

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu



LOVE
IS
LOVE

PRIDE
MONTH

p.16-23

June 2022
Issue 6
Vol. 46



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Free Publication

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In This Issue...

June is LGBTQ+ Pride month, when we lift up the history, struggle & accomplishments of our LGBTQ+ friends & neighbors in the older adult community. See pages 16-23, for more information.

Our cover star is Danny Harris who we featured in the Pride issue of June 2018! In the 2018 issue Danny shared his experience. "When I was younger, me being black and being gay wasn't something I broadcasted. I didn't hide it, but I also wasn't standing on a soapbox to tell the world. I didn't feel like society was ready. In retrospect, I realized I wasn't equipped to defend myself. Now I am fierce. I have experience. I can handle anything that comes to me."



Boston Seniority

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We want to hear from you!

Email us at Bostonseniority@boston.gov



From the Mayor's Desk

Hello Boston!

Welcome to the June 2022 issue of *Boston Seniority Magazine*. This month we're welcoming the warmth of summer. We're also celebrating Pride and Juneteenth!

Pride month is an opportunity to honor the LGBTQ+ community's experiences and victories throughout our history. Here in Boston, we're working to create more opportunities for justice through our first-ever Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement. The Office is dedicated to developing policy, organizing programs, and providing resources to protect and expand the rights of our queer residents. Take a look inside to learn more about the Office and about Pride month. You'll also find events and resources that you can attend to be in community with your neighbors.

June 19 is Juneteenth—a day to commemorate the news of the Emancipation Proclamation reaching enslaved people in Galveston, Texas...over two years after the Proclamation was signed. For more than 150 years, Juneteenth has been a day of reflection—on our nation's history, on the atrocities of slavery, and to reaffirm our commitment to creating a more equitable future. I'm excited to officially celebrate Juneteenth as a City holiday this year! Keep an eye out for Juneteenth events and celebrations happening throughout Boston that weekend.

In this month's issue, you'll read about Operation Able—which trains older adults for today's job market. You can also learn about Cataract Awareness Month, and how to avoid scams that often target older adults.

Whether you join us for Pride and Juneteenth celebrations, attend a neighborhood coffee hour, or take a walk in one of our beautiful green spaces, I hope you'll make the most of the first month of summer!

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

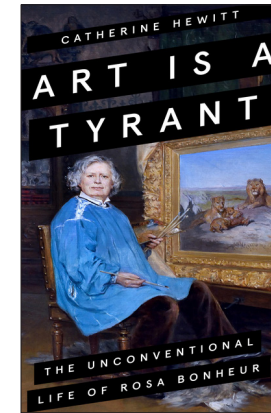


Books

BPL Staff Book Picks

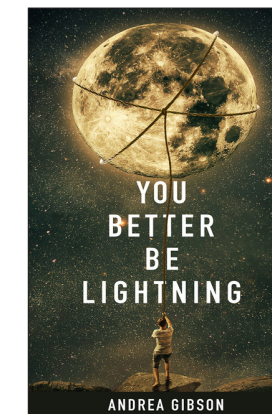
Source: Boston Public Library

We Are Pride is a list of books published in the previous year for all ages concerning the diverse experiences of the LGBTQ+ community. This printing is part of the Boston Public Library's annual observance of Pride month.



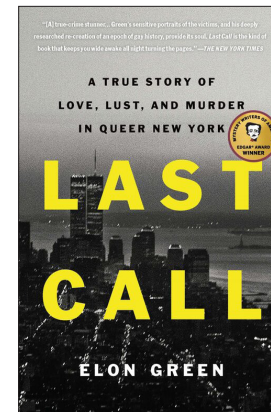
Art is a Tyrant by Catherine Hewitt

Nonfiction. Rosa Bonheur, the wildly unconventional 19th-century animal painter and gender equality pioneer shunned marriage, wore trousers, and lived with two other women. Nevertheless, she was accepted in society due to her artistic genius.



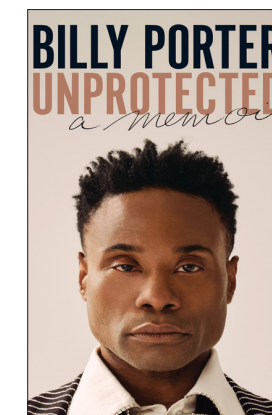
You Better Be Lightning by Andrea Gibson

Expressions. Gibson's poetry explores the expansiveness of the human experience from love to illness, space to climate change, and so much more in between.



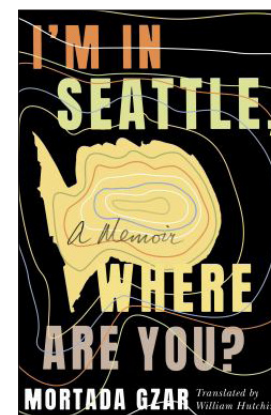
Last Call by Elon Green

Nonfiction. The Last Call Killer preyed upon gay men in New York in the '80s and '90s. Yet because of the sexuality of his victims, the sky-high murder rates of the times, and the AIDS epidemic, his murders have been almost entirely forgotten.



Unprotected by Billy Porter

Memoir. Before he was an Emmy, Grammy, and Tony Award-winner, Billy Porter was a young gay Black boy who was bullied at school, abused by his stepfather, and criticized by his community. This is his story of trauma, healing, and chasing his dreams.



I'm in Seattle, Where Are You? by Murtaḍá. Kazār

Memoir. Mortada Gzar's memoir intertwines the stories of his childhood as a scrap-metal collector, his life as a gay, Iraqi artist, and his seemingly impossible romance with an American soldier.

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

► Contest

The Mayor's Garden Contest is Back!

Source: Parks and Recreation

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the 26th annual Mayor's Garden Contest recognizing all Boston residents who contribute to the beauty of the city's landscape.

Boston's green thumbs have until 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, July 13, to submit their gardens for consideration. The contest recognizes gardeners who have landscaped, planted flowers, trees, and shrubs—helping beautify Boston's neighborhoods.

Judges will visit finalists the week of July 25. Once the votes are tallied, first place winners will receive the "Golden Trowel" award. Second and third place will enjoy certificates. The awards ceremony takes place in the Boston Public Garden August 15.

First place winners are eligible for a drawing for a JetBlue Grand Prize consisting of roundtrip flights for two to any nonstop destination from Boston. Mahoney's Garden Centers will provide gardener's gift bags to the top 3 winners in each category, as well as gift certificates for the 2022 Hall of Fame winners.



Gardeners who have won 3 or more times in the last 10 years will be entered into the Hall of Fame. These Hall-of-Famers are not eligible as contestants, but are invited to return as judges.

Gardeners or those nominating may find printable and online nomination forms at boston.gov/mayors-garden-contest. Contestants may request an application by emailing their name and address to gardencontest@boston.gov. Paper applications are also available in English and ten additional languages. For more information please call 617-635-4505.

► Employment

Operation ABLE Celebrates 40 Years!

Source: Operation ABLE

2022 marks the 40-year anniversary of Operation ABLE serving job-seekers and employers with timely, tailored, live job training instruction and job specialist services to help them on their path to employment. Over 40 years, Operation ABLE has assisted over 40,000 jobseekers in attaining sustainable employment and a heightened level of self-sufficiency.

Since 1982, Operation ABLE, has empowered the community of job seekers, the underemployed, those in career transition, and military veterans who need job support services to re-enter the workforce. They offer a variety of services including occupational and computer skills training, workshops, job search training and support, coaching, and counseling. Some training programs offer internships.

In 2020 Operation ABLE transformed its learning platforms and pivoted to virtual delivery of its training programs due to the pandemic, so that in October 2021, 147 job seekers graduated from OA's programs, all through online learning.



Operation ABLE is also an administrator of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). SCSEP is a U.S. Department of Labor equal opportunity employer/program that serves low-income jobseekers. Accepted participants are placed in paid internships with community partner organizations like MassHire, Mass Rehabilitation Council, ABCD, MassHealth, Pine Street Inn, and others.

Learn more about all of Operations ABLE's offerings at operationable.net or call 617-542-4180 for more information.

Don't Get Scammed! Gift Card Payment Scams to Look Out For

Source: AARP

Gift cards are the most common way scammers seek payment from their targets. Con-artists use Target, Walmart, iTunes, and other popular gift cards as cash channels in impostor and phone scams.

Contacting you under the guise of someone else — often a representative of the IRS or Social Security Administration or a company like Amazon or Apple — scammers claim you owe a debt or need a service. They insist you buy gift cards and read them the serial and personal identification (PIN) numbers on the back to make quick payment.

Don't believe it. Genuine businesses and government bodies never ask for payment via gift card. Any such request is a sure sign of fraud.

The same holds if you get an urgent call from a grandchild in distress, or if someone you've gotten close to online suddenly seeks a loan. An ask for money via gift card means you're dealing with a crook, not a loved one.

Fraudsters also lurk on resale or auction websites, offering goods at a deep

discount. Once they get you interested in buying, they'll ask you to pay with a gift card. As soon as they get the card number and PIN, they vanish, and so does the money on the card.

Another variation involves fraudsters posing as clergy, raising money for a worthy cause or a congregant in need. They reach out to worshipers by email, text or phone, asking them to buy gift cards and share the numbers.

Gift Card Theft

Fraudsters can also directly drain the cash you put on gift cards you've bought for yourself or others. These scams usually spike around the holidays.

One trick is for thieves to go to stores and surreptitiously scratch off the film strip on the back to get the PIN, which they cover back up with easy-to-obtain replacement stickers.

The crook can then spend or transfer the money on the card, or cash it in, before the buyer or gift recipient has a chance to use it. More than 1 in 5 respondents to the AARP survey said they had given or



received a gift card that turned out to have no value on it.

Tips

- Don't give gift-card information to callers claiming to be from government agencies, tech companies, utilities or other businesses. Only scammers ask you to pay fees, back taxes or bills for services with gift cards.

- Don't respond to an unsolicited email or text message offering you a gift card. Delete it.

- Don't give personal information to anyone in exchange for a gift card.

- Don't buy the top gift card right off a store rack. That's where impatient scammers usually put doctored cards.

- Don't buy gift cards from online auction sites. They could be counterfeit or stolen.

You can also file complaints with the Federal Trade Commission at [ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov) or call 877-382-4357. For more information on scams, visit [aarp.org/scams](https://www.aarp.org/scams).

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**CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR GRANTEEES!**

The City of Boston & the Age Strong Commission have awarded \$360,000 in funding to 16 nonprofit community organizations to provide programming that creates connection & reduces social isolation of older adults. Below are the grantees:

- Boston Project Ministries
- Boston Public Housing Corporation
- Central Boston Elder Services
- Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation
- Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly/Boston
- Madison Park Development Corporation
- Maverick Landing Community Services
- Nigerian-American Multi-Service Association
- Operation P.E.A.C.E. Northeast
- Orchard Park Tenants Association/Saida's Community Garden
- Somali Development Center
- The Urban Farming Institute of Boston
- Tzu Chi Foundation
- Urban Edge Housing Corporation
- Voice of the Tabernacle Multi Service Center
- Whittier Street Health Center Committee

CITY of BOSTON

AGE+ | Age Strong

June Awareness

June is National Safety Month

In 1996, the National Safety Council established June as National Safety Month, aiming to increase awareness of the leading safety and health risks and ultimately decrease the number of unintentional injuries and deaths in the United States.

Identifying risks and improving safety standards at home and in your community protects everyone. Whether we increase first aid and emergency awareness through drills or provide water safety tips for summer recreation, we're taking steps to provide a safer neighborhood.

Here are some ways to put safety into practice:

- Report repairs as they are needed
- Put together a first aid kit
- Take a CPR class
- Teach someone to change a tire properly & safely
- Learn about proper storage & disposal of medications
- Learn how to identify fall hazards in the home
- Create a fire drill for your home/family

Visit the National Safety Council website at [nsc.org](https://www.nsc.org) for tips and resources.

June is Cataract Awareness Month

Source: Prevent Blindness

The Prevent Blindness organization has declared June as Cataract Awareness Month to educate the public on symptoms, types of cataracts, cataract surgery, and more.

A cataract is a clouding of the eye's lens, which blocks or changes the passage of light into the eye. The lens of the eye is located behind the pupil and the colored iris, and is normally transparent. Vision may become blurry or dim because the cataract stops light from properly passing through to the retina. Generally, a cataract does not cause pain, redness or tears.

Causes of cataracts include older age, intense heat or long-term exposure to UV rays from the sun, certain diseases, such as diabetes, inflammation in the eye, hereditary influences, eye injuries/diseases, and smoking.

Adults older than 60 should have a dilated eye exam annually to look for cataracts. They can be removed with painless surgery.

For free information on cataracts, please call Prevent Blindness at 800-331-2020 or visit the Prevent Blindness website at [preventblindness.org/ataract](https://www.preventblindness.org/ataract).

City of Boston Observes Juneteenth

Juneteenth falls on June 19 each year. This year, because it falls on a Sunday, it will be observed as a holiday on Monday, June 20th throughout the country. Juneteenth, also known as Jubilee Day or Emancipation Day was first made an official holiday last year in the U.S.

Juneteenth marks the day in 1865 that Union soldiers, led by General Gordon Granger, reached Galveston, Texas. They announced to the state that the Civil War was over and that all enslaved persons had been declared free.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation had become official over two years prior, the institution of slavery remained untouched in areas beyond Union control. In taking control over the state, the Union effectively liberated the remaining slaves in Texas. Former slaves immediately began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, song, and dance.

Juneteenth is a day to gather with loved ones, celebrate Black lives, and reflect and recognize the struggle for liberation in America.

June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month

Worldwide, there are an estimated 47 million people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias, and without a change, these numbers are expected to grow to 76 million by 2030. June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness, share resources, and support those affected and their loved ones.

This month, the Alzheimer's Association invites folks to wear purple, and share why you wear purple to raise awareness.

In the northern hemisphere, the summer solstice marks the longest day of the year. The Alzheimer's Association promotes the summer solstice and "The Longest Day" with the saying, "the day with the most light is the day we fight," and encourages the public to join together to raise awareness to help combat the disease. To find additional resources visit [alz.org](https://www.alz.org).

Check out the infographic - *10 Ways to Love your Brain* on the back cover.

June Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

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

JUNE 15
Tai Chi
Time: 9:30 am - 10:30 am
Location: Symphony Park, 39 Edgerly Road, Fenway
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

JUNE 19
Watercolor Painting Workshop
Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location: Medal of Honor Park, 775 E 1st. Street, South Boston
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

JUNE 25
Walking Group
Time: 8:00 am - 9:00 am
Location: Franklin Park, 1 Circuit Drive, Dorchester
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

JUNE 16
Donna Summer Disco Party
Time: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Location: Copley Square, Back Bay
Contact Info: 617-635-3911

JUNE 21
Knitting/Crochet Circle
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: BPL Roslindale: 4246 Washington St., Roslindale
Contact Info: 617-323-2343

JUNE 27
Chess Club
Time: 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Location: 25 Parmenter Street, North End
Contact Info: 617-227-8135

JUNE 17
Gentle Yoga Class
Time: 10:00 am - 11:00 am
Location: McLaughlin Playground, 239 Parker Hill Avenue, Mission Hill
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

JUNE 23
Zumba Tone Class
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: Billings Field, 369 LaGrange Street., West Roxbury
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

JUNE 30
Afrobeats Dance Class
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: 68 Moreland Street, Roxbury
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

*"Make each day
your masterpiece."*

- John Wooden

Reminder...

Mayor Wu's 2022 Neighborhood Coffee Hours 9:30 am - 10:30 am

- **Wednesday, June 22**
Ronan Park
92 Mt. Ida Road, Dorchester
- **Friday, June 24**
Iacono Playground
150 Readville Street, Hyde Park
- **Wednesday, June 29**
Medal of Honor Park
East 3rd & M Streets, South Boston
- **Thursday, June 30**
Walker Playground
550 Norfolk Street, Mattapan

*Dates and times are subject to change
Consult social media for weather cancellations:
Facebook: @bostonparksdepartment
Twitter: @bostonparksdept
617-635-4505
boston.gov/parks

LOVE

IS

LOVE

**PRIDE
MONTH
2022**

In recognition of Pride month, we honor all Boston older adults—those within the LGBTQ+ community and allies—who have paved the path we march proudly on today. Boston is a thriving, diverse community that we all call home. That's because, here, we support and lift up each other's voices and identities. In Boston, love is love.

-Boston Seniority Team



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF LGBTQ+ ADVANCEMENT

The Mayor's Office of LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer+) Advancement was announced by Mayor Wu in March. The office's mission is to empower, protect, and promote the rights, dignity, and advancement of Boston's LGBTQ+ residents. This office is responsible for developing policy, community oriented programming, and providing resources for the city's multiracial, multigenerational, multicultural, and multilingual LGBTQ+ community.

Previously, this work was led by various LGBTQ+ Liaisons who served in the Office of Neighborhood Services to share resources and deliver city services to the LGBTQ+ community. The Wu administration is excited to scale this work up and continue to prioritize the needs of LGBTQ+ residents.

"City Hall can do much more to ensure that we are truly connecting with and serving LGBTQ+ residents across all of our neighborhoods," Mayor Michelle Wu says. "This new office will ensure that our policies and programs are advancing and protecting the rights and dignity of Boston's LGBTQ+ residents—and centering the lived experiences of queer, trans, BIPOC residents in the City's work—to make Boston a place for everyone."

Mayor Michelle Wu has been a consistent and equitable champion for LGBTQ+ rights through uplifting the work of critical LGBTQ+ organizations and ensuring that Boston is a city for everyone. In 2020, then-

City Councilor Wu with City Councilor Liz Breadon proposed and led the adoption of an ordinance to ensure gender inclusivity on all City-issued forms, documents, and certificates. In 2014, then-City Councilor Wu, along with then-City Councilor Ayanna Pressley proposed and led the adoption of an ordinance to guarantee comprehensive health care for all municipal workers and their dependents regardless of gender identity or expression. This ordinance allowed for city staff, in particular Transgender and non-binary staff and their dependents, to access gender affirming healthcare, gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy, and mental health services to be covered under the city's healthcare plan.

"Our Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement will help build a multiracial, multilingual and multigenerational rainbow coalition," said Mariangely Solis Cervera, Boston's Chief of Equity and Inclusion. "As a gay Latina woman, I know our community stands on the shoulders of older adults who have marched before us—and as the Chief of Equity and Inclusion, I will make sure the voice of our senior population is part of the conversation of what policies and programs the Wu administration should champion. We will work with Age Strong and the necessary departments to address some of the issues that impact our LGBTQ+ seniors - from housing, to health issues, and isolation. We're looking forward to what we can build together!"

Can you tell us about your background?

I joined the Board of Directors of LGBTQ Senior Housing, Inc., after a career as a civil rights attorney and advocate representing the homeless, battered women, and people who experienced discrimination and harassment because of their race, color, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and pregnancy. I became a lawyer at the height of the AIDS crisis and had many clients in the LGBTQ community. My wife and I are long-time residents of Hyde Park and we're active in several neighborhood organizations. It's thrilling to be working on this extraordinary project that will serve so many communities!

How did the LGBTQ Senior Housing initiative get started?

LGBTQ Senior Housing started off as a small group of people concerned about the lack of safe, welcoming, and affordable housing options for our LGBTQ older adults in Boston. We reached out to our elected representatives and LGBTQ groups across greater Boston and discovered broad support for creating this kind of housing. We incorporated as a nonprofit in 2018 and after a lengthy community process, the city awarded the Hyde Park site to us and our development partner, Penrose. Dimella Shaffer, our amazing architects, have preserved the

historic features of the former school while creating 74 accessible studio, one, and two-bedroom apartments. The renovation and construction work has begun and we expect to welcome our first residents in fall of 2023.

Why was Hyde Park chosen as the location for the Senior Housing?

LGBTQ Senior Housing worked closely with Sheila Dillon and the Mayor's Office of Housing to identify possible sites for our first housing community. The former Barton Rogers Middle School had closed in 2015 and was vacant at the time. We saw this historic building, fell in love with it and the surrounding neighborhood. The Hyde Park Main Streets district, just a few short blocks away, is home to wonderful restaurants and shopping. The Hyde Park Branch of the Boston Public Library is across the street, the Menino Arts Center and Menino YMCA are down the block, and Riverside Theatre Works, Hyde Park's community theater, is close by. Of critical importance—Hyde Park's famous Ron's Gourmet Ice Cream & Bowling is just a stone's throw away. The Fairmount and Hyde Park commuter rail stations, along with bus service and Blue Bikes are easily accessible. All in all, it's a perfect location!

What impact do you hope this new senior housing community will create?

We know that having safe, welcoming,

and affordable housing makes an enormous difference in the lives of LGBTQ elders, who face housing instability and homelessness in greater numbers than other seniors, are less likely to have community and family support as they age, and are often forced back into the closet in senior living communities. Being able to live as one's authentic self is critical to good health and wellbeing at all ages, especially as we age. We also know that creating affordable senior housing that is explicitly LGBTQ-welcoming helps educate our neighbors and policymakers about the specific needs of our community. We hope this work will inspire even more welcoming and affordable elder housing in Boston—and beyond. Finally, our new community center will bring desperately needed gathering space to Hyde Park, with programming and services not just for our residents, but for older adults in Hyde Park as well as the greater Boston LGBTQ community. We're planning to have state-of-the-art AV and acoustics at The Pryde so that seniors everywhere can take part in our programming, regardless of ability.

What type of support is there in this housing?

The Pryde will have a full-time staff to create and oversee programming and services. There will be a sunroom, commissary, exercise room, wellness center, art room, and library. The courtyard will have a walking track and raised-bed gardens. There will be extensive programming both for residents and the

general public, including performances by the Gay Men's Chorus, speakers from The History Project, transportation to Pride Night at Fenway Park, a free lunch program, transportation to shopping and medical appointments, drag bingo, programming with affinity groups such as Elders of Color, and more. We are proud to be the first affordable senior housing community to receive Fitwell certification for healthy and engaged living.

How was the name "The Pryde" chosen for this housing?

We surveyed the community and as soon as we saw "The Pryde," we knew that it was the right name. "The Pryde" combines the words "Pride" with "Hyde Park." It captures everything that is unique about this project: our focus on creating safe and welcoming housing for LGBTQ elders, as well as a welcoming, lively and accessible community center in the heart of Hyde Park.

Are there any additional comments you would like to add?

To every LGBTQ older adult reading this article, thank you for being the generation that fought for our healthcare, our civil rights, and our right to marry the person we love. We stand on your shoulders and we love you. You can follow The Pryde's progress on social media (facebook.com/lgbtqseniorhousing) and sign up for email updates on our website: lgbtqseniorhousing.org

A gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender Bostonian born in the late 1940's or early 1950's came of age at a time when the American Psychiatric Association classified homosexuality as a mental disease and federal and state civil rights laws failed to recognize sexual orientation as needing protection from discriminatory practice.

The APA reversed their position in 1973 and Massachusetts law now protects against discrimination in housing, healthcare, and banking. But work remains to be done to address equity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ older adults.

Enter the LGBT Aging Project, now known as the LGBTQIA+ Project, part of Fenway Community Health Center and founded in 2004 to identify issues with a then very invisible population. Marriage equality, LGBTQ+ competency training, and access to welcoming community programs and housing options were early goals.

Reports examining the LGBTQ+ older adult community have confirmed service gaps and needs. A recent report by the Fenway Institute: *Strategies for Achieving a Healthy and Thriving Older Adult Community* indicates that this community suffers higher rates of isolation as they have lower parenting rates and they can more often be estranged from families. They found LGBTQ+ elders less likely to seek access to support services for fear of discrimination, often a holdover from what

they experienced in their youth. This is especially true among older gay veterans and access to veteran support services.

Project Director Lisa Krinsky acknowledges that since their work began they have seen more understanding about sexual orientation but for older adults “their early issues of discrimination means that they still anticipate discrimination and retain fears that their non LGBTQ+ peers will not be welcoming or respectful.”

The Project seeks to address these issues with an array of training and education services. Central to their work is training health and human services professionals and staff at senior centers on best practices and sensitivities in working with, and making program offerings inclusive, for LGBTQ+ adults. Among those trained, according to Krinsky, were the three Boston Aging Service Access Points—Central Boston Elder Services, Ethos, and Boston Senior Home Care, as well as the Age Strong Commission.

The Aging Project also offers weekly Zoom drop-ins (and Zoom trainings) for gay adults to meet and LGBTQ+ friendly community cafes. Also important to their work is offering programming for non-LGBTQ+ older adult groups to help them examine their own attitudes about LGBTQ+ people. The hope is to build a larger cohort of allies and destigmatize stereotypes.

For volunteers like Alice Fisher, the work of the LGBTQ+ Aging Project is not just needed, it's personal. Fisher, an 81-year-old resident of the South End, raised two daughters at a time when lesbian mothers were both uncommon and in many places, unaccepted.

Having grown up in what she called an “unconventional” family, Fischer herself had limited personal exposure to the types of intolerance experienced by many of her LGBTQ+ peers. “When I was raising my children, I often heard stories of workers losing a job after her sexuality was revealed to an employer,” says Fisher. “Lesbian mothers of my generation also lived in constant fear of losing custody of their children.”

As a volunteer with Fenway Health's LGBT+ Aging Project, Fisher continues pushing back against stigmas she still sees around her. Fisher is one of the founders of the program *OUTstandingLIFE: A Virtual Community of LGBTQ+ Older Adults*. She has become a huge advocate of using technology as a connector across her rainbow older adults. One 94-year-old friend, she recalls, did not even have a flip phone as of a year ago. Now he is a regular on her Zoom calls and “one of our greatest conversationalists.”

This month, which marks LGBTQ+ Pride, Fisher hopes that their online communities will be celebratory as well as connective.



She has observed the importance of the meetings, knowing that many participating older adults, including those living in supportive living communities, can find acceptance and peers not always present in their physical community. She hopes participation will steadily grow and has welcomed college students to the group to expand the conversation.

In addition to her work with *Outstanding Life*, Fisher is on the Advisory Board of Age Friendly Boston, is passionate about sharing her home with her grandchildren, and proud of her community garden just off Tremont Street.

It has been said that “to plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.” The Alice Fishers of the LGBTQ+ Aging Project are planting seeds of acceptance and tolerance that will continue to bare fruit for years to come.

► 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:

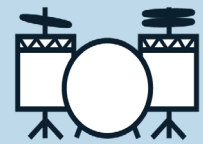
Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



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:

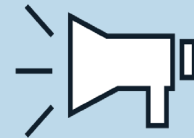
The Commission organizes many **in person and virtual** events and programs throughout the year.



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.

Need Help Getting Online?



Request **FREE High Speed Internet** & a **Chromebook Laptop** through the **Boston Public Library's** **Long Term Lending Program**

If you are an adult Boston resident who either has no home Internet service — or if the Internet service you have is too slow for online learning — you may be able to access free high-speed home internet via an LTE enabled home wi-fi router through June 2023 from the Boston Public Library. Those who qualify may also receive a new Google Chromebook laptop!



A limited number of spaces exist for this program.
Apply now at www.bpl.org/long-term-lending.



City of Boston
Mayor's Office



City of Boston
Housing Authority



City of Boston
New Urban Mechanics

Boston's Age Strong Commission Supports



The Longest Day – Paint the Town Purple!

Highlighting Those with Alzheimer's Disease, Other Dementias & Their Caregivers

This month, join Boston's Age Strong Commission & the Alzheimer's Association to recognize those living with Alzheimer's & other dementias as well as their caregivers. Annually, on the summer solstice, folks are invited to wear purple & to share their stories about living with or alongside the disease & its challenges.

How You Can Participate

- Visit our in-person resource table on **June 21, 11am-2pm, Boston City Hall Plaza**
- Wear purple, or adorn yourself with purple props, take/share photos with **#TheLongestDay**
- On the day of the event get **information & resources** from Age Strong partners about the disease & caregiving
- Share your Alzheimer's/Dementia story at boston.gov/agestrong-the-longest-day
- Follow Age Strong's social media **@AgeStrongBos** & share/re-tweet our The Longest Day campaign content

For more information, call Age Strong at 617-635-4366 or email agestrong@boston.gov



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.

Boston's Age Strong Commission
Weekly Digest
 May 30 - June 5, 2022
 Information & opportunities for Boston's older adults

Submission deadline extended until June 6!

CREATIVE AGING PROJECT'S CITY-WIDE POETRY PROMPT
 Inviting Boston's Older Adults to Write & Share Original Poems

The top 3 submissions will be published in *Boston Seniority* magazine!
 Submission Deadline: Monday, June 6, 2022 at 5:00pm

Older adults are invited to submit original poetry based on any of these prompts:

- Write a recipe describing a specific emotional feeling
- Write the autobiography of your grandparent's hands
- Write about a moment in history (your own or global) you wish you could change & change the ending

How to submit your poetry:
 Email: AgeStrong@Boston.gov
 Fax: 617-635-3213
 Mail: Age Strong Commission, Boston City Hall, Room 271
 1 City Hall Sq., Boston, MA 02201

All poems are welcome, in any language, even if not in line with the suggested "prompt." For more information call Renee Frechette at 617-635-4168 or email renee.frechette@boston.gov

WEEKLY DIGEST Table of Contents

Creative Aging Project Poetry Prompt

Events May 30 - June 5

Creating Connections & Reducing Social Isolation Grantees

Bus Buddy Volunteers

Affordable Connectivity Program

Stay Connected to Age Strong:
 City Hall, Room 271
 1 City Hall Square
 Boston, MA 02201
 617-635-4366
agestrong@boston.gov
boston.gov/agestrong

[f](#) [t](#) @AgeStrongBos

CITY of BOSTON ACE+ Age Strong GORDON HOUSE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY Arts and Culture ACE+ City of Boston Age Strong Commission

Age Strong Virtual Classes

Staying active and engaged in your community is an important part of aging strong in the City of Boston. We host virtual programs and classes each week to keep older adults active and healthy. Join one of our virtual classes this month!

Age Strong Commission's Virtual Programs and Classes

DAY OF WEEK	TIME	PROGRAM	INSTRUCTOR
MONDAY	9AM - 10AM	CHAIR YOGA	CAITLIN
MONDAY	1130AM - 1230PM	MEDITATION	LATIKA
TUESDAY	1130AM - 1230PM	LATIN DANCE	MARIA
WEDNESDAY	1130AM - 1230PM	YOGA	LATIKA
FRIDAY	1130AM - 1230PM	ZUMBA	LINDSEY

Join by zoom link here: bit.ly/ZoomAgeStrongVirtual. For more information on our events call 617-635-3979 or visit boston.gov/age-strong-events

CITY of **BOSTON** AGE+ Age Strong

OPEN STREETS BOSTON

July 10	JAMAICA PLAIN Jackson Sq. to Centre & South
August 06	ROXBURY Dudley St. to Grove Hall
September 24	DORCHESTER Freeport St. to Gallivan Blvd.

OPENSTREETSBOSTON**.ORG**
 Questions? Email us at info@openstreetsboston.org

All events from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

CITY of **BOSTON**

Save the date, Boston!

This summer Boston will close 3 major roadways to car traffic so neighbors can walk, shop, dine & play together in open city spaces.



► Seen Around Town



10 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR BRAIN



START NOW. It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits.



HIT THE BOOKS

Formal education will help reduce risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Take a class at a local college, community center or online.



BUTT OUT

Smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.



FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke – obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes – negatively impact your cognitive health.



BREAK A SWEAT

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.



STUMP YOURSELF

Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Play games of strategy, like bridge.

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body.



HEADS UP!

Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.

BUDDY UP

Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Find ways to be part of your local community or share activities with friends and family.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Some studies link depression with cognitive decline, so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.



CATCH SOME ZZZ'S

Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.



FUEL UP RIGHT

Eat a balanced diet that is higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.



Visit alz.org/10ways to learn more.

alzheimer's  association®

THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS.™