

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu

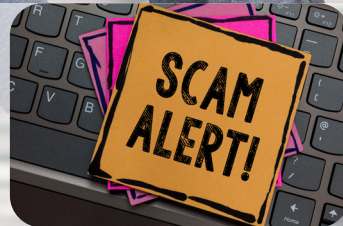
Get Moving!

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April 2022
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As an older adult, regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. In this issue, we look at some of the key benefits of exercise. See pages 16-25 for more.



Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



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Twitter: @AgeStrongBos

Do you have a story to share? We want to hear from you!

Email us at BostonSeniority@boston.gov



From the Mayor's Desk

Hello Boston!

Welcome to the April 2022 issue of Boston Seniority Magazine.

And welcome to Spring! The dark winter days are getting brighter and warmer, snow is giving way to showers, and soon enough, flowers will be blooming across Boston. It's the perfect season for this issue's theme: "Get moving!"

We're encouraging residents across our city to enjoy the fresh air, and find fun ways to be more active. It's especially important for our older residents to get outside and get moving, after a long, cold winter indoors. Exercise does more than just keep your body strong; it also keeps your mind sharp. So we're here to help you make every step count!

Inside you'll find exciting ways to get back into the swing of things, from online wellness programs to in-person exercise classes at local senior centers. You'll also meet the Jolly Walkers, a walking group from Roxbury. We've also included safety tips so that you can exercise at your own pace, and with confidence.

April is also National Poetry Month—when we celebrate the magic and musicality of language, and recognize the accomplishments of local poets like Mattie Deed, a Boston resident whose poem you can read inside. And if you're looking for more words to inspire and move you, be sure to check out the work of Boston's Youth Poet Laureate, Anjalequa Leynneyah Verona Birkett. Anjalequa's poetry explores the beauty and complexity of family, love, and community.

This is also the second month of our fare-free bus pilot. Don't forget to take advantage of Routes 23, 28 and 29 to get around the city and explore our neighborhoods, green spaces, and public art, at no cost!

See you in the neighborhood,

Michelle Wu

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

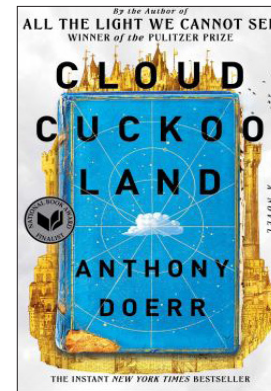


▶ Book Picks

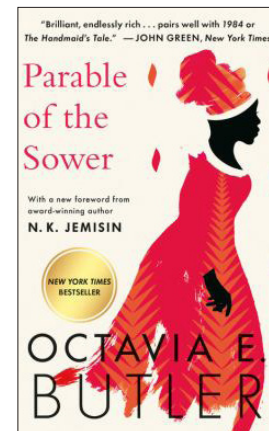
BPL Staff Book Picks:

Source: Boston Public Library

Every month staff from the Boston Public Library recommend their favorite books for all ages across a variety of genres. We hope this list inspires you to keep reading!

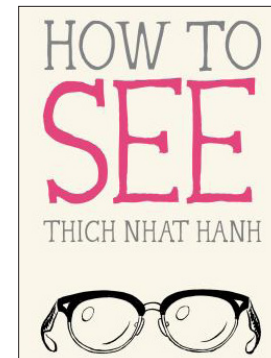


Cloud Cuckoo Land
by Anthony Doerr
Science Fiction. Doerr has created a science fiction epic celebrating books and libraries that reaches back to fifteenth century Constantinople, through present-day Idaho, to an interstellar starship traveling through space decades from now.

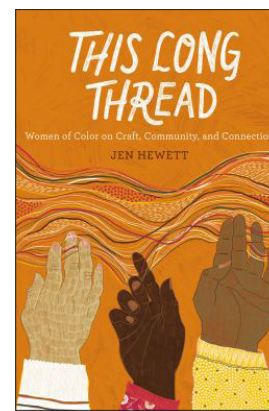


Parable of the Sower
by Octavia E. Butler
Science Fiction. It's 2025 and climate change and an economic crisis has led to social chaos in the US. Lauren lives in a walled-off California

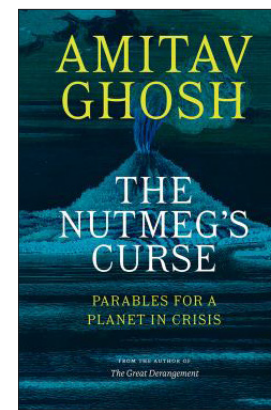
community, trying to avoid the dangers of the outside world where people are killed, or worse, for their meager belongings.



How to See
by Thich Nhat Hanh
How can we clear the fog of illusion and see things as they really are? Nhất Hạnh shows us how mindfulness practices can help us see our real selves. He brings his signature clarity, compassion and humour in these pithy meditations that will lead readers to achieve an awakened, more relaxed state of self-awareness.



This Long Thread
by Jen Hewett
Nonfiction. This book contains interviews, profiles, and essays by people of color in the crafting community in North America.



The Nutmeg's Curse
by Amitav Ghosh
Nonfiction. The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis frames climate change and the Anthropocene as the culmination of a history that begins with the discovery of the New World and of the sea route to the Indian Ocean.



For more titles or BPL info, visit bpl.org or call 617-536-5400.

Bridging Racial & Ethnic Barriers in Alzheimer’s & Dementia Care

By the Alzheimer’s Association, Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter

While nearly everyone is likely to be familiar with Alzheimer’s disease because so many folks either have it or love someone with it, many don’t realize that the disease disproportionately affects older Black and Hispanic Americans versus older Whites. In fact, Black Americans are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer’s, and Hispanic Americans are one and a half times more likely to develop the disease.

A recent Alzheimer’s Association report shows half of Black Americans report they have experienced health care discrimination; more than 2 in 5 Native Americans and one-third of Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans likewise report having experienced discrimination when seeking health care. These findings indicate despite ongoing efforts to address health and health care disparities in Alzheimer’s and dementia care, there is still much work to do.

Actions and solutions are needed to ensure that the already devastating burden of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias on disproportionately affected racial and ethnic groups is not made worse by discrimination and health inequities in the current health care system. The Alzheimer’s Association is working

to bridge current gaps to ensure all Massachusetts residents have access to Alzheimer’s care and support services.

The Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter collaborates with a number of local organizations and community leaders to help understand and meet the needs of local communities, providing information and services, including multiple programs offered in Spanish. The Alzheimer’s Association 24/7 Helpline (800-272-3900) is also available around the clock and offers over 200 languages.

We continue to expand efforts to support populations at greater risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia, expanding awareness efforts into underserved communities, while forging new partnerships. For more information, and to register for upcoming programs in Spanish, visit alz.org/manh.



Getting Your Ducks in a Row: Health Care Proxy and Medical Decision Making

Source: Tufts Medical Center

Hospitals are required, by federal law, to provide all adult patients with information on their rights to make decisions in regard to their medical care, to make an “advance directive” and the hospital’s policies regarding such rights.

Thinking Ahead. There may come a time when you are seriously injured or become gravely ill, and are unable to make decisions about your own medical care. Your family or caregivers may have to make decisions on your behalf about the medical care you receive, including decisions about whether or not you are kept alive on life-support systems.

Giving Advance Directives. You can help ensure that your wishes are followed by taking steps now. In Massachusetts, the law specifically provides for naming someone to serve as your “health care agent” and make medical decisions for you if you become unable to make these decisions yourself. A health care agent is appointed by a health care proxy document. You can also include specific instructions about what medical care you want—or do not want.

Discussing the Issues. Because it’s difficult to know what medical care you

might want in the future, you can discuss it with your doctor before preparing your health care proxy. You can also talk to your health care agent about what medical care you want—or don’t want, including:

- do you want to be revived if your heart/breathing stop?
- do you want life support, and which kind? (breathing tubes/machines, feeding tubes)
- if you become unconscious and not expected to recover, do you want a respirator, artificial nutrition/hydration, and kidney dialysis?
- the ability to communicate with family and friends
- following the wishes of your family
- the quality of your life

If You Don’t Have a Health Care Proxy. Your family will be asked to make decisions based upon what they believe you would want. If you have no family, or if there is disagreement about what treatment you would want, a court may be asked to appoint a guardian to make those decisions.

For more information visit masshealthdecisions.org or call 781-784-1966.

► Scam Alert

Top Scams Targeting Older Americans

Source: AARP

Frauds aimed at older adults are becoming more creative. Scammers stay on top of whatever is new, such as the popularity of Zoom, COVID-19 vaccines and online shopping. Here are frauds happening widely right now:

► Zoom phishing emails

Con artists registered more than 2,449 fake Zoom-related website domains during the pandemic, so they could send out emails that look like they're from Zoom. You get an email with the Zoom logo, telling you to click on a link because your account is suspended or you missed a meeting. Clicking can allow criminals to download malicious software onto your computer, access your personal information to use for identity theft, or search for passwords to hack into your other accounts. Never click on links in unsolicited emails, texts or social media messages. If you think there's a problem with your account, visit Zoom's real website at [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us) and follow the steps for customer support.

► COVID-19 vaccination card scams

Many who got a COVID vaccine posted selfies on social media showing off their vaccination card. Scammers immediately took advantage. With your full name, birth date, and where you received your

shot, scammers have valuable data for identity theft, breaking into your bank accounts, getting credit cards in your name and more. If you want to inform friends and family that you got your shots, a selfie with a generic vaccine sticker will suffice—or use a Got My Vaccine profile picture frame on social media.

► Phony online shopping websites

Phony retail websites aren't new, but they look more real today than ever before. Fake sites are using photos from real online retailers and mimicking their look and feel. You click on an ad online or on social media, see stuff you like at a great price, enter your credit card info ... and never receive a product. Or you receive a lower-quality item shipped directly from an overseas seller. Never click on an ad to go to a retailer's website. Instead, bookmark the URLs of trusted shopping websites you visit frequently. If you're considering buying from a new site, first check online reviews as well as the company's track record via the Better Business Bureau's online directory (bbb.org).

► Online romance scams

They're not just lurking on dating sites. Romance scammers are getting close to unsuspecting seniors in online



prayer groups/book groups, through online games like Words With Friends and other online groups people turn to during pandemic isolation. Scammers typically lure seniors off sites that may be monitored and onto Google Hangouts, WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger, where no one's watching. Eventually they hit you up for money. Never send money to someone you've never met in person. And say no to requests for suggestive selfies and videos that a scammer can later use to blackmail you.

► Medicare card scams

Scammers are emailing, calling and even knocking on doors, claiming to be from Medicare and offering all sorts of pandemic-related services if you “verify” your Medicare ID number. The offers include new cards they claim contain microchips. Some ask for payment to move beneficiaries up in line for the COVID-19 vaccine. Hang up the phone, shut the door, delete the email. Medicare will never contact you without permission

for your Medicare number or other personal information. And it will never call to sell you anything. Guard your Medicare number and never pay for a COVID vaccine—which are free.

► Social Security scam calls

Scammers are using “spoofed” phone numbers that look like they're from Washington, D.C., to appear credible. You get a scary phone call saying your Social Security number was used in a crime — and you'll be arrested soon if you don't send money to fix it. Or your number was used to rent a car where drugs were found and that the Drug Enforcement Agency is on their way to your house. Don't pick up the phone unless you absolutely know who's calling. If it's important, they'll leave a voicemail.

AARP's Fraud Watch Network can help you spot and avoid scams. Call their toll-free fraud helpline at 877-908-3360 or visit aarp.org if you or a loved one suspect you've been a victim.

Mindfulness

April is National Poetry Month.

Please enjoy this poem by Mattie Deed, 71, from Roxbury.

Mind, body, and soul
Put it all together
You're never too old
Have fun every day
Be in the sun

Soaking up that vitamin D
Drinking that tall glass of vitamin C
Now pull out those sneakers
Get ready to walk or run
Let's get it on and have some fun

Let's dance, let's dance, rock and roll
Call your peeps, go for a stroll
Work that body, shape it up, get it ready
Feel your body, feel your body, keep it steady

Bend those knees, curl those arms,
lift the legs,
Make stomach rolls, do sit ups, roll
your head
Walk, walk, walk, soft run, hop, and
rabbit jump
Rise up, now circle round that
invisible stump

Hold hands, swing around, let's go
Rock your hips from side to side and glow
Hold hands, hug somebody, catch
your breath
Watch my sign, move your body, do
your best

Walk, run, dance, get off your seat
Listen to your heart, listen to that beat
Let's walk, let's run, let's have some fun
Boom, boom, not yet you're not done

Get on with it, moving, feeling good
Looking your best like I knew you would
Keep on getting fit, one day at a time
Sit down, get up, make your body shine

Put your hands on your hips
Let your backbone slip
Now do your own thang
Curl those arms, make your body sing

1.2.3. 1.2.3. 1.2.3.
Stretch it out, get fit with me
Step up, step back, take your time
Work it for yourself
You're looking real fine

Now walk it out, bounce, move
Get up, get up, get up, groove
Get up, get up, walk it out, walk it out
Walk it out, walk it out, dance it out
Feel your body shout, shout, shout

Come on everybody, feel that love
Somebody looking down from above
Get up and get out of that seat
Groove and move feel the heat

Swing your arms, swing your arms
Move it, move, and don't be alarmed
Laugh out loud
Make your body speak "I'm so Proud!"

Sound your voices, sing a song
Laugh, live, and love, like nothing's
wrong
Listen to the talking birds calling
We all in this together, nobody's falling

Move it, move it, move it real smooth
Show me how you get that groove
Keep it moving; move it, let's go higher
Now look at your muscles getting tighter

1.2.3. 1.2.3. 1.2.3.
Now steady on your feet
Move and dance to that beat
Get ready to swing your arms
Dance, dance, dance there's no harm
Grab a partner, hold a partner
Dance, dance, dance, let's go harder

I love you now, you love, we love
you now
Move it, groove it, show your
neighbors how
Come on, come on, come on
Move it, move it, move and groove
with me
Good, body's feel happy, minds buzzing
like bees

Wrap it up now, we are warming down
Laugh it out, laugh again, make
amazing sounds
Hug yourself, be yourself, kiss yourself,
feel proud
You got body, mind, soul, enjoy life; love
yourself out loud



► Did you Know?

April is Stress Awareness Month

Stress relief tips for older adults

Source: Harvard Medical School

Stress in adults, especially older adults, has many causes. You may experience it as a result of managing chronic illness, losing a spouse, being a caregiver, or adjusting to changes due to finances, retirement, or separation from friends and family. Fortunately, there are plenty of things you can do for stress relief.

Tailor the Treatment

The type of stress relief that works best depends on what someone is experiencing. For example, if insomnia is a considerable source of stress in adults, a special type of cognitive behavioral therapy designed to treat insomnia, called CBT-i, may help. It aims to correct ingrained patterns of self-defeating behavior and negative thoughts that can rob you of sufficient amounts of sleep. In fact, the American College of Physicians now recommends CBT-i over medications as the first-line treatment for insomnia.

If disability is a source of stress, changes in your home may help you live more independently. Turn to your doctor, an occupational therapist, or a staff member at your local council on aging for guidance.

Fixes for All

- General stress in adults may be reduced with some of the following ideas, as reported in the Harvard Special Health Report Stress Management:

- Engage in regular physical activity. Ask your doctor whether you might benefit from certain types of exercise, such as tai chi, which enhances balance. Many kinds of physical activity improve your health, lift your mood, and reduce stress, too.

- Consider whether you might benefit from a course in assertiveness training that would help you state your wishes and handle conflicts.

- Join a support group if you are dealing with bereavement or illness.

- Think about getting a pet—both the pluses and minuses. Several studies support the stress-lowering effects of having a dog, cat, or other animal companion. But don't forget to take into consideration the physical and financial challenges of pet ownership.

- Attend a mind-body program. These can help at any age. Some are specifically

designed for seniors. Others may focus on chronic pain or specific ailments, such as heart disease.

- Don't ignore symptoms. The symptoms of stress in adults may show up in many forms, such as tension headaches, back pain, indigestion, heart palpitations, poor concentration, indecisiveness, crying, irritability, or edginess.

- Don't wait to seek stress relief. Chronic stress in adults increases the risk of heart disease, heartburn, and many other health problems. "Stress increases blood

sugar and can make diabetes worse. It can create high blood pressure and cause insomnia. It can also make people become anxious, worried, depressed, or frustrated," says Dr. Ann Webster, a health psychologist at the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital.

With so much at stake, it's best to seek stress relief as soon as you suspect that stress may be a problem.



April Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

* Please note not all events are free and are subject to change

Meditation

Mondays, 2:00pm-3:00pm
BCYF Grove Hall Senior Center
51 Geneva Ave., Dorchester
Contact: Ayana, 617-635-1486

Tai Chi

Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:30am
BCYF Hyde Park
1179 River St., Hyde Park
Contact: 617-635-5178

Senior Lap Swim

Mondays, 7:00am-7:45am
BCYF Curtis Hall
20 South St., Jamaica Plain
Contact: 617-635-5193

Water Aerobics

Tuesdays & Thursdays,
6:30pm-7:30pm
BCYF Leahy-Holloran
1 Worrell St., Dorchester
Contact: 617-635-5150

Chair Yoga

Thursdays, 10:00am-11:00am
BCYF Golden Age Senior Center
382 Main St., Charlestown
Contact: Meghan, 617-635-5175

Walking Club

Thursdays, 4:00pm-5:00pm
BCYF Curley
1663 Columbia Rd., South Boston
Contact: 617-635-5640

"Spring: A lovely reminder of how
beautiful change can truly be."

-Tracy McMillan

Mayor Wu's 2022 Neighborhood Coffee Hours

All coffee hours will be held from
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., weather
permitting.



► **Wednesday, May 4**
East Boston Memorial Park
Porter and Orleans St., East Boston

► **Friday, May 6**
McLaughlin Playground
239 Parker Hill Ave., Mission Hill

► **Monday, May 9**
Doherty Playground
349 Bunker Hill St., Charlestown

► **Friday, May 13**
Mozart Street Playground
10 Mozart St., Jamaica Plain

► **Wednesday, May 18**
Ramler Park
130 Peterborough St., Fenway/Kenmore

► **Friday, May 20**
Billings Field
369 LaGrange St., West Roxbury

► **Wednesday, May 25**
Commonwealth Avenue Mall
(Arlington Street entrance)
15 Commonwealth Ave., Back Bay

► **Friday, May 27**
Garvey Playground
995 Morrissey Blvd, Dorchester

For more information and updates
on possible weather cancellations,
please contact the Boston Parks and
Recreation Department at
617-635-4505, on their social channels
@bostonparksdept on Twitter,
Facebook, and Instagram, or by visiting
boston.gov/parks.

GET MOVING!



Deciding to become physically active can be one of the best things you can do for your health. Exercise and physical activity are not only great for your mental and physical health, but they can help keep you independent as you age. In this issue, we outline various fitness tips for older adults, ways to stay active in the City of Boston, and more!

-Boston Seniority Team

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS ESSENTIAL TO HEALTHY AGING

Source: Center for Disease Control & Prevention

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things older adults can do for your health. It can prevent/delay many of the health problems that seem to come with age. It also helps your muscles stay strong so you can keep doing your day-to-day activities without becoming dependent on others.

Some physical activity is better than none. Your health benefits will also increase with the more physical activity that you do. Start slow, increase over time.

Adults age 65+ need:

-At least 150 minutes/week (for example, 30 minutes/day, 5 days/week) of moderate intensity activity like brisk walking; or 75 minutes/week of vigorous-intensity activity like hiking, jogging, or running.

-At least 2 days/week of activities that strengthen muscles.

-Activities to improve balance, 3 times/week, like standing on one foot.

-If chronic conditions affect your ability to meet these recommendations, older adults should be as physically active as their abilities/conditions allow.

Move More & Sit Less

Older adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none. Older adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity gain some health benefits. Your health benefits will also increase with the more physical activity you do.

Ways to Move More

- Walk
- Climb steps
- Jog or run
- Hike
- Ride a bike
- Play tennis
- Skate
- Water aerobics
- Swimming
- Dance
- Yoga
- Pilates
- Tai Chi

SAFETY WHEN EXERCISING

Source: Center for Disease Control & Prevention

You've made a plan to be more active, and you're ready to go outside and get started. But before you do, make sure that you can exercise safely in your neighborhood. Here are a few tips that can help you stay safe as you get moving.

Plan Ahead

- Carry your ID with emergency contact information and bring a small amount of cash and a cell phone with you, especially if walking alone.

- Stay alert by not talking on the phone as you walk and keeping the volume low on your headphones.

- Let others know where you're going and when you plan to be back.

- Stick to well-lit places with other people around.

- Be seen to be safe. Wear light or brightly colored clothing during the day. Wear reflective material on your clothing and carry a flashlight at night.

- Wear sturdy, appropriate shoes for your activity that give you proper footing.

Safe Walking Outdoors

- If possible, walk during daylight hours.

- Choose routes that are well-used, well-lit, and safe.

- Choose routes with places to sit in case you want to stop and rest.

- Always walk facing oncoming traffic.

- Walk on a sidewalk or a path whenever possible. Watch out for uneven sidewalks, which are tripping hazards.

- Cross at crosswalks or intersections.

- Never assume a driver sees you crossing the street.

- Before you start to cross a street, make sure you have plenty of time to get across. Rushing increases your risk of falling.

- Look across ALL lanes you must cross and make sure each lane is clear before proceeding.

- Look left, right, and left again before crossing. Just because one driver stops, don't presume drivers in other lanes will stop for you.

- Check out city parks. Many parks have walking or jogging trails away from traffic.

Be Active Inside

- Find local stores or malls large enough for you to walk around.

- Walk up and down your stairs a few times in a row.

- Be sure the stairwell is well-lit and has railings for safety.

- At home, do strength, balance, and flexibility exercises.

- Try exercises online, like the National Institute on Aging YouTube channel.

Q&A WITH PHYSICAL THERAPY STUDENTS AT NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY WHO WORK WITH OLDER ADULTS AT MADISON PARK VILLAGE IN ROXBURY - Lauren Gallant, Bergomi Francois, Noah Sprinkle, Libby McCann

Can you tell us about the Department of Physical Therapy Program at Northeastern? The Department of Physical Therapy at Northeastern University places groups of students with community partners to provide fitness education, fitness classes, and health awareness. Our group works with the Madison Park Village community residents.

What is the service learning project that you are working on at Madison Park Village? There are 4 students working at Madison Park Village (MPV) this semester. The rest of our cohort is spread around the city, working with kids, families or other older adults. We conduct fitness classes weekly for older adults that live in MPV. Many of the Jolly Walkers attend our sessions as a part of their overall fitness.

What are some of the ways that this partnership helps older adults who are socially isolated? The class is held in the Dewitt Center, a community building in Madison Park Village. It gives older adults a chance to socialize with others, close to home. It's a social event with the added benefit of being physically active. More residents have joined us as the semester has progressed, and as the weather improves, we hope to meet them on the track for group walks and outdoor exercises.



What are some of the benefits of health and fitness for older adults? Fitness for older adults is incredibly important to maintain comfort in daily activities. Regular physical activity improves cardio pulmonary health, strengthens bones and muscle, which helps to prevent osteoporosis, and decreases fall risks. Basic strengthening exercises improve independent living and the ability to do daily tasks without difficulty. Health and fitness for older adults keeps them active in their community and able to get around with more confidence. Group fitness adds a social aspect that does improve mental health and mood, especially after the pandemic lock down.

What is your favorite thing about partnering with the Jolly Walker group and working with older adults? This group is a joy! They give great feedback; tell us what kind of activities they like to do during our classes, and what they like to see more of. We will start including dancing (per request) into our exercise routines which is fun and easily adaptable. It's exciting to work with a group of older adults so motivated to improve their health. It lifts the spirits and is a lot of fun.

MEET THE JOLLY WALKERS - A WALKING GROUP OF OLDER ADULTS IN ROXBURY

Q&A with Pauline Sheridan, 89, Roxbury

Being active is the secret to staying healthy, and walking is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to get moving. One way to get motivated is to join your peers in a walking group. Walking groups can help you get fit, socialize, and connect with others. Boston Seniority Magazine spoke with Pauline Sheridan, 89, from Roxbury who leads the "The Jolly Walkers."

Can you tell us a little bit about the Jolly Walkers? It all started about 30 years ago when I worked at the Smith House in Roxbury as a social service coordinator. At the time the residents didn't have many programs and they were socially isolated. One day, a resident asked if there was a way that a walking group could get started. So, it started as a group of residents at the Smith House and we all got together to walk. There were people with different health challenges in the group, so it was a great way to get some exercise. The walkers were always in good spirits, so we called ourselves the Jolly Walkers! I was the youngest in the group then, so they asked if I would keep the group going. We are still walking today.

How many people are in the group now and how often do you walk? We always have at least 10-15 people walk with us every Saturday. When the pandemic came, things changed a bit. We would continue to walk at a track in Roxbury, but wore masks



Pauline Sheridan is the one with the gray hat.

and kept our distance. I'm glad we found a way to still meet up and walk.

What are some of the benefits of this group for older adults? Walking laps on a track with a group of other older adults really helps combat social isolation and depression. The members always have smiles on their faces. It's not too structured, and you can do as many laps as you want. Some of the group just watch and talk with one another. It really helps mentally and physically to just come out outside and communicate.

What would you say to a group of older Bostonians who want to start a walking group? Take your heart for a walk. That's what it's all about. Your heart needs exercise. Walking is a great physical activity and it's efficient. It's something that you don't have to pay for, but you get so many rewards for it. Walking as a group can lift your spirits and make you feel great. You can also be of service to others by inviting others to walk.

AGE FRIENDLY WALKING PATHS IN BOSTON

Part of Age Strong's work includes the Boston version of the national Age Friendly initiative, making Boston more accessible and safe for older people to stay independent, longer. One of Age Friendly Boston's efforts is the Age Friendly Walking Paths – safe, well-lit, flat walking areas throughout the city. Here's a list, so just grab your sneakers and go!

Age Friendly walking paths are located throughout Boston neighborhoods including Dorchester, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Mattapan, Back Bay, Downtown, West Roxbury, East Boston, South Boston, South End, and Brighton.



WALKING PATH LOCATIONS:

▶ BACK BAY/DOWNTOWN

Commonwealth Mall
484 Commonwealth Avenue,
Boston, MA 02116

**The Armenian Heritage
Park on the Greenway**
Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy
Greenway, Boston, MA 02109

Boston Common
139 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02111

▶ BRIGHTON

Evergreen Cemetery
2060 Commonwealth Avenue,
Boston, MA 02135

Brighton Common
30 Chestnut Hill Ave, Boston, MA 02135

Artesani Park
1255 Soldiers Field Rd, Boston, MA 02135

▶ DORCHESTER

Franklin Park/Scarboro Pond
Franklin Park Disc Golf, Circuit Dr,
Boston, MA 02130

Ronan Park
43 Juliette St, Boston, MA 02122

Neponset Greenway
180 Granite Ave, Boston, MA 02124

Harambee Park
930 Blue Hill Avenue

▶ EAST BOSTON

East Boston Greenway
365 Bremen St, East Boston, MA 02128

▶ HYDE PARK

Fairview Cemetery
45 Fairview Drive, Boston, MA 02136

▶ STONY BROOK

95 Turtle Pond Pkwy, Hyde Park,
MA 02136

George Wright Golf Course
420 West Street, Hyde Park, MA 02136

▶ JAMAICA PLAIN

Wonder Spots (Arnold Arboretum)
125 Arborway, Boston, MA 02130

Forest Hills Cemetery
95 Forest Hills Ave Boston, MA 02130

Jamaica Pond
Jamaicaway and Perkins Street,
Jamaica Plain, MA

▶ MATTAPAN

Almont Park
40 Almont St., Mattapan, MA 02126

Mt. Hope Cemetery
355 Walk Hill St, Boston, MA 02131

▶ ROXBURY

Franklin Park/George White Stadium
450 Walnut Ave, Boston, MA 02130

▶ SOUTH BOSTON

Castle Island
2010 William J Day Blvd, Boston, MA 02127

▶ SOUTH END

Carter Park
656 Columbus Ave, Boston, MA

▶ WATERTOWN

Watertown Riverfront Park
147 Charles River Rd #101,
Watertown, MA 02472

▶ WEST ROXBURY

Millenium Park
300 Gardner St, West Roxbury, MA 02132

Hynes Field
502 VFW Pkwy, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

AGE STRONG COMMISSION'S VIRTUAL WELLNESS CLASSES

Staying active and engaged in your community is an important part of aging strong. Boston's Age Strong Commission hosts a variety of virtual wellness classes including meditation, chair and traditional yoga, Latin dance, and Zumba.

Monday 9am: Chair Yoga In this gentle yoga class, participants practice poses seated in a chair or standing with the assistance of a chair. Great for active older adults and for those unable to get up and down from the floor.

Monday 11:30am: Meditation A guided meditation for older adults to experience new energy and a calm state of mind.

Tuesday 11:30am: Latin Dance Latin dancing has many benefits like boosting walking speed and overall better fitness.

Wednesday 11:30am: Yoga Yoga is an excellent way for older adults to loosen and stretch painful muscles, reduce stress, and improve circulation. This is a chance to connect to your mental health practice while still staying active.

Friday 11:30am: Zumba Zumba burns calories and improves heart health, but it's also a great low-impact, confidence-boosting workout for older adults.

Q&A with Age Strong's Certified Zumba Instructor, Lindsey Briggs



To learn more about the benefits of exercise for older adults, Boston Seniority interviewed Lindsey Briggs, Age Strong's certified Zumba instructor.

How did you become a Zumba instructor?

As a new mom, I sought a community of women like myself who needed a physical outlet to stay fit and mentally healthy. So I became officially Zumba certified and started teaching in 2016. I taught Zumba in various wellness programs, community centers, Boston Public Schools, the Boston Police Department, and now with older adults in-person and online.

For someone who is new to Zumba, can you tell us a little bit about your classes?

Zumba is a fitness program involving cardiovascular exercise and Latin-inspired dance movement. I want all participants to walk away feeling rejuvenated, empowered, and seen. The music I play ranges from hip-hop and R&B to reggaeton and line dance tunes infused with afrobeats. I also feature songs with empowering and faith-based lyrics during

cool-down to get the body, mind, and spirit grounded.

What is it like leading exercise classes for older adults?

Teaching older adults feels so invigorating. I love seeing their smiles and hearing them saying "I love this song!" or "I feel so good, this workout is just what I needed." They always prove they're up for the challenge by learning the choreography and making it their own. My classes also have a lighter variation component (sometimes in chairs) for individuals with physical limitations or injuries. It is a pleasure watching each older adult's love of music soar past their physical limits. Sometimes the dance itself serves as healing. My late grandmother attended some classes I taught in person. It was a joy seeing how the music would turn her energy into an upbeat spunk.

What are the benefits of Zumba for older adults?

The benefits of Zumba are both the increase of mobility and the connection through community. Older adults look forward to the classes, dancing, the music, and seeing other participants.

How was it to transition to teaching Zumba online during the pandemic?

I missed being able to walk over to a participant and help by demonstrating



Lindsey and her grandmother in 2019 at an LB Dance Fitness Session

next to them in person. But, there's a few benefits of offering classes online. Folks can participate from their own homes and most-importantly, staying safe. Virtual teaching encourages me to be more thoughtful about connecting, so we make time before and after the class to debrief or share about the music, the moves or life.

What would you tell an older adult who's thinking of joining a Zumba class?

I say join us! Older adults will thank themselves for honoring their bodies and taking some time out to exercise, be vibrant, and confident.

The Age Strong Commission can connect you to programs and outings that enrich your life in Boston. To learn more about our events and virtual programs, visit boston.gov/age-strong-events. For more about Lindsey, visit lindseydbiggs.com.

► In Boston, we Age Strong.

As part of the City's Human Services cabinet, The Age Strong Commission's mission is to enhance your life with meaningful programs, resources, and connections so we can live and age strong together in Boston.



We can help with:

Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.

Access to Information and Benefits:

Our Community Advocates connect older adults to a comprehensive array of resources, benefits, and information. We can:

- Assist with applications for public benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and fuel assistance.
- Ease the process of applying for, and receiving, Medicare benefits.
- Assist older adults in accessing several tax relief exemptions and programs like the Elderly Exemption 41C, Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, and others.
- Assist older adults with navigating systems including the aging network and city services.

Outreach and Engagement:

The Commission organizes many **in person and virtual** events and programs throughout the year.

Transportation:

We are committed to helping older adults continue to lead independent lives by connecting them to transportation resources. We offer:

- Free wheelchair-accessible shuttles that provide door-to-door service for non-emergency doctor's appointments. Call 617-635-3000 for more information.
- Taxi Coupons at discounted rates.

Volunteer Opportunities:

We operate volunteer programs that impact our work across the city:

- *RSVP* matches seniors with valuable volunteer opportunities in Boston.
- The *Senior Companion Program* matches seniors with homebound persons who need assistance and companionship.
- *Senior Greeters* volunteer their time to greet guests of City Hall.
- *Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program*: Qualified senior homeowners may work-off up to \$1,500 on their property tax bill by volunteering for a City agency.

Housing:

The Age Strong Commission works to ensure that older adults are able to find and maintain housing. We can:

- Assist with housing applications.
- Connect older adults with other City and community agencies that can provide resources for home repair and other challenging situations like hoarding.
- Provide mediation and court advocacy.

Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support:

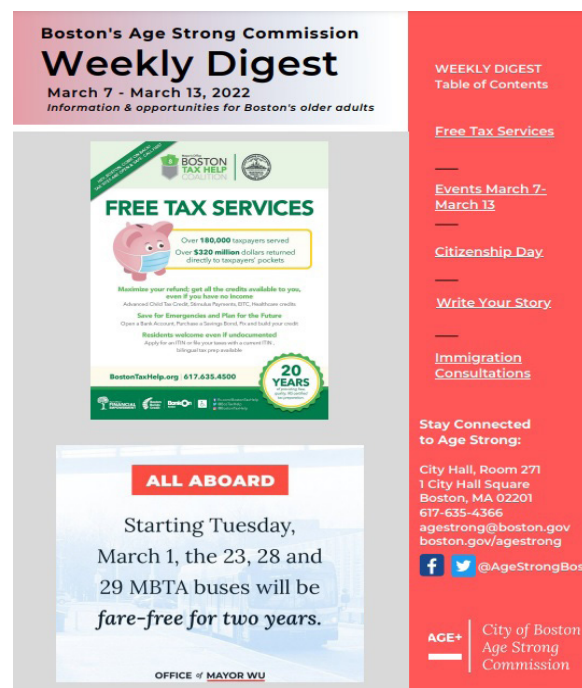
Know that you are not alone; we are here to support you. We:

- Host Memory Cafés, places where individuals experiencing memory loss and their caretakers can meet in a safe, social environment.
- Provide referrals and offer workshops, training, and support groups for those who are supporting an older loved one.



Sign-Up Today

Check out the latest Age Strong Weekly Digest! We include events for older adults, volunteer opportunities, and much more. Sign-up for the weekly newsletter and read more at boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/age-strong-commission-weekly-digest.



Seniors Save Program

Did you notice over this winter you need to replace your faulty heating system? The Boston Home Center's Seniors Save Program helps Boston residents over 60 replace their failing heating systems.

Visit boston.gov/how-join-seniors-save-program for the application and more information.

Curbside Textile Collection

Now that it's officially spring, it's time for spring cleaning! Get organized, pack up what you're ready to donate, and schedule a pickup with curbside textile collection! About seven percent of items thrown away as trash are textiles, including clothing, linens, shoes, and more. You can keep clothing and textiles out of the trash and even give them a new life by recycling or donating them.

Learn more at boston.gov/textiles.



Second Booster Dose

If it's been at least four months since your first booster, you are eligible for a second booster if you are:

- 50 years or older; or
- 12 years or older and moderately to severely immunocompromised; or
- 18 years or older AND received 1 Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 primary dose and 1 booster dose

Boosters are essential for preventing severe illness from COVID-19. **Stay up to date on your vaccinations by getting your COVID-19 booster!**

boston.gov/covid19-vaccine



Mayor's Health Line:
617-534-5050

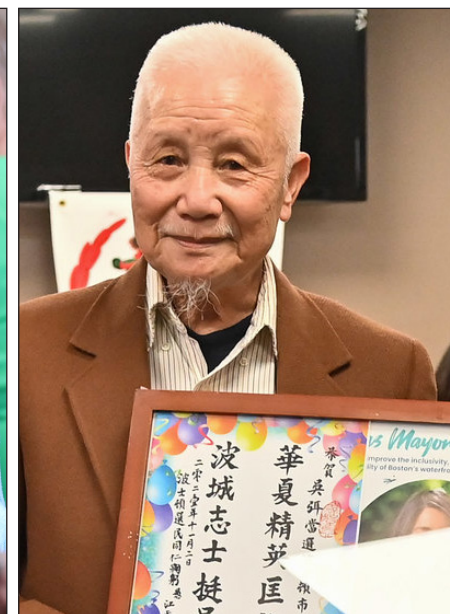
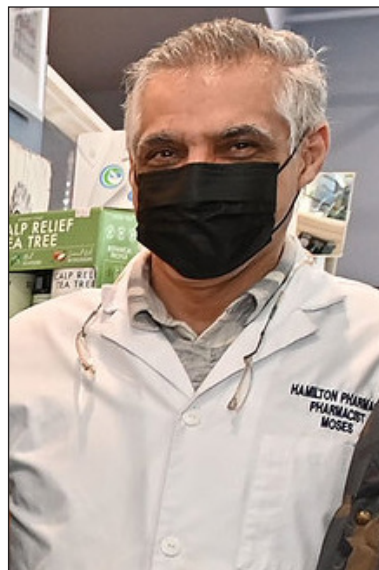
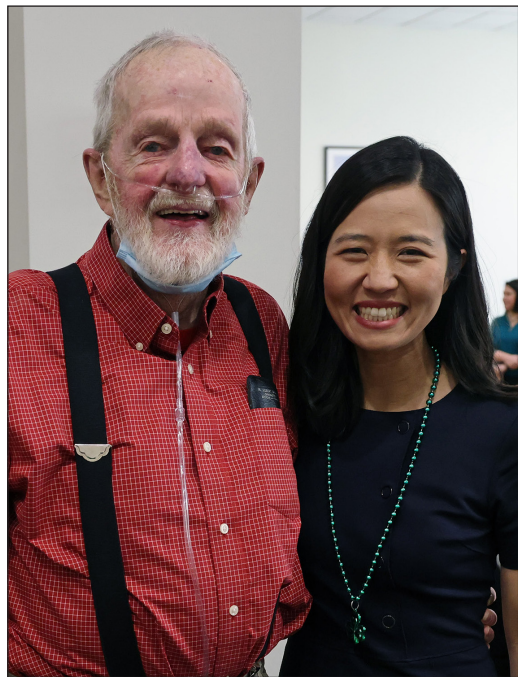
Medicare Covers Over-The-Counter Covid-19 Tests

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, people with Medicare can get up to 8 over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month for free from participating pharmacies and health care providers.

Visit medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus#300 for more information.



► Seen Around Town





"Energy and persistence conquer all things." -Benjamin Franklin