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VOL.1 NO.329-36

SOMERVILLE/MEDFORD MASS.

Tuesday March 25th, 2025

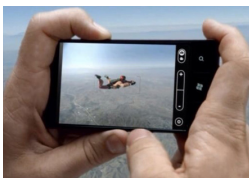
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LOUD/SPEAK UP



Somerville Police  
Real Life Somerville  
Police Stories Page



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## Mayor Ballantyne Announces Transformation of Founders Rink into All-Ages Recreation Hub



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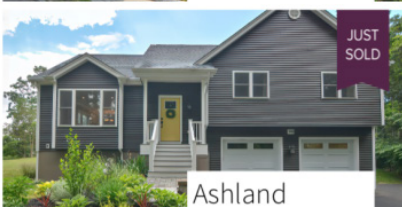
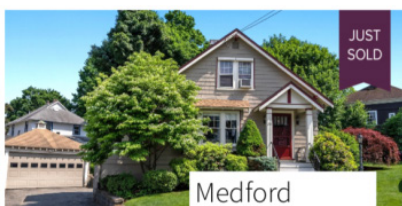
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We have been busy, but never too busy for you! These four properties were sold in one month! If you see something you would like to know more about, have any questions or are thinking about buying or selling a property, please don't hesitate to send us an email or give us call!

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If you have any questions email us at [MHSVarsitySoftball22@gmail.com](mailto:MHSVarsitySoftball22@gmail.com)  
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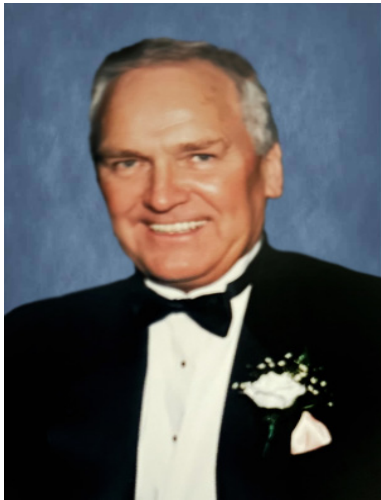


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### Somerville/Medford Remembering Thomas Hogan



Thomas Hogan, age 87 of Quincy  
 Thomas Hogan, age 87, a longtime resident of Quincy, died peacefully, Wednesday, March 19, 2025 in the comfort of his home, surrounded by his loving family.  
 Tom was born in Cam-

bridge, to the late Thomas J. and Mary F. (Murray) Hogan. Raised and educated in North Cambridge, he was a graduate of the former Saint John's High School in Cambridge, Class of 1955. He lived in Quincy for twenty-seven years, previously in South Boston for eighteen years.  
 Tom was proud to have served in the United States Marine Corps. He was employed as a ramp service agent for the former Eastern Airlines for thirty years.  
 Tom and his wife, Joyce, were people of faith, and oriented towards helping others. Tom was an active member of the Lions Club International, My Brother's

Keeper, and the Cursillo Movement. He was a parishioner of Saint Agatha Parish in Milton. He was also a supervisor on bus tours from the former Celebration Tours in Marina Bay. Tom and Joyce were world travelers. He was an avid Boston sports fan and loved the beach.  
 Beloved husband for thirty-one years of Joyce M. (Donahue) Hogan.  
 Devoted father of Cynthia M. DeMeo and her husband James of Natick, Thomas J. Hogan and his wife Ellen of Wilmington, and Carol A. Hogan and her husband Robert Latwas of Pembroke. Loving grandfather of Nicholas, Stephanie, and Joseph DeMeo; Sara, Jessica,

and Thomas Hogan; Drew and Erin Latwas.  
 Former husband of the late Marilyn Cooke.  
 The last of seven siblings, he was predeceased by Mary Dillon, Michael Hogan, Helen Hogan, Nancy Edwards, Beatrice Desmond, and Patricia Joyce.  
 Dear brother-in-law of Marilyn T. Powers and her husband Peter of Hillsboro, N.H., Jay Donahue, Jr. and Mymie of Boston, Frederick W. Donahue, Jr. and his wife Cindy of Quincy, and Brian J. Donahue and his wife Lori of Mineola, N.Y.  
 Tom is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and their families.  
 Visiting Hours will be held at the Sweeney Brothers

Home for Funerals, 1 Independence Avenue, Quincy, on Wednesday, March 26, from 4 – 7 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited to attend. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at Saint Agatha Parish, 432 Adams Street, Milton, on Thursday, March 27, at 10:30 a.m. The Mass will be livestreamed and the link will be available on his obituary on the funeral home website. Interment, with military honors, to follow at Pine Hill Cemetery, West Quincy.  
 For those who wish, donations in Tom's memory may be made to the Holy Cross Fathers Retreat House – Cursillo, 490 Washington Street, North Easton, MA 02356.

### Somerville/Medford Remembering Vincent J. Mattera



Obituary  
 Vincent J. Mattera passed away on March 19, 2025,

he was 73. Born in Somerville and raised in Medford, he was the son of the late Rosa (Sullivan) and Vincent Mattera.  
 The beloved husband of Diane (Saraiva) Mattera, together they celebrated 47 years of marriage. Vincent was the devoted father of Michael Mattera (SFD) and his wife Holly of North Reading and Melinda Breen and her late husband Daniel

of Medford. Cherished grandfather of Christian, Bailey and Ambria Breen and Kiera Mattera and a great grandfather of Waylon Breen.  
 Vincent served honorably in the US Army and later the National Guard, following his military service he began his career with the Somerville Fire Department. Appointed in May of 1985, he served at the Highland Ave Station,

Engine 7 for the majority of his career and retired in December 2016. Vincent was proud of his service to the city and above all, devoted to his family.  
 Calling Hours will be held in the George L. Doherty Funeral Home, 855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) Somerville on Tuesday, March 25th from 4:00PM to 7:00PM. Relatives and friends invited to attend. A private burial will take

place at Oak Grove Cemetery, Medford.  
 In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Vincent's name to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at <http://www.lls.org> or to the National Kidney Foundation at <http://www.kidney.org>

### Somerville/Medford Remembering Aurora (Altobelli) DeMarco



Obituary  
 Aurora (Altobelli) DeMarco, a lifelong resident of Somerville, passed away on March 20, 2025, she was 100 years young. Born in East Boston she was the cherished daughter

of Carolina (Cecia) and Natale Altobelli. Beloved wife of the late Arthur J. DeMarco.  
 An active and independent woman, Aurora lived in Somerville all her life prior to moving to the Atria Marland Place Assisted Living in Andover for the last three years. She loved fashion and design and always dressed to the nines. In earlier years, she had a long career in retail. Working first at Chandler's Department Store, R.H. White of Boston,

then Popper Shoe as an office manager and would retire from Sears after 30 years. She enjoyed people watching anywhere she went, taking note of everyone's fashion choices. She could be found daily at the former Meadow Glen Mall where she would meet up with a large group of friends to walk the mall and socialize. Above all, Aurora loved spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren.  
 Aurora was the devoted mother of James De-

Marco, mother-in-law of the late Shiela P. (Lehane) DeMarco of 52 years, and his current partner Beverly Zambarnardi of Hampton, NH. Cherished grandmother of Kristen Callahan and her husband Michael of Billerica and great-grandmother of Rachel Marie Perriello and her partner Maverick Landry of Dunstable, Connor James Perriello and Megan Sheila Perriello of Billerica.  
 Calling Hours will be held in the George L. Doherty

Funeral Home, 855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) Somerville on Wednesday, March 26th from 4PM -7PM.  
 Relatives and friends invited to attend.  
 A Funeral Procession from the George L. Doherty Funeral Home, 855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) Somerville on Thursday morning, March 27th at 10AM. Followed by a graveside service at Oak Grove Cemetery at 11AM.

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### Governor Healey's Casino Piggy Bank Grab!

By William Tauro

Governor Moura Healey intercepted/ hijacked all the money that was earmarked/ promised for Massachusetts cities and towns for public safety, schools and streets from the Encore Casino contributions to the state of Massachusetts. What did she use it for her budget, illegal migrants, who knows? She also took the opportunity and zeroed out next year's balance to do the same as well.

Money that was supposed to be used for cities and towns for fire engines, equipment,

schools, police stations, public safety and much more all got absorbed in Maura Haley's piggy bank grab!

Now because of this, Massachusetts cities and towns are forced to raise their property taxes on residents to offset the money. they were promised.

The city of Everett was told last week no funds were available. I heard that Everett already uped their property taxes to offset it.

I would take some time and go through each community around here and add up. As

of now zero funding. Do some research you may find more!

Community Mitigation Fund – Massachusetts Gaming Commission



### Somerville Pride Wins Championship

Picture:Top left side is coach Ronald Freeman with the hat, next Reese Freeman, Mika Dimagiba, Trinity Stiles, Gia Spires, Olivia Spires, Gianna Stiles, Maria Garcia, me coach Israel Garcia, low side Arielys Lopez, Aria Bruce, Leilah Denning.

By Israel Garcia

After four years coaching this and a very

disappointment lost on a finals two years ago, we finally "WON" the 7th grade girls basketball metrowest "Championship" tournament.

These girls deserve to be "Champions"... they work hard, relentless, teamwork and pride.



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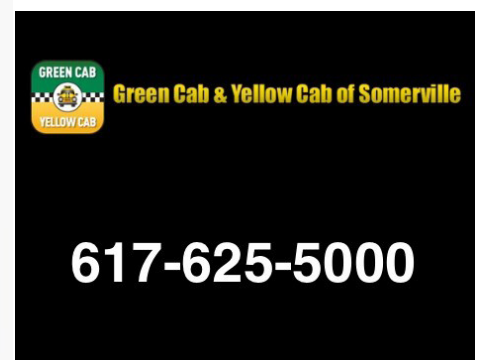
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### DIRECTOR OF FAIR HOUSING

By Bob Katzen

Whitney Demetrius joined the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities as the state's first Director of Fair Housing.

The position was established by the Healey Administration's Affordable Homes Act to support fair housing initiatives, including enforcement, testing, outreach and education, as well as collaborating with

other state agencies to advance fair housing policies and programs.

"A crucial part of ensuring our commonwealth is truly livable is addressing the barriers to fair housing

and housing choice," said Demetrius. "I am eager to work collaboratively in this role to carry out the vision of this administration, putting fair housing at the forefront of our path forward."

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### MEDFORD VFW POST 1012 HAS A NEW COMMANDER

Congratulations to The Medford VFW on its new Installation of Commander Steve McLaughlin as he takes charge.

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them out!" Somerville/Medford News Weekly/Boston News Group

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If there is anything in particular you would like to see from us or if you need help preparing food at home for your families please reach out and we will do

our best to help. Whether it be recipe ideas with random things you might have purchased or if you run out of something that you need that we can help with please don't hesitate to ask.

A Tavola Restaurant Winchester outdoor patio dining is open for business & takeout orders: (781)729-1040 34 Church St Winchester

Thank you for your continued support.



# Mayor Ballantyne Announces Transformation of Founders Rink into All-Ages Recreation Hub



Community Invited to Take Survey to Help Shape Recreation Programming Priorities

SOMERVILLE – Mayor Katjana Ballantyne today announced the transformation of Founders Ice Rink into a multi-purpose recreation hub serving all ages. This exciting development comes after a successful pilot period showcasing the community’s demand for diverse recreational activities.

The Administration is proposing a significant upgrade following the rink’s seasonal closure with the installation of a multi-purpose gym floor. The estimated \$168,000 for this upgrade requires funding approval by the City Council and has been submitted for consideration.

The safer, multi-use surface, will allow

for a broader range of activities while retaining the option to revert back to an ice rink in the future. This transformation addresses the community’s pressing need for accessible recreational space and builds upon the success of recent programming initiatives. Because Somerville is a two-rink community, Veterans Memorial Rink, which is next door to Founders, will also continue to offer ice hockey and skating to the City and region.

“Founders will be a game changer for us,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “We are filling the gap from what Founders was to what it can be, restoring access to vital recreational opportunities for all Somerville residents. We still have a long-term goal to establish a community center in our city, but we also need solutions right now. Founders makes smart use of current resources to provide the recreation space that residents need today.”

Recent successful programs demonstrated the community’s enthusiasm for diverse recreational offerings at the site. Popular pickleball sessions for all ages, a well-attended Fall Festival, and a dynamic Women in Sports Day featuring local high school volunteers drew significant participation. And when summer camp spots filled up this past summer, staff quickly set up the

SomerSpot program at Founders providing 44 children enriching summer camp programs who otherwise would have been turned away.

Somerville’s two ice rinks have traditionally served both local athletes and residents for ice sports, as well as regional users including hockey leagues. The administration is confident Veterans Rink, as well as rinks in neighboring communities, can continue to well serve Somerville ice users and regional hockey leagues, which serve both Somerville and area players, while Somerville residents interested in other activities gain access to Founders.

“Together these two rinks can serve the full range of activities from hockey and ice skating to dance, pickleball, indoor weather-protected senior fitness, teen clubs, and more,” said Ballantyne.

The Founders recreation hub will feature an expanded program lineup, including:

Fitness and Wellness: Zumba, yoga, cardio, senior walking, and dance classes

Sports: Futsal, badminton, volleyball, basketball, street hockey, lacrosse, tennis, and pickleball

Community Events: Dances, inclusive

bike days, roller skate nights, and themed parties like the upcoming 80s Glow Party in May

Youth and Teen Programs: After-school and summer programming with a focus on both sport/fitness as well as games and puzzles and creative arts

Intergenerational Programs: Activities designed to increase cooperation, interaction, and knowledge between any two generations.

The center will offer programming spring, summer, and fall throughout the day, catering to various age groups: pre-schoolers and seniors in the mornings, teens in the afternoons, adult athletics in the evenings, and family-friendly activities on weekends. The spring schedule will be posted soon to [somer-villema.myrec.com](https://somer-villema.myrec.com).

“Our vision is to create a vibrant recreation hub for all ages,” said Parks & Recreation Director Sue Yerkes. “We want to provide consistent space for a broad range activities, complementing the existing outdoor field and water plays areas and creating a new gathering place where people can make community connections.”

All Invited to Take the Recreation Survey

Whether you or your family are regular participants in Parks & Recreation programming or you haven’t tried a program yet, the City wants to better understand how to meet your needs. Your feedback will help staff adjust existing recreation programs and develop new ones. The survey should take about five minutes. The survey is available in multiple languages at [bit.ly/somervillerecsurvey](https://bit.ly/somervillerecsurvey)

Visit the Somerville Parks & Recreation website at <https://somer-villema.myrec.com> for info on upcoming programs and more.

## This Week’s QUOTABLE QUOTES On Beacon Hill

By Bob Katzen

“Hundreds of people proudly took to Beacon Hill today in a display of support and solidarity at this pivotal moment when the immigrant community is under constant attack. We are incredibly proud of this year’s Immigrants Day at the Statehouse, and for the policymakers, immigrants and advocates who inspired attendees. We must use this momentum to show the nation that Massachusetts will firmly oppose hate and tirelessly fight for immigrant rights.”

—Elizabeth Sweet, Executive Director of the

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition criticizing the Trump Administration’s immigration policies and calling on state leaders to pass essential reforms to protect immigrants who call Massachusetts home.

“Edith Nourse Rogers was ahead of her time. She saw a future where women could serve their country and receive the benefits they earned—and she made it happen. Her legacy is all around us, in the women who wear the uniform today and in the veterans who continue to serve their communities. Massachusetts is proud to

recognize her contributions and to honor the women who followed in her footsteps.”

—Gov. Healey declaring March 19 as Edith Nourse Rogers Day honoring the life and legacy of the former Massachusetts Congresswoman who transformed opportunities for women in the military.

“Energy efficiency is one of the most important tools we have for lowering costs. Our energy efficiency programs empower residents to bring down their bills and help them afford the latest appliances for their homes. And over 76,000 high-quality jobs are supported through

this industry in Massachusetts. We’re proud of our top spot and will continue to make strides to support more renters and low- and moderate-income households get assistance through Mass Save.”

—Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper on the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy naming Massachusetts the second most energy efficient states in the nation.

“Protecting manufacturers from cybersecurity threats will ensure the Massachusetts manufacturing ecosystem remains safe, secure and competitive. The Manufacturing Cy-

bersecurity Program will empower manufacturers to grow and provide opportunities to access new markets while remaining protected from threats to their operations.”

—Massachusetts Economic Development Secretary Yvonne Hao on the awarding of \$540,473 to Massachusetts-based manufacturers to upgrade their cybersecurity infrastructure.

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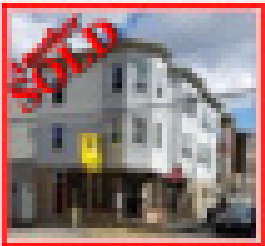


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The Somerville/Medford News Weekly

Here's your weekly News Talk Shout Out dosage continued from page 2



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## Somerville Seeks Community Input on CPA Priorities; Annual Review Survey Open Through March 31

Public hearing scheduled for March 26 as CPA Committee prepares for FY26 funding round

SOMERVILLE – Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is inviting residents to help shape the future of Community Preservation Act (CPA) investments by participating in the CPA Annual Review process. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has launched a survey to gather public

input on community needs and priorities for CPA funding. The survey is open through March 31, 2025, and can be accessed at this link.

Additionally, the CPC will host its Annual Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 26, via Zoom to hear directly from residents. Community members can register for the meeting here. The feedback collected during the review period will help

guide the allocation of CPA funds for Fiscal Year 2026.

This year's review is particularly important as the City prepares to strategically leverage additional CPA revenue. In November 2024, Somerville voters approved a ballot measure increasing the local CPA property tax surcharge from 1.5% to 3%. With this increase set to take effect, the CPC is looking for fresh

community perspectives on how best to invest these additional funds alongside other economic considerations.

Since Somerville adopted the CPA in 2012, the program has funded nearly 100 projects across affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation. Community input has always been a vital part of the CPA process, ensuring

that funding aligns with residents' evolving needs and priorities.

Residents are encouraged to complete the CPA Annual Review survey by March 31 and attend the public hearing on March 26 to share their thoughts.

For more information, visit somervillema.gov/cpa.



### \$10.4 MILLION FOR INTERNET UPGRADES FOR PUBLIC HOUSING

By Bob Katzen

The Healey Administration announced \$10.4 million in grants to upgrade Internet access in some 8,000 public and affordable housing across 26

Massachusetts communities.

The projects will install modern cabling in each unit, increasing residents' access to high-quality, reliable and affordable

broadband service. The Residential Retrofit Program prioritizes ISPs that offer affordable quality service to decrease the cost of access.

“When residents are bet-

ter connected, it opens a world of new possibilities in both their professional and private lives,” said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. “The Residential Retrofit Program is a transformative investment in com-

munities across the state and demonstrates Massachusetts' commitment to advancing the Internet for everyone.”

### ALLOW REMOTE ACCESS TO PUBLIC MEETINGS (H 62)

By Bob Katzen

The House and Senate approved and sent to Gov. Maura Healey legislation that would extend, until June 2027, the current law that allows cities and to offer remote participation at public meetings through June 2027. The option, first adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent state of emergency, was due to expire on March

31. The extension applies to public bodies and representative town meetings.

“I voted for this legislation because it has substantially increased resident participation and engagement in local government and has made it easier for public bodies to manage their meetings with both equity and transparency,” said Sen. Mike Rodrigues (D-Westport), chair of the Senate Committee

on Ways and Means. “It's been clear from municipalities across the commonwealth that they want to continue to offer this expanded access.”

“I have heard loud and clear from my colleagues, and the communities we represent, that hybrid meetings have increased access, engagement and transparency in local government,” said Senate President Karen Spilka

(D-Ashland). “There is no reason that a family obligation, a car breakdown, a disability or any other life circumstance should get in the way of making your voice heard on an issue you care about in your community.”

“One of the lessons we learned from the pandemic was that using technology for public meetings expands access and civic participation across

government,” said House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy). “With this extension, we are removing barriers to participation and residents will continue to be able to be active participants in governmental decisions remotely.”

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### Mayor Ballantyne Invites Community to Somerville's Third Annual Civic Day Celebration



Join family-friendly activities and games to learn about local government & services on Saturday, April 5

SOMERVILLE – Mayor Katjana Ballantyne invites community members to

attend the city's spring Civic Day celebration on Saturday, April 5, from noon to 4 p.m. at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.) and on the City Hall concourse.

Now in its third year, Civic Day aims to provide community members of all ages with fun, interactive opportunities to celebrate democracy and learn about City government, programs, services, and ways to get involved.

Visitors can join in a

variety of family-friendly activities planned by City departments, including:

Selecting a home a pollinator plant plug for your home garden.

Casting your vote in Cycle 2 of Somerville's Participatory Budgeting process.

Posing for a photo on a Somerville Police motorcycle.

Taking a tour of City Hall.

Navigating a hazard house and learn about fire safety

with Somerville Fire Department.

Enjoying local food and music performed by Somerville High School ensembles.

The City Hall concourse will be closed to vehicular traffic. Temporary handicap parking will be available along Highland Avenue near the concourse. In the event of inclement weather, all outdoor activities will be moved inside to Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.)

Multilingual staff from the SomerViva: Office of Immigrant Affairs will be present to offer language support for residents who may need assistance connecting with city departments.

For more information, please contact Kristine McNulty at [kmcnulty@somervillema.gov](mailto:kmcnulty@somervillema.gov) or visit [somervillema.gov/civicday](http://somervillema.gov/civicday)



## Wakefield Sons and Daughters of Italy Nominate Officers



Photo caption: Our members are not only from Wakefield, but also from Medford, Melrose, Reading, Stoneham, Danvers, Saugus, Lynnfield and more!

Lodge members reunited at the West Side Social Club in March after a two-month hiatus. It was a great turnout, and everyone was glad to see each other. It was an important meeting because biennial elections are coming up, and officers needed to be nominated.

After that business was taken care of, the Lodge discussed upcoming plans for social activities, charitable organization involvement, and finally, the April Charity auction.

The auction will take place on Friday April 25, 2025, at St. Joseph's parish hall in Wakefield. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., with dinner from Avellino's at 6:30. Members are coming up with creative items to auction or raffle off, and we have many wonderful donations from local

businesses, as well.

Last month, we thanked some of the businesses that donated items to the auction. Additionally, we want to thank Calareso's Farm and Garden Center, Christopher's Restaurant, Fat Larry's Sub and Ice Cream Shop, Half & Half Café, Reading Town Florist, Reading House of Pizza, Meraki Medical Esthetics, The Chocolate Truffle, and Venetian Moon of Reading. From North Reading: Kitty's Restaurant and East Gate Liquors.

Thank you to the Wakefield Bowladrome (of movie fame), Tania Hair Salon, Morena Cucina Rustica, Mel & Sons Oil, Fahey Tire and Auto Center, Dunkin's (Salem Street store), Cibo's Café & Bistro, Mary Kay Representative Cheryl Carroll, Café Italia Trattoria, Billy's Roast Beef and Seafood, author

Alison Simcox, Leaf & Ginger and Tonno's of Wakefield. A special item this year is an opportunity for four people to be on the viewing stand during the famous Wakefield Independence Day Parade.

Other area businesses who have donated include Peppino's of Melrose, Salon Oasis, Nude Esthetics of Danvers, North Shore Music Theater of Beverly, Hanover Theatre of Worcester, Manganaro Plumbing & Heating of Melrose, author Lisa Marie Rankin, author Jane Healey, Dom's Sausage, Colonial Cadillac, Bella Bling, photography by Tracy, and photography by Rebecca.

If you are a business or individual interested in donating an item, a service, or a gift certificate, please contact sharrun19@yahoo.com.

This charity event is our primary fundraiser that allows us to give out scholarships to graduating high school seniors each year. It funds the Lodge's other philanthropic endeavors including the Wakefield Food Pantry, Stoneham Senior Center, Wakefield Senior Center, Wakefield's Council of Clubs holiday food baskets, INspire Cafe, Alzheimer's Association and Cooley's Anemia Foundation.

Tickets are \$25 each and can be reserved by the deadline of April 17th by contacting President Paula at wakefieldosia@gmail.com. To learn more about the Lodge, check out our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/wakefieldOSIA>.

## Somerville PorchFest 2025: Important Safety & Event Updates

**SOMERVILLE**— The Somerville Arts Council is excited to announce PorchFest 2025, the citywide live music event, is returning on Saturday, May 10, from 12 to 6 p.m. (rain date: Sunday, May 11).

To ensure a safe, enjoyable, and well-organized experience for all, this year's event will feature new safety measures and structural updates designed to enhance the day for both performers and residents. All information is available on [somer villeartscouncil.org/porchfest](http://somer villeartscouncil.org/porchfest)

### Key Updates & Changes for 2025:

**Application Process & Deadline:** Deadline to submit an application is Thursday, April 10, at 11:59 p.m. Applying does not guarantee participation.

**Event Map to Be Issued Early:** A map of the bands and their locations will be available several weeks before the event to make it easier for residents, businesses, and participants to plan ahead.

### Street Limitations:

Streets and locations identified by the Somerville Fire and Engineering Departments as being part of a key safety route will not be able to host performances.

These safety routes have been identified to ensure safe pedestrian and traffic flow as well as emergency vehicle travel.

Residents on safety routes are encouraged to partner with neighbors on a nearby designated street.

**Block Party Submissions:** Block parties must also apply through Citizen Serve to request a block party permit.

Applications will be open March 10 – April 10 and will be reviewed based on the street safety restrictions noted above.

**Emergency Management Plan:** The Mayor's Office has convened an Emergency Management Team to oversee a central command station on Porchfest.

This team includes the Police Chief, Fire Chief, DPW, Emergency Management Department, and Arts Council.

**Ambassador Volunteer Program:** Volunteers will be stationed throughout event zones to assist visitors, direct people to porta-potty locations, monitor safety, and serve as points of contact.

**Official PorchFest Badges:** Approved porches will receive an official PorchFest badge that must be displayed on the day of the event. Ambassadors will help ensure compliance.

### Additional Information:

**Schedule:** Performances will take place in three two-hour zones across the city: West of Willow Street: 12–2 p.m. Willow to Central Street: 2–4 p.m. East of Central Street: 4–6 p.m.

**Event Guidelines & Rules:** To keep PorchFest safe and enjoyable for all, please follow these rules: Be respectful of porch hosts, neighbors, and residents—do not loiter on non-PorchFest properties. Public alcohol consumption is prohibited. Use public transportation to reduce

traffic and parking congestion. Stay on sidewalks to allow cars to pass safely. Use designated porta-potties. Tip the bands (cash or digital) to support local musicians.

The updates to Porchfest's safety and organization were shaped with help from the Porchfest Committee, composed of five members of the Somerville community including a business owner, a resident, a musician, a Department of Public Works representative, and a member of the Arts Council staff.

"PorchFest is one of Somerville's most popular events, and to keep it going strong, we've made some important safety and sustainability updates," said SAC Director Gregory Jenkins. "We're limiting performances on key emergency routes and refining the application process to ensure the event stays safe and accessible for everyone. These changes will help PorchFest thrive for years to come, and we need the community's support to make it happen. I also want to thank the PorchFest Committee for their help

creating these recommendations, and everyone who helps bring this amazing event to life."

**History of Porchfest**  
In 2011, the Somerville Arts Council launched PorchFest, a citywide community music event that invites residents to celebrate local musicians by hosting mini-concerts on their porches and stoops, or driveways and yards. Think of it like Somerville Open Studios, but for musicians. Rather than a traditional festival, PorchFest brings neighbors together to share and enjoy live music ringing out from porches across the city.



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APRIL 1, 2025  
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Suzanne Rinfret, Director

Somerville/Medford News Weekly 3/25/25 , 4/0/25 , 4/08/25



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### STATE'S FIRST POET LAUREATE

By Bob Katzen

Gov. Healey and the Mass Cultural Council announced that the Bay State is now accepting applications to fill the new role of Poet Laureate of Massachusetts.

Gov. Healey created the new position in February when she signed an executive order establishing the position. This honorary position is designed to promote poetry and creative expression across the state, serve as the governor's ambassador of the arts and inspire the next gen-

eration of writers. The poet laureate will be eligible for an honorarium provided by the Mass Cultural Council.

The Poet Laureate will be charged with encouraging the appreciation of poetry and creative expression across Massachusetts, participating in public readings and other statewide literary and cultural events, composing poetry for ceremonial occasions and advising the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on an outreach program for schools focused on the cel-

ebration and advancement of poetry.

"I was proud to sign an executive order establishing our first-ever state Poet Laureate," said Healey. "We're excited to be opening the application so that local poets from across the state can apply for this historic position. This is an opportunity to spread the gift of poetry, celebrate the talent in our state, stoke the fires of imagination and tell our stories."

"The Mass Cultural Council, the commonwealth's

state arts agency, believes in the Power of Culture and recognizes poetry as a strong and vital art form that inspires connection, fosters empathy and gives voice to diverse experiences," said Mass Cultural Council Executive Director Michael Bobbitt. "Poetry has the unique ability to capture the essence of human emotion, challenge perspective and build bridges between communities. This new voice will help to enrich our cultural landscape, remind us of our rich legacy of profound writers and strengthen the

creative spirit of the commonwealth."

To apply for the position or for more information go to: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/artists-art/poet-laureate/application-process/>

### Man Arraigned After Posing as Government Agent to Scam Senior out of Over \$480,000 of Dollars

NEWTON – Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan and Newton Chief of Police George McMains have announced that Vishal Kumar, 23 of Queens, New York has been arraigned on charges of extortion, larceny over \$250 from a person over 60 and conspiracy for allegedly participating in a scheme to extort and defraud a 72-year-old Newton woman out of nearly half a million dollars.

The allegations are that, on or about December 4, 2024, the victim received a telephone call from individuals claiming to be agents of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). The callers allegedly told the victim that someone had opened 22 accounts in her name. They claimed that she was responsible for \$2 million dollars in those accounts, which was being used in illegal narcotics transactions. When the victim told the "agents" that she had not opened the accounts, she was told that to stop any identity theft, she would have to transfer all her assets to the United States Treasury and that she would be given Treas-

ury checks to secure those assets. The victim was informed that, if she did not cooperate, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) would arrest her.

The victim was subsequently contacted by another caller claiming to be her "case manager" from the United States Treasury. That person directed her to transfer her money to the Treasury by purchasing gold bars, after which, her social security number would be changed and her money returned. She was directed to buy gold bars and deliver them to couriers at times and locations specified by the caller.

Fearing arrest, over the next month, the victim liquidated hundreds of thousands of dollars from her retirement account to purchase gold bars. On two separate occasions the victim delivered to a courier sent by the scammers. On December 17, she delivered 12 bars of gold worth approximately \$342,000 and then again on December 24, she delivered three bars of gold worth approximately \$88,955.43. On December 26, the victim also wired \$49,755 to a bank

account at the direction of the scammers. The victim was instructed that her gold would be secured by Treasury checks. Although she was sent images from the "agents," which they represented to be Treasury checks, the victim ultimately lost over \$480,000.

Ultimately, the victim's family learned about what the victim was being coerced into doing and reported it to law enforcement. After law enforcement learned of the scheme, a sting operation was conducted. An undercover officer posed as the victim and delivered a package, which was supposed to contain \$165,000 in gold bars, to the defendant, who first confirmed the code-word given to the victim by the imposter posing as federal agent on the telephone. After the defendant confirmed the code-word and took possession of the package, he was arrested by Newton Police detectives and special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The United States Secret Service later confirmed that the images of the checks were counterfeit.

"This elaborate scheme illustrates several common aspects of these financial scams. The

defendant and his alleged co-conspirators used multiple points of contact to build trust, they posed as official government agents, assigned a 'case worker' in an effort to appear helpful to the victim and even created fake documents to serve as receipts. Additionally, the perpetrators sought to strike fear in the victim, using the threat of criminal prosecution to pressure her into making huge financial payments," said District Attorney Ryan. "These scams thrive in secrecy. Fortunately, in this case, the victim and her family were able to enlist the help of law enforcement within a fairly short period of time which put a stop to this exploitation but not before the victim suffered a staggering loss of nearly half a million dollars."

Vishal Kumar was indicted by a Middlesex County Grand Jury on Feb. 26, 2025. At his arraignment Kumar was ordered held in lieu of \$500,000 cash bail. The next date in this case is April 2, 2025 for scheduling.


This case was investigated by the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, Newton Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The

investigation into the role of co-conspirators is ongoing.

If you are a victim of fraud or attempted fraud you can report it to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3.gov). For more information and tips view the FBI Fraud Alert here: <https://www.ic3.gov/Outreach/Brochures/IC3-Fraud-Alert.pdf>.

The prosecutor assigned to this case is Graham Van Epps. The victim witness advocate is Leia Kaplan.

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### \$5.7 MILLION FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION

By Bob Katzen  
Environmental Affairs  
Secretary Rebecca Tepper  
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of \$5.7 million in fund-  
ing for farmland pres-  
ervation. The funding is

aimed at protecting 400  
acres of farmland through  
the state's Agricultural  
Preservation Restriction  
(APR) Program. Another  
\$500,000 will be granted  
to help existing Massachu-

setts APR farmers restore  
land that was previously  
unsuitable for farming.  
"Massachusetts farmers  
are some of the strongest  
and most resilient people

I've met," said Tepper. "Be-  
tween extreme weather,  
high costs and now a tariff  
war, our farmers deserve  
our support more than  
ever. Our programs are  
designed to keep existing

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## Somerville Police Department Weekly Crime Log



### Crime Log

3/11/25 – 3/17/25

[HTTPS://WWW.SOMERVILLEPD.COM/PUBLIC-SAFETY-NEWS](https://www.somervillepd.com/public-safety-news)

**Residential Breaking and Entering**  
 25013820: On 3/13/25 at approximately 8:59 AM, Somerville Police responded to a residence on Concord Ave for report of a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated his bicycle and electric scooter were stolen from the common basement area.

**Assault**  
 25013665: On 3/12/25 at approximately 12:50 PM, Somerville Police took a lobby report regarding a past assault. The victim stated she was at her workplace and was assaulted by a co-worker during an argument.

**Arrest**  
 25014486: On 3/16/25 at

approximately 3:38 PM, Somerville Police responded to the area of 771 McGrath Hwy for report of shots fired. Upon arrival, officers located five spent shell casings in the area of 11 Blakeley Ave. Officers then spoke with a witness who stated he heard loud bangs then observed a male party walking down Cross St toward Blakeley Ave. Shortly after, officers located a male party matching the description and located a handgun in his backpack. He was placed under arrest.

**Arrest**  
 25014132: On 3/14/25 at approximately 4:16 PM, Somerville Police responded to a residence on Elm St for a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated she was in her bedroom

and observed a male party staring at her. She yelled at him and the male fled out of the house. Officers were then given a suspect description and located the male in a nearby business. He was then placed under arrest.

**Assault**  
 25014139: On 3/14/25 at approximately 7:18 PM, Somerville Police responded to a residence on Foley St for report of a past assault. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated she got into an argument with her co-worker two days prior and was assaulted by her.

**Residential Breaking and Entering**  
 25014305: On 3/15/25 at approximately 6:11 PM, Somerville Police responded to a residence on Broadway

for report of a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated numerous documents were missing from her apartment.

- Other Crimes:**
- 2 Vandalisms
  - 1 Bike Theft
  - 1 MV Theft
  - 1 Car Break

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## Join The Somerville Blessing Boxes Group



Somerville Blessing Boxes are located at Union Square Plaza and Statue Park Davis Square  
 Give what you can, Take what you need  
 Check us out Somerville Blessing Boxes on Facebook and please join the group!  
 The outpour of support of donations that have been coming in of much needed supplies of foods, hygienic items and warm clothing from the generous people of Somerville is overwhelming.  
 Its up to all of us to help when we can to make a difference in the lives of others especially in those of the

homeless and less fortunate.  
 A "Somerville Blessing Boxes" Facebook page has been established keep everyone updated on donations and the Blessing Boxes inventory status. Please feel free to join the page and follow all the good that is being done everyday by the good people of Somerville.  
 One blessing box is located at Statue Park in Davis Square and the other is located at Union Square, Plaza in Union Square.  
 "Give what you can, Take what you need."  
 Much thanks and appreciation,  
 Frank Santangelo

### Blessing Backpack Checklist

<p><b>BASICS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wool beanie (hat)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smart wool socks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gloves</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scarf</li> </ul> <p><b>FOOD &amp; DRINK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality instant coffee</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tea</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Energy drink</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Beef jerky</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fruit leathers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nuts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Granola bars</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Protein powder packets</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant gift cards</li> </ul> <p><b>HELP THEM CONNECT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Journal &amp; pen</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stationary</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stamps</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre-paid phone card</li> </ul>	<p><b>TOILETRIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Multi-purpose wipes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chapstick</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Facial wipes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moisturizer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comb</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush &amp; tooth paste</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grooming kit</li> </ul> <p><b>SURVIVAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle with built in filter</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Heat-pack</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Multi-purpose tool</li> </ul> <p><b>TREATS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chocolates</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fruit snacks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cookie snack packs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Candy (individually wrapped)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mints</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chewing gum</li> </ul> <p><b>SPLURGE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starbucks gift card</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compact reusable bag</li> </ul>
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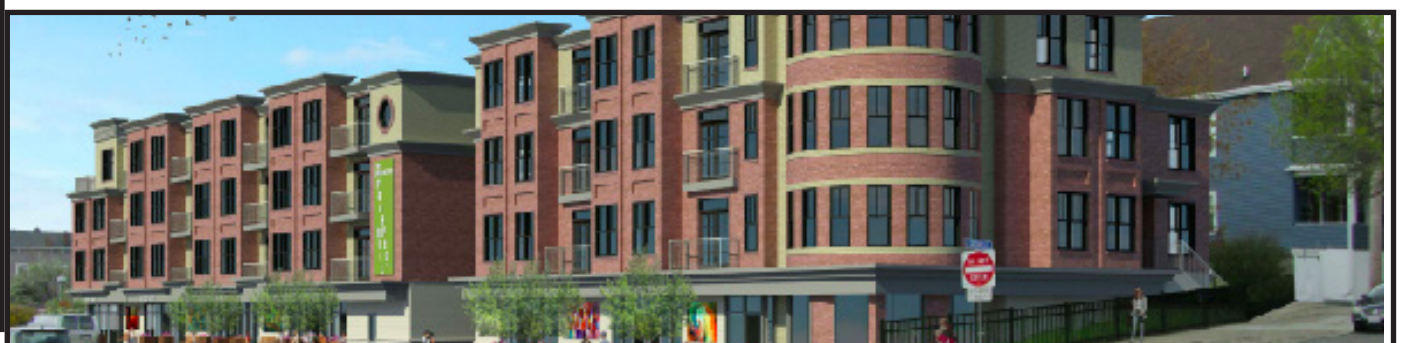
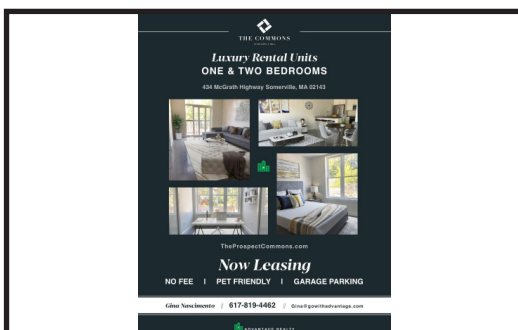
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## REAL ID

By Bob Katzen

The Registry of Motor Vehicles reminds Bay State residents that beginning on May 7, 2025, people traveling by plane domestically or entering certain federal facilities will need

a Registry-issued REAL ID-compliant driver's license or ID, or a valid passport.

The Registry strongly encourages everyone seeking a REAL ID-compliant license or ID card to go on-

line at Mass.Gov/REALID to learn what documents are needed for a required in-person appointment. Appointments to upgrade to REAL ID are available now, and several RMV service centers offer Saturday appointments. Cus-

tomers who already have a compliant credential may renew online as long as they have not had a name change.

"May 7th is almost here, and we remind everyone to check your wallets and

make sure you and your family members have the credentials that you need, depending on your travel plans," said Registrar of Motor Vehicles Colleen Ogilvie. "We want to make sure everyone is cleared for takeoff."

## Elliott Murphy's Infinity Goes There and Beyond 52 albums and going strong

Joe Viglione

"Granny Takes a Trip" opens this extraordinary 52nd album from Elliott Murphy merging Roger Maris and Richard Harris in a quasi-rap-meets-folk, perhaps the psychedelia after effect of Woodstock concert goes now grandparents, it is fun and different. "Red Moon over Paris" has Beatles elements for its opening, and grows dark with the twilight ending and Murphy indulging John Cale meets Leonard Cohen. It's a tremendous chorus over the poetry-meets-song verses.

The press release notes: INFINITY was recorded at Murmure studio in Paris with Elliott's musical partner and virtuoso guitarist Olivier Durand as well as Australian Melissa Cox (violin) and Alan Fatras (cajon

et percussion) with the addition of acclaimed double bassist Gerard McFadden (Opéra national de Paris) on Fetch Me Water. Keyboards, electric bass and drum programming were handled by Gaspard Murphy. The 3rd of nine songs, "Baby Boomers Lament" referencing David Bowie, 007, Lou Reed, the Rolling Stones over a rhythmic quiet stomp, is as easy to absorb as the other six musical essays. Smart guitar on Lament makes it a hidden gem here with Murphy's vocals working to good effect over the entire journey. When I asked Ian Hunter to go through each tune, having a series called "Going track by track," Ian felt it was half the fun for the audience to figure it out, paraphrasing him here. Yet with "The Lion in Winter" it is compelling to try to figure the artist and his state of mind out. The

pretty melodies would fit nicely in the 1968 film of the same name featuring Katherine Hepburn and Peter O'Toole, or perhaps even the 2003 film with Glenn Close. "Fetch Me Water" is three minutes and thirty-three seconds of a song that would fit perfectly on a Doug Kershaw album while "Three Shadows," at 3:21 has Murphy putting his array of thoughts into a pop structure. Another composition perfect for film, this is all Elliott Murphy with musical twists and turns over simple chord changes. It's a stellar piece of work. Suddenly the album rocks out with the two and a half minute "Makin' It Real" with the singer's opinion on things past and present. It's softer rock and roll Jonathan Richman would appreciate, toned down yet still effective. "Night Surfing" at 2:33

is the perfect follow-up to the preceding tune, pretty melodies. Neo-Baroque with folksy elements. It's beautiful and with the tracking like this it almost feels like a concert playing out over each selection. The little over two minute "Count My Blessings" is a good disci-

pline and admonition to listeners to be thankful for things that they've got - like this disc.

Joe Viglione is also on Substack: <https://joeviglione.substack.com/>



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## Somerville Class of 2025 Invited to Apply for Municipal Scholarship Opportunity



Seven scholarships available to Somerville residents currently graduating in the Class of 2025

Application Period closes March 31, 2025

SOMERVILLE- Mayor Katjana Ballantyne and the City of

Somerville Municipal Scholarship Committee are reminding Somerville residents graduating high school in 2025 to apply now for seven municipal scholarship opportunities. Selected applicants will receive \$1,000 to help with post-secondary education expenses.

To qualify for consideration, students must be in high school, a resident of the City of Somerville at the time the financial aid is awarded, and be accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution.

To apply, students can complete

a profile and answer three short essay questions here: [somervillema.gov/somerville-municipal-scholarship-2025](http://somervillema.gov/somerville-municipal-scholarship-2025) or call 311 (617-666-3311) for more information.

## Somerville/Medford Remembering Elizabeth M. (Horan) McLean

### Obituary

McLean, Elizabeth M. (Horan) Of Somerville, passed away on Saturday, March 22, 2025 surrounded by her loving family. She was 102 years young.

Complete obit to be posted.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated in St. John the Evangelist Church, 2254 Massachusetts Ave Cambridge, MA 02140 at 11:00AM on Monday, March 31st. Please meet directly at church.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend.

Services will conclude with interment at Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett.



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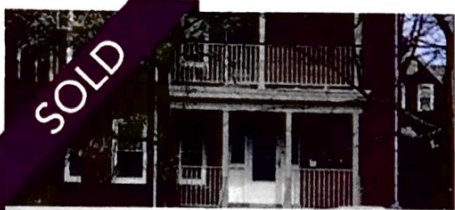
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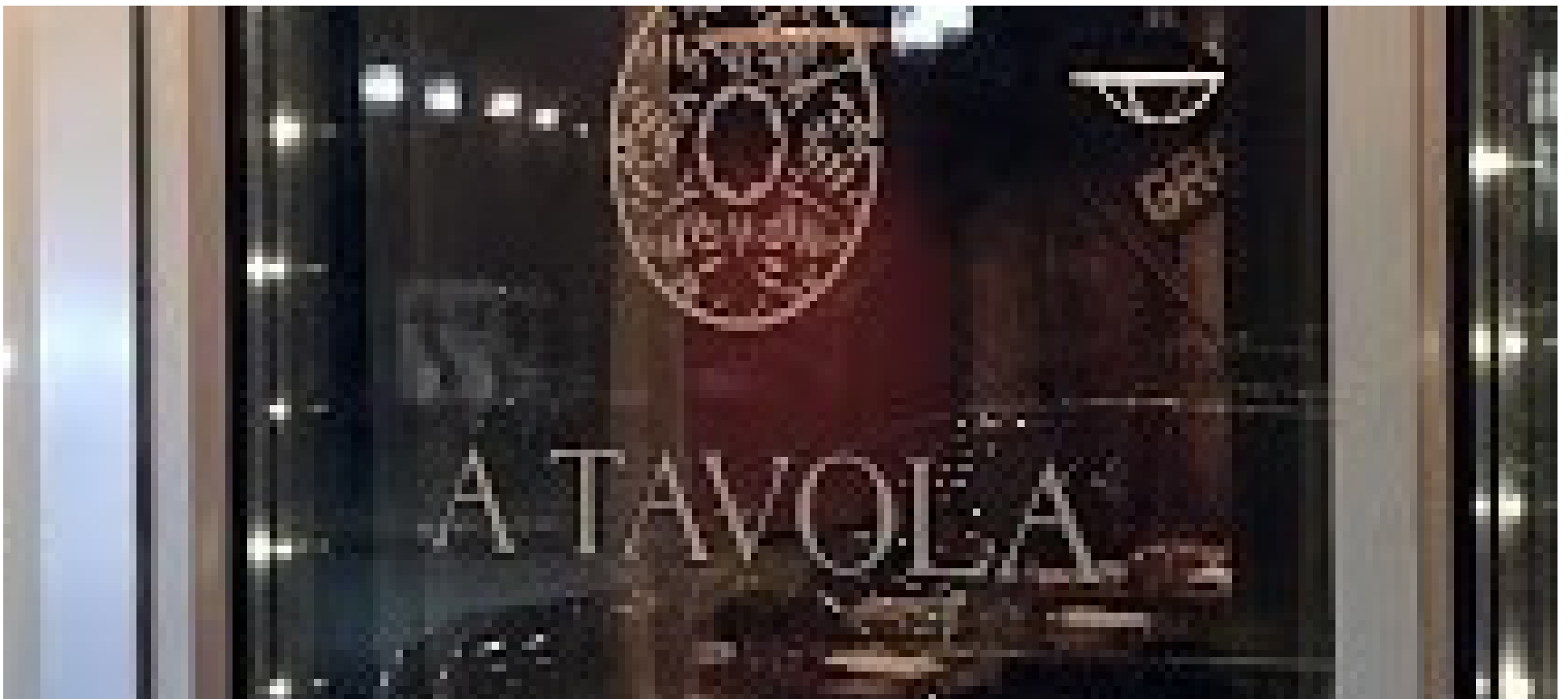
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