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**WHEATON RESIDENT TO RUN THE BOSTON MARATHON IN SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF
WOMEN ALONGSIDE ICONIC ATHLETE KATHRINE SWITZER**

Wheaton, IL (January 24, 2017)—Ellen Bintz Meuch, 57, will be lacing up her sneakers on April 17, 2017 for the run of her life.

Bintz Meuch, as well as 100 other runners, will be running the 121st Boston Marathon to represent 261 Fearless, Inc, the new non-profit benefitting women's running initiatives from legendary marathoner, Kathrine Switzer.

In 1967, Switzer became the first registered woman to compete in the Boston Marathon. At that time, the race was considered a male-only event, but, using her initials, Switzer managed to obtain an official bib, number 261. Mid-stride in the competition, an angry race director leapt from the press truck and attempted to pull Switzer from the race. In one of sport's most dramatic moments, Switzer's burly boyfriend bounced the official off the course, allowing Switzer to go on to finish. The photo of the incident became one of Time-Life's *"100 Photos That Changed the World."*

"Switzer not only broke the glass starting line," says Bintz Meuch, "But she continued to champion the cause of women's running for the next 50 years. 261 Fearless – a global women's running network - is the result. This charity uses running to empower women around the world. That's why I'm running for 261 Fearless."

"It is a joy to run with Ellen in the 121st Boston Marathon," said Switzer. "What was a dramatic incident 50 years ago became instead a defining moment for me and women runners like Ellen. The result is nothing less than a social revolution; there are now more women runners in the United States than men, and these women are both fearless and compassionate, wanting to help other women around the world achieve their goals. Because of women like Ellen, 261 Fearless will be able to spread our message far and wide."

"I know I have some hard work ahead of me," confesses Bintz Meuch, who has completed a Half Ironman triathlon but never a full marathon. She's also trying to raise over \$7,000 for 261 Fearless. "With the money we raise, this non-profit organization is able to help establish social running Clubs and create coaches' education and communication programs, even right here in our own community!" enthused Bintz Meuch "We aim to bring women together and connect them with other 261 runners globally. This is a wonderful way to continue to give back and support other women long past the time of the Boston Marathon. Every woman out there deserves to have the chance to reach their own

starting line and feel fearless. I grew up in the Wheaton area and feel very lucky to have been supported in my athletic endeavors as I rode the wave of Title IX. I want to help other women and girls have that same opportunity and support.”

Despite an inauspicious beginning, the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) early on realized the seriousness of women’s desire to participate and the potential of their endurance. In 1972, five years after the ‘Switzer Incident’, the BAA welcomed women as official competitors, becoming the first major marathon to do so. This year, the Boston Athletic Association has continued its commitment to women’s running by inviting the 261 Fearless team to participate in the 121st running of the Boston Marathon on April 17, 2017.

To donate on Ellen Bintz Meuch’s behalf visit :

www.crowdrise.com/261FearlessBoston2017/fundraiser/ellenmeuch

To learn more about the non-profit 261 Fearless, please visit: www.261fearless.org

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Background: Kathrine Switzer being accosted in the ‘67 Boston Marathon. Foreground: Kathrine today.

Ellen Bintz Meuch at Racine Half Ironman 2015



Switzer and Bintz Meuch in Naperville, IL

