



Courtesy photo. Credit:
www.thehenrystudio.com

Larger-than-life painting dedicated to Spencer, official dog of the 126th Boston Marathon

Cancer returned, owners hope dog can attend in April

By THERESA KNAPP

Spencer, the beloved official dog of the 126th Boston

Marathon, now has a larger-than-life sized painting in his honor.

SPENCER

continued on page 2



A captain in wrestling, Finn Blossom also is an honor-roll student who's aiming for a career in chemistry.

Blossom: An Unsung Wrestler For Holliston High

Panthers' Captain Keeps Improving

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

WRESTLING

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SPENCER

continued from page 1

Spencer, who turned 13 in July, had been fighting cancer off and on in recent years and owner Richard Powers of Holliston says the cancer has returned and it is terminal.

"We learned in the fall that Spencer's cancer had returned and we wanted to create something to immortalize him, and have something to inspire at the Marathon this year to mark the 10-year anniversary of the tragedy," says Powers, referring to the marathon bombings of 2013.

Spencer, and his now 10-year-old sister Penny, both Golden Retriever therapy dogs, rose to fame during the coronavirus pandemic when Powers was posting near-daily "pupdates" on his "Spencer & Penny" Facebook page @Spencerpows and other local town pages. The pupdates continue today.

Spencer has been cheering on Boston Marathon runners at his post in Ashland since 2015. The

rendering entitled "Celebrating Spencer" depicts the pup in the center of the frame wearing a Boston Marathon medallion around his neck and holding a pole in his mouth. On the left side of the pole is a flag with a heart on it and on the right side hangs a "We Are Boston Strong" flag.

The painting is 5 feet wide and 5.5 feet tall and hangs in Powers' home though he plans to loan it out during the week of the marathon "to be displayed to continue to inspire and give hope to runners and attendees."

Powers commissioned the painting from artist Tom Mosser Design based in Pittsburgh. It took about two months to complete and was unveiled in January at Boston's Fairmont Copley Plaza where Spencer is the hotel's "honorary canine ambassador."

A video of the ceremony can be found on Holliston Cable Access at <https://bit.ly/3ZSbysu>

Powers hopes Spencer can attend this year's marathon in April, where he and Penny typically greet thousands of runners, but it would be a short visit.

"It is our hope he will be with us but, even if he is with us, he would not be able to attend in his

traditional role, it would be too much for him," says Powers. "But we would love to bring him for a quick moment so could feel the energy one more time."

In the meantime, Powers reports his "angel on earth" has been "comfortable and relatively active."

"Sadly, he's terminal and there is nothing more we can do with any treatment. We are just managing his care and comfort. His days have been mostly good so far but we are monitoring him very closely as we know it can change very quickly."

As for his owners, Powers says, "We are taking it day by day. Anyone who has lost a dog understands that he is not just a dog, he is a family member and they know the emotional roller coaster we are experiencing. Every day is a gift with him. He is an amazing dog and has beaten the odds so many times, and we are thankful for the extra time we have had."

Powers thanks everyone who has supported Spencer over the years. They have raised more than \$4,000 for canine cancer research and he encourages others to donate to the cause at <https://bit.ly/2InCwzJ>.



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Need for Fuel Assistance on the Rise

By DAVID DUNBAR

As the colder weather arrives, folks with low income – particularly seniors – are having trouble paying the oil, gas, and electric costs of heating their homes and apartments.

Sometimes, it comes down to a choice between heating and eating. There are government programs and local organizations that can help.

One of the most popular is the fuel assistance program offered by SMOC, the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, which is available in local communities including Bellingham, Hopedale, Medway, and Millis. Senior Centers in these and other area towns are intake sites where people can get help signing up. SMOC reports that in the fiscal year 2021, 195 clients were served in Bellingham at an average of about \$1,500 each; in Hopedale there were 68, Medway had 67, and Millis had 59.

Through SMOC's Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), individuals and families who qualify from 37 communities across the MetroWest can receive assistance with a portion of their home heating bill paid directly to their heating vendor. The heating season runs from November through April.

To be eligible, annual household income cannot exceed

60% of the Massachusetts estimated state median income. For example, a household of one person would have a maximum income of \$42,411. For two people, \$55,461; for three people, \$68,511; for four people, \$81,561. Benefits, which increased in December, range from \$800 to \$2,200. More information is available about fuel assistance at www.mass.gov.org

"The Millis Council on Aging (like many COAs) is an intake site for SMOC," explains Patty Kayo, Millis COA Director. "We gather the necessary documentation for the application and send it to SMOC. We ensure that the proper paperwork is submitted so there are no unnecessary delays in procedure. So far this fiscal year, we assisted 73 residents with recertifications or new applications for assistance."

"Each town deals with different area agencies," says Carole Mullen, the director of the Hopedale Senior Center. "SMOC is the agency for Hopedale. We have very robust activity regarding fuel assistance applications and re-certifications. Yes, SMOC is about three months behind from clients' date of applications. However, we can expedite 'emergency' situations."

"SMOC is extremely backed up this year," confirms Kayo. "There is a long wait for ap-

proval. SMOC's website is a great source of information and outlines their services clearly. I would suggest if someone needs help to go directly to their website, www.smoc.org."

Kim Cookson has been working at the Medway Senior Center for seven years and is seeing "greater demand now than ever before" for fuel assistance. She points out that all prices are way up for "heat, rent, groceries and more."

"My office is aware of the backup in cases," reports State Representative Mike Soter. "We have been receiving many calls and emails regarding fuel assistance applications that have been in the queue. We are doing everything that we can to expedite applications for everyone that reaches out to our office. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the office at Michael.soter@mahouse.gov, Curtis.boucher@mahouse.gov, or at (508) 657-4688. We would be more than happy to help in any way we can."

"So far this year," explains SMOC's Amanda Foster, Division Director of Financial Assistance Programs, "we have processed about 5,000 applications and found about 2,000 eligible." Last year, SMOC processed about 3,700 applications.

"The high prices of fuel are driving demand," says Foster, "and we're working our hardest to meet the demand." If your situation is an "emergency," then your application will be processed sooner. "Emergency" is defined by having less than 1/8 tank of oil, a "shut off notice," or an inoperable heating system according to Foster.

Across Massachusetts, SMOC reports serving 134,000 individuals and families in fiscal year 2022. Fifty-four percent were elderly (60 years of age or more).

Here are some other sources of fuel assistance:

- Good Neighbor Energy Fund by the Salvation Army. (508) 473-0786
- Financial Assistance by the Edith Stewart Chase Foundation. (508) 422-0109
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families. 800-482-2565
- Also check out local churches and Catholic Charities.
- You might also visit www.findhelp.org to explore additional sources.

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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. To subscribe, visit www.townofholliston.us/subscribe

Annual Troop 14 Holliston BSA Pancake Breakfast Feb. 2

Boy Scout Troop 14's annual troop pancake fundraiser is back!

The event is all-you-can-eat pancakes and sausages, from 8 AM to noon, on Sunday, Feb. 2.

The cost is \$5 per person – max \$20/family. Any Scout in uniform eats free.

The breakfast will be held at St. Mary's Parish Hall, Washington Street.

Proceeds from the event are used to fund both troop activities and equipment used for those activities. There are approximately 40 active scouts in the troop.



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One Book One Holliston, a Town-wide Read

This year's book is *Travels with George*, by Nathaniel Philbrick.

Join us for a town wide reading of *Travels with George*, by Nathaniel Philbrick.

Travels with George is an account of his retracing Washington's footsteps — and carriage tracks — accompanied by his wife, Melissa, and their Nova Scotia duck tolling retriever, Dora. The book is a hybrid: part history and part travelogue.

We will be hosting a live on-line author talk with Nathaniel Philbrick here at the library on Wednesday Feb. 8, at 6:30pm. You can also sign up to attend the talk virtually at the library's website <http://hollistonlibrary.org/>.

Additionally, we will have local historian Joanne Hulbert and friends talk about Nathaniel Philbrick, George Washington, and the local legends that made it into the book! In person at the Library Wednesday Feb. 22, at 2:30pm.



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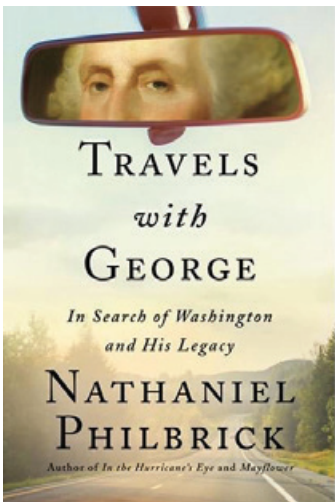
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A Heat Pump – Is It the Right Choice for You?



John Szolomayer

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Fortunately, when it comes to heating and cooling your home there are many options on the market, and with so many choices, it can be hard to know which one is right for you. Your home’s heating and cooling choices do not have to be difficult or expensive. Years ago people thought of heat pumps as being most useful in the southern states. However,

they have become more common in a wider variety of places, including colder climates like ours. Many homeowners now in Massachusetts have chosen heat pumps as their preferred year-round home comfort system.

If it is time to replace your home’s air conditioning system, you have many choices. Two of the most popular types of AC systems are ductless mini-split systems and central air conditioning systems. Both have their own advantages and drawbacks, so how do you know which one is right for your home?

A Comparison of Ductless Mini-split vs Central Air Conditioners

Central air units are typically less expensive upfront but may not be as energy-efficient in the long run. On the other hand, mini-splits are typically the most expensive to purchase and install, but they can be very efficient and effective. Mini-splits tend to be less expensive to operate because they don’t lose as

much energy through ductwork. They do not require ductwork to distribute the cool air. Instead, they use a series of small, whisper-quiet blowers that deliver conditioned air directly to different areas of your home. What type is cheaper to run depends on a number of factors, including the size of your home, and your personal preferences. A ductless mini-split system might be the more cost-effective option if you live in a small home, have multiple rooms to cool, and live in a climate with extreme temperatures like we have.

A central air system might be your best bet if you have a large home. Ultimately, the best way to decide which option is right for you is to speak with a qualified HVAC installer who can help you assess your specific needs.

Should I Replace My Central Air with a Mini-Split?

If your central air conditioner is an older model, it may be time to consider replacing it

with a ductless mini-split which takes up less space in your home, and is generally more energy efficient than central air systems. A mini-split system will consist of an outdoor unit connected to one or more indoor units. The indoor unit can be placed anywhere and allows you to cool specific rooms you use most often rather than cooling your entire home. As a result, you can save money on your energy bills by only cooling the rooms you are using. Ductless mini-splits can also heat and cool multiple rooms at different temperatures, which central air cannot do.

Information provided by John Szolomayer, RE/MAX Executive Realty and Energy Monster. Myenergymonster.com - For more information, John Szolomayer can be reached at 508-259-4788 or Johnszolomayer.com

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Community Ties and a Commitment to Customer Service: Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe you're planning to move and need to clear out the basement and attic before your open house. Maybe you've spent way too much time at home lately and are feeling the need to declutter.

But figuring out who to call can be a pain. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's

Business spotlight

too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2003. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup



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truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with ten trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end

up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing

your costs before you call for an appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston as well as Resellables, a thrift store in Bellingham. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

For more information, contact Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit Affordable Junk Removal online at www.takeawayjunk.com.

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Secure Act 2: Electric Boogaloo?



Glenn Brown

Sometimes it's best to not have a sequel.

Still, Congress delivered us one with "Secure Act 2.0" in December.

The original Secure Act was released three years ago. It began with 417-3 House vote in May 2019, advanced by the Senate cramming into the 2020 budget and concluded with Congress cheerleading the delay of Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) by 18 months to age 72 and providing greater access to 401(k) for part-time employees.

Those are good things, but hidden in plain sight was the dismal plot - the death of 'stretch' IRA and creation of the 10-Year Rule, which included liquidating inherited non-spousal (children) Roth IRAs.

See Congress had wanted to speed up tax revenues. What better way than forcing a 25 year old, regardless of financial situation, to liquidate mom or dad's inherited IRA or Roth IRA by age 35 instead of during their retirement years.

How does this help secure retirement for future generations? Or benefit hardworking Americans who sacrificed, saved, planned and proactively paid taxes years, in some cases, decades sooner than needed?

So, with this precedent, how does their latest Secure Act 2.0 look?

In a word: better.

Here are some early awards:

Most Widespread Impact - RMDs from retirement accounts increase to age 73 from 72 beginning January 1, 2023. It will increase to age 75 in 2033. That said, just because you can delay doesn't mean you avoid being required to take greater

amounts later. In fact, it can accelerate and put some into higher tax brackets without planning.

Most Significant Benefit - Roth, Roth, and more Roth. These changes all appear to be good news for those seeking planning opportunities.

Creation of SEP Roth IRAs and SIMPLE Roth IRAs as well as employer contributions (aka 401(k) match) will be permitted to deposit matching and/or nonelective contributions to employees' designated Roth accounts. There is a caveat, the match would be included in the employee's income in the year of the contribution. Ditto for amounts deposited into SEP Roth IRAs and SIMPLE Roth IRAs. Still, great to have choice.

Surprising 2024 Newcomer - In 2024, "high wage earners" will be required to use Roth option for catch-up contributions to 401(k), 403(b), and 457(b) plans, but not for IRAs.

What's Congress's definition of a high wage earner here?

\$1,000,000?

\$400,000?

Nope, here it's \$145,000.

A caveat if you're self-em-

ployed individual (sole proprietors and partners) it is specific language of wages (which you don't earn), thus it appears can still make pre-tax catch-up contributions if income from self-employment is over \$145,000.

Future Star - After 15 years of a 529 plan being opened, unused assets can be rolled over to a Roth IRA for the beneficiary (child). Now, it is subject to annual Roth contribution limits and an aggregate lifetime limit of \$35,000. Still, this is a great idea, as you can help a young adult grow a Roth IRA, while they use funds for other savings or pay off liabilities.

Closing Credits - Secure Act 2.0 has dozens for nuances and benefits for student loans, emergency savings in DC plans, automatic enrollment, annuity

options, qualified charitable distributions, solo 401Ks, surviving spouse benefits and more. Best to consult your Certified Financial Planner to learn more.

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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The History of St. Mary's Book Talk

Talk about the Newly Published St. Mar's Anniversary History Book Feb. 26, at 2 PM.

Three years in the making, the book is now finally published: a new history of St. Mary's Parish written for its 150th anniversary in 2020!

Come join St. Mary's Parish Librarian and Historian Betty Febo as she describes the research and writing process that was involved in the book's creation.

Betty will present a slide show of highlights from the first fifty years of St. Mary's Parish and offer two mysteries that are yet to be fully solved.



The program will be held in the Holliston Historical Society's Asa Whiting House, 547 Washington St., Holliston.

The talk is free and open to the public. Refreshments will follow. All are welcome!



Black Earth Compost

For the last few years, Ashland and Holliston have had a partnership with Black Earth Compost.

Black Earth Compost is a curbside compost service that allows residents and businesses to reduce the food waste that they send to landfill. The more residents that subscribe to the service the less the cost of the service will be.

How it works:

Put all of your kitchen scraps in a counter top bin. They accept all produce scraps, dairy, meat, paper towels, napkins, bones, pet food, pet waste, cotton balls, fireplace and stove ash, and much more. When your bin gets full put it into the larger curbside bin. This will be collected like trash and recycling once a week.

Cost:

The current cost of a weekly composting pick up service is \$69.99 for 6 months. This breaks down to \$2.96 a week. In adding this service to your weekly waste pick up you are not only reducing food waste going to landfill but can also cut down on your cost for trash pick up. Currently the cost for a small Ashland trash bag is \$1.05 each and the cost for a



large Ashland trash bag is \$1.80 each. If you are using more than two large bags a week, bringing in a compost service or backyard compost will lead to savings. The more residents that sign up the more the rate will be reduced.

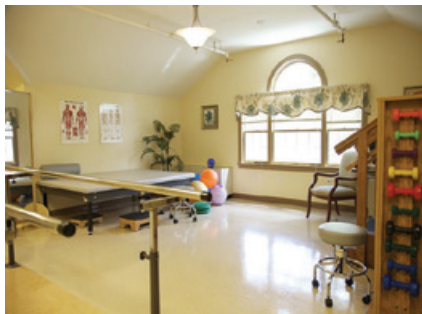
Why composting is important:

Food waste is one of the leading forms of waste. Annually in the US 119 billion pounds of food waste is created. When put in landfills it does not break down as easily and when it does it produces methane gas. Methane gas has more than 80x the warming power of CO2. By composting your extra food waste you allow the waste to decompose and be made into compost soil. For everyone that subscribes to the service they receive a bag of compost each spring that they can use in their own yards.

To sign up go to <https://blackearthcompost.com>



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Creating Creative Collaboration

The Senior Center announced a new intergenerational program with older adults from the Holliston Senior Center and a wonderful class of fourth-grade students from Miller Elementary School.

All seniors who sign up will be paired with an elementary student to create a small project that bridges the generational divide.

This collaborative project will focus on cherished and joyful moments, important places, positive childhood experiences and challenges overcome.

“Creation Sessions” will be held at Miller Elementary School on the following Tuesdays from 12:30pm to 1:45. (Seniors will leave at 2pm, after school dismissal)

- Tuesday, Feb. 7
- Tuesday, Feb. 14
- Tuesday, Feb. 28

The Final Showcase where everyone will present what they made with their Elementary “teammates” will be held on Monday, March 6, from 9:30 to 11am at the Holliston Senior Center.

Call the Senior Center for more information: 508-429-0622.

Water Rates On Agenda For Feb. 27



Notice is hereby given that the Select Board will hold a public hearing on Monday Feb. 27, , at 7:30 p.m. in the Select Board Meeting Room, Room 105 at Town Hall, 703 Washington St., to determine the water rate for fiscal year 2024.

For remote participation instructions, see website at <https://www.townofholliston.us/select-board/events/137256> once the Select Board Agenda is posted.



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Open Until March 13

The Town of Holliston’s Select Board voted to open the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 8.

Articles are to be submitted to the Office of the Select Board by Monday, March 13, by 4 p.m.

Any questions about how to submit an Article for consideration should be directed to Travis Ahern, Town Administrator at ahernt@holliston.k12.ma.us.

Lunch and a Movie Celebrates Black History Month, LGBTQ+ Stories

Thursday, Feb. 23, noon, Sandwiches and Soup or Salad will be served along with movie snacks!

“Kinky Boots” PG-13 2019 Musical 2h 2m

Break out your favorite dancing boots and join us for this heartwarming and hilarious Tony-winning musical written by Cyndi Lauper and Harvey Fierstein! *Kinky Boots* is based on the true story of a young man who inherits his family’s struggling shoemaking business. As he searches for some way to save the factory and his friends’ jobs, he finds unexpected inspiration when he meets Lola, a fabulous and wise drag artist. KINKY BOOTS: THE MUSICAL filmed live onstage with the original London Cast .

Julie Novak, BayPath Elder Services’ LGBTQ+ Initiative Coordinator will be joining us!

\$3 donation requested. You must sign up by Feb. 16. Please call 508-429-0622.

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<div><div>FRIENDSHIP MONTH!</div><div>BLACK HISTORY MONTH</div><div>February 2023</div><div>FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH</div><div>February is Library Lovers' Month</div></div>				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RESERVATIONS ARE REQUESTED IN ADVANCE. CALL THE SENIOR CENTER AT 508-429-0622		1 9:30 Walking Fitness 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch 1:00 BINGO	2 9:00 Pilates (Zoom) 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Photography 2:00 Watercolor Class 	3 9:30 Select Chat*** 9:30 Quilled Valentine Craft Class*** 1:00 Tune Timers
	6 9:00 AARP Tax Appts*** 9:30 Coloring and Coffee 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Game Day	7 9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic 10:00 Writers Group 10:30 Energy Focus Mvmt 12:30 Zumba Gold 12:30 Creation Sessions at Miller Elementary*** 2:00 Coffee with Holliston Police***	9 9:00 Pilates (Zoom) 10:00 Libby Training by Holliston Public Library*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Photography 2:00 Watercolor Class	10 9:30 Friday Crafters 1:00 Tune Timers 1:30 Book Club
	13 9:00 AARP Tax Appts*** 9:30 Coloring and Coffee 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Game Day	14 9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic 9:00 Monthly Breakfast*** 10:00 Legal Hour with Attorney Marsden*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Zumba Gold 12:30 Creation Sessions at Miller Elementary***	15 10:00 Podiatry*** 12:00 Valentine's Day Luncheon*** <i>Yoga, BINGO and Walking Fitness cancelled today</i> 	17 9:30 Friday Crafters 1:00 Tune Timers
	20 <i>Closed in Observance of President's Day</i> 	21 9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Zumba Gold	22 9:00 Pilates 9:30 Java with Jay*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:00 Lunch and a Movie*** 12:30 Photography 2:00 Watercolor Class	24 9:30 Friday Crafters 12:00 Dementia Friendly Lunch and Learn*** 1:00 Tune Timers
	27 9:00 AARP Tax Appts*** 9:30 Coloring and Coffee 10:00 Legal Advice w/ Attorney Bergeron*** 12:00 Weekly Lunch*** 1:30 Tai Chi 1:30 Game Day <i>Yoga cancelled today</i>	28 9:00 Blood Pressure Clinic 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:30 Zumba Gold 12:30 Creation Sessions at Miller Elementary***		

Senior Center Lunch Menu

Wednesday, Feb. 1

Rosemary Roast Chicken, Vegetable Soup, Home Fries, Corn, Banana Bread

Monday, Feb. 6

Club Sandwich, Tossed Salad, Carrot Sticks, Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

Wednesday, Feb. 8

BAKED HAM, Macaroni And Cheese, Brussel Sprouts, Apple Pie

Monday, Feb. 13

Beef Stroganoff, Egg Noodles, Waldorf Salad, Mixed Vegetables, Pudding

Wednesday, Feb. 15

Valentine's Luncheon — Baked Stuffed Shrimp, Tossed Salad, Baked Potato, Vegetable, Rolls, Cake (Suggested Donation: \$7.00)

Monday, Feb. 20

Pork Cutlet, Tomato Soup, Roasted And Seasoned Potatoes, Green Beans, Cupcakes

Wednesday, Feb. 22

Shepherd's Pie, Garden Salad, Peas, Chocolate Cake

Monday, Feb. 27

Stuffed Chicken, Caesar Salad, Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Jell-O

Would you like to receive your Holliston Senior Center newsletter digitally?

The Senior Center is happy to send you our newsletter to your email inbox, if you prefer. It is good for the environment and you will receive it sooner since you do not need to wait on the mail!

If you would like to join our email list, please email our Assistant Director, Amanda at boralessaa@holliston.k12.ma.us or call us at 508-429-0622



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For 2022, all the 21 Medicare drug plans have preferred pharmacies as do several Medicare Advantage plans. You should check that the pharmacy you currently use is the best one to use with your plan; plans can

change their preferred pharmacies from year to year. By using a preferred pharmacy, you may save money!

Trained SHINE volunteers offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of Medicare and related health insurance programs. To schedule a SHINE appointment, call our Senior Center at 508-429-0622. For other SHINE related matters, call 1-800-243-4636. Once you get the SHINE answering machine, leave your name, number and town. A volunteer will call you back, as soon as possible.



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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Galentine's Day - February 13th

By GINA WOELFEL

February 13th is National Galentine's Day! Ok, ok...not officially, but UNOFFICIALLY, Galentine's Day is celebrated on February 13th, the day before Valentine's Day.

February is the month of love and Galentine's Day fits right in! We shower our significant others with gifts and cards on the 14th, but 24 hours earlier is all about our equally important relationships: our girlfriends! Galentine's Day brings together the ladies in our lives we love and lean on the most - our ride or die BFF's (you know who you are...)

You may recall that last year's Beauty Beat focussed on self-care. Well, we've made the executive decision that hanging with your besties is the best self-care there is!

We were actually inspired to write a Galentine's Day Beauty Beat when two best friends recently booked a facial day together at our b.LUXE studio. Estheticians, Colleen and Monique took such great care to pamper and beautify these two lovelies, the smiles on their faces said it all. They'd thoroughly enjoyed a day of self-care made all the more amazing by doing it together.

This holiday is the perfect opportunity to indulge in the YOU-time you need with the people who always have your back, the people who keep you laughing and who never let you down. Whether you're single or in a relationship, the best things in life are better with friends, and isn't that worth celebrating?

As much as we'd love to, not all of us are in the position to book a crazy girls trip to Paris (sorry SJP) or even a weekend away, but there are many fun and unique ways to celebrate your friendship that, with a little planning, can be almost as fabulous as Paris!

Here are a few ideas for you and your queens to kick up your heels and celebrate!

- Mimosas and pancakes - Have all the toppings and break out the crystal!
- Slumber party - Tell the gents they need to scoot and queue up your favorite films.
- Plan the perfect hike - Map out a new and exciting route and pack a lunch of your favorite munchies to snack at the summit.
- Zoom Happy Hour - No time to go out? Put the kids to bed and dial in!
- Friends Facial Day - Well, of course this is a b.LUXE favorite!! Our spa loves when friends book together! Facials are so great, why not bring a friend?? Tandem facials are a double shot of fun and leave you feeling like you're taking care of yourself, as well as your bestie!

POP UP PROMO ALERT!

On February 13th, for one day only, get a \$50 Galentine's Day Spa Gift Card for only \$40! 12 hours only, from 9AM - 9PM, online purchases only. Buy as many as you like, but only one Galentine's Spa Gift Card per appointment. Scan QR code to be brought to our website and click "E-Gift Cards" from the menu to purchase.

Read on about our other spa special that's happening for this month!

The Red Envelope Event!

For the entire month of February, every client with a booked facial or spray tan will receive a red envelope at their appointment and surprise...

EVERY ENVELOPE'S A WINNER!

Prizes include b.LUXURY Facials, facial add-ons, spa products, spray tans and coupons! There's even a grand prize, golden ticket winner! Don't miss out and book today, space is limited.

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(*Red Envelope prizes must be used on the same day as your booked service, they're non-transferable, and have no cash value.)

Now, of course we haven't forgotten about you, February 14th! Our gift cards are always available for easy purchase online and are the perfect way to say Happy Valentine's Day to all your special someone's. You all know how much your wives, mothers and significant other's LOVE them! So, grab your honey the gift they really want. Hint! Hint!

We hope Galentine's/Valentine's Day finds you celebrating with all the people and things that you love and wish you a joy-filled February filled with love, light and magic! (And pancakes and mimosas...)

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RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Big Brothers Big Sisters Of Central Mass & Metrowest Celebrating 60th Anniversary In 2023

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Mass & Metrowest (BBBS) is turning to the community for help in matching 60 boys (Littles) who are currently on the waitlist for a mentor (Big). BBBS hopes to match those 60 Littles with their Big by April 1, to coincide with their 60th Anniversary Big Celebration Gala.

The 60 boys on the waitlist reside in Worcester and will benefit from a mentor. The reasons for why these young kids, ages ranging from 8-16, are in need of a mentor varies. Some are coming from single-parent households and are lacking a male role model. Others have experienced difficulties in life and need that extra connection that a Big provides. After being matched with a mentor, it has been found that children gain confidence, do better in school, and are overall happier.

BBBS has garnered the support for the 60 Men to Mentors initiative from Worcester Mayor, Joe Petty, and Worcester City Manager, Eric Batista. Mr. Petty and Mr. Batista have been important advocates in connecting BBBS with people throughout

the Worcester community who will play a role in making the initiative a success.

BBBS CEO, Connie Askin, explained, "with 100 children on the waitlist, Mayor Petty is helping us put out the call: Big Brothers Big Sisters needs caring adult volunteers to sign up as volunteers! The commitment is just 1 hour a week- if you sleep 8 or 9 hours a night, 1 hour is less than 1% of the time you're awake. Worcester, you can change a child's life for the better with 1% of your time!"

Once a match is made between a Big and a Little, they are supported by one of BBBS' professionally trained, Match Support Specialists. The Match Support Specialists conduct monthly check-ins with both the Big, the Little, and the parent/guardian to make sure the relationship is a healthy and productive one.



BBBS Board Chair, Jack Hoehlein, further emphasized, "Boys tend to sit on the wait-list longer than girls, especially boys of color. They are looking for someone who looks like them to be their special Big. A coach, a mentor, a friend. We are calling this campaign 60 Men to Mentors, because we need 60 men to

sign up as volunteers, to spend just 1 hour a week with children who need a Big Brother."

To learn more about the initiative visit: <https://bbbscm.org/60-men-to-mentors> or call 508-752-7868.



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Sports

WRESTLING

continued from page 1

Finn Blossom is a captain on Holliston High's wrestling team who knows a thing or two about overcoming adversity and understanding the value of playing an unsung role for the Panthers.

A senior, the 6-foot-3, 200-pounder didn't have much success during his sophomore season, finishing with a winless record at 0-10 during a covid-shortened schedule. A year later, as a junior, he elevated his record to 11-21, earning the team's most-improved wrestler award.

But, adversity lingered at the conclusion of that junior campaign — he missed qualifying for the state tourney when he lost two of three bouts at the sectional playoffs.

Blossom, however, deals with setbacks and challenges in a classy manner.

"When I lost all my matches as a sophomore, I decided to get stronger physically," he said. "I also relied on a strong work ethic and staying mentally tough. The winless record was a fire under my feet and I wanted to put it in my past."

Blossom obviously was disappointed when he fell one victory shy of advancing to the state tourney. "I was a bit crushed," he said. "I look back at it now

and it was difficult not being with my teammates to compete. But, I've used that situation as motivation this year."

Blossom's goals at the start of the season speak volumes about his desire to meet challenges head-on and to develop resilience.

"My team goals are to improve, compile a winning record, for many of us to get to the state tourney, and strive to be competitive in the Tri Valley League," he emphasized. "My individual objectives are to qualify for the states and aim to advance, improve all season long and for my win-loss record to reach 20 victories or beyond."

At *Local Town Pages* deadline, the Panthers were 3-8 and Blossom's record was 8-5.

The sectional tourney is less than two weeks away (Feb. 11) and that'll be the starting point in determining if Blossom's goals are reached. "I'm optimistic and I believe all the goals are realistic," he said.

A native of Holliston, the 18-year-old Blossom gets rave reviews from head coach Alex Strum — for his ability to lead in unsung fashion.

"Finn is the first to arrive at practice and he's quick to roll up all the mats after practice," said Strum, who's been elevated to head coach after serving as an assistant to Mike Capobianco last year. "He's not our most

accomplished wrestler but his teammates thought enough of him to elect him as a captain.

"He's got no ego, he just shows up and does his work. He's coachable, asks the right questions and pays attention. Always on an even keel, Finn has a good wrestling IQ, he's strong, mentally tough and relies on sound technique."

A leader by example, Blossom is a captain who's also supportive, always quick to assist a teammate. "I try to lead in a behavior-wise fashion," he said. "On the mat, when I get passionate about wrestling and win, I hope my enthusiasm is on display."

Why Strum refers to Blossom as "unsung" is easy to understand. He's all about putting his team first.

"I give 100 percent on the mat at all times," Blossom said. "I try to be supportive of everyone and I'm a team-first competitor."

Blossom began his wrestling career as a freshman and started out on the jayvees. Now, he's in his third year as a starter and he's a captain driven to excel.

"I enjoy wrestling because it's an individual sport and also a team sport," he noted. "I like striving to score points for the team but I also enjoy the one-on-one challenge. It's personal because you know you gave 100 percent when you win. I'm not

great at focusing on strategy but wrestling gets my brain going to execute what I want to achieve."

Blossom relies on a cradle move that involves getting an opponent's arm, head and a leg in a bear hug and striving for a pin. He also relies on and admires Holliston's other three captains — seniors Michael Derubeis and Anthony Touchette and junior Zak Robinson. "They're contributors, quality competitors and technically sound," he emphasized. "They're also vocal leaders."

Blossom also likes Strum's coaching style. "He recruited me for wrestling," he said. "He's a motivator who teaches the sport effectively, knows strategy and is supportive of his players."

Calling former Holliston wrestler Thoren Berg a role model for his support and encouragement, Blossom's competitive philosophy is all about "enjoying your sport and the moment and reaching your potential." Winning, he believes, "will follow and be the by-product."

Valuable life lessons can often be learned from athletics and Blossom has indeed learned many. "I've learned how to lead and how to overcome adversity,"

he noted. "I've also learned that when aiming to achieve a goal, it's imperative to go all out to make it happen. Sports also help to teach us the value of commitment."

An honor-roll student who has a 3.89 GPA, Blossom hopes to attend Dartmouth College and eventually focus on a career in chemistry. He likely will stay involved with wrestling at the club or intramural level. Worcester Polytech and the University of Colorado are also potential collegiate venues.

Achieving goals is important for Blossom. He's fulfilled some of his early-season objectives but a berth in the state tourney will not be determined until the sectional playoffs conclude.

Blossom's determination should lead to a slot in the states because that attribute so often leads to success.

Holliston has something called "the G-Club," and there's only eight wrestlers in the history of the program who've gained membership. It focuses on take-down drills and if a competitor compiles 1,000 in practice for an entire season, he's in the club.

Last year, Finn Blossom became the eighth member.

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Nearly \$2M in Fire Education Grants

Record Number of S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE Grants Awarded in FY 2023

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that 266 municipal fire departments will receive \$1.9 million in grants to fund fire and life safety education for children and older adults, setting a new record for the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE programs. The previous record of 253 communities was set in FY 2018.

"For more than 25 years, the S.A.F.E. grant program has provided hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts students with fire and life safety lessons that last a lifetime," said Governor Charlie Baker. "We are glad that this year's awards will support consistent, statewide, professional safety education in a record number of communities."

The average number of children who die in fires annually has dropped by nearly 80% since the S.A.F.E. program began in FY 1996, and Massachusetts recently went nearly three years without losing a child to fire. The Senior SAFE program was launched in FY 2014, funding fire safety education for another vulnerable population — seniors, who face a disproportionate risk

FIRE

continued on page 14

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Real Estate Corner



45 Green Street in Holliston recently sold for \$725,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

Recent Home Sales

Date	Holliston	Amount
01/13/2023	124 Prospect Street	\$455,000
01/06/2023	48 Mohawk Path	\$1.13 mil
01/05/2023	2317 Washington Street	\$495,000
01/04/2023	114 Jennings Road	\$562,750
12/30/2022	401 Underwood St (2.62 acres)	\$195,000
12/30/2022	380 Underwood Street	\$765,000
12/30/2022	45 Green Street	\$725,000
12/29/2022	30 Gretchen Lane	\$425,000
12/29/2022	9 Day Road	\$805,000
12/29/2022	30 Gretchen Lane	\$425,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

FIRE

continued from page 13

of dying in a fire at home. “The Senior SAFE grants support home visits, smoke and CO alarm installations, and fire safety presentations delivered by firefighters in partnership with service providers,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “Their valuable program gives older adults the tools, knowledge, and strate-

gies to stay safe and independent at home.” This year’s awards will provide \$1,103,488 in S.A.F.E. funding for 262 fire departments; \$562,194 in Senior SAFE funding for 265 fire departments; and \$252,783 for regional trailer props used by multiple fire departments to teach and demonstrate fire safety skills. Every department that applied for a grant received funding.

“The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE grants represent a smart investment in fire safety,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence M. Reidy. “Youngsters and older adults are historically at greater risk in house fires, but that risk can be reduced through the targeted outreach, education, and awareness programs like these.” “The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE programs bring trained

firefighter-educators together with children and older adults to deliver age-appropriate fire and life safety lessons,” said State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey. “Fire service programs like these are part of the reason Massachusetts is one of the most fire-safe states in the nation, and I’m very glad that more communities than ever applied for this year’s grants.”

The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE grant programs are funded through legislative earmarks to the Executive Office of the Public Safety & Security, and they are administered by the Department of Fire Services. A full list of recipient departments and their awards is attached. For more fire service grant opportunities, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-for-fire-departments>.

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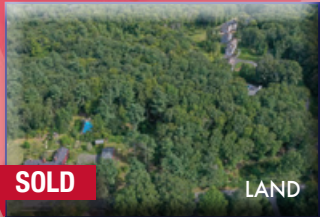


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