

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Martin J. Walsh

*Together,
in New
Ways*



Sept./Oct.
2020
Issue 6
Vol. 44

Free Publication



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Stay Connected
with the Age Strong
Commission:



Main number: (617) 635-4366



Website: www.boston.gov/age-strong

In This Issue...

Charlestown couple, Janet and Wayne Black, went on their first date to a drive-in movie over 60 years ago. The sweethearts celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary at our Age Strong Drive-in matinee held this summer.



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Published by the City of Boston's Age Strong Commission

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City Hall Plaza-Room 271
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Printed by Flagship Press, Inc.

Boston Seniority is supported in part by The Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Although all material accepted is expected to conform to professional standards, acceptance does not imply endorsement by the City of Boston.



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

Email us at
Bostonseniority@boston.gov

From the Mayor's Desk

Keeping Boston Safe and Strong



This year, our city has faced incredible challenges, and I am deeply grateful for the strength, resilience, and generosity that the Boston community has shown. Our priority has and will continue to be ensuring the health and safety of all residents. As we move into the fall, we will continue to follow the science and public health data; we will continue to be proactive in our efforts to contain the virus, with testing, with outreach, with resources, and with information in many languages and formats.

We need everyone to stay vigilant. We need everyone to do their part. Please take every precaution to keep yourself and others safe by wearing a face covering, washing your hands regularly, practicing social distancing, and avoiding gatherings.

This will certainly be a fall unlike any other, but some things stay the same. We are still a city of strength, perseverance, and connection. In the face of this challenge, we will continue to show that we are Boston Strong.

To those feeling isolated or afraid, I want to let you know that the City of Boston is here for you. You are at the front of our mind, and we are doing everything we can to support and protect you. Later this month, the AARP Massachusetts Task Force to End Loneliness & Build Community will launch the #ReachOutMA campaign—which I'm proud to serve as a spokesperson for—to let people know they are not alone. I encourage everyone to routinely check in on one another. We can all find creative ways to be good neighbors, like saying hello, cooking an extra meal, or writing a note. We'll continue to encourage members of our community to help build connections so that everyone has the support they need. We're all in this together, Boston. Thank you for your cooperation and strength during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

-Mayor Martin J. Walsh





Important Phone Numbers

Here are some important numbers to keep in mind if you're looking for help.

▶ **Age Strong Commission** 617-635-4366

Helping older Bostonians access the information, programs, and services they need. Our services remain open and available by phone. In-person meetings are by appointment only. Call us, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. or email agestrong@boston.gov.

▶ **Age Strong Shuttle** 617-635-3000

We provide Boston residents age 60 and older with free transportation within the City of Boston to non-emergency medical appointments and grocery trips, with advance notice. We also have wheelchair-accessible shuttles.

▶ **Mayor's Health Line** 617-534-5050

A free, confidential, multilingual information and referral service. We help and welcome all residents regardless of immigration status. If you or your family needs legal assistance we provide referrals to legal services.

▶ **Office of Fair Housing & Equity** 617-635-2500

This office works to prevent discrimination and ensure fair and equitable access to housing for all people of Boston.

▶ **Governor's Office** 617-725-4005

Information on the Governor's Executive Order.

▶ **Attorney General's Office**

617-727-8400

Workplace/Consumer complaints.

▶ **Dept. of Unemployment Assistance**

877-626-6800

Call Center - Multilingual call agents are available.

▶ **Call 311 or 617-635-4500**

Available 24/7 to assist with all Non-Emergency City services.

▶ **All Emergencies**

(Police, Fire, EMS) should be reported to 911.

Help Slow The Spread of Covid-19

While the seasons are changing, our precautions remain the same. We need continued vigilance to keep each other safe.



► Stay home whenever possible. We must limit in-person contact.



► Practice physical distancing. Keep your distance from others (at least six feet apart), and avoid crowded places.



► Wear a face covering to help prevent unknowingly transmitting the virus to others.



► If you or someone you know thinks they have contracted the virus, call your doctor to determine your next steps. Please do not delay emergency medical care.



► Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow.



► Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



► Avoid shaking hands, as handshakes are a common way to spread the virus and bacteria from one person to another.



► Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

► Mosquito Safety

Mosquito Bite Prevention

Source: Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC)

The West Nile Virus risk level was raised from low to moderate in the City of Boston. Read this Q&A to learn how to protect yourself from mosquito-borne illnesses.

What diseases are spread by mosquitoes? Mosquitoes in Boston can spread West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). People can get WNV or EEE when an infected mosquito bites them. Mosquitoes get these diseases by biting infected birds, but people cannot get WNV or EEE from birds. Most people bitten by infected mosquitoes experience no symptoms or mild symptoms, but some can develop serious disease.

Do people in Boston get sick from mosquitoes? WNV has been found in Boston mosquitoes every year since 2000 and has caused some people to get very sick. EEE is found occasionally in Boston mosquitoes. Cases of EEE in people are extremely rare in Boston, but can happen.

Am I at risk? Mosquitoes in Boston are most active and most likely to carry disease from July to September, but they can spread disease until the first hard frost

(as late as November). People over age 50 are most at risk to experience serious illness if they are infected with WNV. EEE can cause serious illness in any age group.

What should I do if a mosquito bites me? Both WNV and EEE are rare, and it is unlikely that you will get sick from a mosquito bite. However, you should contact your doctor immediately if you develop high fever, confusion, severe headache, stiff neck, or if your eyes become sensitive to light.

How can I help prevent mosquito-borne illnesses? If you are outdoors from dusk to dawn, or in an area with mosquitoes, consider these options to stop mosquito bites:

- Use an EPA-approved repellent anytime you're outdoors
- Wear long pants, long sleeves and socks to reduce exposed skin outdoors
- Repair torn screens to keep mosquitoes outside
- Remove standing water around the house to prevent mosquitoes from breeding

For more information, go to bphc.org.



▶ Election

Mail-In Voting Available to Registered Voters in Boston

Source: City of Boston Election Department

Voting by mail-in ballot was approved by the Massachusetts legislature as a temporary measure to ensure all registered voters who have concerns about voting in person due to COVID-19 precautions have another option to exercise their right to vote.

PLEASE NOTE:

▶ An application was mailed out to registered Boston Voters this summer. After you complete the application and mail it back, you'll receive your mail-in ballot.

▶ Include your signature (without one the application is invalid).

▶ Postage has been paid — just drop it in the mail.

▶ If you are in the area of City Hall, you may drop off your application in the Election Department dropbox located on the third floor.

MAIL YOUR BALLOT RIGHT AWAY

You can mail the ballot to the address on the envelope. Please submit your completed ballot as soon as possible. You can track your ballot through the state's website. Make sure to call the Election Department before Election Day if you haven't seen movement in the tracker.

For more information, contact the Election Department at 617-635-8683 or visit boston.gov/election.

Important 2020 Election Dates

Tuesday, September 1: State Primary

Saturday, October 17, through Friday, October 30: Early voting period
Any registered Boston voter can vote at any early voting location. You don't need an excuse or reason to vote early. If you miss the early voting period, you can still vote on Nov. 3, 2020.

Wednesday, October 28: Deadline for requesting vote-by-mail ballot

Monday, November 2, at 12 p.m.: Deadline for in-person absentee voting

Tuesday, November 3: Presidential election

FEDERAL 2020 CENSUS

What can Boston's neighborhoods do with their fair share of *billions of federal dollars*?

September 30th is the last day to respond to the 2020 Census.

THE CENSUS

Did you know that billions in federal funding that help support your community are based on census data?



PUBLIC EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

The Census impacts funding for programs like Head Start and grants for special education and public schools.



FOOD & NUTRITION

The Census impacts funding for programs like SNAP, Meals on Wheels, and Free/Reduced Breakfast and Lunch in local schools.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING & TRANSPORTATION

The Census impacts funding for programs like Section 8 vouchers, homebuyer assistance, and infrastructure planning.



HEALTHCARE

The Census impacts funding for programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Community Health Centers.

Participate in the census at
2020census.gov
844-330-2020

United States®
Census
2020

CITY of BOSTON

HOW MUCH I WISH

A poem by Liliam Alvarez of Dorchester

How much I wish...
to be able to hug you, kiss you
and shake hands with confidence
that there is no more disease.

How much I wish...
to go visit you soon
without days of affliction
full of tears and lamentations.

How much I wish...
not knowing what is out there
because thousands are dying
fear is everywhere.

How much I wish...
hearing any good news
this deadly ill no longer exists
and there is only well-being.

How much I wish...
that a magic wands exists
and the virus be removed
and a new life begins.

How much I wish...
with this sad experience
your spirit be strengthened
of infinite mercy, will be.

How much I wish...
wings were born on me.
among the sickness fly.
with heaven's blessing fly.


How much I wish...
that our mother nature
take compassion on our planet
so all the worries vanish.

So much I wish...
to wake up on any day
where we are without pain
with the Light of Healing shine!

*Dedicated to the planet that lives
through the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Have a submission?

Submit your story or poem to
bostonseniority@boston.gov





In the News

ReiMAgine Aging is the Commonwealth's age- and dementia-friendly Year-One Progress Report to AARP. The Age Strong public awareness campaign was featured in the report. You can view the report at www.mass.gov/reimagine-aging-progress-report



INACTIVE

I'm a lot of things, and inactive isn't one of them.

-Sandra, 68



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Age-Friendly Businesses

A big welcome to SarahCare of Dorchester, 4 Corners Yoga + Wellness, and Dorrs Liquor Mart as the newest Age-Friendly Businesses! Find these businesses in Brighton Main Streets and Dorchester.

Teamwork

Age Strong and City of Boston staff worked together making and delivering boxes of food for older adults in need.



Thank You RSVP Volunteers!

For the past few months, the Age Strong Commission's RSVP volunteers have been using their talents and time to make masks for essential workers and other older adults. Age Strong staff provided the volunteers with everything necessary to create the masks. To date, they have sewed 275 masks which we'll be giving to the other older volunteers to recognize their commitment to helping people and to keep them safe.



Mayor's Garden Contest Winner

Boston Parks Commissioner Ryan Woods (right) presents the coveted Golden Trowel award to Senior Garden category winner Wm. Ernest Garneau of West Roxbury

2nd Place: Janice Dunlevy, Dorchester
3rd Place: John Govoni and Dorothy Giarla, Roslindale

Ending Loneliness and Building Community

AARP and many local organizations are collaborating to help you stay healthy and connected during this pandemic and beyond. The AARP Massachusetts Task Force to End Loneliness & Build Community is launching the #ReachOutMA campaign on Good Neighbor Day (September 28th). The Taskforce will be sharing information about how social isolation and loneliness affect your health, with tips for how to connect with older adults and community members of all ages. There will be an online summit on October 1, to share insights from community research done with support from The UMass Gerontology Institute. To learn more: www.aarp.org/ma. The AARP Foundation also has you covered on this topic at www.connect2affect.org.



**"Distance gives
us a reason to
love harder."**

AGE+

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