

In Somerville, ‘Lit Knits’ is a community crafting circle with a catch: Cannabis

“It feels like a grown up art class,” said one member of the group.

By [Julian E.J. Sorapuru](#) Globe Staff, Updated February 9, 2024, 11:04 a.m.



Somerville resident Jess Sanford organized a knitting circle, called “Lit Knits,” that meets once a week at The Goods, a

SOMERVILLE — You’ve heard of paint and sip. But how about knit and smoke?

The two popular pastimes have collided in Davis Square at [Lit Knits](#), a free, weekly knitting circle that revolves around consuming cannabis at home and then coming together at a dispensary to create crafts.

Somerville resident Jess Sanford, 29, started the group seven months ago, as a way to build a community of like-minded people with a shared passion close to home.

“I just get high, and I knit a lot. And then I was looking around Somerville, looking around Cambridge, and I was like, ‘I bet a bunch of these other [people] do too,’” said Sanford, who works as a software engineer. “I think that as an adult, your happiness is kind of tied to how local your community is and how local your friendships are.”

Initially, the meetups happened outdoors, [in Powderhouse Park](#). But as the weather grew colder, Sanford started looking for a building to host her burgeoning community of crafters. After pitching the idea to a few local businesses, [Davis Square cannabis shop The Goods](#) got back to Sanford and offered to let her operate out of their free-to-use community space on Thursday nights.

Alexander DeGroot, cofounder of The Goods, [the city’s first recreational cannabis shop](#), said he welcomed Sanford into the space because it was evident that “Jess is just a very professional, put-together person.”

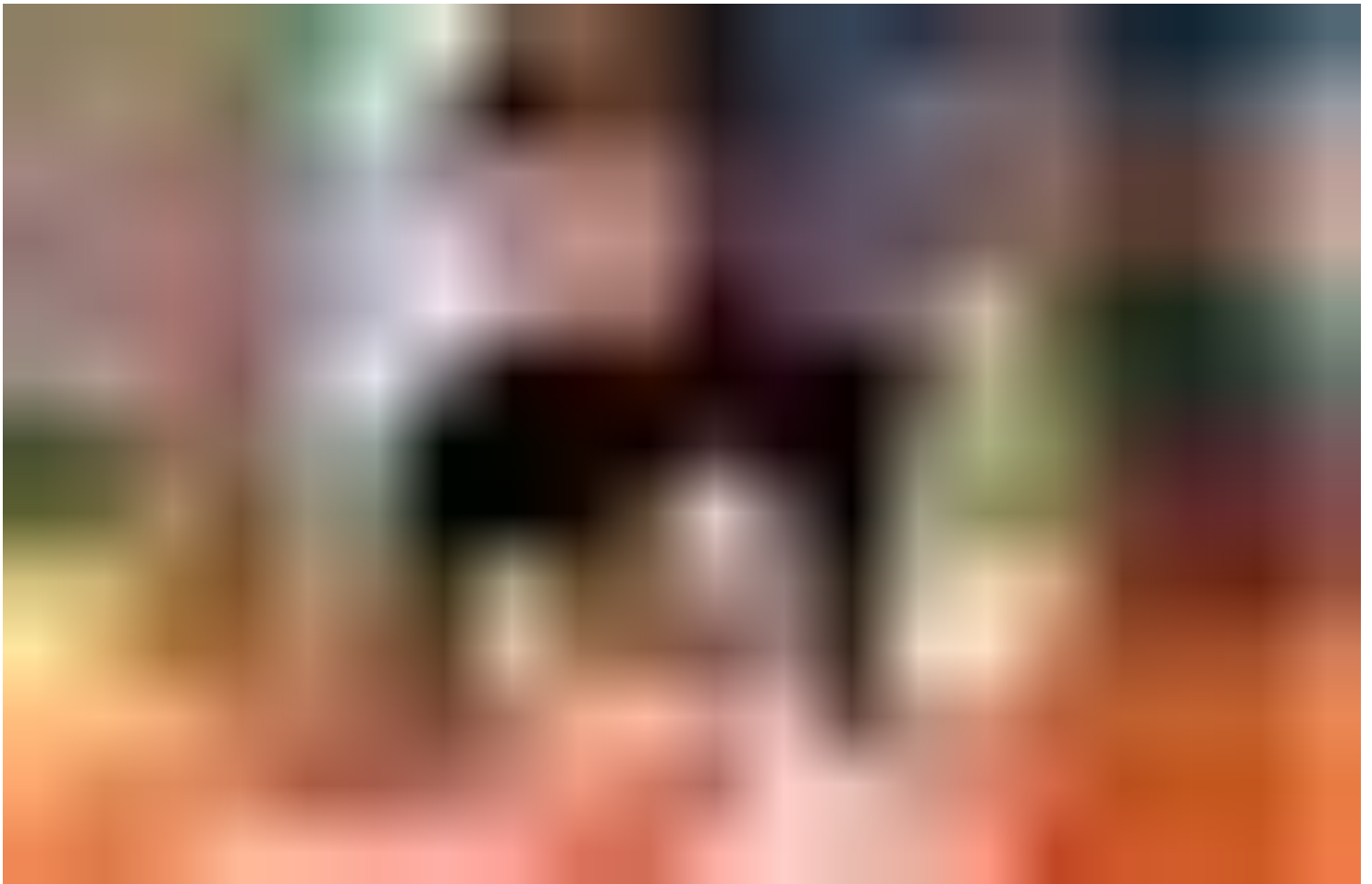
“It was very obvious that she was capable and had follow-through,” he said. On top of that, DeGroot felt the Lit Knits idea aligned with his dispensary’s mantra of “good people, good deeds, good product.”

The idea appeals to others, too — mainly highly educated young professionals looking

for a community to decompress with after work. Sanford said during the sessions the group sometimes talks about their jobs, but more often the conversations range from “deeply philosophical questions about social dilemmas” to “jabbering on about trash TV.”

According to [a 2023 consumer report by market research firm Mintel](#), Gen Z and younger millennials represent a highly engaged segment of the crafting economy, due to a desire for personalization and frugality.

“I feel like finding community post-pandemic is kind of tough,” said Christina Blakely, 27, who has been attending Lit Knits for a few months. “It’s nice to have something to do outside [my home], but you don’t have to constantly shell out money just to talk to people.”



Marley Morrell of Somerville has been a consistent Lit Knits community member for a few months. DANIELLE

Lit Knits attendees do have a set rules to follow. If they are under the influence while crafting, they have to partake before meeting up with their fellow knitters on account that The Goods [doesn't have a social consumption license](#). Everyone who attends must also be at least 21 or older, since the group meeting is inside of a dispensary. And Sanford insists that no one who participates while high drives themselves to the venue.

The knitting circles usually draw a crowd of eight to 16 people, many of whom heard about the group through social media. Marley Morrell, 29, who is also a software engineer, found Lit Knits on Reddit in December, while searching for things to do in the neighborhood she had moved to just months prior.

“I heard this mention of a knitting group in Somerville that meets at a dispensary, and I was like, ‘That sounds too good to be true.’ But no, it exists. And it’s amazing,” she said. “It feels like a grown-up art class.”

Sanford puts a considerable amount of thought into making Lit Knits a comfortable community that people will want to return to each week. Every “sesh,” as she calls them, has snacks, music, and sometimes TV — plus the space is decorated with tablecloths, fake candles, and flowers to set the mood.

Most nights, attendees bring their own project to work on. But Sanford also plans themed sessions — usually revolving around a holiday — that involve a project everyone works on together, such as crocheting maple leaf coasters for Thanksgiving, snowflakes to celebrate the winter solstice, or plush hearts for the Valentine’s Day-themed session Lit Knits recently hosted.



“Lit Knits” attendees working on a plush heart project at a recent Valentine's Day themed session. DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/GLOBE STAFF

Sanford emphasized that all are welcome regardless of the type of fiber art they're interested in, what neighborhood they live in, or their experience level. It's a community where they share tips and tricks freely, though Sanford does warn that if you're a beginner looking to be taught to knit or crochet from scratch “it's probably not the best environment for that” given the cannabis consumption.

But not everyone attends sessions after consuming cannabis. Morrell, for instance, said she comes sober “if I'm working on something technical, and I want to make sure that I'm on my game.”

Even with the restrictions, DeGroot sees cannabis and crafting as a winning combination.





The tools of the trade. DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/GLOBE STAFF

“Cannabis can help you unwind and maybe even lessen some of the anxieties of modern life. I think knitting kind of goes with that because it’s sort of meditative, and it’s certainly creative,” he said.

The Somerville crafting community is “very vibrant” according to Bridget Duggan, who co-runs a vendor market called [Small Mart](#) in the Crystal Ballroom at Somerville Theatre, where a number of local crafters sell their creations.

“There’s a lot of people doing it for fun, to build community with each other, and also to earn extra income,” Duggan said.

For Morrell, “the sense of community” is what keeps her coming back to Lit Knits.

“I like to see what everyone’s working on and I like to show off what I’m working on. It’s just something I look forward to every week,” she said. “There is definitely some sense of magic that just comes from creating things just for the sake of it.”

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