

# THE SLG ADVISOR

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## Don't Let Life Knock You Down GET BACK UP

Most people don't realize that the first day of February is National Get Up Day. If you know me, you know I like to poke fun at these made-up holidays. Where do people come up with these ideas? But as I began to poke fun at this "new" day to celebrate, I realized the joke was on me; National Get Up Day has an inspiring backstory and is a day that can and should inspire us all to get up after we take one of life's many inevitable knockdowns.

National Get Up Day was conceived and implemented by the U.S. Figure Skating Association back in 2016. The spirit behind the day is about

being fearless in the face of falling and/or failing. It really is how we bounce back that counts, or as Rocky Balboa famously explained to his son, "It ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard ya can get hit and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done."

When I write these monthly cover articles, I tend to get introspective. It's a good break from the frenetic pace of "taking care of business." It allows me to ponder and write, two of my favorite activities when I find some rare free time. So, I asked myself, have I ever taken a solid beatdown in life? Did I get back up

and keep moving forward? With the help of God, family, friends, and clients, the answer is a resounding YES, I have. (Cue the Rocky theme song here).

Now I have a wonderful life that I cherish and have been blessed with many great opportunities, some I've taken advantage of and some I've squandered, but overall it's been a very good life. But between July of 2013 and March of 2020, you could say life kicked the crap out of me. During that period of time, my mother, my father, my sister, her daughter, and my law partner all died. Throw in a cancer diagnosis and a nasty case of COVID-19 during this period and you might agree that it was life by knockout during those years. But here I am, and here you are. We got back up and kept moving forward. So, in my opinion, National Get Up Day is worth celebrating.

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# What Every Renter and Landlord Needs to Know About Snow Removal Obligations

If you live or own property in Massachusetts, it's important to know the laws when it comes to snow and ice removal. You may have legal responsibilities to remove snow and ice, whether you're a tenant, landlord, homeowner, commercial property, or business.

About a decade ago, there was a big shift regarding snow and ice removal laws in Massachusetts. This is particularly important because the past 15 years have also been the snowiest years in the state's history. For more than 100 years, Massachusetts allowed property owners to have a "natural" accumulation of snow and ice to avoid liability. Now, this is no longer the case.

All property owners in Massachusetts have a legal duty to remove snow, ice, sleet, and slush from their property. If someone is injured in a slip-and-fall accident on your property — because you neglected to remove your ice or snow — you could be responsible for their injuries.

There are also rules about how you can remove snow and ice. You are not allowed to shovel any snow, ice, or slush from your driveway or sidewalk and put it into the street, even if a city plow will go over the area. As a general rule, removal of ice and snow means that sidewalks must be cleared to the bare pavement whenever possible.

Additionally, most cities have a timetable regarding how long you have to remove snow and ice from your property. For example, in Boston, the city's policy only allows businesses three hours to remove all snow and ice, but residents get up to six hours to remove it. If it snows overnight, then usually the time is extended to within 3–6 hours post-sunrise.

If you're a renter, you're not necessarily excused from snow and ice removal. If you live in a rental property with only one entrance or exit used exclusively by you and no other occupants of the building, then a landlord can legally require you to remove all snow and ice to remain in compliance with city and state ordinances.

If you were injured in a slip-and-fall accident in Boston, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, Everett, or anywhere in Massachusetts due to snow or ice, give our office a call or send us a text.

## 2021 Was a Pedestrian Safety Year

2021 was a very rough year for pedestrian safety in Boston. At the beginning of December, Boston was on pace to have the most pedestrian deaths in five years with 10 pedestrian deaths. 2017 had the most pedestrian deaths over the last five years with 11. 2021 doubled the number of pedestrian deaths seen in 2020.

Boston does have a plan to make the streets of Boston safer for pedestrians. Vision Zero Boston is the city's plan to eliminate fatal and severe crashes, including pedestrian accidents, in Boston by 2030. The program was announced in 2015 by Mayor Marty Walsh, and current Mayor Michelle Wu is also passionate about the project.

As part of Vision Zero Boston's plan, Boston's default speed limit was lowered from 30 mph to 25 mph. Traffic Safety data shows there is a 47% likelihood of a pedestrian being killed or seriously

## Review of the Month



*"Len and his team are very welcoming, respectful, and professional in all aspects of their work. They made me feel a sense of comfort during a stressful time. I would definitely refer Spada Law Group to friends and family."*

*–Elizabeth A.*

# Dangerous Year for Pedestrians in Boston

injured in a collision with a car if a driver is going 30 mph. At 25 mph, there is a 30% likelihood and at 20 mph, the possibility of death or severe injury for a pedestrian decreases to 17%.

Some of the most dangerous streets in Boston over the last five years are Newbury Street, Boylston Street, Dartmouth Street, Tremont Street, Kneeland Street, and Massachusetts Avenue from the Mass. Ave Bridge to the intersection of South Hampton Street.

There are certain things we can all do to make the streets safer in Boston. Speeding and running red lights are two of the most dangerous driving behaviors in the city, according to the LivableStreets Alliance. You can help by watching your speed in the city and coming to a complete stop at yellow and red lights. It's also imperative that you look for pedestrians when turning, regardless of the color of your light.

Pedestrian accidents are among the most serious cases we see. They almost always result in serious injuries or even death. If you were injured as a pedestrian in Massachusetts, give our office a call for a free consultation to see how we can help you.



## *... continued from Cover*

Remember, none of us get out of this life unscathed. It just doesn't happen. But when you look at people who are happy in life and have peace of mind, they never seem to be the people who are without problems. The happiest people are almost always those who have great attitudes and are in control of how they react to problems. They control what is in their control; they control their RESPONSE to their problems. It's a well-worn and overused cliché, but it encapsulates this secret to getting back up and choosing to move forward: "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." I made and drank a lot of lemonade between 2013 and 2020, and so what if some of it had some vodka in it. I hope and pray each of you reading this will Get Back Up ASAP!

*-Len Spada*



## Hot Buttered Bourbon Cocktail

*With Valentine's Day coming up, couples across Massachusetts are preparing for a romantic evening out or at home. If you're looking for a delicious cocktail that will enhance your evening, try this recipe! It's delicious and also a great drink to help warm up your body during the cold winter months.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup apple cider
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 cup bourbon
- Cinnamon sticks, for garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a saucepan, heat cider and bring to a simmer.
2. Combine the butter, honey, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger in a small bowl and add to cider. Whisk until melted.
3. Remove the mixture from heat and whisk in the bourbon.
4. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and serve immediately.

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Humpback Whales: The Heroes of the Sea



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## The Heroes of the Sea **Humpback Whale Saves Scientist**

In the movie "Cast Away," we see a whale notifying Chuck Noland of a nearby ship. The whale sprays him with water to get his attention. Although this is a fictional story, what happened in "Cast Away" isn't just movie magic. There are real-life stories about whales helping people in need.

In 2018, a marine biologist, Nan Hauser, was swimming in the waters off the Cook Islands when she noticed a 50,000-pound humpback whale near her. For 10 minutes, Hauser swam around the whale while it nudged her with its head, bumped her with its belly, and swiped at her with its fins. At first, Hauser thought the whale was trying to attack her. But actually, it protected her from a 15-foot-long tiger shark on the other side of the whale.

Hauser told the Daily Mirror, "I've spent 28 years underwater with whales and have never had a whale so tactile and so insistent on putting me on his head, belly, or back, and most of all, trying to tuck me under his huge pectoral fin ... I was sure that it was most likely going to be a deadly encounter." Hauser didn't know the whale wanted to protect her until she returned to her team's research vessel. This is when she noticed the tiger shark creeping nearby.

This isn't the first time a humpback whale has intervened to help another creature. In fact, the humpback's altruism has been well-documented over

the years to show how they benefit other species at their own cost.

In 2009, Robert Pitman took a photo of a humpback cradling a seal while rolling out of the water. The whale had protected the seal from a group of killer whales. Pitman, a marine biologist, has analyzed 115 interactions with humpback whales and concluded that they will travel long distances in order to

prevent killer whales from attacking, regardless of what type of animal the killer whale is pursuing.

Whether this behavior is out of instinct, accident, or altruism, they have saved the lives of many aquatic animals and people. They are the heroes of the sea!

