredom, or low moods

- Feeling a quick high followed by guilt or regret
- Regular surprises in your bank or credit card statements

What to do instead:

- Start with awareness—pause before unplanned spending
- Track emotional triggers and replace spending with healthier outlets
- Work on the root cause—stress, sadness, or a need for control
- Build systems—like budgeting or auto-

matic savings—to reduce temptation

Over time, intentional habits can help you spend with purpose instead of impulse.

Any questions? I’d be happy to help.

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

Disclaimer: This column provides general



financial information and should not be considered legal, investment, or tax advice. Individual situations vary. Always consult a qualified professional for personalized guidance.

Mayor's Senior Picnic 2025

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and Somerville's Council on Aging hosted the annual Mayor's Senior Picnic at Trum Field on September 9. Food, music, and good cheer were plentiful for all who attended.





Photos by Claudia Ferro





Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week

Q: Is anybody exempt from the federal Fair Housing Act?

A: There are several situations that are exempted from Title VIII:

- 1) A single-family house sold or rented by the owner--but only if done without the use of a real estate broker and without discriminatory advertising (oral or written), and only if certain other conditions are met.
- 2) Rental of rooms or units in owner-occupied dwellings of four units or less.
- 3) Exemptions for familial status include:
 - state and federally owned elderly developments; or,
 - housing intended for and solely occupied by persons 62 years of age or older; or,
 - housing intended for occupancy by at least one person 55 years old or older per unit.
- 4) Exemptions for disabilities include:
 - persons whose tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the health and safety of others; and,
 - persons whose tenancy would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others.

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.

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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Double feature... — Photo by Denise Provost

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



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On This Day in History

September 17

- 1787 – The Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia approves the constitution for the United States of America.
- 1862 – The Battle of Antietam in Maryland, the bloodiest day in U.S. history, begins.
- 1916 – Germany's "Red Baron," Manfred von Richthofen, wins his first aerial combat.
- 1947 – James Forrestal is sworn in as first the U.S. Secretary of Defense.
- 1959 – The X-15 rocket plane makes its first flight.
- 1962 – The first federal suit to end public school segregation is filed by the U.S. Justice Department.
- 1976 – The Space Shuttle is unveiled to the public.
- 1978 – Egypt and Israel sign the Camp David Accords.
- 1983 – Vanessa Williams becomes the first black Miss America.
- 2006 – Alaska's Fourpeaked Mountain erupts for the first time in 10,000 years.
- 2011 – Occupy Wall Street movement calling for greater social and economic equality begins in New York City's Zuccotti Park

Riverfest 2025

This year's Riverfest took place on Saturday, September 13. Attendees enjoyed fireworks over the Mystic River, shopped at 30+ artisan vendors, played beach volleyball or pickleball at Club Volo, and experienced live performances on two different stages throughout the day. This year, the Baxter Park Oval featured a bounce house obstacle course, giveaways, roving entertainment, and more family-friendly fun. The evening ended with a breathtaking fireworks display over the Mystic River, the perfect finale to a day of community, celebration, and fun.

— Photos by Angel Tummino and Lorraine Barr



Somerville Preliminary Election unofficial results

CONT. FROM PG 1

Christopher Ryan Spicer – 2,395
 Will Mbab – 7,221
 Kristen Strezo – 5,391
 Scott Istvan – 2,757
 Jack Perenick – 2,967
 Marianne Walles – 3,265
 Tuesday N. Thomas – 981

Holly Simone – 2,769
 Jonathan Link – 3,448
 Justin Klekota – 2,037
 Ari Iaccarino – 1,780
 Ben Wheeler – 6,177
 Write-in – 166
 Blank – 6,330

Councilor Ward 7# votes

Wilbert Pineda – 395
 Michael Murray – 228
 Emily E. Hardt – 925
 Write-in – 9
 Blank – 74

Councilor Ward 3# votes

Jessie C. Ratey – 610

Kat S. Johnston – 602
 Michele Lippens – 657
 Write-in – 7
 Blank – 327

Check for any further updates on the election results on our website at www.the-somervilletimes.com.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

craftsman who creates objects for sale? You can rent a table to display and sell your wares on **Saturday, October 25**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the **Holiday Crafts Fair** at the **Somerville Community Baptist Church** in Davis Square. The price for renting a table is \$35. The Fair will also feature food and fun activities for all ages. To rent a table, please make out your check for \$35 to Somerville Community Baptist Church, and mail it along with your name and contact information (address, phone, email) to SCBC, 31 College Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144. For more information about the Fair, contact **Marion Annacone**, mari-on.annacone@gmail.com.

Dilboy Post will be holding their **3rd Annual Comedy Fundraiser, Elaine Pelino & Friends**, hosted by **John Harrington**. The event will be held on **November 9**, 2 – 5 p.m., 351 Summer St. For tickets (\$25) and more information: www.dilboyfw529.com, dilboy.post@comcast.net, 617-666-8794.

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 Schools** want to hear from you. To learn more about the project and take the survey offered in seven languages, please visit somervillema.gov/newpk8. The deadline to complete the survey is 11:59 p.m. on **Monday, September 22**. For general assistance in taking the survey or interpretation support for other languages, please contact 311 (617-666-3311).

Registrations are now open for **Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services' fall Savvy Caregiver course**. Savvy Caregiver is an evidence-based training program designed to help family caregivers best support a loved one with dementia and care for themselves. The course has been

proven to decrease caregiver distress, burden, and depression, while increasing a caregiver's sense of competence and confidence in their care role. Participation is free. Savvy Caregiver will be held virtually via Zoom **each Wednesday** from 12 to 2 p.m., **starting October 1 and concluding on November 12**. To register, call 617-628-2601 ext. 3153 or email katherine.bonilla@eldercare.org.

Ignite: A Global Street Food & Fire Festival is returning to Union Square on **Saturday, September 27**. Get ready for a magical afternoon filled with flavors from around the world, incredible culture and fire performances, and entertainment that will light up the evening. Expect more opportunities for hands-on experiences. 3:30 – 7:30 p.m., **Union Square**. <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/events/ignite-festival-2/>.

The **Somerville Garden Club** is holding its annual plant sale. **Sunday, September 21**, from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. (rain or shine), 331 Summer Street, Somerville. Discover the perfect plant to enliven your garden or windowsill at this popular yearly sale. Perennials for sun and shade, herbs, shrubs, groundcovers, plus a wide variety of house plants, will be featured. Choose from hundreds of plants donated by Somerville Garden Club members and friends – there's something for everyone! Horticultural books, decorative containers, and garden tools will also be for sale. Experienced gardeners will be available to answer questions and assist with plant selections. Proceeds benefit the all-volunteer, non-profit Somerville Garden Club.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Arts Editor, **Doug Holder**, for setting up a **GoFundMe** campaign for **The Somerville Times**. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely thank all

who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

The **Somerville Naloxone Distribution event** takes place on **Thursday, September 18**, 1 – 4 p.m., **Davis Square Plaza**, Somerville, intersection of College and Highland Avenues. **Somerville Public Overdose Prevention Training** takes place **Tuesday, September 23**, 6 – 7 p.m., **Auditorium, Somerville Public Library Central Branch**, 79 Highland Avenue, Somerville. Registration link: bit.ly/4mJcOsw. For more information, please contact **Director of Prevention Services Tina Los** at tlos@somervillema.gov.

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, **Somerville Police Chief Shumeane Benford**, and the **Somerville Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** invite community members to a neighborhood meeting on **Monday, October 6**, to discuss public safety and homelessness in the Davis Square/Seven Hills area. All members of the community, including individuals and businesses, are invited to attend. Monday, October 6, 6-7:30 p.m., **Somerville Community Baptist Church**, 31 College Ave., in the **Sanctuary**. This meeting will also be livestreamed on City YouTube at youtube.com/SomervilleCityTV. Submit questions in advance: For people watching the livestream, questions may be submitted in advance to davissafetymeeting@somervillema.gov. Please submit by **Friday, October 3**.

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. Sun-

days, August – October. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., 18 Holland St.

The **Somerville Farmer's Market Community Booth Interest form** is now open. The market has two community booths available each week (free of charge) for the nonprofits, schools, and other organizations working to benefit the greater Somerville community. Petition the greater Somerville community by tabling for your organization. Community Booth form: <https://forms.gle/L62Zr2RtUK4NjqmW9>. The priority deadline is September 27. Email swfm_community@artsatthearmory.org with any questions.

The **Somerville High School Class of 1980 Reunion Social** is taking place **Saturday, October 4**, from 7 to 10 p.m., **Jake n Joe's**, 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. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Through the generosity of the **American 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. For additional information or for an application, please contact **Debby Higgins** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

The Silent Pendulum and Full Circle in 'Broken Identities'

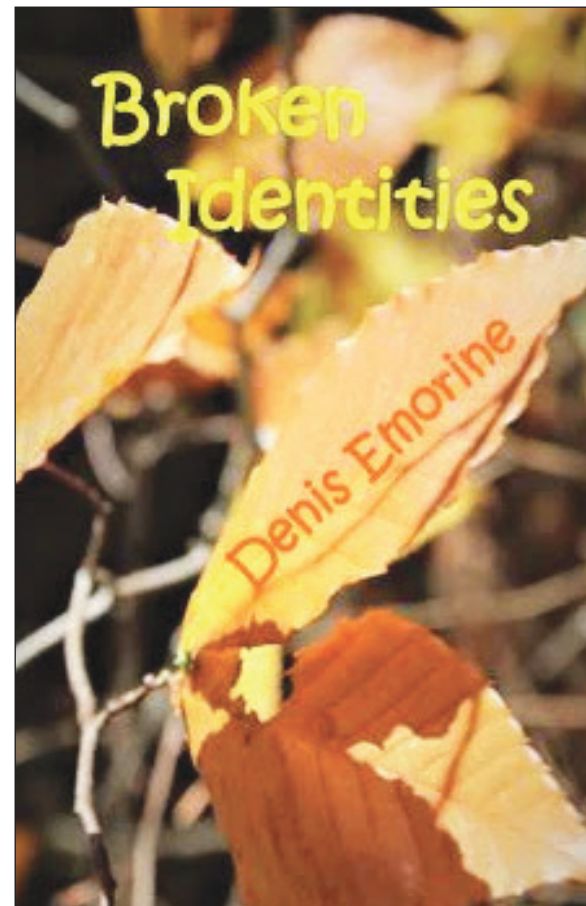
Broken Identities, the new novella by Denis Emorine

Article by Off the Shelf correspondent Michael Todd Steffen

Denis Emorine's moving fidelity to his creative inspiration pulses at the heart of his new novella, *Broken Identities* (JEF Books, Arlington Heights, IL, ISBN 979-8284824-05-4). The book unfolds a sequel, a further denouement and conclusion to the public emergence of a writer begun in the 2017 novella *Death at Half-Mast*, where Emorine traces origins of "broken identities," foremost that of his fictional subject, Dominic Valarcher and his integral duality as a human being and his vocation as "the writer," the alternative appellation chiming like a formal constraint throughout the two narratives.

Laetitia, Dominic Valarcher's wife, reappears here with her fairy-esque character as muse, metaphorically represented playing private recitations for her husband at a piano topless, with her breasts exposed to him. The trope has flown my imagination to the cinema and the possibility of a movie perhaps with the title *The Naked Pianist*. While arousing erotic tensions, the portrayal of Laetitia at the piano remains in a sensual rather than graphic character. In scenes beyond her home with Valarcher and her piano stool, we are also made to understand her true beauty, not just to Dominic, yet also her devotional character to him. She is his, his alone, strictly immune to other hungry suitors. This is essential in delineating Valarcher's deep sympathies for his wife as well as the excruciating extent of his dilemma in carrying his work, as it must be, fully to the public. The depth of Valarcher's sympathies has been noted also for its nominal ambiguity by Cristina Deptula, in the revelation of the writer's name, Dominic, for its more frequent feminine form, Dominique. (synchchaos.com/2019/08)

As the narrative is inevitably determined, the figure of inspiration is left to sink and fade at moments throughout the two stories with the realization of Valarcher's worldly success in publications and in presentations of his writing, public readings, notably with the emergence of a young Hungarian Literature researcher, Nóra. The young student's coming to life in the writer's presence and in his stirring desire makes an elastic and revisited topos. Emorine follows his subject as the writer oscillates. This goes like a pendulum, back and forth



beside the piano of his exposed musician, between devotion to the original inspiration and its release in an expression of love toward the very work's appreciation. There we meet, again, the figure of the young Hungarian student Nóra, the fresh clay of consciousness awakening under the intelligence conveyed by the author.

This ontological movement of Emorine's fiction, between numinous, mnemonic origin and its naïve, "lively" and irresistible recipience, intersects with our civilization's deepest foundations and iconography, in new seminal terms and oppositions, the politics of East vs. West, in reminiscence and therapy between parent and child, and between the authentication of art through its intimate inspiration in contrast to its marketing epiphany in the rival world of publishers and university appointments.

Without giving away their charm and details, let it be noted this second story's beginning, with a partial disappearance of the writer at the end of his wits, comes full circle with the story's astonishing but convincing conclusion. A worthy read, for its charms, curiosity, resonance and much needed reminder (of the ever-vigilant light in darkness) under the flickering lamps of our busy desks.

Lyrical SOMERVILLE edited by Doug Holder

Isabella Shea, a second-year student at Endicott College, published a collection of poems, *Living In Pieces*, detailing her mental health struggles during the COVID-19 pandemic. The book was published in November 2023 with the intention of raising awareness about teen mental health. She hoped that her book would allow others, who were struggling, to know that it is okay to not be okay. Individualism is one of the many poems in Isabella's collection.



Individualism

Breath.

One breath can save you.

No one has to tell you to breathe at night.

Your body knows,

How to breathe without you.

How to live without you.

In a way, your body doesn't need you.

You need your body.

More than your body needs you.

You are, without your body.

Nothing.

One free soul,

In the world.

Would you like that?

Freedom from your body?

Mirrors would no longer stop,

And stare back.

Telling you to change.

You would be free.

Do you want the mirror?

Does the mirror want you?

Do you want to change and leave the mirror behind?

— Isabella Shea

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

Doug Holder, 25 School St.; Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu

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