

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Martin J. Walsh

CELEBRATING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH p. 14-21



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On the Cover:

Our cover stars Irene, 103, and Kay, 100, became fast friends at our colorful photoshoot for Older Americans Month at Happy Place in Boston. Happy

Place is a temporary pop-up experience running until June 2nd, filled with larger than life installations and multi-sensory, immersive rooms in the Back Bay. For more information, visit www.happyplace.me or call 1-888-718-4253 opt. 1.



Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected
with the Age Strong
Commission:



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Website: www.boston.gov/age-strong



Facebook: @AgeStrongBos



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

Celebrating Older Bostonians Every Day



May is National Older Americans Month. This year's theme, "Connect, Create, Contribute," emphasizes the importance of connection, creativity and contribution in the daily lives of older Americans. *(See pages 14-21 for ways you can connect, create, and contribute in the City of Boston).*

In Boston, older adults are one of our fastest growing populations. The American Community Survey estimates that in 2017, there were 105,000 people over the age of 60 living in the City of Boston, compared to 88,000 in 2010. While much of the growth is aging baby boomers, more than 10,000 of our residents are over the age of 85.

This is a very exciting time for the City of Boston. We are growing and expanding in many ways. Our economy is thriving and technology is advancing. These factors present us with limitless opportunities for our future. Above all, we share a responsibility to ensure these opportunities reach everyone in our city, across all ages and abilities.

You've heard me say it before: Older Bostonians built our city. We want you, our older residents, to continue to live and thrive here because you make our communities stronger. That's why we celebrate you, not just in May, but every day.

Sincerely,

-Mayor Martin J. Walsh



▶ Reader Poetry Submission

Boston's Common

Submitted by: Mike A. Coppola, 83, Roslindale

In the spring the Common's green,
People come to view the scene.
They also come to have some fun,
Play baseball, tennis or just run.
They come to watch a fountain shower,
To lie in the sun for just an hour.
There are those that come to articulate,
At every bench there's a great debate.
It's the city's orators rallying spot,
To argue their arguments or share a thought.
The Common's a place that's here for all,
To think deep thoughts or have a ball.
It's Boston's hub 'round which she turns,
Where Liberty's torch was lit and still burns.

Maintaining Positive Mental Health

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention / Boston Public Health Commission

It is estimated that one in five people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health condition, the most common being anxiety, severe cognitive impairment, and mood disorders, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Many factors can contribute to mental health problems, including genes, brain chemistry, family history, personal relationships, violence, abuse, substance use, finances, living situations and overall health. If you or someone you know is living with mental health problems, you may notice some changes.

Here are some warning signs when mental health is affecting someone's life:

- Pulling away from people
- Stopping usual activities
- Diet or sleeping changes
- Severe mood swings
- The inability to perform daily tasks

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act and can determine how we make choices, relate to others and even how we handle stress. See our infographic for tips.

Tips to Maintain Positive Mental Health

Tip 1

Connect with others



Tip 2

Be physically active



Tip 3

Get professional help if needed



Tip 4

Help others



Tip 5

Get enough sleep



Tip 6

Develop coping skills



Did you know?

May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

How do you get help?

► Many people with mental health problems can get better. There is help available. The Boston Public Health Commission is involved in a variety of efforts to remove the stigma associated with mental health and to provide services and resources to improve the social and emotional wellness of everyone in Boston.

► To read more about the services available to individuals and families in Boston, contact:

Boston Public Health Commission
617-534-5395
Bphc.org

► City Initiatives

How can the Office of Language and Communications Access help you?

Provided by the City's Language and Communications Access Program

In 2016, Mayor Martin J. Walsh signed a city ordinance called “Establishing Language and Communications Access for City Services.” We are excited to share with you the progress that has been made in this monthly blog series. We hope you will support us in making Boston a more accessible place to live, work, and play.

In February 2016, Mayor Walsh signed City Ordinance 2016 Chapter 13 which established language and communications access in the City of Boston. This ordinance strengthens the Mayor’s vision to make Boston a more inclusive and equitable city. It ensures that people who use languages other than English (LOTE) and people with disabilities have meaningful access to City information and services.

The ordinance is an advancement of an executive order from 2008. This order created the baseline practice of providing interpretation services for residents appearing before boards or commissions. Mayor Walsh’s ordinance extends this practice to include interpretation, translation, and assistive technology support for all City services and programs. Furthermore, the City strives

to provide interpretation and translation requests in any language. These services are provided at no charge to the constituent.

The ordinance also helped create the Office of Language and Communications Access (LCA). Our office works to build the capacity of all 48+ City departments around language and communications access. Our four main areas of responsibility are:

- **We provide support.** We help City departments make their services and information more accessible to all. We provide regular training on guidelines and best practices. We act as the point of contact for any and all inquiries about language and communications access.
- **We collect data.** We collect data about people’s experiences regarding greater accessibility in the City. We measure the City’s capacity in providing these specific accommodations. We use this information to improve our practice and help the City create more meaningful services.
- **We partner with communities.**



We partner with community groups and organizations so more people can learn about these services. We created a feedback form and a website to open direct lines of communications with constituents.

► **We organize resources.** We compile resources that we think will be valuable to both city staff and constituents. We maintain and lend out assistive technology equipment like assistive listening devices and interpretation equipment. We recruit for the Volunteer Language Pool that draws on the skills of generous multilingual volunteers. We create reports like the Demographic Data report that capture the diversity of the City.

So how can we help you? We are happy to answer your questions and assist

in anyway we can. Whether you are a community member, organization, or city employee, we look forward to working together to make our city a welcoming place for all.

The Office of Language and Communication Access works to strengthen the City of Boston so that services, programs and activities are meaningfully accessible to all constituents. To learn more, visit the Language and Communications Access website at boston.gov/LCA.

The Office of Language and Communication Access works to strengthen the City of Boston so that services, programs and activities are meaningfully accessible to Bostonians.



Mayor Walsh Announces More Than \$26 million in New Funding for Affordable Housing in Boston

Building on his commitment to create and preserve affordable housing in Boston, Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced more than \$26 million in new and recommended funding from the Department of Neighborhood Development, the Neighborhood Housing Trust, and the Community Preservation Fund, to create and preserve 515 units of housing in Brighton, East Boston, Dorchester, Mattapan, Mission Hill, North End, and Roxbury. The new funding will also contribute to affordable housing programming like the Acquisition Opportunity Program and the Boston Home Center.

“As Boston continues to grow, we want to make sure everyone has a place to call home, no matter their income,” said Mayor Walsh. “It’s important now more than ever that we use every tool in our toolbox to build more housing

for working families in our City. This announcement is a great example of how we’re building strong partnerships in the housing community to create more affordable housing options across all of our neighborhoods.”

The new funding will create 459 new units and preserve 56 units of housing. As a result of requesting proposals with a focus on creating affordable units, 290 units that will be created or preserved will be restricted to households with low, moderate, and middle income.

The majority of these units will be accessible to households with incomes up to 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), which amounts to \$65,000 or less for a family of four.

The new units are a combination of homeownership and rental opportunities

with some set aside for formerly homeless households, seniors, and artists.

To ensure that all units receiving City funding will remain affordable, they will all be deed restricted permanently or for 50 years. In all cases, the projects have been carefully underwritten to leverage alternative sources to minimize City funding.

For the homeownership opportunities, first-time homebuyers earning between 70-100 percent of AMI will receive down payment assistance, the opportunity to take a home buying class, and financial and real estate counseling.

“DND is excited that we were able to fund projects with such deep affordability, ranging from 50 percent of the Area Median Income to homeless individuals and the elderly,” said Chief of Housing Sheila Dillon.”

Funds to create and preserve these units will be awarded from three sources: the first, of approximately \$4.4 million, consists of funds administered by the Department of Neighborhood Development. The second source, of approximately \$3.6 million, utilizes funds from the Neighborhood Housing Trust (NHT), which are collected through the City’s Linkage policy, extracting affordable housing funds from developers of large commercial projects.

The third source is from the Community Preservation Fund, of approximately \$18 million, which are collected through the CPA’s one percent property tax surcharge adopted by Boston voters in 2016 to invest in affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space.

3 Senior Housing Investments Included

▶ East Boston

Grace Apartments
Developer: East Boston Community Development Corporation

The developer will create 42 units of low-income elderly housing, including five units of housing for the homeless in Maverick Square.

▶ North End

Knights Senior Housing
Developer: East Boston Community Development Corporation

East Boston CDC will create 23 affordable apartments for seniors, including three units of housing for homeless seniors, and a neighborhood meeting space, in the Knights of Columbus headquarters.

▶ Roxbury

Bartlett Station Lot D
Developer: Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH)

The developer proposes to create 52 units of housing, including 42 units restricted to Bostonians over the age of 55 who earn at or below 80% of AMI, or \$69,000 for a two person household.

May Happenings: Ways to Fill Your Calendar

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

MAY
14
Community Reading Event with Mimi Jones
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Location: First Church in Roxbury, 10 Putnam St., John Eliot Square
Contact Info: 617-318-6010

MAY
15
Franklin Park Bird Walk
Time: 7:00 am - 8:30 am
Location: Franklin Park - Meet at the Shattuck picnic area and Franklin Park tennis courts by the Shattuck Hospital
Contact Info: 617-442-4141
*Bring binoculars

MAY
16
Adult Sewing Classes
Time: 10:30 am - 1:00 pm
Location: BPL - Honan-Allston Branch, 300 North Harvard St.
Contact Info: Registration Required - Please email Carin at coconnor@bpl.org
617-787-6313

MAY
17
Color Me Calm
Time: All Day
Location: BPL - Codman Square Branch, 690 Washington St.
Contact Info: aeneh@bpl.org

MAY
18
Walking Tour Of Sumner Hill
Time: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location: Loring-Greenough House, 12 South St., Jamaica Plain
Contact Info: Info@JPHS.org

MAY
20
Senior Social Club - Part of Never Too Late Group
Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Location: BPL - East Boston Branch, 365 Bremen St.
Contact Info: 617-569-0271

Memorial Day Flag Garden

For Memorial Day weekend on the Boston Common, volunteers plant over 37,000 flags at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Each flag represents every brave MA service member since the Revolutionary War who gave his or her life defending our country.

MAY
21
Yoga for Seniors
Time: 2:45 pm – 3:30 pm
Location: BPL - West End Branch, 151 Cambridge St.
Contact Info: 617-523-3957

MAY
23
Free Gentle Yoga
Time: 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Location: BPL - Mattapan Branch, 1350 Blue Hill Ave
Contact Info: 617-298-9218

MAY
29
Beginning Internet Class
Time: 11:00 am- 12:00 pm
Location: BPL - Brighton Branch, 40 Academy Hill Rd
Contact Info: Call for an appointment and ask for Alan at 617-782-6032.

This Month...

Mayor Martin J. Walsh's Neighborhood Coffee Hours 9:30 am - 10:30 am

- **Tuesday, May 14**
Fenway, Symphony Park
- **Monday, May 20**
Mattapan, Walker Playground
- **Wednesday, May 22**
South Boston, Joseph Moakley Park
- **Thursday, May 23 (9:15 am)**
Back Bay / Beacon Hill,
Commonwealth Ave Mall
- **Tuesday, May 28**
Roxbury, Marcella Park

*Dates and times are subject to change

Consult social media for weather cancellations:
Facebook: [@bostonparksdepartment](https://www.facebook.com/bostonparksdepartment)
Twitter: [@bostonparksdept](https://twitter.com/bostonparksdept)
617-635-4505
www.boston.gov/parks

BETTER WITH AGE!

It is not every day you get to spend a morning with two centenarians, running around a pop-up exhibit intended for teenagers taking selfies. It is a beautiful and important reminder that aging can mean many things.

Aging can be freeing. Freedom from judgment and our own expectations. It can liberate us from the things that held us back when we were younger.

Aging can be playful. It can allow us to appreciate silly, joyful moments, and find humor in unlikely places.

Aging can be fulfilling. It can reveal opportunities and open new paths of understanding about ourselves and the world around us.

Like with most things, aging can be what you make it.

-Your Editors



**Kay Wilson,
100, from
Dorchester!**

**Irene Murray,
103, from
Charlestown!**

Ways to Engage During Older Americans Month & Throughout the Year

Connect

with friends, family, and services that support participation.

Connect by attending one of our community events specifically coordinated for older Bostonians that are held throughout the city. Our biggest events include our annual *Mayor's Walk*, *50th Anniversary Celebration*, and *Senior First Night*. You can also connect with caregivers and those with dementia through our *Memory Cafés*. You can learn how to age strong and participate in our *Aging Mastery* classes.

Create

by engaging in activities that promote learning, health, and personal enrichment.

There are so many ways to create and engage with the Age Strong Commission in the City of Boston. Some of our new programs include *Tai Chi*, which helps improve balance, and *What Unites Us*, which offers cultural cooking classes that celebrate Boston's diversity.

Interested in learning more? View our side bar for a quick snapshot of some of our programming.

Contribute

time, talent, and life experience to benefit others.

Boston needs your strong skills and experience. Contribute by volunteering. We can connect you to a variety of volunteer opportunities based on your interests, location, and preferred time commitment.

For more details about our volunteer opportunities, contact Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

Snapshot of Age Strong Programming

- ▶ **Aging Mastery**
The Aging Mastery Program® core curriculum combines evidence-informed knowledge sharing with goal-setting and feedback routines, daily practices, peer support, and small rewards.
- ▶ **Yoga-lates on the Greenway**
Yoga-lates fitness class series offers an age-friendly fusion of yoga and pilates.
- ▶ **Memory Cafés**
A Memory Café is a place where individuals with memory loss and their caregivers can get together in a safe, supportive and engaging environment.
- ▶ **Say Your Age with Karen Young**
We explore the challenges and triumphs of growing older through drumming and facilitated dialogue.
- ▶ **Tai Chi**
This free evidence-based workshop focuses on preventing falls and improving balance.
- ▶ **What Unites Us**
A program to celebrate Boston's immigrants by learning how to prepare cuisine from all over the world and promote healthy living.

For more ways to engage and the most up-to-date programming, call us at: 617-635-4366.

AGE STRONG AT EVERY DECADE IN BOSTON

50's

60's

70's

80's

90's

100's



Brian Higginbottom, 58
"When I was in my 30s and 40s, I took life much more seriously. I put so much focus in work and forgot about relaxing. Now, as I'm in my 50s, I realize how important my time is and that I should spend it how I want to spend it. Now, I spend much more time with my family and friends.... It's okay to take time off and chill."



Mangla Fash, 62
"Wake up and enjoy your life every second. Be happy cheerful and kind to each other. Say hello and make friends. Happiness makes a healthy life. The more kind you are to others the happier you'll be. Exercise is very important and diet."



Rachel Tate, 75
"Enjoy life. Live life to the fullest. Exercise, be very active, be involved, and learn about what's going on. I help bring other people information."



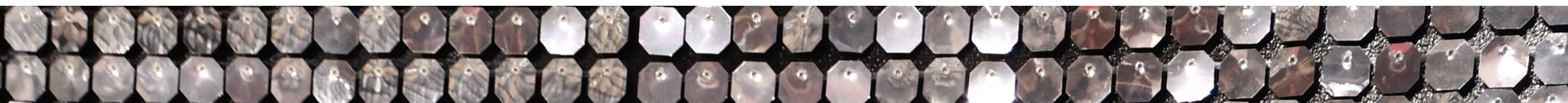
Juan Viteri, 83
"I cook my own food. I still exercise, avoid eating grease, and no drugs, alcohol or cigarettes. I go to the club and dance to all types of music. Just have fun. I still dance pretty well."



Edith Deas, 90
"I'm always learning about different organizations and events that keep me active. It's so important to get involved in the church and surround yourself with positive people. It helps you stay young."



Irene, 103, and Kay, 100
"Love is the best thing you can give to anyone. Learn from yesterday, live for today, and hope for tomorrow." - Irene
"If someone suggests something to you, before you take any action, confer with someone and listen. It is so important to listen." - Kay





What is the most amazing thing you have experienced in your life?

That I'm still here at 100 years old!



“Just because you’re old doesn’t mean you can’t be active.”



“I give my problems to God and ask him to help me.”



“You want to be happy? Then be happy. I tell people, ‘If you’re gonna be a grouch, don’t sit on my couch!’”- Irene

► In Boston, we Age Strong.

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



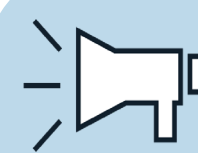
We can help with:

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



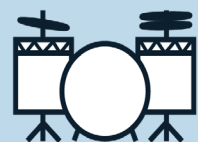
Information + Referral:

Our helpful Advocacy Representatives can connect you to resources, benefits, and information, including health insurance counseling, applications for SNAP (food), referrals to protective services, and more.



Volunteer Opportunities:

Boston needs your strong skills and experience. We can connect you to a variety of volunteer opportunities based on your interests, location, and preferred time commitment.



Events + Engagement:

Staying active and engaged in your community is an important part of aging strong in the City.



Housing:

Our housing team has the expertise and compassion to solve problems with you, including housing search, landlord/tenant advocacy, applications for fuel assistance, and much more.



Transportation:

Being able to travel around Boston is an important part of leading an independent life. We offer free, wheelchair-accessible shuttles that provide door-to-door service for non-emergency medical appointments. Call 617-635-3000 to schedule your ride.



Caregiver Support:

We are here to help with questions, offer support, and connect caregivers to helpful resources. We provide referrals, offer workshops, and host Memory Cafes.



Seniority Around the World

Boston Seniority magazine was spotted in New Orleans, Louisiana with Cassandra Baptista, our Age Strong Communications Director and one of our Seniority editors.

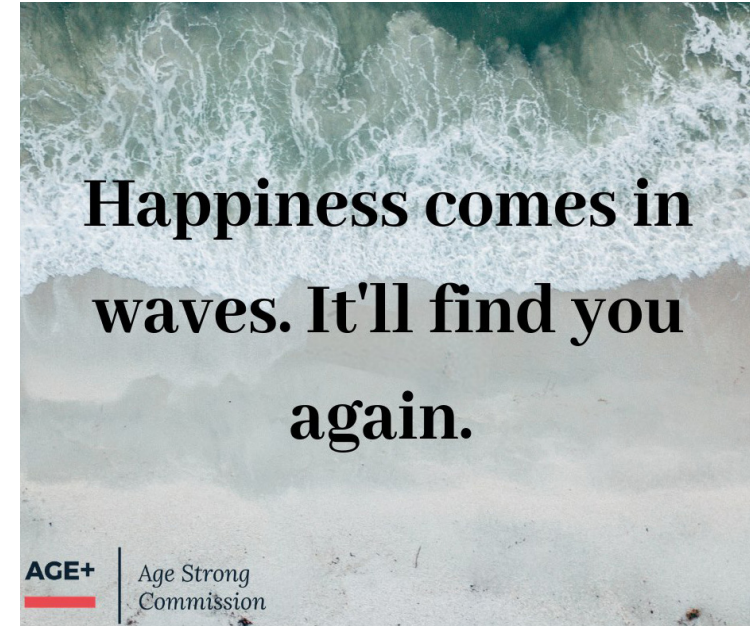


Seen on Social Media

Find us on Facebook and Twitter: @AgeStrongBos



On social media, we post inspirational quotes for a dose of #WednesdayWisdom. Here are a few!



Boston Crate Giveaway!

In honor of Older Americans Month, let us know how you connect, create and contribute for a chance to win.

- Emails us at bostonseniority@boston.gov by June 1st with:
- your name
 - age
 - neighborhood
 - phone number

Senior Spotlight

Forty years after her historic Boston marathon victory, 61-year-old Joan Benoit Samuelson returned to the course and finished the 2019 marathon only 30 minutes within her winning time. The talented runner hoped to come within 40 minutes of her 1979 victory, and she fulfilled those wishes after completing the race in just over 3 hours.



The Flashback

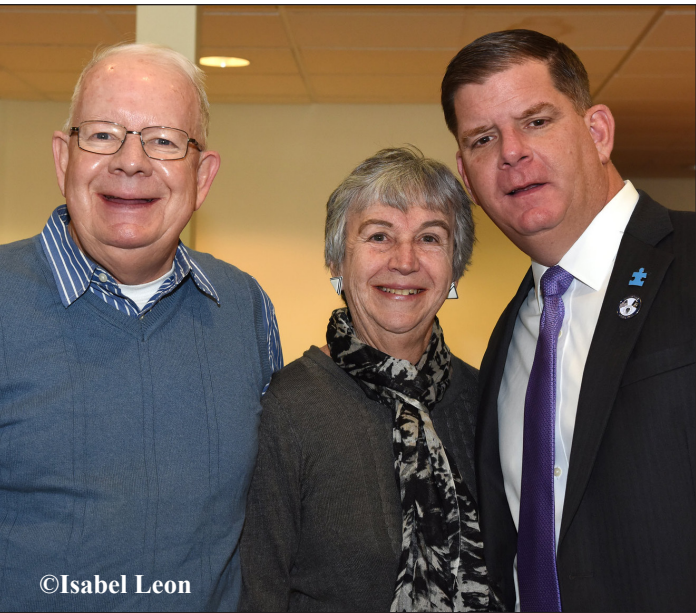
Last month's answer: Guild Row, Roxbury

*Congratulations to Roxbury resident Etta Moore for contacting us with the correct answer.

Can you guess?

Hint: This was taken on November 1905.

► Seen Around Town





@AgeStrongBOS

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