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# WINTHROP

## SUN TRANSCRIPT

EST. IN 1882

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THURSDAY,  
January 13, 2022

FIRST SNOWFALL OF 2022

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INDEPENDENT



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Newspaper Group

NEWS Briefs

### TOWN PROVIDES CLARIFICATION ON PROPERTY TAX BILLS

Interim Town Manager Terence Delehanty and the Town of Winthrop wish to provide residents with an update on property tax bills.

Due to a software error, third-quarter tax bills displayed a 2021 assessed value on tax bills rather than the 2022 values they should have displayed. However, the amount due listed on individual bills is correct.

The Town of Winthrop has engaged the Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services regarding the error.

"We would like to apologize for any confusion caused by this error, and encourage residents to reach out if they have any questions," Delehanty said. "However, they should rest assured that the listed

See BRIEFS Page 6

### TRASH DELAY

Due to the Martin Luther King Holiday on Monday January 17, 2022, Trash will be delayed by one day

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Shown above, Saint John's Episcopal Church on Bowdoin Street may have showed signs of a wintery cold day on the outside, but all are warmly welcomed inside.

Shown right, Matteo Cantu was out with his dad Dane, building a snow castle.

Shown below, residents make their way Winthrop's boat launching ramp for a boat ride. See more photos on Page 8.



### FKO Afterschool awarded \$5,000 grant towards scholarships for Winthrop families in need

Staff Report

For Kids Only Afterschool (FKO) received a \$5,000 grant award from East Boston Savings Bank Charitable Foundation for FKO's scholarship program to cover tuition costs for families in need.

"We are extremely grateful for this generous grant which expanded access to safe afterschool and summer enrichment activities for Winthrop youth," said

Deborah Kneeland Keegan, FKO Executive Director. 100% of grant funding was used to provide scholarship assistance that allows low and moderate income and at-risk school-aged youth from Winthrop access to quality out-of-school time enrichment.

FKO collaborates with Winthrop Public Schools and other community and government partners to design and provide out-of-school-time (OST) ser-

vices that meet the needs of local youth. Through its longstanding contract with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, FKO provides low-income families with subsidized programming and through its contract with Massachusetts Department of Family and Children's Services, provides Supportive Child Care services for children at risk of abuse or neglect, living in foster care, or exposed to trauma. Together, these collaborations help FKO connect Winthrop youth to safe, healthy enrichment opportunities.

With this generous funding from the East Boston Savings Bank Charitable Foundation FKO will con-

See FKO Page 3

### As Omicron rages, WPS sees historic staff, student absences

By Laura Plummer

time to start anew."

The Winthrop School Committee met on Jan. 10, where the dominant theme of the evening was the unprecedented staff and student absences in the district.

The meeting was the first to be attended by newly elected Town Council Pres. James Letterie and School Committee member Suzanne Leonard. They joined Chairwoman Jennifer Powell, Vice Chair Julie Barrie, and members Gus Martucci and Suzanne Swope.

Supt. Lisa Howard congratulated and welcomed the committee's new members, calling it "an exciting

**COVID**  
In her usual COVID update, Supt. Howard reported a level of student and staff absences never before seen in the district. The town had predicted a spike due to holiday gatherings, especially with the Omicron variant already on the rise, but nothing like this.

On Monday, Jan. 3, the district was missing 446 students (almost a quarter of all enrolled) and 20 staff. While the student absences seemed to level off in the following days, the staff

See SCHOOL COMM. Page 3

### Winthrop COVID cases on the rise

By John Lynds

It seems as though Winthrop is not immune to the rising number of COVID cases that have affected neighboring cities and towns and some are reassessing that bit of freedom we all enjoyed over the summer months.

According to the Director of the Winthrop Department of Public Health & Clinical Services

Meredith Hurley, RN, MPH, the weekly positive test rate jumped 82 percent when comparing the week ending January 1 with the week ending December 25.

For the week ending

January 1 3,386 Winthrop residents were tested for COVID and 15.8 percent were found to be positive. This was an 82 percent spike from the 8.7 percent that tested positive the week prior.

Six percent more residents were tested for the virus during the week ending January 1 so it seems the Omicron variant, which makes up nearly all new cases in the US, is spreading rapidly through the town.

The number of confirmed cases jumped from 280 to 535 from Christmas

See COVID-19 Page 3

### WINTHROP MARKETPLACE

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Contact and interaction with other dogs and people is another benefit of outdoor winter exercise.

## CITY PAWS

# Winter Exercise

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

We all know how tempting it can be to look out on a winter day with snow, rain, icy sidewalks, or below-freezing temperatures and decide to forgo a substantial walk with your dog. It's so easy to promise you'll make it up tomorrow. For us, it is even more tempting because our dog, Poppy, prefers to stay inside and is an expert in using her puppy pads as needed.

There are a few days each winter when staying in or a quick trip to do what is absolutely necessary is the right decision. However, we admit that it's often just the easy way out, and we should give our dog and ourselves the exercise we need.

### Muscle Tone and Winter Weight!

Remember your vet is happy to encourage you to monitor and control your animal's weight. If you have a large dog, you may need to drop into a veterinary clinic to check on weight status. We expect that most vets and their staff will allow you to use their scales if you are willing to wait for a time between clients when it is free. In many cases, the scale may be in a waiting area.

For dogs you can lift, use the subtractive meth-

od. Weigh yourself on your bathroom scale. Then, pick up your pet, get a total for the two of you, and deduct your weight from the total. Ed likes to follow schedules and keep logs, so he weighs our dog Poppy every week. That helps both of them get more exercise since he notices when she is more than a few ounces up from the week before.

Two things come with a reduction in exercise: weight gain is noticeable, but muscle reduction is not. What's more, since muscle is more dense than fat, you may be fooled into believing that your dog is not gaining weight until it is a more serious problem. Regular exercise will help tone the body, strengthen bones, and help control weight.

"A tired dog is a good dog" is an old saying with a ring of truth to anyone who has lived with an energetic dog during a blizzard. Keeping your dog physically fit, socialized, and well-behaved requires a winter workout plan.

We have to be aware that dog walks in winter require more energy and can leave older or frail dogs exhausted and plan accordingly. However, for a healthy high-energy hound, a quick trip outside may not be enough. The excess energy they need to burn off with a good romp could result in behavior issues at home.

### Socialization Too!

Contact and interaction with other dogs and people is another benefit of outdoor winter exercise. The pandemic has already prevented some companion animals from being well socialized. Fortunately, over the summer and fall, we saw more casual meetings between canines and their people and fewer warnings that the dog was not used to strangers.

Mikkel Becker, Vetstreet.com's Certified Behavior Consultant Canine (CBCC-KA) writes, "My rule of thumb is to provide your dog with at least two interactive activities per day along with several socialization opportunities throughout the week."

Since your friends with dogs have the exact needs, you could set up playdates or at least a texting system that lets others know when you are on your way for a walk. What's more, what is good for your dog is good for you. Social interaction with other dog people can be the encouragement you need to take a longer walk each day, even when the weather makes you want to stay inside and hibernate.

*Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.*

## The Animal Legal Defense Fund offers tips to keep pets warm this winter season

Special to the Journal

With winter—and low temperatures—upon us, it's important to think about how we'll keep all our family members safe, warm, and healthy, including the four-legged ones.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund, the nation's leading legal advocacy organization for animals, has tips for how you can make sure your companion animals sail through even the worst weather winter has to offer. Dogs, cats, and other companion animals are not equipped to handle the cold much better than humans, so it's important to pay close attention to signals they may be getting uncomfortable.

- First and foremost, bring your companion animals indoors, where it is warm. If it's too cold for you to be outside, it's too cold—and potentially deadly—for them.

- Watch for signs of hypothermia—shivering, weak pulse, dilated pupils, stupor, and unconsciousness. If an animal exhibits these symptoms, get them to a veterinarian right away!

- "Salts" that melt snow

can be a serious irritant for an animal's paws—and some are toxic if eaten. Make sure to wipe or rinse their feet when back indoors.

- Don't leave antifreeze in open containers. Antifreeze is deadly—its sweet taste attracts almost any animal and will kill them.

- Bang on the hood of your car before starting it—small animals, including cats, may crawl under the hood to find warmth. Companion animals give us unconditional love but they can't tell us when they get too cold. A little care and caution will go a long way toward keeping all our family members healthy this winter.

If you see an animal in distress outdoors, call 911.

It is not uncommon for dogs and cats left outdoors in the brutal cold to suffer severe frostbite or even to freeze to death. Some areas, like North Dakota and Minnesota, have recorded temperatures as low as 40 degrees below zero.

State laws differ dramatically when it comes to defining the standards of care required for animals.

Some states fail to expressly include a requirement to provide adequate "shelter" as an element of the crime of animal neglect. Nebraska, New Mexico, and New York are guilty of this omission.

However, others, like North Dakota (mentioned above) expressly mandate it. For example, in North Dakota, neglect of a dog or a cat includes failing to provide "[s]helter from the elements, as appropriate for the species, the breed, and the age and physical condition" of the animal.

But one thing is certain: it is illegal to cause a companion animal to freeze to death in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund is frequently contacted regarding animal cruelty charges filed against people who have left animals out in the cold.

Public scrutiny and law enforcement are our best tools to enforce animal cruelty laws, and that is why we make exposing such neglect—like leaving dogs outdoors to freeze to death—a priority and make sure violators of these laws are held accountable.

## Urgent need for kitchen volunteers at Community Servings

Staff Report

Kitchen volunteers are urgently needed at Community Servings to help the nonprofit's professional kitchen staff prepare and package 18,000 medically tailored meals that are delivered weekly to critically and chronically ill individuals across the region.

While Community Servings operates one of Boston's largest volunteer programs, the current COVID-19 surge has pushed January volunteer numbers to low levels. Demand for the nonprofit's nutritious, life-saving meals has increased by over 80% since the pandemic began.

"Volunteers have been at the heart of our mission since we began, essential to ensuring that we can feed our neighbors in need and help maintain their health," said David B. Waters, CEO of Community Servings. "Given the effects of this pandemic surge, we are making a plea for anyone with a few hours to lend a helping hand in our kitchen."

Volunteers help peel and chop vegetables; portion soups, stews and salads; and pack weekly meal bags for clients living with HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes and heart disease, among other illnesses.

For health and safety reasons, all volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated, have their temperature taken, and wear a surgical or KN95 face mask (provided) at Community

Servings' Food Campus in Jamaica Plain, which is on the T's Orange Line. The kitchen is equipped with hospital-grade air ventilation and filtration systems.

Anyone interested in volunteering can visit [www.servings.org/volunteer](http://www.servings.org/volunteer) to sign up for three-hour shifts Monday through Friday (9 a.m. to noon, 1 to 4 p.m. and 4 to 7 p.m.).

Founded in 1990, Community Servings' mission is to actively engage the community to provide medically tailored, nutritious, scratch-made meals to

chronically and critically ill individuals and their families. To help clients maintain their health and dignity, we provide culturally appropriate meals, nutrition education and counseling, and other community programs. Our kitchen team, with support from thousands of volunteers, prepares over 800,000 medically tailored meals that are served to more than 3,200 clients annually. For more information about programs and opportunities to volunteer or donate, please visit [www.servings.org](http://www.servings.org).



Volunteers with Community Servings work on packaging some foods for in accordance with medically tailored meals.

# RISE

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GreenStar's adult use retail stores in Dracut, Maynard, and Chelsea, will officially become RISE Dispensaries on January 13, 2022.

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### Get to know RISE!

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At RISE, we believe cannabis is a freedom, and we're proud to serve your communities.

### PLEASE CONSUME RESPONSIBLY

This product has not been analyzed or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). There is limited information on the side effects of using this product, and there may be associated health risks. Marijuana use during pregnancy and breast-feeding may pose potential harms. It is against the law to drive or operate machinery when under the influence of this product. KEEP THIS PRODUCT AWAY FROM CHILDREN. There may be health risks associated with consumption of this product. Marijuana can impair concentration, coordination, and judgment. The impairment effects of Edibles may be delayed by two hours or more. In case of accidental ingestion, contact poison control hotline 1-800-222-1222 or 9-1-1. This product may be illegal outside of MA.

Marijuana is available under Massachusetts State Law; however it is illegal under Federal law. Marijuana products may be purchased or possessed only by persons 21 years of age or older. Keep out of reach of children. Marijuana can impair concentration, coordination and judgement. Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of marijuana. This product has intoxicating effects and may be habit forming. There may be health risks associated with consumption of this product. National Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222. Massachusetts State License No. MRN 282297 Maynard, MRN 282048 Dracut, MRN 282034 Chelsea.

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