

Fill a Cruiser for Christmas

BY PATRICIA ROY

Would you like to make the holidays a little brighter for families in need?

The Holliston and Ashland police departments can help you with that.

Together, the two departments are holding their "Fill a Cruiser" event, where they partner with the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10. The event is held at the Big Lots parking lot, 41 Pond St. (Route 126), Ashland.

Officers from Ashland and Holliston will be on hand to help collect the gifts.

Presents (only new, unwrapped and non-violent) are needed for ages 3 years old up through high school.

"There are always lots of gifts for the younger kids, but sometimes there are things that are needed like gift cards for the older kids," Holliston Police Chief Matthew Stone said.



CRUISER

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The Bees Knees

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

"We just put them to bed for the winter," said Fr. Carl Chudy.

He serves as Interfaith Outreach Coordinator, Media Director and Delegation Councilor for Holliston's Fatima Shrine. Yet over the past several years, parishioners may know him more for his honeybee outreach. The creatures are newcomers to the church grounds, and Fr. Chudy has taken the hives under his wing.

Colonies colloquially are called a hive, nest, drift, an erst, grist, a stand, swarm, and perhaps most endearingly - a rabble.

The work of caring for the bees takes a village, especially in more-northern and colder climes, and so Fr. Chudy is joined by church members Jess



McGuire and Cathy Spinoza in the effort. All three have completed a course in honeybee husbandry.

"I think we learn as we grow," said McGuire. The church now hosts four hives on its sprawling natural landscape, and has been doing so for as many years. Each rabble can vary in terms of temperament and tenacity.

Every hive, she said, "It's like opening a Christmas present. You never know what these tiny little insects can do."

"You kind of roll with the punches," seconded Fr. Chudy. To mitigate the blows, the church opted for an Italian breed of bees, a type that tends to be less aggressive. They are a



BEES

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CRUISER

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“Sometimes the middle school and high school gets left out.”

Gifts can also be left off at the Holliston Police Department (550 Washington St., Route 16) or Ashland Police Department, (12 Union St.).

Beginning the weekend after Thanksgiving, the collection boxes will rival the laden shelves at Santa’s North Pole workshop.

“For the next three or four weeks, it’s non-stop. People just come out of the woodwork and bring toys; they have their kids bring toys,” he said, adding that it’s a lesson in giving for his own young children.

The Fill a Cruiser event is only a piece of the toy collection efforts.

It’s located at the Big Lots because they have aisles of moderately priced toys. Sometimes people will see the Cruiser and dash back into the store to buy a present to add to the rest, the Chief said.

Local groups, businesses and

organizations will collect toys and drop them at the police station in place of an office holiday party or Yankee Swap, said Stone.

“We’ll get a call saying, “We had a company party Saturday night and I have 25 toys, can I bring them by?”” he said.

Holliston has been active in the Toys for Tots program for years, and is a well-established drop center. The station is open 24/7 which makes it convenient so people can drop off toys any-time.

“I also have 30 police officers who can help me load them into a truck or a van to take them to the drop center,” he joked.

The toys make their way to a large distribution center that changes its location from time to time, but has been in Burlington for a few years, Stone explained.

The toys are sorted by age and type so people in need can put in a request, then sometime in the middle of December, they’ll be invited to go to the center and pick out toys they know their kids would like.

“There’s a room of all Barbie dolls,” he said. “Technically the drive ends on Dec. 11, and it’s to give time to get the gifts out to families.”

In addition to being new and unwrapped toys, the gifts should also be non-violent, Stone said.

“No guns, no Nerf guns, no swords,” he said.

The drive has collected some big-ticket items in the past like bicycles and X-boxes, so if it’s in your budget, let the spirit of giving lead you.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Join the Holliston & Ashland Police Departments
for our Annual “Fill-A-Cruiser” Event

ASHLAND POLICE **HOLLISTON POLICE**

Sunday, December 10, 2023
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at

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Help “Fill-A-Cruiser” to support Toys for Tots!
Officers from Holliston and Ashland Police will be
Collecting new, unwrapped, non-violent toys!

The police officers enjoy the toy drive, since it allows them to extend their service to the community.

“It’s another way of serving,” Stone said. “If someone is having a bad year or a tough time, we’re there to help. We don’t get to see

the kids opening gifts on Christmas, but knowing we can make a little kid happy means a lot.”

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Holliston Chosen Again For Location Of Wreaths Across America

National nonprofit Wreaths Across America (WAA) announced that Lake Grove Cemetery in Holliston, MA has once again joined in the mission to Remember, Honor, Teach, as an official location for 2023. This is the second year that the cemetery will participate in this national program.

Wreaths Across America started as a simple gesture of thanks that has grown into a national, yearlong movement of dedicated volunteers and communities coming together to not only remember the nation's fallen and honor their service but to teach the next generation about the value of freedom. This year, there will be more than 3,700 participating locations placing veterans' wreaths on National Wreaths Across America Day – Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023 – with more than two million volunteers coming together.

The goal for Lake Grove Cemetery is to raise enough funds to exceed last year's number of 200+ sponsored veterans' wreaths to lay at the headstones of all the local heroes laid to rest there, to ensure that the individuals who served to protect the freedoms of our country never



be forgotten and to bring the community together in patriotic commemoration. We look forward to seeing you on Dec. 16. The ceremony is to begin at 10 a.m. with the laying of wreaths to follow.

"We are forever grateful for the thousands of supporters who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to fulfilling our mission all year long," said Karen Worcester, executive director, of Wreaths Across America. "These individuals and their communities know the value of remem-

bering the fallen, honoring those who currently serve, and teaching the next generation about the sacrifices made for our freedom every day, and because of their continued support, Wreaths Across America continues to grow and touch new people each year."

My name is Taryn Holmes, I am a senior at Holliston High School, and I am, again, the Location Coordinator for this event I am doing as a National Honor Society Project. Those interested in volunteering for Wreaths



Across America or sponsoring a wreath for Lake Grove Cemetery you can scan our QR code or visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/MALAGV to learn more.

Also, consider becoming a local sponsorship group. Thank you to our current sponsoring

groups, the Jason Russell Society Children of the American Revolution, Mount Hollis Lodge A.F. & A.M., and the Old Middlesex Chapter Sons of the American Revolution. National Wreaths Across America Day is a free event open to all people.

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End The Year With The Friends Of Holliston Trails

BY SUSAN MANNING
STAFF WRITER

End of the year with friends and neighbors at the Friends of Holliston Trails Annual First Night Trail Walk.

According to Gretchen Rice Prieve Chair, First Night Trail Walk, and President, Friends of Holliston Trails, the event is highly anticipated.

“The trail has been called the crown jewel of Holliston and this event invites people to explore the trail in a new way. One of our goals as a nonprofit is to

raise awareness of the trail and it’s important to show off the trail in fun ways. Along the walk, we’ll have volunteers staffing fire pits for warmth, entertainment, decorations, and snacks,” she said.

Prieve said the inaugural First Night Trail Walk was 10 years ago and, “We have hosted this event most years since 2013.”

The Trail Walk is Dec. 31, from 5-8 PM.

With the walk and dinner early, it allows for “time to get outside for fresh air, exercise, and to chat with neighbors early in the evening, leaving plenty of time for more traditional New Year’s celebrations,” said Prieve.

She said over the years, the organization has had different entertainment features to engage walkers of all ages. From live ice sculpture demonstrations to a unicyclist roaming the trail, they try to make it family friendly for all to enjoy.

“This year we will welcome back The Unlikely Strummers, a community-based group of ukulele players. They are sure to get a crowd singing and per-



haps even dancing on the trail. In Blair Square we are adding a DJ this year. Erosbooth will bring energy to Blair Square like we’ve never seen with music, lights, and a 3D photo booth. Three Ring Creations is also new to Holliston this year with an LED juggling act to dazzle our youngest walkers,” said Prieve.

Another favorite are the fire pits along the trails.

“Our fire pit hosts often bring their own, offering to shape this event—bells to ring in the new year, laser light shows, and resolution burning have all been featured along the trail. People have a story—and they integrate that story into the event, making this experience truly unique,” she said.

There will be a variety of snacks along the trail. Many of the fire pits offer snacks—s’mores, trail mix, hot choco-



late—and Holliston Boy Scout Troop 73 will grill up hot dogs for walkers in Phipps Tunnel.

Prieve is excited for the event. “This is Holliston at its best. It’s a family-friendly, fun way to celebrate New Year’s Eve. Whether a participant walks the entire length of our event or just a short portion, they’ll experience the trail in a way that is unique—visually they’ll see lanterns hanging from Phipps Tunnel, lights lining the trail, and fire pits guiding the way.

“They may engage by smashing a gong to ring in the New Year, listening to music, talking with neighbors at different fire pit

stops, or simply spending time as a family without the distraction of phones and iPads,” she said.

As an all-volunteer organization, the group depends on neighbors to support this event and are still in need of fire pit hosts. Fire Pit Hosts are responsible for building, maintaining, and extinguishing a fire pit in a specific location along the trail. If anyone is interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity, email president@hollistontrails.org.

Prieve said “Middlesex Savings Bank is a key sponsor of our 2023 First Night Trail Walk. We’re thankful for their financial support, which allows us to bring more entertainment to our event this year.”

Know before you go

Participants may begin their walk from either Blair Square (corner of Central and Railroad Streets) or Cross Street, to make their way to Phipps Tunnel. The walk from Blair Square to Phipps Tunnel is about 1 mile and the

TRAILS

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BEES

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subset of European honeybees, familiar to folks by their brown and black tiger-stripe-patterned abdomens. Yet despite their more-docile reputation, the church's tiny charges are still bees at heart.

"We have gotten stung," said McGuire. "It's highly entertaining."

But why bees?

McGuire said the effort was inspired by the convergence of the ecological and ecclesiastical, a philosophical place where the two concerns connect.

"It's part of a spiritual project," she said. "Being charged by god to care for the earth." Of the 23 acres of church property, "We're turning over a good portion of that to meadowland. To assist our pollinators in the community. For me, it's very healing."

Spinoza agreed. "It's really about the community. Everybody's sort of rooting for the bees." She joined Fr. Chudy and McGuire to help tend to their growing flock of little fliers, a pursuit that can entail a lot of work, knowhow, and much attention to detail.

"They were kind enough to take me on as their apprentice," said Spinoza.

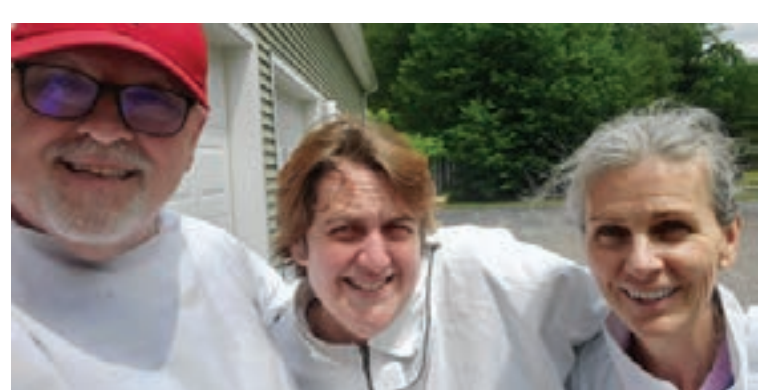
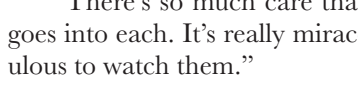
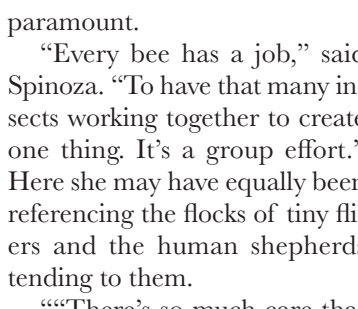
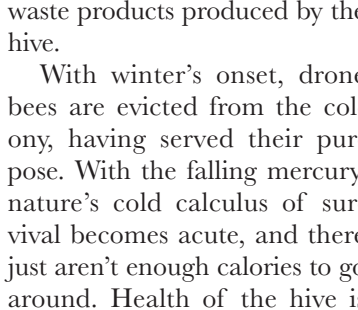
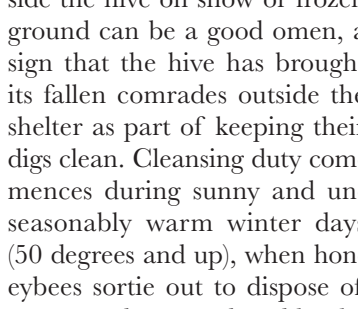
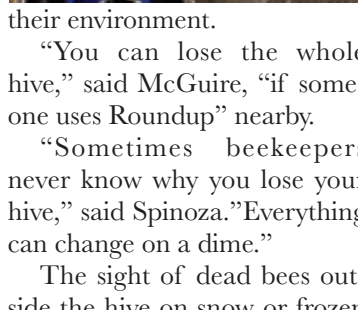
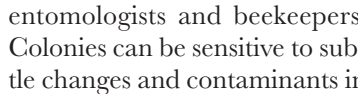
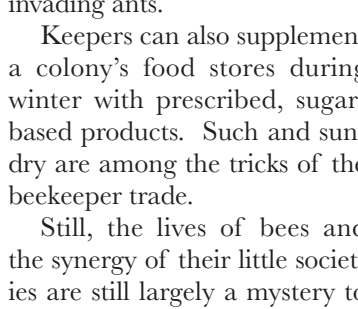
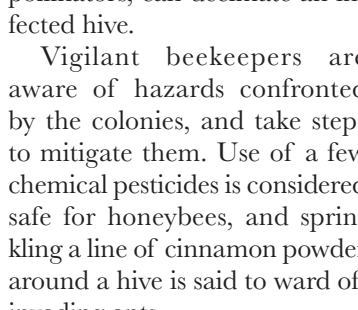
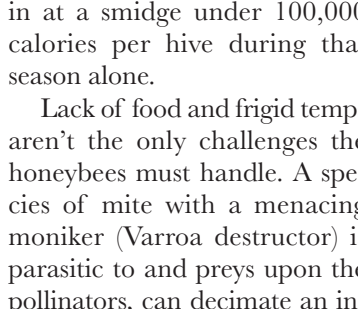
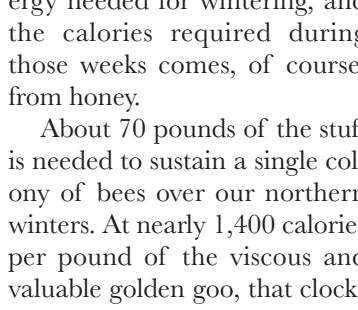
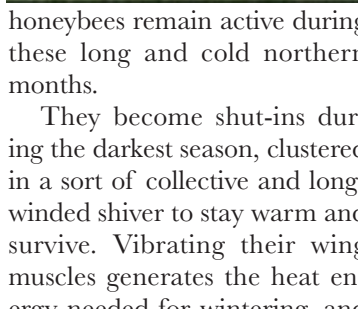
The church hopes eventually to bring its number of hives to seven. The group has had a success (survival) rate of about 50 percent over its several winters tending to the bees, not atypical for this cold and long winter climate.

"In the spring we hope to add a couple more" hives, said Fr. Chudy. The group arrived at the aspiration of seven hives, he added, because of the number's spiritual significance.

"It's kind of symbolic of being whole and complete."

But it's been a bad year for bees, he said, owing in part perhaps to the summer's numerous and voluminous downpours. Yet one sunny spot of the season was that the beekeepers were for the first time able to harvest a little honey for the bipedal community.

Fr. Chudy said that the hives had recently been tucked in and sent to sleep for the season, but the little buggers don't actually doze all winter, or even go dormant in a general sense. Rather,



honeybees remain active during these long and cold northern months.

They become shut-ins during the darkest season, clustered in a sort of collective and long-winded shiver to stay warm and survive. Vibrating their wing muscles generates the heat energy needed for wintering, and the calories required during those weeks comes, of course, from honey.

About 70 pounds of the stuff is needed to sustain a single colony of bees over our northern winters. At nearly 1,400 calories per pound of the viscous and valuable golden goo, that clocks in at a smidge under 100,000 calories per hive during that season alone.

Lack of food and frigid temps aren't the only challenges the honeybees must handle. A species of mite with a menacing moniker (*Varroa destructor*) is parasitic to and preys upon the pollinators, can decimate an infected hive.

Vigilant beekeepers are aware of hazards confronted by the colonies, and take steps to mitigate them. Use of a few chemical pesticides is considered safe for honeybees, and sprinkling a line of cinnamon powder around a hive is said to ward off invading ants.

Keepers can also supplement a colony's food stores during winter with prescribed, sugar-based products. Such and sundry are among the tricks of the beekeeper trade.

Still, the lives of bees and the synergy of their little societies are still largely a mystery to entomologists and beekeepers. Colonies can be sensitive to subtle changes and contaminants in

their environment.

"You can lose the whole hive," said McGuire, "if someone uses Roundup" nearby.

"Sometimes beekeepers never know why you lose your hive," said Spinoza. "Everything can change on a dime."

The sight of dead bees outside the hive on snow or frozen ground can be a good omen, a sign that the hive has brought its fallen comrades outside the shelter as part of keeping their digs clean. Cleansing duty commences during sunny and unseasonably warm winter days (50 degrees and up), when honeybees sortie out to dispose of waste products produced by the hive.

With winter's onset, drone bees are evicted from the colony, having served their purpose. With the falling mercury, nature's cold calculus of survival becomes acute, and there just aren't enough calories to go around. Health of the hive is paramount.

"Every bee has a job," said Spinoza. "To have that many insects working together to create one thing. It's a group effort." Here she may have equally been referencing the flocks of tiny fliers and the human shepherds tending to them.

"There's so much care that goes into each. It's really miraculous to watch them."

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TRAILS

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walk from Cross Street to Phipps Tunnel is about 0.25 miles.



Many businesses around Blair Square—CVS, Casey’s Pub, and Depot Package Store specifically—are open for business and we ask that trail walkers do not park in their lots, so they may serve their customers. Parking is available in the following locations:

- Blair Square parking lot
- Exchange Street municipal parking lot
- Robert Adams Middle School parking lot
- Placentino Elementary School parking lot
- Cross Street parking lot

The event is free of charge to the public. Should walkers wish, there will be three onsite oppor-



tunities to donate to Friends of Holliston Trails.

One thing to note: For the safety of the animals, dogs are not welcome at this event.

“While our four-legged friends are typically welcome on the trail, we respectfully ask that people leave their dogs at home for this event. In past years we

have welcomed more than 3000 walkers, so the trail is crowded. Additionally, the lights, music, and decorations create a lot of stimulation that may frighten animals,” she said.

Friends of Holliston Trails (FOHT) is a registered 501c3 founded in 2012. It was established to support the 6.7-mile rail trail created through

years of work by the town of Holliston.

The FOHT collaborates in close partnership with the town-appointed Holliston Trails Committee (HTC). We’re comprised of volunteers who drive awareness of the trail and fundraise on behalf of trail needs. The money we raise supports trail maintenance, on-trail amenities, and community programming to drive awareness.



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Many THANKS from Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors

The Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors Thanksgiving Drive and Meals for Seniors Committees want to thank YOU! HNN once again was able to contribute to the Thanksgiving efforts of the Holliston Pantry Shelf’s gift cards to their patrons as well as Head Start and Wayside Youth who both support Holliston youth.

HNN also assembled and delivered a complete Thanksgiving meal to over 60 Holliston Seniors identified by the Holliston Senior Center, Mission Springs and Cole Court.

Many thanks go to our local community organizations, religious groups and volunteers. Thanks to these groups for spreading the word, making so many Thanksgiving cards especially Holliston Girl Scouts and

Holliston Cub Scouts and volunteering their time the day before Thanksgiving to brighten the day of our Seniors.

But all of these efforts would not have been possible without all the individuals and businesses that donated to this effort including the generous donations from Applewood Survey, TLC Painting (an HNN Sponsor), Stucchi Landscape & Design, Holliston Glass & Mirror, Holliston Sewer Service, Village Auto, Moor Metals, Sapphire Counseling, ABBESS Instruments and Systems (an HNN Sponsor), BDR Automotive and For a New You/ Dr. Barbara Preussner as well as donations from Meridian Financial Advisors, Planet Automotive Group, Prana Center, Yoga Garden, Anastas Lock & Safe Company, Farrell Pool Service,

Hasting Consulting, Holliston Tire & Automotive, Holliston Vision Center, Hometown Automotive & Autobody, Inspire Dance Academy, Ocean Dreams Market, Cheryl Coehn Mosaics, Crafted and Gaetano’s.

Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors and the HNN Thanksgiving Committees hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving Day with family, food and fun. We couldn’t be more thankful for the support we received from the community on this project. We are so proud that HNN was able to be a part of making Thanksgiving a great day for so many of our neighbors.

Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors - Building Friendships, Building Community

Your Money, Your Independence

The Clash Against The Magnificent Seven



Glenn Brown, CFP

Never before has the S&P 500 been this top-heavy.

The seven largest companies by market capitalization (Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Nvidia, Meta, and Tesla) comprise more than 29% of the S&P 500 index. These companies dubbed the "Magnificent Seven" have performed very well in 2023.

The Only Band (of stocks) That Matters?

A November 14th Goldman Sachs report shared that the Magnificent Seven have gained 71% this year while the other 493 stocks in the S&P 500 have gained just 6%.

Given market cap distribution, which allows larger stocks to contribute more to the index's movements, the S&P 500 has gained +19% this year.

Thus, if one owns the other 493 stocks but not the Magnifi-

cent Seven, they're trailing the S&P 500 Index by ~13%.

"Di-worse-ification"?!

- As for other asset classes YTD through 11/14:
- +9.1% - MSCI EAFE (International) Index.
- +7.5% - Gold.
- +5.1% - Dow Jones Industrial Average (Apple, Microsoft are components).
- +5.0% - MSCI Emerging Markets Index.
- +3.4% - U.S. Small Cap (Russell 2000) Index.
- +0.4% - U.S. Aggregate Bond Index.
- 0.6% - Morningstar U.S. Real Estate Index.

What of dividend stocks? Vanguard's Dividend Appreciation +7.9% trails S&P 500 Index by ~11% even though its largest holdings Apple and Microsoft are ~9%. It can't own other Magnificent Seven stocks because they don't pay dividends (yet).

Before asking, what about NASDAQ 100's +34.6%? Understand, Magnificent Seven are 44% of that index's 100 stocks.

Death or Glory.

Yes, Magnificent Seven 2023 returns are eye-popping, but let's review 2022 then add together for net total return (not average) from 01/01/22 -11/14/23.

- Apple: **2022 -26%**; 2023 +45%; Net +7%
- Microsoft: **'22 -28%**; '23 +56%; Net +12%

Amazon: **'22 -50%**; '23 +74; Net -13%

Alphabet: **'22 -39%**; '23 +51%; Net -8%

Nvidia: **'22 -51%**; '23 +240%; Net +69%

Meta: **'22 -64%**; '23 +179%; Net 0%

Tesla: **'22 -65%**; '23 +93%; Net -32%

Still, since 2018 the Magnificent Seven have outpaced the S&P 500 and Nasdaq 100. Not the first time a concentrated group of tech stocks outperformed 5 years to sit near the top of S&P 500.

The Four Horsemen.

In the late 90s, Dell, Cisco Systems, Intel and Microsoft were deemed The Four Horsemen.

To end 1999, the Top 10 S&P 500 Index holdings were - Microsoft, General Electric, Cisco, ExxonMobil, Wal-Mart, Intel, Lucent, IBM, America Online and Citigroup. Notice 7 out of Top 10 were technology. Dell was #18, between Nortel Networks and MCI Worldcom.

A "What Happened To...?" article should be done, but understand from 2000-2009, aka "The Lost Decade", the S&P 500 Index lost -9%. The best performing Four Horseman, Microsoft, had a -36% decline for 2000s.

Diversification and Equal-Weight At Work.

If S&P 500 was negative for the 2000s, so was everything else. Right?

Nope.

Per indices cited previously, Gold returned +274%, U.S. REITs +162%, Emerging Markets +154%, U.S. Bonds +85%, U.S. Small Caps +44%, and International stocks was +12%.

Additionally, the Equal-Weight S&P 500 Index was +65% for the 2000s.

An equal-weight index is when all components are weighted equally. In today's terms, a Magnificent Seven stock impacts the same as Lululemon, Hubbell and Blackstone, all recently added to S&P 500 Index.

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

This isn't to say sell this or buy

that, as everyone's situation is different with goals, taxes, risk tolerance and timelines. It's to help educate, understand what you own and why you own it.

You should go to your CFP for your customized recommendations.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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Fatima Shrine Of Festival Of Lights Begins Dec. 7

Our Lady of Fatima Festival of Lights 2023 will be open Dec. 7 to 27.

Join Our Lady of Fatima Shrine in Holliston for the traditional Christmas lights as they prepare this Advent for the Christmas season.

Hot chocolate, donuts, and more will be available. The lights are on from 5 to 9 PM every night. The event is wheelchair accessible, with a path that winds throughout the exhibit.

Our Lady of Fatima Shrine is located at 101 Summer St., Holliston. There is no charge for this event.

Town of Holliston Special Town Meeting – October 16, 2023

ARTICLE 1	PASSED	Stabilization Fund
ARTICLE 2	PASSED	Pension Stabilization Fund
ARTICLE 3	PASSED	Capital Expenditure Fund
ARTICLE 4	PASSED	Capital Budget
ARTICLE 5	PASSED	Sidewalk & Ramp Repairs & Reconstruction
ARTICLE 6	FAILED	Temporary Signalization at Whitney & Washington Street
ARTICLE 7	PASSED	Establish Opioid Settlement Stabilization Account
ARTICLE 8	PASSED	Transfer to Opioid Settlement Stabilization Account
ARTICLE 9	N/A	Presentation from Envisioning Future Holliston
ARTICLE 10	PASSED	Conceptual Design of Senior Center Improvements
ARTICLE 11	PASSED	Community Preservation Committee
ARTICLE 12	PASSED	Historic Commission Survey & Planning Grant Match
ARTICLE 13	PASSED	Funding of EV Charging Revolving Fund
ARTICLE 14	PASSED	Tree By-Law
ARTICLE 15	PASSED	MBTA Zoning & Mapping Professional Services
ARTICLE 16	PASSED	Zoning Map Adoption
ARTICLE 17	PASSED	Conveyance of Land, 15 Winthrop St.
ARTICLE 18	PASSED	Petition-All Alcohol License Central Café & Convenience
ARTICLE 19	PASSED	Petition-Non-Closure of Lowland Street

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Don't leave your IRA to the IRS



Mark Freeman

FINANCIAL FOCUS

If you've invested in an IRA for many decades, it may well turn into a key source of income for your retirement. Still, you might not deplete your IRA in your lifetime, especially if you also have a pension or a 401(k) and other investment income. So, if your IRA still has sizable assets after your passing, it would likely end up in your estate plan. If you leave your IRA

to grown children or other family members, could they be hit with a big tax bill?

Here's a little background: Up until the Secure Act of 2019, those who inherited traditional IRAs could extend their required withdrawals over their lifetimes, which stretched out the annual taxes due on these withdrawals. But the Secure Act changed the provisions for non-spouse beneficiaries who inherited an IRA after 2019, meaning that beneficiaries of inherited IRAs had only 10 years (beginning the year after death) to withdraw the entire balance. For some beneficiaries, this could potentially create a tax burden. (Inheritors of Roth IRAs are also required to follow the 10-year distribution rule but are not subject to income taxes on account earnings if the Roth IRA's five-year holding period has been met).

However, not all beneficiaries were affected by the new rules. Spouses can stretch their inherited IRA distributions over their

lifetimes and exceptions exist for certain non-spouse beneficiaries. Minor children of the IRA owner (until the age of majority), chronically ill or disabled individuals, and beneficiaries who are no more than 10 years younger than the IRA owner may opt to stretch their distributions.

The new 10-year requirement applies to IRAs inherited on or after

Jan. 1, 2020. But due to confusion over changes to required minimum distribution (RMD) rules for some beneficiaries of inherited IRAs, the IRS waived penalties for individuals who failed to take RMDs in 2021 and 2022 and extended the RMD penalty waiver for 2023.

Although these rulings give beneficiaries — those not eligible for the exemptions listed above — more time to plan, they will eventually need to start taking RMDs, which could affect their tax situations. To help protect your heirs, consider these suggestions:

• **Using permanent life insurance.** A properly structured permanent life insurance policy could help you replace the assets your family might lose to the taxes resulting from an inherited IRA. You might even consider naming a charity as the beneficiary of an IRA, rather than your family members. The charity would receive the IRA proceeds tax free, and the life insurance could then provide tax-free benefits to your heirs.

• **Leaving taxable investment accounts to your heirs.** Apart from your tax-deferred IRA, you may own other, fully taxable accounts containing investments such as stocks or bonds. Typically, these investments receive what's known as a "step-up" in their cost basis once they are inherited. This means your heirs will essentially inherit all the gains your investments earned by the time

of your passing — but they won't be taxed on these gains if they sell the assets immediately. This type of sale could help offset the taxes your heirs will incur from the inherited IRA.

The tax and investment issues surrounding inherited IRAs can be complex, so consult with your tax and financial advisors before making any moves. And, as with many areas relating to inheritances, the sooner you start planning, the better.

If you would like to discuss your personal situation with a financial advisor contact:

Mark Freeman
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
77 West Main Street,
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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

The Beauty in Kindness

BY GINA WOELFEL

There is a commonly held belief that kindness is like snow in that it can beautify everything it touches. Despite the harshness of New England winters, a certain peacefulness and serenity envelop us when a fresh layer of snow blankets the landscape. This magical stillness beckons us to slow down and appreciate the beauty of the present moment.

As the holiday season approaches, it's easy to get distracted by the endless shopping and sale announcements, which can take us away from the true spirit of this time of year. Our message to you is to slow down and step away from the hustle and bustle. Plan your shopping ahead of time, wrap and store your gifts early, and use the extra time to do what you love. By simplifying your routine, you can focus on what truly matters this holiday season - spending quality time with the ones you love.

This year, we've organized a special event with our co-workers to take a break from our busy schedules and celebrate the end of the year. The b.LUXE Team is hitting



the roller rink for a Grinch-themed, old-school skating party, complete with ugly sweaters! We're fortunate to have a team of women who support and care for each other, and we look forward to celebrating this relationship. Skating the night away together will be an unforgettable evening.

Our team is deeply committed to giving back to the community, especially during the holiday season. Our responsibility is to positively impact the community; we're proud to do our part. This month, we supported The Franklin Food Pantry with donations and an afternoon packing holiday gift baskets. We also sponsored The Medway Village Food Pantry Toy Drive with gifts for children ages 13-17. Recently, we had the pleasure of hosting the Franklin Senior Center at our studio, where we treated them to a day of beauty. It was a fantastic experience and one

Holiday Gift Card Specials

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Luxury Hair Gift Card Package

\$100 hair gift card with complimentary LUXE add-on treatment

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- LUXE Shine
- LUXE Volume

Specially Priced: ~~\$100~~ **\$130 value**

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that we truly enjoy.

We want to thank our clients and readers for their loyalty and encouragement throughout the past year. Your continued support makes us love what we do even more

and brightens our day with kindness. We're sending you all a big, warm holiday hug from our family to yours!

Of course, it wouldn't be the most wonderful time of year if we didn't have some

specials for all of you! Check them out above!

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Exsultet! invites you to celebrate the festive sounds of music during the upcoming holiday season! Exsultet! will perform a holiday concert entitled "Listening to the Snow" on Saturday,

December 9, 2023 at 7:00pm at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA and on Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2:00pm at Allin Congregational Church, 683

High Street, Dedham, MA. This performance is a celebration of sacred song, familiar jingles and winter cheer. We invite you to take a break from the hustle and bustle of this busy time of year to fill your soul with gladness and find quiet moments for contemplation. Old favorites like *O Come All Ye Faithful* will resound with upbeat classics like *Joy to the World*. Let the music of the season fill your heart and soothe your soul!

General admission tickets are \$20; students and seniors (65+) are \$15; and children 12 and under are free. Performances are not suitable for children under age 5. Tickets can be purchased beginning November 1, 2023 through our website (www.exsultet.us) or by calling Stacey Balardini at 508-395-5600.



Founded in 2013, Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices is an auditioned women's chamber ensemble combining great music and poetry to inspire audiences with adventurous and innovative concerts. Exsultet's mission is to give women an opportunity to join together to make music, to show-

case the works of up and coming composers and arrangers, to feature the talents of local musicians and actors, and to combine performance and advocacy by focusing on important community issues and partnering with other local organizations. For more details, please visit www.exsultet.us.

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Charles River Chorale to Perform

The Charles River Chorale and the Charles River Children's Choir will be presenting their Winter Concert on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 2 p.m. at the Medway High School Auditorium. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students. Children 5 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased prior to the concert by using the QR code below or by visiting our website at www.charlesriverchorale.com/tickets. Tickets can also be purchased at the door

with payment by cash or check. No credit cards will be accepted at the door.

The theme of this concert is Joy to the World, Celebrations Around the Globe.

This year's program will feature music celebrating cultures and seasonal events across the globe, including Chinese New Year, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali and more!

We invite you to travel around the world with us as we celebrate music and tradition from over 10 different cultures.

With many of these pieces in other languages, we expect the music will speak for itself, radiating reverence, joy, humor and more in our universal language - music!

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is in its 40th year as a nonprofit

501(c)3 chorale. Membership has grown and both the chorale and the younger children's choir are very excited to be back on stage stronger than ever to present our joyful work to the greater community! We hope you can join us, stow away any worries for a few hours, and liftoff into the holiday season through our gift of music.

Purchase Tickets



www.charlesriverchorale.com/tickets

300th celebration anniversary events start this month



New Year's Eve event kicks off a year of festivities

By THERESA KNAPP

The Town of Holliston will celebrate its 300th anniversary of incorporation next year, on Dec. 3, 2024. Over the course of the year, "Celebrate Holliston" will be hosting several events, starting on New Year's Eve:

- Dec. 31, 2023** - Ring in the New Year, First Night Railtrail Walk
- Feb. 1, 2024** - 300th Anniversary Gala
- March 17** - Saint Patrick's Day Breakfast Roast
- May 11** - Parade
- May 25** - Golf Tournament
- June 23** - Strawberry Festival with the Historical Society
- July 4** - Laser light show

- July 13** - Olde Time Baseball Tournament
- July 18** - Family Movie Night on the Green
- Aug. 1** - Day at the Lake
- Aug. TBD** - Claffin Hill Symphony Orchestra concert at Blair Square
- Sept. 14** - Horse Show
- Sept. 21** - Celebrate Holliston Field Day
- Oct. 1** - Holliston's Very Own Cabaret
- Nov. 2** - Encampment Impression
- Dec. 3** - Anniversary Cake Celebration

For more information and details, visit www.celebrateholliston.com/300th-anniversary.html

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Thanks To Yanks Volunteered At Run For The Fallen

Recently volunteers representing Thanks to Yanks, a local charity dedicated to serving our military heroes, distributed fruit and snacks at the 2023 Run for the Fallen.

The event honors and remembers those killed while serving in the military post 9/11, the picture of the boots with flag placed inside emotionally represent those killed while in service to our nation.

For information on Thanks to Yanks please follow us on Facebook.



Pictured left to right facing are: Pat Rosenthal, Mark Lafountain, Chaplain Bob Markunis, John Milot and Nancy Boates.

Reception for Artist's

On Nov. 4, an artist's reception was held for the Nemasket Plein Air Festival at Tru Grit Gallery in Middleboro, where local Holliston plein air painter, Obie Miller was awarded the blue ribbon for first place honors for his painting entitled, "Hometown Heroes".

The judge, Peter Damon, co-owner of the gallery wrote "Now some may be cynically thinking that the judge, being a disabled veteran, chose this painting as the first-place winner for its patriotic imagery. Admittedly, they would be partly correct, though not for the aforementioned context. I chose this painting for the lively play of light and shadow as well as for its strong directional element, leading the viewer's eye to the two main events in my opinion-those being the brightly lit, red brick of the building and the waving flags. These two sub-

jects compete for top billing and it's hard for me to choose which I find most appealing. That brick-red contrasts so nicely with the greens of the aged copper flashing of the building and the energetic brushwork brings the waving flags, and indeed the whole scene to life. Lastly, the artist chose a scene that I thought had really encapsulated the spirit of this town."

Obie lives in Holliston with his wife and son. He enjoys painting outdoors in nature and capturing fleeting moments with each brush stroke. Please visit the artist's website to view local works www.hollistonpleinair.com or visit the Sherborn Library, where many of his local paintings are currently on display. Commissioned paintings are another option and make a wonderful holiday gift.



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Holliston establishes an EV charging station cost recovery policy

By THERESA KNAPP

Earlier this year, the Holliston Select Board unanimously approved an Electric Vehicle Charging Station Cost Recovery Policy meant to address some of the costs incurred at town-sponsored charging stations.

The town currently has one EV charging station at 9 Green Street.

Holliston's Director of Technology Chris Meo spoke for a team of town officials who worked to develop the policy.

Meo said, "What we first did was we looked at what 9 or 10 other towns around here did and

it became very clear to us that every [town] has a different philosophy."

Meo said their group worked to create a policy and fee structure that would fully cover the cost for electricity used at the station, plus a portion of the yearly operation and maintenance costs of the station.

Meo noted the current cost of electricity is 33 cents per kw hour so the fee at the charging station would be the same. There will also be a 10% service fee to cover transaction charges. This rate could be revised "once or twice a year."

There will be a \$1.50 connection fee per transaction.

There will also be an "over-time parking fee" of \$5.00 per hour for any vehicle that remains at the station more than 30 minutes after it is fully charged. The charging system will send the driver a message 30 minutes before the vehicle is fully charged.

The full policy is on the town's website at bit.ly/HollistonEVpolicy

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Holliston welcomes Economic Development Coordinator Melanie Hamblen

Part-time position was approved by voters in May

By THERESA KNAPP

Melanie Hamblen is Holliston's new part-time Economic Development Coordinator.

At a Select Board meeting on Oct. 30, Assistant Town Administrator Kathleen Buckley said the purpose of the position – which was approved by town meeting in May – is "to provide overall better support for [Holliston's] existing businesses and better two-way communication and identifying new business opportunities."

Buckley noted Hamblen has "extensive experience from Franklin and is also a small business owner herself, so we're excited to present her to the business community."

Hamblen is a member of the Franklin Town Council and is chair of Franklin's Economic Development Subcommittee. She and her husband own the Franklin Agway and Broken Fork Farm.

Hamblen said, "When I'm here, I hope to be able to reach out to different businesses, to all the businesses, and be that connection for the town to the businesses to the industrial areas, to help people and guide them through the processes that aren't usually that easy to do."

Select Board Chair John Cronin said Hamblen's municipal experience will be a great asset in this role.

"Clearly through your background in Franklin Town Council and learning how local government works, I think that's going to be invaluable because what we've always missed in this role is not having the bridge between what businesses want/need, what an interested business might want to know, and where to go to get the answers – you're that bridge."


Select Board member Ben Sparrell asked about her thoughts on drawing in new business.

Hamblen said she plans to create a network of information, to meet with local businesses and stakeholders to "get that network up and running," and hopes to bring people together to get them to trust each other.

Select Board member Tina Hein said Hamblen is a "phenomenal addition" to the town. "I do love the fact that you have a science background, a research background; I think the way those minds work is to the benefit of the work that you're going to be doing in Holliston... Your approach to finding common ground on complicated issues I think is going to be a tremendous value here in Holliston."

Cronin added, "Economic Development is the partnership between a community's needs/wants and what businesses can do for it. Holliston is open for business, I've been saying that for a long time; we really want business to come here and thrive so I'm looking forward to having you on board."

Hamblen with work with the


LGBTQIA+
AGING PROJECT

- **LGBTQIA+ Bereavement Support Groups**
 The LGBTQIA+ Bereavement Support Group is the first statewide initiative to address loss in the LGBTQIA+ community. The program is funded by the Department of Public Health and it is facilitated by The LGBTQIA+ Aging Project. All groups require pre-registration. For more information on the LGBTQIA+ Bereavement Program contact Bob Linscott at 857.313.6578 or blinscott@fenwayhealth.org
- **Weekly Zoom Drop-in Group for LGBTQIA+ Older Adults**
 Since the very beginning of the pandemic, the Aging Project has offered a weekly Zoom drop in group for LGBTQIA+ older adults. These are informal discussion groups that keep people feeling connected during these challenging times. One group meets on Mondays from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM, and for those who like a smaller group, there is a second drop in on Thursdays from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

New members are always welcome and can be matched with a current member to talk before their first group if that feels more supportive.

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZEuf-GgqjksGdIWEGk.JIudSGhF99fRRWL7>



Source: www.franklinma.gov

Economic Development Committee and report to the Town Administrator. Her office is located in the basement of the

Town Hall, near the Conservation Agent. For more information, visit www.townofholliston.us/people/melanie-hamblen

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
<p>***RESERVATIONS ARE REQUESTED IN ADVANCE. CALL THE SENIOR CENTER AT 508-429-0622</p>					1
<p>9:30 Coloring and Coffee 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Games Day</p>	<p>9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic*** 10:00 Writers' Group: "Reviewing 2023" 10:30 Energy Focus Mvmt 12:00 Zumba Gold 2:00 Coffee with Holliston Police*** 3:00pm Tech Help</p>	<p>9:30 Walking Fitness 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:00 BINGO 2:00 Council on Aging meeting</p>	<p>9:00 Pilates 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Photography</p>  	<p>9:30 Friday Crafters 1:00 Tune Timers 1:30 Book Club</p> 	4 5 6 7 8
<p>9:30 Coloring and Coffee 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Games Day</p>	<p>9:00 Monthly Breakfast*** 9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic*** 10:00 Legal Advice with Marsden Law PC*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:00 Zumba Gold 1:00 Library Libby Training*** 3:00pm Tech Help</p>	<p>9:00 Podiatry*** 9:30 Walking Fitness 10:00 Hopkinton Audiology Cleaning*** 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Winter Holiday Luncheon***</p>	<p>9:00 Pilates 9:30 SSF Meeting 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Photography</p>	<p>9:30 Friday Crafters 1:00 Tune Timers</p>	11 12 13 14 15
<p>9:30 Coloring and Coffee 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Games Day</p>	<p>10:00 Blood Pressure Clinic*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:00 Zumba Gold 3:00pm Tech Help</p>	<p>9:00 Podiatry*** 9:30 Walking Fitness 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:00 BINGO</p>	<p>9:00 Pilates 9:30 Vets' Coffee Hour*** 9:30 Java with Jay *** (Zoom) 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Photography</p>	<p>9:30 Friday Crafters 1:00 Tune Timers</p>	18 19 20 21 22
<p align="center"><i>Center Closed</i></p> 	<p align="center">No Programs</p> 	<p align="center">No Programs</p>	<p align="center">No Programs</p>	<p align="center">No Programs <i>Monday</i> <i>January 1, 2024</i> <i>the Center is Closed</i></p>	25 26 27 28 29

Sports

Boys Basketball At Holliston High Is In Revival Mode

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Chris Vanesian's first season as coach of the Holliston High boys basketball team last year focused on changing the culture. Now, his prime goal is to qualify for the state tourney.

The Panthers' program has struggled the last four years — four sub-.500 records, two of which were 2-18 and 4-16. But, during that 4-16 record last year, the 31-year-old Vanesian saw a major shift. His players began embracing a team-first attitude, they displayed resilience and their work ethic was solid.

The coach knew the tide was turning but the turn-around didn't arrive fast enough to secure a playoff berth. But, as an old song says: "The times they are a changing."

"Our eight seniors last year and five underclassmen all worked diligently to change the culture," Vanesian said. "They came up short for a tourney berth but their efforts were strong and they never gave up. The five returnees, two of whom are captains, have been outstanding in the off-season, focusing on preparation, improving their skills and volunteering."

The five returnees include co-captains Owen Vaughn and Eben Salem, and Aidan Daly, Logan Schmid and Charlie Smith.

"They volunteered at our youth camp, they worked in the weight room, and they competed in summer and fall leagues," Vanesian offered. "They set great examples and they held each other accountable. They're also inclusive, always welcoming younger players."

To aim for a tourney berth

sounds like a lofty objective but Vanesian calls it "realistic."

"The players are competitive, they're working hard and they're ready to take the next step," said Vanesian, a former all-star in soccer for the Panthers and a captain in basketball. "Our second goal is to continue with the positive change. The players are all in. Our last goal is for the kids to be role models in school and in their community."

The Panthers' team strengths should be major factors in what Vanesian hopes will be a year where Holliston closes the gap with the other schools in the Tri Valley League Large Division. The Panthers were 2-8 in the division but shined brightly in two victories over Ashland and an overtime loss to Norwood.

"Our players have a high basketball IQ, they're instinctive and athletic, our team chemistry is good and we can shoot," Vanesian emphasized. "And, our mental toughness is strong. That means they're committed to winning, they're coachable and they want to improve."

Leading the five returnees, who could be labeled as change-agents, are the captains.

Vaughn, a 6-2 junior guard-forward, averaged 8 points, 5 rebounds and managed a 32 percent clip from three-point range last year.

"Owen is a vocal leader who's super competitive," Vanesian noted. "He thinks basketball all the time, a true student of the game with a high hoop IQ. His shooting kept us in games last year, especially his three-pointers. He knows what he needs to work on and he's improved his penetration in the paint."

Salem is a 6-1 senior forward who leads by example. A hard-worker, he showed lots of tenac-



Chris Vanesian's second season as coach of the Holliston High boys basketball team will focus on qualifying for the state tourney.

ity in practice last year and that earned him more playing time.

"Eben is solid on defense and usually guards our opponents' top players," Vanesian said. "A football player last fall, he has good instincts and knows how to maintain proper spacing. His speed and quickness make his very athletic. He's not a vocal captain but his teammates follow what he does."

Senior Aidan Daly, a 6-1 shooting guard, worked intensely in the summer and fall leagues. "Aidan is all about basketball," Vanesian said. "He displays a great work ethic in the gym and the weight room. An athletic defender, he's a very good shooter who can also drive to the hoop and finish the play. An all-out competitor, he's got a great vertical leap."

Senior center Logan Schmid, who's the Panthers' tallest player at 6-foot-7, is in his second varsity season and Vanesian plans to utilize his size.

"Logan rebounds well and on defense he often alters shots in the paint," Vanesian said. "He didn't get much playing time last year but he worked a lot in the weight room to improve his strength. His footwork in the paint is good and he's agile and quick. More versatile now, Logan knows his role and he's progressed a lot from last year."

Senior Charlie Smith, a 6-3 power forward, didn't get much playing time last year but Vanesian says "he emulates what we look for — he works hard, gets to practice early and he's eager to compete."



Returning players who'll be in key roles this season for the Panthers are, from left, Aidan Daly, Owen Vaughn, Eben Salem, Logan Schmid, and Charlie Smith.

"Charlie likes to shoot threes," Vanesian continued. "And, he's improved as a rebounder. A mentally tough player, he never gives up, he's resilient and he never complained about his minutes last year. I hope he keeps improving as a rebounder and scorer."

Vanesian emphasized that he's excited about all his other candidates. "Our next wave of players from the freshman and jayvee teams has potential and I'm hoping they will fill open spots on the roster," he said. "And, if we have a player who steps up in a leadership role, then we'll add another captain."

A 2010 graduate of Holliston High, Vanesian majored in math and secondary education at Salve Regina College in Newport, R.I. He taught math in West Bridgewater for a year before returning to Holliston where he's worked the last nine years teaching seventh grade math at the Adams Middle School.

Vanesian's coaching experience includes two years as the Panthers' jayvee hoop coach, one year coaching the Holliston freshmen, four years as an assistant at Lasell University in Newton and one year as Medway's junior varsity coach.

Relying on an athletic philosophy that focuses on winning, reaching one's potential and having fun competing, Vanesian believes that "if our players reach their potential, that leads to winning and winning creates fun."

Valuable life lessons can be learned in sports and Vanesian hopes his forces "learn how to overcome adversity, learn to be leaders and develop a team-first attitude."

Vanesian has three coaches on his staff whom he regards highly. They are Kevin Lamarque (freshmen), Joel Bernstein (jayvees) and his brother, Liam (varsity assistant). "They all do a great job with their teams and with the varsity," he said.

The Panthers will open their season at Norwood on Dec. 12 and their home opener is Dec. 15 against Medfield. Holliston's non-league games include a second meeting against Medway, East Bridgewater, Sharon and Hopedale.

"Our five returnees will form our nucleus and I like what defines them," Vanesian said. "They're versatile, resilient, coachable, intense and team-first players."

Boys basketball at Holliston High is in revival mode.

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Real Estate Corner



The 5-bed, 3-bath, 3,885 sf house at 251 Gorwin Dr. in Holliston recently sold for \$1,150,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com
Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

Recent Home Sales

Date	Holliston	Amount
11/16/2023	623 Central St.	\$627,500
11/15/2023	14 Walnut Rd.	\$682,000
11/15/2023	44 Burnap Rd. #1	\$210,000
11/15/2023	42 Westfield Dr.	\$490,000
11/13/2023	251 Gorwin Dr.	\$1.15 mil
11/01/2023	38 Peter St.	\$880,000
11/01/2023	15 Katie Way	\$1.54 mil
11/01/2023	7 Rebeca Ln.	\$1.58 mil
10/31/2023	14 Day Rd.	\$540,000
10/30/2023	23 Bonney Dr.	\$703,000
10/30/2023	159 Norfolk St.	\$840,000
10/27/2023	36 Gregory Rd.	\$550,000
10/26/2023	23 Skyview Ter.	\$577,000
10/25/2023	88 Central St.	\$725,000
10/18/2023	131 Jennings Rd.	\$675,000

Have you read the new Town Administrator's newsletter?

The Town Administrator Newsletter recently debuted under the moniker, "Holliston Hometown Newsletter."

Town Administrator Travis Ahern told the Select Board at its March 7 meeting that the quarterly newsletter already had 857 people subscribe as of that date.

The eight-page electronic document includes information for town meeting, updates on town projects, important deadlines, lists seasonal jobs, and much more.

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Barbara Ryan, Steve Bradford, Leslie and Jonathan Gerber receive Holliston Humanitarian Awards

By THERESA KNAPP

On Nov. 13, the Town of Holliston held its 5th annual Humanitarian Awards ceremony in Upper Town Hall.

State Rep. James Arena-DeRosa, who lives in Holliston, welcomed the crowd.

“There are lots of ways that we honor service in this town but this is somewhat unique and it really speaks to those people in our community who care for others...This is so important, it is such a blessing to live in this town,” said Arena-DeRosa.

Barbara Ryan

Select Board member Tina Hein nominated Barbara Ryan for her many contributions to the community.

Before moving to Holliston in 2019, Ryan served in the Army, was a pediatric nurse practitioner at Walter Reed Medical Center, and retired from military service in 2008.

Hein said, “These experiences as a health care provider and through her service in the military are carried over to the many volunteer roles Barbara holds in Holliston and in our community.” Those roles include serving

as a community parent representative on the Holliston Drug and Alcohol Awareness Coalition; Holliston Parent Teachers Organization where she has led programs related to mental health and adolescent health, and is current president; and leading an effort to create an Outdoor Learning Space at the Placentino Elementary School.

Said Hein, “I think by, at this point, you all can see what I see in Barbara Ryan. She is a devoted volunteer in Holliston with a clear vision to bring positive change for the health and well-being of others. She is effective. She is strong. She is kind.”

While accepting the award, Ryan said, “I’m honored to be recognized. I really don’t like recognition, but I will humbly say thank you to all of you for this, and to the community that I moved to with my family four years ago that has welcomed us and we’re grateful to be part of it...It’s great to be a Hollistonian, thank you.”

Steve Bradford

Select Board member Ben Sparrell nominated Steve Bradford who continuously gives to

his community with a selfless and respectful demeanor.

“Saturday was Veterans Day. It feels fitting to honor a veteran for their humanitarian efforts today. Steve has led the Veterans Post and has recently retired from that position. We see him lead the parade on Memorial Day, behind the scenes on the holiday, as well as advocating for veterans throughout the year. Steve makes Holliston better for veterans and has made Holliston a better place as well...We are indebted to you for all you have done for [veterans] and for our community, day in and day out. You are able to connect on a personal level and understand the needs of our veterans and help to explain to those of us who have not served. You help bring people together in all parts of Holliston to honor and celebrate service to our community and our country. We thank you for your service and all you’ve given of yourself to the veterans and the people of Holliston.”

Upon accepting the award, Bradford said, “I don’t do any of this stuff by myself. I’ve always had the help of other veterans in town...It’s a joy to work on the



Source: Holliston Hub -HCAT-

things I get to work on in town... Thank you very much, it’s a pleasure to be able to receive this honor.”

Leslie and Jonathan Gerber

Select Board Chair John Cronin nominated Leslie and Jonathan Gerber, “a couple who have been truly doing amazing things.”

Both Leslie and Jonathan were born and raised in Holliston and are now raising their family in town. Approximately 10 years ago, they created the Holiday

Dreams Foundation which has provided holiday gifts to numerous children and families; it also

Provides ready-to-cook Thanksgiving meals to area senior citizens. The program soon grew to provide assistance year-round, including addressing food insecurity and providing personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic. They are now working to assist children and families in Israel.

Cronin said to the Gerbers, “Thank you for all you do to make the lives of others better. We all benefit from your kindness, caring and compassion, and it is my pleasure to award this humanitarian award to both of you.”

As they received the award, Jonathan Gerber said, “Thank you to the board for this honor, this means a lot to us. Thank you to our children, to our parents. This is something we started many years ago to teach ‘giving back’ to our children, and it actually gave a platform to the community to give back to underserved, underprivileged families in the area, in the neighborhoods, in the Metrowest. This program has grown not necessarily from just our family but through the community. Starting over the next six weeks is going to be a crazy time but it’s such a cheerful time and now we allow the community to help and give back. It’s great that we’re able to provide this...Thank you.”

To watch the full 2023 Humanitarian Awards, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjHVul6FQR0



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KATIE MCBRIDE

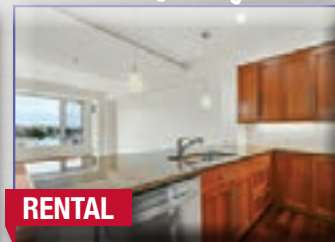
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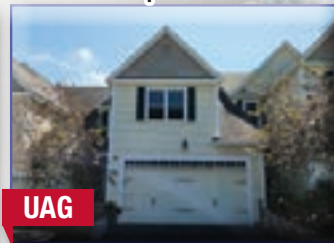
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KATIE MCBRIDE

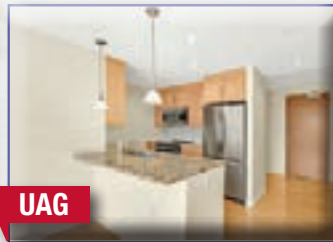
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