

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – January 18, 2019

News & Notes

SHS STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT MARSHALL COLLECTION AT HARVARD'S PEABODY MUSEUM

Mr. Linville and a group of Somerville High School students recently visited the [Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology](#) at Harvard University to view the Marshall Collection exhibition of ethnographic photography.

Students were guided through the exhibition by the museum's Director of Education and the Head Curator, then participated in a very interesting and lively follow-up question and answer session.

The Marshall family's experience in documenting hunter-gatherers in the Kalahari, during which they took more than 40,000 still images of men, women, and children at work and play, is considered "one of the most important ventures in the anthropology of Africa." Learn more about the Kalahari Perspectives exhibition at:

<https://www.peabody.harvard.edu/kalahari-perspectives>.



VOLUNTEERS OF THE FINEST KIND

Somerville Public Schools are lucky to have among their midst some treasures of the human kind. At one of our elementary schools, two retired doctors (with the same last name but unrelated), have been volunteering every week for more than four years to read one-on-one with students. Recently Dr. Sylvia Fine and Dr. Albert Fine spoke about why they chose to volunteer in a school, how their volunteering is going, and what they believe students gain when paired with an adult for individualized reading.



Dr. Albert Fine began serving in Somerville long before his volunteer career at the East Somerville Community School. He began his love affair with Somerville when he started his medical practice in the 1970s on Highland Ave, treating adults as an internal medicine specialist. During his 40 years of medical practice, Dr. Fine got to know his patients and their stories—many of them elders who had lived in Somerville their entire lives.

After Al retired, one of his daughters convinced him to try volunteering with the East Somerville Community School, where she enjoyed serving through the [Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy](#) program. This program pairs volunteers with students for weekly one-to-one literacy intervention.

Reading with his own children had been a favorite activity for Al, and he welcomed the opportunity to connect with children again through reading. He also missed the Somerville community he'd grown to know so well. Dr. Fine was quickly matched with students for one-on-one reading, and has been volunteering every week since 2014.

When asked what keeps him making the trek every week at 80 years young from New Hampshire to Somerville, Dr. Fine replies without hesitation, "the kids."

"These kids are so fantastic. And I have a deep appreciation for the struggles that some families can face. Whether it's with learning, language, time challenges or meeting their children's nutritional and health needs, I think there are a lot of demands on families today. It's hard not to feel a little helpless in the face of some of these things. So I come back for the kids."

Dr. Sylvia 'Siva' Fine served in Somerville as an Obstetrician-Gynecologist for 20 years (and personal note, a great one at that!) Shortly after her retirement, Siva reached out to ask about volunteer opportunities with the schools. She wanted to know what requirements were involved, and steps she needed to take so she would be ready to begin in a few months, after she completed hiking the Appalachian Trail.

That was my first indication of the kind of volunteer Siva would be: truly committed to the task, reliable, organized, and a volunteer who knows what she wants. After a couple of false starts with classroom volunteering (not on her end), Siva requested to be matched for individualized literacy support. She realized that she and the students would benefit more by connecting regularly and individually.

With her knack for finding good literature that students love to read (and often bringing it in), more than four years later Siva is working with the same students at the East Somerville Community School. A testament to her relationship-building and connections made with these students—now in grades six, seven and eight—is their asking if they can work with Siva year after year. And, when one of her students tested so well that he no longer needed extra reading intervention, he asked if he could come in before school to meet with her and read. His wish was granted.

"It's been so rewarding to me to get to know these students," says Siva. "The beauty of working with the same students every year is that we don't have to start getting to know each other in September. I know where they are, what subjects and genres they love and we can just get going with it."

Interview January 3, 2019

SPS Volunteer Program, Jen Capuano



EASTERN DISTRICT SENIOR CHORUS

Somerville High School students Sam Hook, Youdson Felix, and Alessandro Ferrari Carrubba recently participated in the Eastern District Senior Chorus. The chorus performed last Saturday at Boston Latin High School.

Representatives for the Chorus were selected after a difficult audition process in which more than 300 applicants participated. The Highlander trio was mentored by Somerville Choral Director, Beverly J. Mosby.

What's Happening

School Committee Winter Office Hours

The Somerville School Committee invites you to share your thoughts about the Somerville Public Schools, including a potential new school and the district budget for the upcoming school year, during office hours hosted throughout the city from January 22 through February 10, 2019.

- Tuesday, January 22, 8:15-9:15am – School Committee Vice Chair Emily Ackman at East Somerville Community School Principal Coffee Hour, 50 Cross St.
- Thursday, January 24, 8:30-9:30am – School Committee Member Laura Pitone at Kennedy School Coffee Hour, 5 Cherry St.
- Saturday, January 26, 9:00-10:30am – School Committee Member Lee Erica Palmer (Spanish bilingual) with City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen, Representative Denise Provost, and Senator Pat Jehlen at 17 Pitman Street (Lee's house)
- Saturday, January 26, 9:30-10:30am – School Committee Member Paula O'Sullivan at Diesel Café, 257 Elm St.
- Saturday, January 26, 12:00-1:30pm – School Committee Chair Carrie Normand with City Council President Katjana Ballantyne, Representative Christine Barber, and Senator Pat Jehlen at Angelina's Pizzeria, 230 Holland St.
- Sunday, January 27, 10:30am-noon – School Committee Member Laura Pitone with City Councilor Mark Niedergang at Armory Café, 191 Highland Ave.
- Tuesday, January 29, 7:30-8:30am – School Committee Member Dan Futrell at Bloc 11 Café, 11 Bow St.
- Wednesday, January 30, 8:00-9:00am – School Committee Member Lee Erica Palmer (Spanish bilingual) at Forge Bakery, 626 Somerville Ave.
- Thursday, January 31, 7:30-8:30am – School Committee Member Dan Futrell at The Biscuit, 406 Washington St.
- Thursday, January 31, 6:00-8:00pm – School Committee Member Andre Green with Representative Christine Barber at Tipping Cow, 415 Medford St.
- Friday, February 1, 8:15-9:30am – School Committee Chair Carrie Normand and School Committee Member Paula O'Sullivan at Soundbites, 704 Broadway
- Friday, February 1, 10:00-11:30am – School Committee Vice Chair Emily Ackman at Dunkin', 220 Broadway (Spanish interpretation available)
- Tuesday, February 5, 9:00-11:00am – School Committee Member Andre Green at Winter Hill Brewing, 328 Broadway
- Friday, February 8, 10:00-11:30am – School Committee Vice Chair Emily Ackman with City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin & State Representative Mike Connolly at the Cross St. Senior Center, 165 Broadway
- Sunday, February 10, 10:30am-noon – School Committee Member Laura Pitone with City Councilor Mark Niedergang at Armory Café, 191 Highland Ave.

Upcoming Winter Concerts

Enjoy the sounds of the season and help us celebrate the outstanding work of our student musicians and music educators. Learn more about Music and Performing Arts at the Somerville Public Schools in our latest production of **Our Schools, Our City** (https://youtu.be/nRg_nB-pV18). Upcoming concerts include:

Thursday, January 24, 8:45-10:45am: WSNS Winter Concert. The West Somerville Neighborhood School presents *Songs of Peace and Community*. Enjoy performances about peace and community by the K-6th grade classrooms, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade String & Band Ensembles, 7th and 8th grade Chorus, World Percussion, and Orchestra. Please contact Mr. Darrell with any questions at adarrell@k12.somerville.ma.us.

Thursday, January 31, 9:00-10:00am: Healey Winter Concert, featuring students in grades 3-8. To be held in the school cafeteria.

Thursday, January 31, 9:15am: Argenziano School MLK Celebration Concert, featuring students in 5th through 8th grades and band students. Concert will take place in the school cafeteria.

Special Education Basic Rights Workshop – Wednesday, January 23

Join the Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC) and Diana Santiago from Mass. Advocates for Children on Wednesday, January 23rd, for a Spanish-language workshop that introduces participants to federal and state special education laws, the special education process, and parent and student rights. Workshop takes place at the East Somerville Community School (50 Cross St.), from 6:30-8:30pm. Spanish to English interpretation will be provided.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Rescheduled to Monday, January 28

Somerville's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration has been rescheduled to Monday, January 28th due to this weekend's anticipated snowstorm. The January 28th celebration will take place at the East Somerville Community School auditorium (50 Cross St.), from 6:00-7:30pm. The event will feature musical performances, readings by winners of the student essay contest, and more. This year, the Somerville Human Rights Commission is also holding a Winter Clothing Drive during the event. Donations of gently used or new winter clothing for school-aged children are welcome, and will be distributed to the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative's Clothing Closet.

Somerville Learning 2030 Community Conversation & Reflection – Tuesday, January 29

This past fall, the City of Somerville, Somerville Public Schools, and many of our community agencies and organizations partnered to reach out and ask you – our community – what you value most and where we should focus our efforts to make sure every Somerville youth has a great learning experience while growing up in our city. Through surveys, focus groups and community visioning sessions, you shared your voice and values and let us know what's most important in creating a thriving, healthy, opportunity-filled city for our youth. Join us to hear about our findings and share your reflections. We want to make sure we haven't missed anything. Tuesday, January 29, 5:30-7:30pm at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School Cafeteria (115 Sycamore St.). Light pizza dinner and refreshments served at 5:30pm; facilitated session 6:00-7:30pm. Please RSVP at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SVJan29Reg> by Monday, January 28, 2019 if you plan to attend.

Upcoming School & District Events:

Visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us and click on the "calendar" link at the top of the page for a list of upcoming activities in our schools and in our District this month.

Monday, January 21: Martin Luther King Jr. Day – School Holiday – All Schools and District Offices CLOSED

Tuesday, January 22, 5:30-7:00pm: ESCS School Council Meeting (50 Cross St.)

Wednesday, January 23, 1:30pm: Somerville High School Early Release Day

Wednesday, January 23: Argenziano 4th Grade Field Trip (Chagas/Baer) to Museum of Science

Wednesday, January 23, 6:30-8:30pm: Special Education Basic Rights Workshop (in Spanish with Spanish to English interpretation) at the East Somerville Community School (50 Cross St.)

Thursday, January 24, 7:30-8:05am: Healey Middles Grades (7&8) Parent/Teacher Meeting in Mr. Stephano's classroom

Thursday, January 24, 8:45-10:45am: WSNS Winter Concert at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)

Thursday, January 24, 5:00-7:00pm: SFLC Community Resource Clinic at the Cummings School (42 Prescott St.)

Thursday, January 24, 6:00-10:00pm: Brown School Night at Winter Hill Brewing

Friday, January 25: Argenziano 4th Grade Field Trip (Pacino/Gommerstadt) to Museum of Science

Friday, January 25, 1:30-2:30pm: ESCS 2nd Grade Math Parent Event, in 2nd grade classrooms (50 Cross St.)

Upcoming School Committee Meetings:

Find the complete School Committee schedule, agendas and meeting minutes (as approved) online at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/school-committee.

Monday, January 28, 6:00-7:00pm: Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting of the Whole at the Board of Aldermen Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Monday, January 28, 7:00pm-8:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting at the Board of Aldermen Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Wednesday, January 30, 5:30-6:30pm: Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole at the City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room (93 Highland Ave.)

Wednesday, January 30, 6:00-8:30pm: School Committee and Board of Aldermen Joint Hearing at the Board of Aldermen Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Upcoming Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Workshops and Events:

Find a complete list of SFLC events and workshops at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families.

SFLC January Drop-In Playgroups. Session 2 Drop-in Literacy Playgroups for children birth – 5 years old (children must be accompanied by an adult). Playgroups are at the Cummings School building (42 Prescott St.). To register, call (617) 625-6600, x6990 or register online at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/playgroups.

- Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30pm: January 8, 15, 22, 29 – Discover & Learn (Yellow Door)
- Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30am: January 9, 16, 23, 30 – Climb & Create (Pink Door)
- Thursdays, 10:00-11:30am: January 10, 17, 24, 31 – Discover & Learn (Yellow Door)

Special Education Basic Rights Workshop. Join the Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC) and Diana Santiago from Massachusetts Advocates for Children on Wednesday, January 23rd, for a Spanish-language workshop that introduces participants to federal and state special education laws, the special education process, and parent and student rights. Workshop takes place at the East Somerville Community School (50 Cross St.), from 6:30-8:30pm. Spanish to English interpretation will be provided.

SFLC Community Resource Clinic. Do you have questions about community resources? Are you looking for childcare? Join us on Thursday, January 24th, 5:00-7:00pm at the Cummings School building (42 Prescott St.), for a Community Resource Clinic. Meet representatives from the SFLC, City of Somerville Health and Human Services, and SomerViva for information, resources and referrals. The SFLC Community Clothing Closet, a resource offering free clothing for families in need will be open. For more information, please contact Franca Reyes at freyes@k12.somerville.ma.us or (617) 625-6600, x6994.

Course Planning Night for 8th Grade Families. On Thursday, January 31, 6:00-7:00pm, all 8th grade parents and families in the district are invited to Somerville High School to learn about the high school course selection process and to meet their students' future high school counselors. Interpretation will be provided. Event takes place at the SHS Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)

Looking Ahead:

Wednesday, January 30, 2:45-4:15pm: Healey Parent-Teacher Conferences (5 Meacham St.)

Wednesday, January 30, 1:30pm: Somerville High School Early Release Day

Wednesday, January 30, 6:00-8:00pm: SHS School Improvement Council Meeting at the Somerville High School Library (81 Highland Ave.)

Thursday, January 31, 9:00-10:00am: Healey Grades 3-8 Winter Concert at the Healey Cafeteria (5 Meacham St.)

Thursday, January 31, 9:15am: Argenziano MLK Celebration Concert at the Argenziano Cafeteria (290 Washington St.)

Thursday, January 31, 2:45-4:15pm: Winter Hill Community Innovation School Parent-Teacher Conferences (115 Sycamore St.)

Friday, February 1, 8:00-8:45am: Cramer Coffee Collab at the Healey School Library (5 Meacham St.)

Friday, February 1, 6:30-8:30pm: Brown School Tropical Dance at the Argenziano Cafetorium (290 Washington St.)

Community News & Events

Let's Talk About Race Symposium & Panel Discussion. Somerville Media Center (SMC) invites you to "Let's Talk about Race", a podcast and radio show that invites people from all backgrounds to engage in courageous conversations around issues related to race. On Saturday, January 19th, from 11:00am to 1:30pm, SMC will welcome back a panel of past years' guests who will share their experiences and expertise. Afterwards, the community is invited to join the conversation at SMC, at a community meal and by participating in racial dialogues facilitated by the panelists.

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week Meme Contest. Somerville Prevention Services invites Somerville youth to participate in a Meme Contest to promote National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week (January 22-27, 2019). The contest starts January 21st and ends on January 25th. To participate, youth should submit original memes to Prevention Services Manager, Matthew Mitchell, at mmitchell@somervillema.gov. The winner of a \$25 Target gift card will be notified on Monday, January 28th. Contest guidelines include:

- Drug facts, drug-free, or positive messaging required for submitted memes
- Avoid "Just say no to drugs" or similar taglines

- Submissions will be judged by creativity and alignment with prevention goals/efforts.

2018 Somerville High School Health Survey Results & World Café Style Community Discussion. Somerville Cares About Prevention (SCAP) invites you to learn about Somerville student health issues and share your ideas to improve health in our community, as they present the results of the 2018 Somerville High School Health Survey. SCAP and Somerville Positive Forces (SPF) 100 Youth Leaders will share highlights from the results of the 2018 SHS Health Survey in an interactive game format, which will be followed by a World Café Style discussion. Enjoy an open community discussion with parents/guardians, grandparents, youth, teachers, counselors, mentors, leaders and others, on a variety of youth health topics. Light refreshments will be served. Event takes place on Thursday, January 31st, 5:30-7:30pm at the SHS Highlander Café/Culinary Arts Bistro (81 Highland Ave.)

Marijuana, Vaping & Youth: A Discussion for Adults. Somerville Prevention Services, the SHS PTSA, and Somerville's Health and Human Services Department invite you to a discussion on Marijuana, Vaping and Youth. The discussion takes place Thursday, February 7, 2019, 6:00-7:30pm at the Somerville High School Highlander Café/Culinary Arts Bistro (81 Highland Ave.). Prevention resources will be distributed. A light dinner and refreshments will be provided, and childcare and interpretation services will be available.

Writers' Den. Writers' Den presents two *Writing and Publishing Get-Togethers* for writers in grades 4 through 8, at the Somerville Public Library (Central branch) on Highland Avenue (Auditorium, 1st floor): Thursday, January 24, 3:15-5:30pm and Thursday, February 21, 1:00-5:30pm. Share writing that you bring, free write, and have writing challenges and mini-workshops. Publishing possibilities will be discussed. If you love to write, this is for you! Free. Also, Middle School Writers' Den meets regularly on Monday evenings, 6:15-8:00pm at the Healey School, except when there is no school. All writers in grades 4-8 are welcome. For more information, contact kid@12zine.com. Visit www.12zine.com to read all the publications.

Boston Junior Derby. Boston Junior Derby invites all girls or non-binary kids ages 7-17 to join the fun! Intro session starts January 19, 2019. Roller skaters of all skill levels are welcome. Boston Roller Derby trains beginner and advanced skaters to have the skills and safety necessary for competing at the Junior roller derby level. Practices take place in Lynn, MA. For more information, visit <http://www.bostonjuniororderby.com/> or contact bjdreg@gmail.com.

Somerville Parks & Recreation. Visit <http://www.somervillerec.com/info/activities/default.aspx?type=activities> to learn all about the Somerville Parks & Recreation Department's current programming.

City & District Employment Opportunities

Consider joining a winning team! Current city and district opportunities include:

- [Deputy Director of Libraries](#), Libraries Dept., City of Somerville
- [Social Media Manager/Community Engagement Specialist](#), Communications and Community Engagement, City of Somerville
- [Primary Water Operator](#), Water and Sewer Dept., City of Somerville

Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/jobs> for a complete listing of current open positions in the City of Somerville.

- [K-12 Supervisor of Health and Physical Education](#), Somerville Public Schools
- [Director of Somerville Community Schools](#), Somerville Public Schools
- [SHS Welcome Center Liaison](#), Somerville High School

Visit <https://www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902> for a complete listing of current open positions in the Somerville Public Schools.

Have something to share with the community? Send information to connections@k12.somerville.ma.us to share an event. Please note that we look for events and programs that support youth development. Include date, time and name of event, along with any additional pertinent information. Or, submit your event to <http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/calendar/submit>.

Our Commitment to the Whole Child

VISION: "We believe in developing the whole child — the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students — by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities."

