

**SOUTH ORANGE DOWNTOWN**  
**Open Air Holiday Market**  
**SLOAN ST PARKING LOT**  
Visit [southorangedowntown.org](http://southorangedowntown.org) for details

**2021 HOLIDAY MARKET DATES**

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
NOV	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
DEC	28	29	30	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

Small Business Saturday 11/27 10AM-3PM  
All December Thursdays 1PM-6PM

COMMUNITY ♦ MAPLEWOOD

# SOMA Spotlight: Kindergarten Teacher, Philanthropist, Author and Maplewoodian Claire Sinclair

Written By [Joy Yagid](#)

November 24, 2021



## **Name?**

Claire Sinclair.



## **What town do you live in, and how long have you lived here?**

Born, raised and lived here all my life other than college, and we spent a few years in townhouse in West Orange when we were first married.

## **SOMA or MapSO?**

My husband and I say SOMA, my kids say MapSO. According to my 24-year-old “the younger generations say MapSO.”

## **What do you do?**

I am a Kindergarten teacher at Tuscan School.

## **Why do you live/work/interact here?**

I live and work here because my husband Dave and I grew up here. We met at Columbia High School in 1987. My parents also met at CHS in the 60s. They also grew up here did my husband’s mom. I teach Kindergarten in the same Kindergarten classroom th attended Kindergarten in...many years ago. I am a real local.

## **Which book have you been meaning to read?**

I prefer audio books and just finished North of Normal by Cea Sunrise Person which amazing!

## **What book did you just write?**

My 1st Children’s’ book, [The Mice Who Came to Story Time](#). *[See more about the boo in the press release below.]*

## **Why did you write the book? Where did you get the idea?**

About 8 years ago, while I was teaching, when the room would get very quiet, two little mice kept appearing during story time. It is no secret that mice appear occasionally at school. The school buildings are nearly 100 years old and I am sure there are plenty of little nooks and crannies that are warm and cozy and appealing to a mouse. They usually didn't come out while anyone was in the room, but these two little mice were curious. The students saw them more than once and named them Squeaky and Cheesy. The story is loosely based on this experience.

**If you could say one nice thing to the residents of SOMA, what would it be?**

Thank you for always being willing to jump in and help when I share in [Feed SOMA](#) Facebook group that addresses food insecurity]. When there is a need, these towns always pull through and help make it a huge success.

**Is there anything about our towns that bugs you? Or, if you could change one thing, what would it be?**

How quickly some can be to judge on local social media groups when they don't have the full story.

**If SOMA was a flavor of ice cream, what kind of ice cream would it be?**

[Heavenly Hash](#) – there is a little bit of everything in it. Just like our towns, which is what I love so much about living here.

**How do you contribute to our community?**

I work at the [OLS Food Pantry](#) and am a board member for [MEND](#). I organize food, diaper and pajama drives in the community. I am the administrator of a Facebook Group, [Habitual Gratitude](#) where I share a prompt everyday. Starting and/or ending your day with gratitude has been a great practice for many and this group has a huge following and brings joy to me (and many others) on a daily basis.

**What's your favorite dessert in SOMA?**

Cupcakes from [Gigis](#), wait, no from [The Able Baker](#), wait, no from [Palmers](#), wait, no from [Three Daughters Baking](#).... can I just say cupcakes?!?! 

### **What's your favorite place to shop in SOMA?**

Also so hard to choose! But I really believe in consignment and [West Village Clothing](#); my absolute favorite place to buy clothing and shoes. Plus the owners are AMAZING people!

### **What's your favorite thing about living here?**

Being invested in the towns, and being able to organize and get others involved when there is a need for something in the community.

### **What's your favorite place to go on Saturday morning?**

My Saturday mornings are spent doing two things and they alternate every other week. If I am not at The OLS Food Pantry, I am kickboxing at [CKO](#). Tara, the owner, is an amazing business owner and I owe a debt of gratitude to her for all she has done to help transform me into a strong and confident person.

---

*Claire will be signing copies of her book on:*

*Friday, November 26 from 12:00 to 4:00 PM at [WNTR: Holiday Village and Make Market](#) on Springfield Avenue in Maplewood.*

*Saturday, November 27 at the [South Orange Downtown Open-Air Holiday Market](#) from 10 AM till 3 PM.*

*December 11, Book House in Millburn from 12-2 .*

Contact: Thomas West, Publisher  
Phone: 862-224-1415  
Email:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Local Authors Release “The Mice Who Came to Story Time”



(MAPLEWOOD, NJ, November 18, 2021) They have been a legend at a local elementary school for decades, but now Squeaky and Cheesy debut in their first book, “*The Mice Who Came to Story Time.*” Beloved Maplewood kindergarten teacher **Claire Sinclair** teamed with Millburn-based artist and illustrator **Amir Achitov** to create a charming and

Page 1 / 1

n.

[Download \(PDF, 327KB\)](#)