

# Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu



**Welcome  
Mayor Wu!**

**Winter Guide**  
p.16-25

Winter 2021  
Issue 6  
Vol. 45

**Free Publication**



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In the "Winter Safety" issue, we offer some information and tips so that you're ready for winter. Making it through winter in Boston is truly a team effort. Let's do our part! See pages 16-25 for more.



# Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



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

Email us at [Bostonseniority@boston.gov](mailto:Bostonseniority@boston.gov)



# From the Mayor's Desk

## The Holiday Season

My family and I love the holidays—our two boys, Blaise and Cass, revel at every special event, holiday songs, and sparkling lights. This year is even more special right after being sworn in as your next Mayor of Boston! The top priority of all our city agencies is to ensure every resident is healthy, safe, and thriving.

I know how much older adults offer to our families and communities in the form of wisdom, experience, joy and connection. My mom, who experiences mental health challenges, lives downstairs from me in our Roslindale home. While we care for her, she also offers us her wisdom and caring. Our administration will always recognize your tremendous contributions, and offer the support and services you deserve.

I'm so grateful that over the years I've had the opportunity to meet many of you at events, senior centers, and in the community. I can't wait to connect in the coming weeks, months and years ahead.

This issue of Boston Seniority highlights essential winter safety tips, including snow storm preparedness. I hope you will read these tips in full and reach out to my team with any thoughts of your own for staying safe this winter.

As we emerge from a pandemic that has deeply affected all of our lives, I urge you to stay safe by getting your COVID-19 booster shot and your flu shot as well. Please reach out to us with any questions.

As we look to the year ahead with hope and anticipation, I wish you a safe and joyous holiday season. And I look forward to working with you to build a Boston in which every one of us is seen, treasured and valued.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Wu*

Michelle Wu



### ▶ Book Picks

## BPL Staff Book Picks: Tales from the Field

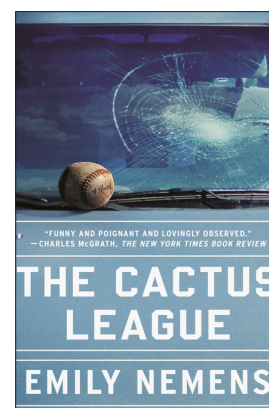
Source: Boston Public Library

Are you a sports fan? Whether you enjoy basketball, football, gymnastics, or sportscasting, this list has you covered. Check one out today and get in the game!



**When the Men Were Gone**  
by Marjorie Herrera Lewis

When most of the men in her community depart to serve in World War II, Tylene Wilson navigates opposition from the press, her neighbors, rivals, referees, and players to become Texas's first female high school football coach.



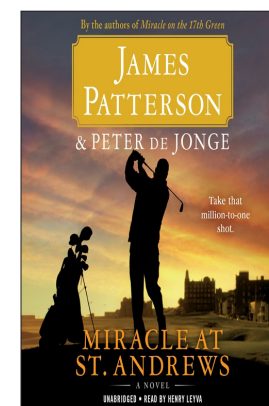
**The Cactus League**  
by Emily Nemens

Beginning spring training in the unforgiving Arizona desert, a star baseball outfielder navigates the secrets of the coaches, writers, wives, girlfriends, criminals, and fans who watch his every move.



**Trophy Son**  
by Douglas Brunt

A tennis prodigy struggles with stardom and family as he seeks to find balance and wholeness in a life dominated by his athletic talents.



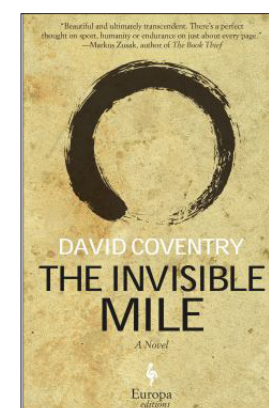
**Miracle at St. Andrews**  
by James Patterson

Former professional golfer Travis McKinley travels to Scotland to the mythical greens at St. Andrews in search of something that can help him achieve a higher plane.



**The Second Season**  
by Emily Adrian

With a chance to become the first woman to call NBA games on national television, Ruth Devon is torn between the two things she has always wanted most: the game and motherhood.



**The Invisible Mile**  
by David Coventry

Determined to confront their demons, the Ravat-Wonder cycling team becomes, in 1928, the first ever English-speaking peloton to compete in the Tour de France and faces one of the toughest routes in the race's history.



For more titles or BPL info, visit [bpl.org](http://bpl.org) or call 617-536-5400.

► Transportation

## Boston's Age Strong Shuttle: Helping Older Adults Get Where they Need to Go



(L-R) Mike, Michael, Patty, and Tracey at The Shuttle office at Frontage Road.

Did you know the Age Strong Commission offers free shuttle transportation to Boston's older adults age 60+? The Age Strong Shuttle operates over 20 vehicles, most equipped for wheelchairs, available Monday through Friday for daytime doctor appointments and grocery shopping within Boston. Simply call The Shuttle at 617-635-3000 to sign up. Please schedule appointments in advance. Medical appointments take priority.

The Shuttle vehicles and staff of nearly 30 are housed at Frontage Road in the South End. The staff of schedulers, dispatchers, and drivers, many who have worked at The Shuttle for over twenty years, help get Boston's older adults where they need to go.

The Shuttle offices are a bustle, early, as drivers receive their pick up schedules for the day. All staff stay in touch throughout

the day via 2-way radios, updating drivers on next pick-up/ drop-off locations and scheduling changes. Each Age Strong Shuttle driver is assigned his/her own vehicle, but sometimes vehicles need maintenance/repair.

On a recent visit to The Shuttle, *Boston Seniority* joined driver Jean Abellard, on a drive-along. Jean lives in Mattapan, and has driven for The Shuttle for 6 years. Jean showed us the different kinds of shuttle vehicles, and took us on the newest version, fully equipped with a hydraulic lift, enabling easy and safe pick-ups for older adults in wheelchairs, or those needing assistance getting aboard.

One rider, from Mattapan shared "I love the Age Strong Shuttle. They pick me up right on time."

## Shuttle Rider Q&A

By: Andrew Higginbottom  
*Age Strong, Staff Assistant*



Helen Thames, 80, Hyde Park

### How long have you been taking The Age Strong Shuttle?

I've been taking the shuttle for over 10 years.

### How did you first hear about The Shuttle?

I was at the Carney Hospital in Dorchester, and a woman that worked for Age Strong gave me one of her cards. I called the number and I've been using it ever since.

### What do you like most about taking The Shuttle?

Well, first off, I like taking The Shuttle, because it's free! And all of The Shuttle drivers are very nice, especially Jean. He helps so much and always arrives on time. He helps get my wheelchair on the

shuttle and makes sure I'm safe and secure throughout the ride.

### How often do you take The Shuttle?

I take it about once a week to my doctor appointments.

### Would you recommend The Shuttle to other older Bostonians?

Yes, and I already have recommended it to friends and family. It's so convenient and takes you to where you need to be throughout the Boston area. It's such a great service and would tell other older adults that if you need a ride to an appointment in Boston, then reach out!

### Shuttle rider from Mattapan:

#### What do you like most about taking the shuttle?

Well, I would not be able to make my appointments on time without The Age Strong Shuttle. It is very convenient and always gets me to my doctor's appointments on time. The drivers are very nice and help me in every way. They are great to talk to, as well. I also meet other riders and have great conversations and even form friendships.

#### Would you recommend the shuttle to other older adults?

Of course! It is a fantastic program and so convenient. I would most certainly recommend it to other older adults in Boston.

## ► Scam Corner

# Boston Police Department Alert: Prepaid Credit Card Scam Targeting Older Adults

Source: *BPDNews.com*

BPD has received reports that an unknown caller, claiming to be an employee of Suffolk County House of Correction, asks that the victim clear up a warrant by paying a fine with prepaid gift cards.

These scam callers have also claimed that a victim's family member is being held captive and will be harmed if money isn't sent using prepaid credit cards or gift cards. The victim is further instructed to purchase a prepaid card in a specified amount and then provide the numbers to the caller for payment.

Users of prepaid cards are reminded to

never give anyone the numbers on the cards; doing so provides instant access to the funds with no ability to get it back. Community members should be mindful, legitimate agencies do not ask for this form of payment.

If any person or company calls to ask for payment to be made specifically with these cards, or if you receive a call that a loved one is in danger of being harmed, the Boston Police Department recommends you do not comply, and immediately report the incident to your local police and the company the caller claims to represent.

## Holidays are for giving ... and for some, taking

Source: *AARP*

The holidays are a time for togetherness, celebration, and giving. Unfortunately, scammers take advantage of the season to give gifts to themselves, using your money to pay for it. In fact, a new AARP study shows that the entire gift-giving process, from purchasing the perfect gift to making sure it gets to the recipient, offers a number of opportunities for scammers to get in on the act for their own benefit.

AARP's new survey on holiday scams

found that 35% of US adults have experienced fraud when buying a product through an online ad.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network equips you with reliable, up-to-date insights and connects you to our free fraud helpline so you can better protect yourself and loved ones. The AARP Fraud Watch Network may prevent you from being a victim during this holiday season.

To learn more, visit [aarp.com/scams](http://aarp.com/scams) or call 1-888-687-2277.

## ► Booster Info

# Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shot as Soon as Possible

Sources: *CDC, Mass.gov*

Everyone age 18 and older should get a Covid-19 booster shot.

If you got Pfizer or Moderna vaccinations, get your booster at least 6 months after your second shot. If you got J&J, get your booster at least 2 months after.

It doesn't matter which type of Covid-19 booster you get, you can choose any of the three. All three types are the same formulation of the original Covid-19 vaccinations, except the Moderna booster is one-half the vaccination dose.

COVID-19 vaccines are very effective in lowering the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death. They even work against the Delta variant. The CDC has found that this protection may wear off over time. Boosters keep the vaccines effective for longer.

The Covid-19 booster is free. You do not need to pay, have ID, or have health insurance to get a booster shot.

To schedule your booster, visit [boston.gov](http://boston.gov), or [vaxfinder.mass.gov](http://vaxfinder.mass.gov). If you need help booking a booster shot or need transportation to an appointment, call



the Age Strong Commission at 617-635-4366.

Bring your vaccination card when you get your booster so they can update your card.

If you do not have your vaccination card, contact your primary care provider or the retail pharmacy where you were first vaccinated. If that is not possible, learn how to obtain your vaccination record, which could take up to 2 weeks, by visiting [mass.gov/myvaxrecord](http://mass.gov/myvaxrecord).

If you have trouble getting to a vaccine clinic, you can use the In-Home Vaccination Program at [mass.gov/vaccinesathome](http://mass.gov/vaccinesathome) or call 211 for more information.

According to the CDC, it's ok to get booster shots, flu shots, and other vaccines at the same time.

► Health Insurance

## Medicare Savings Program in 2022

If you are a Massachusetts resident on Medicare with limited income and assets, you may qualify for help paying for your Medicare costs. MassHealth offers Medicare Savings Programs, also known as MassHealth Buy-In (MHBI) to help with these costs.

**A Medicare Savings Program can help pay some out-of-pocket costs, including:**

► Your monthly Medicare Part B premium (currently deducted from your Social Security benefit)

► Prescription drug costs through the Part D Extra Help program, which you automatically qualify for with a Medicare Savings Program

► In certain cases, your out-of-pocket Part A and Part B costs, such as coinsurance and deductibles

► In certain cases, your Part A premium, if you have one

See if you qualify by calling Boston's Age Strong Commission to make an appointment with an advocate at 617-635-4366.



► Oral Health

## Dental Care for Older Adults

Submitted by: Kaylin Thies, *Class of 2025 Tufts University School of Dental Medicine*

On a recent phone call with my grandmother, she was surprised she did not “pass” at her most recent dental visit and that she had cavities! She told me, “I guess my teeth are aging too.”

As we age, our teeth become more susceptible to dental “caries,” dental decay caused by lack of dental hygiene or lack of saliva which naturally fights off bacteria in the mouth. Dental caries break down tooth enamel, putting teeth at risk for cavities.

Luckily we can reduce the risk of dental caries by:

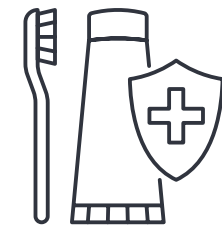
### 1. Eating a healthy diet



### 2. Not smoking



### 3. Brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice a day



### 4. Daily flossing



### 5. A routine teeth cleaning every 6 months



### 6. Proper saliva production



Certain medications decrease saliva production. Ask your dentist if they recommend an oral rinse to help fight acid-causing bacteria that lead to dental caries.

For more information, visit [webmd.com/oral-health/guide/dental-care-seniors](http://webmd.com/oral-health/guide/dental-care-seniors)

## December Awareness

### Preventing Seasonal Depression

December is National Seasonal Depression Awareness month. Now that we're into Daylight Saving time, we get less sunlight everyday, sometimes causing Seasonal Depression, especially in older adults who spend less time outdoors. Between that and colder weather, older adults are at risk.

#### Here are some prevention tips:

- Get plenty of sunlight. Even if you don't go outdoors, open the shades/blinds and let the sun shine in. Sit by the window, let as much natural light into your home as possible.
- Eat more foods high in Vitamin D like salmon, eggs, dairy, orange juice, and oatmeal.
- Be active: walk outside (or inside), do chair yoga, or stretch out your body.
- Be social: meet with or call friends, family & neighbors. If you're able, go to the senior center,



library, faith centers/churches, or an outdoor park.

Even with preventive measures, some folks still experience seasonal depression.

#### Be on the lookout for seasonal depression symptoms including:

- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Experiencing changes in appetite or weight
- Having problems with sleep
- Feeling sluggish or agitated
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Having difficulty concentrating

If you or a loved one experiences these symptoms, seek medical care as treatments are available, including medications, talk therapy, and light therapy.

For more information, visit [nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder](http://nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder)

### International Day of People with Disabilities

December 3 is International Day of People with Disabilities, an international observance promoted by the United Nations since 1992. The observance aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. It was originally called "International Day of Disabled Persons" until 2007.

For more information, visit [idpwd.org](http://idpwd.org)



### 50 Years Together!

#### Boston Couples Celebrate Long Lasting Relationships

In February 2022 Boston Seniority will celebrate Boston couples who have been together for 50 years or more. We want to hear from you!

Couples who have been together for 50+ years can enter to win a special prize.



To enter to win, call Renee Frechette at 617-635-4168 or email [renee.frechette@boston.gov](mailto:renee.frechette@boston.gov) with this information:

- You and your spouse's first and last names
- Your neighborhood
- Your phone number
- Your anniversary month/day/year

**Deadline to enter** is January 5, 2022. We will notify the winner by January 7.

# December Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

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

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving"

-Mother Teresa

**DECEMBER**  
**15**  
**Book Discussion Group**  
-- The Power by Naomi Alderman  
**Time:** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL - West Roxbury Branch, 1961 Centre St.  
**Contact Info:** 617-325-3147

**DECEMBER**  
**16**  
**¡Con Salsa! - The History of Afro-Latin Music in the United States, Past, Present, & Future**  
**Time:** 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**Location:** 365 Bremen St., East Boston  
**Contact Info:** 617-569-0271

**DECEMBER**  
**17**  
**Friday Unwind: Gentle Yoga with Hands to Heart Center**  
**Time:** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm  
**Location:** Virtual  
**Contact Info:** 617-942-0194

**DECEMBER**  
**18**  
**JP Farmers Market**  
**Time:** 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
**Location:** 677 Centre St., Jamaica Plain  
**Contact Info:** 617-942-0194

**DECEMBER**  
**21**  
**Career Skills: Job Seeker's Discussion Group**  
**Time:** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm  
**Location:** Virtual  
**Contact Info:** kblic@bpl.org

**DECEMBER**  
**22**  
**Shelf Service Live: Personalized Reading Recommendations from BPL Librarians**  
**Time:** 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm  
**Location:** Virtual  
**Contact Info:** readerservices@bpl.org

**DECEMBER**  
**23**  
**Last Minute Gifts**  
**Time:** 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL - Uphams Corner Branch, 500 Columbia Rd., Dorchester  
**Contact Info:** 617-265-0139

**DECEMBER**  
**30**  
**Dudley Town Commons Farmers' Market**  
**Time:** 2:30 pm - 6:30 pm  
**Location:** 11 Brook Ave., Roxbury  
**Contact Info:** 857-308-8951

**DECEMBER**  
**31**  
**First Night Boston**  
**Time:** 12:00 pm - 12:00 am  
**Location:** Copley Square, 47 Huntington Ave.  
**Contact Info:** info@firstnightboston.org

## Dog Parks in Boston

Are you a dog owner? The City of Boston currently has 5 off-leash dog parks:

► **Downer Avenue Playground** at 40 Downer Avenue in Dorchester

► **Garvey Playground** at 340 Neponset Avenue in Dorchester

► **Ronan Park** at 92 Mt. Ida Road in Dorchester

► **Peters Park** at 230 Shawmut Avenue in the South End

► **DeFilippo Playground** at 135 Prince Street in the North End

For more information, contact the Parks and Recreation Department: 617-635-4505  
boston.gov/parks



# Winter Guide 2021-2022



**Tips for Staying Safe &  
Healthy this Winter**



In the City of Boston, we're gearing up for another winter. In order to be ready for everything winter throws at us (snow, ice, freezing temperatures) we ask everyone to pitch in.

It's important to check on your friends and neighbors and see if they have what they need, especially fellow older adults and those with health concerns.

This guide will help you and your family stay prepared. If you prepare and stay aware, you can continue to enjoy being out and about even during the cold Boston winters.

We hope everyone has a safe and happy winter!

*-Boston Seniority Team*

## Key Winter Safety Tips

We want all residents to stay safe during extreme cold weather. Our public safety agencies put together a comprehensive set of safety tips for the winter season.

### Warming Centers:

When the Mayor declares a winter weather emergency, BCYF Community Centers may be made available as warming centers.

Because the BCYF Warming Center list changes, please call 311 for updates on which centers are open during emergencies.

Mobility issues may be worsened by cold weather, so it could be difficult to travel to a warming center. Please plan ahead.

### Keeping You and Your Family Safe:

- Chronic medical conditions and some medications can change how a person's body responds to cold weather. Talk to your doctor in advance and seek help early if you feel unwell.

- Individuals who are less physically active or have a slower metabolism make less body heat and are more susceptible to cold temperatures.

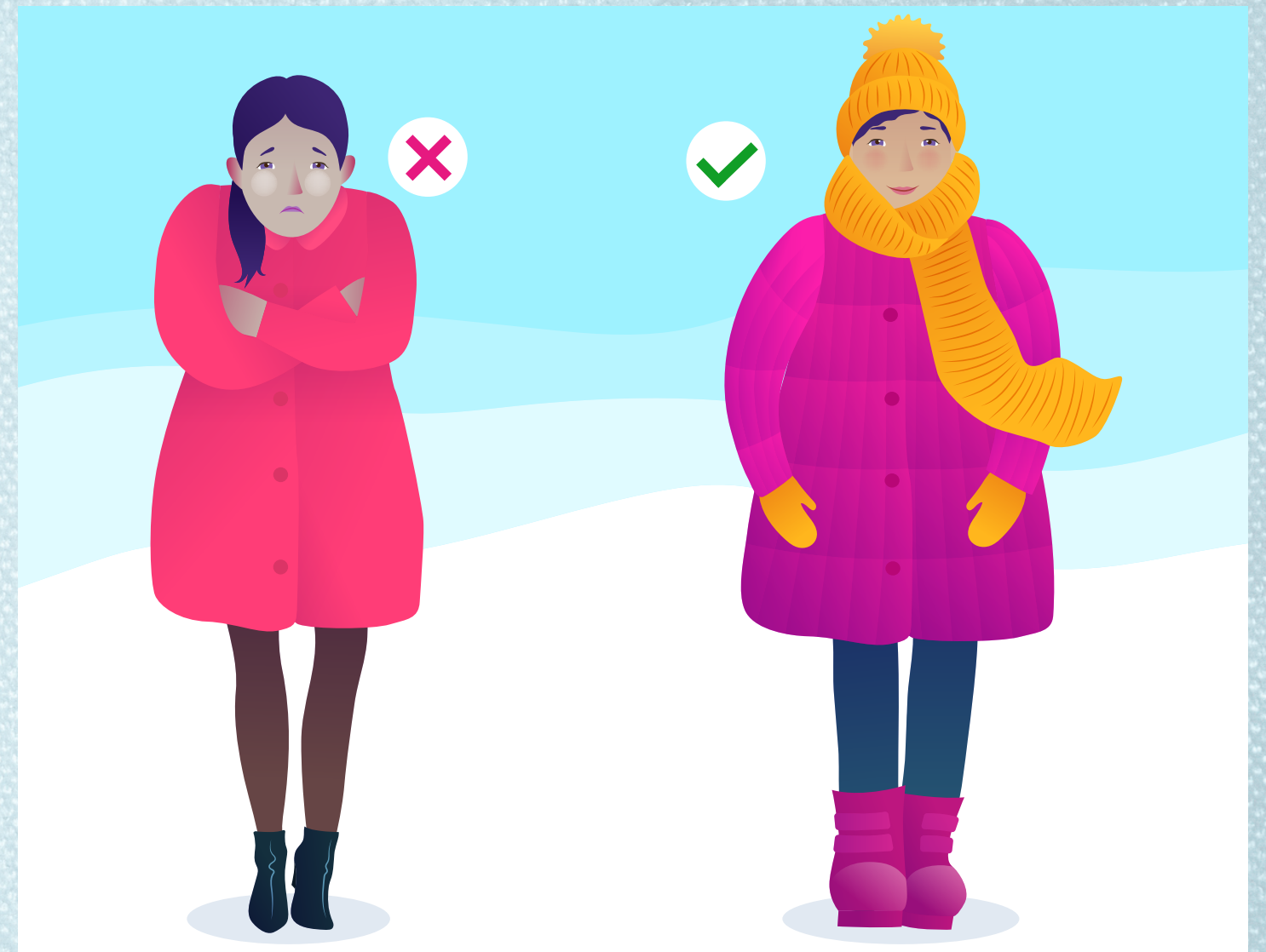
- Those who live alone are at heightened risk. Consider asking a friend or neighbor to check on you.

- Individuals with health issues, especially if they have a heart condition should avoid shoveling. Reach out to family members, friends, or neighbors for assistance.



### Dress for the Weather:

- Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, residents are required to wear face masks in all public places, indoors, even when maintaining 6 feet of distance from others.



- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.

- Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.

- Wear mittens over gloves; layering works for your hands as well.

- Always wear a hat and cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

### Watch for Signs of Frostbite:

- Signs of frostbite include loss of

feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.

### Watch for signs of hypothermia:

- These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion. If you or someone you know shows any of these symptoms, contact a healthcare provider immediately. If symptoms are severe, call 911.

## Heating Guidelines for Property Owners and Tenants:

- In accordance with the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code, the heating season officially begins on September 15 and runs through June 15. Property owners must heat habitable spaces at a minimum temperature of 68 degrees between 7 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. and 64 degrees between 11:01 p.m. and 6:59 a.m.
- In case of emergency, property owners are encouraged to keep a list of licensed contractors (electrician, plumber and general contractor) on file. Tenants experiencing problems with their heating system should check the thermostat, ensure the dial is turned on, and report insufficient or no heat problems to the property owner or manager immediately.
- If your landlord or property manager is unresponsive, call 311 to file a complaint.

## Heating Safety:

- Never try to heat your home using a charcoal or gas grill, a kitchen stove, or other products not specifically designed as a heater. These can cause a fire or produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide very quickly.
- Have your heating system cleaned and checked annually.
- Install and maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors on every level

of your home. Carbon monoxide is an invisible gas produced whenever any fuel is burned. Common sources include oil or gas furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces, stoves, and some space heaters. It has no smell, taste, or color. It is poisonous and can be deadly.

## Tips to Keep Water Flowing and Pipes Unfrozen During Extreme Cold:

- The Boston Water and Sewer Commission recommends homeowners locate a home's main water shut off valve, and learn how to use it. Should a frozen pipe burst, shutting the main valve quickly will minimize flooding and property damage.
- Homeowners should insulate pipes in unheated areas like basements, garages and crawl spaces. Use inexpensive hardware store materials to prevent pipes from freezing and to keep warm water flowing.
- Circulate warm air around pipes by keeping cabinet doors open. Circulate a trickle of tap water through pipes during extreme cold to help prevent them freezing up.
- Locate your water meter, protect it from drafts, and make sure basement doors and windows are shut tightly.
- If pipes do freeze, slowly thaw them with a hair dryer, if possible. If water is lost in all taps, call BWSC 24-hour Emergency Assistance Line at 617-989-7000.

## Emergency Home Repair Resources:

- Income-eligible homeowners and Boston's residents over age 60 can receive assistance with winter emergencies and repairs, such as fixing storm damage, leaking roofs, furnaces and leaking/frozen pipes. For assistance, residents should call the Mayor's hotline at 311 or the Boston Home Center at 617-635-HOME (4663).
- In addition, the Mayor's Seniors Save program helps income eligible Bostonians over the age of 60 replace old, inefficient heating systems with a brand new heating system, even before a failure occurs during the cold winter months. Older adults can also call 311 or the Boston Home Center at 617-635-HOME (4663) to be connected with a City staff member to provide additional details.

## Fuel Assistance:

- Qualified residents of Boston can get up to \$1,030 to help with their heating bill. Age Strong Commission advocates can help you fill out or renew your fuel assistance application, call 617-635-4366.

## Utility Companies:

- Utility companies offer discounted rates to low-income residents who meet certain requirements. Contact your utility company to see if you are eligible.

## Shoveling - Property Owners Must:

- Clear sidewalks within three hours of snowfall ending or three hours after sunrise if it snows overnight, and
- Clear at least a 42-inch-wide path for wheelchairs and strollers.
- Fines can be issued each day until the violation is addressed.



## Conserving Energy (and saving money) this Winter

Source: ABCD Boston

### Heating & Cooling Tips:

- If possible, install a programmable thermostat.
- Set thermostat to 60°F at night & when no one is home.
- Clean and tune your oil heating system once a year & your gas system every two years.
- Replace your furnace filter every month, especially if you have pets.
- Set refrigerator temperature between 37°-40°F.

### Water Heating Tips:

- Repair leaking hot water faucets immediately.
- Reduce hot water heater temperature to 120°F.
- Install low-flow shower heads/faucets to save energy & water.
- Use cold water whenever possible & never run hot water needlessly.

### House Heating & Warming Tips:

- Stuff towels or rags under doors and cover windows with blankets at night.
  - Place hand drapes, bedding or shower curtains over doors or windows.
  - Caulk & weatherstrip around windows & doors, sealing holes/cracks.
  - Put plastic and duct tape around windows. If possible, install storm windows.
  - When purchasing new windows and appliances, look for the Energy Star® logo.
  - Install foam gaskets behind electrical outlets to stop cold air infiltration.
  - Move furniture & draperies away from radiators, vents & registers.
  - Turn off lights in any room you are not using.
  - Don't heat unused rooms.
  - Replace traditional light bulbs with LEDs
- ### Laundry Tips:
- Wash and rinse clothes in cold water.
  - Avoid over-drying clothes.

- Set water level to match load size.
- Clean the lint trap after every load.

### Water Conservation Tips:

- Repair leaky faucets promptly.
- Take showers, not baths, because they use up less hot water.
- Don't let the tap water run unnecessarily while you wash or shave.

### Cooking Tips:

- Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator and avoid pre-heating.
- Use the smallest pan possible to cook because smaller pans require less energy.
- Whenever possible, use your microwave or toaster oven instead of your conventional oven.
- Keep the refrigerator stocked if possible; it takes more energy to cool an empty refrigerator.

ABCD is part of the Community Action Network, created with the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act (1964). The Act was a sweeping plan to improve the lives of all Americans, regardless of their circumstances. For more information visit ABCD at [bostonabcd.org](http://bostonabcd.org) or call 617-357-6012.

### Utility Shut-Off Protection

Many older adults struggle to pay their utility bills. If you, or someone you know, is having trouble paying a utility bill, there are resources that may help.

#### Electric, Gas, Water (Regulated Utilities)

If all residents of your home are age 65 and over, your electricity or gas cannot be shut off without permission from the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) between Nov. 15 and Mar. 15 and the utility service is needed to heat your home.

If you meet these requirements and your electric or gas has been shut off, you should call your utility company directly. They will ask for proof of your situation, such as a birth certificate or income-based proof of your inability to pay.

If, after speaking with your utility company, your electric or gas service is not restored, you should contact the Department of Public Utilities at 1-877-886-5066 (toll-free).

### Fuel Assistance for Older Adults

You may qualify for fuel assistance (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) based on your annual income and how many people are in your family. The program is available to homeowners and renters even if you live in non-subsidized housing with heat included in your rent. Your gross family income must be at or below 60% of the Massachusetts median income.

When you qualify for LIHEAP, you gain access to other energy related services including weatherization, heating system repairs, past-due bill reductions, and resources to promote energy conservation and efficiency in your home. Go green!

For help applying for fuel assistance, make an appointment with an Age Strong advocate by calling 617-635-4366.

## What to do with Your Car When it Snows

When you have a car in Boston, you need to be aware of what to do before, during, and after a snowstorm.

### During a Snow Emergency:

After the City of Boston announces a snow emergency, main roads need to be kept clear for plows and emergency vehicles. If you're parked on one of these main roads during a snow emergency, the City will ticket and tow your car.

### Discounted Garages:

Some garages offer discounts to Boston residents with a resident parking sticker. Discounted parking starts two hours before the City declares a snow emergency, and ends two hours after they lift the emergency.

Check [boston.gov/snow](http://boston.gov/snow) for information on discounted garages and where not to park during a snow emergency.

### Space Savers:

Did you use a trash can, cone, or some other object to save your parking space on the street? Here's what you need to know:

- You can only use a space saver when the City declares a snow emergency.
- You have 48 hours to use a space saver after the City ends an emergency. After that, you must remove it from the street.

Please keep in mind, space savers are banned in the South End.

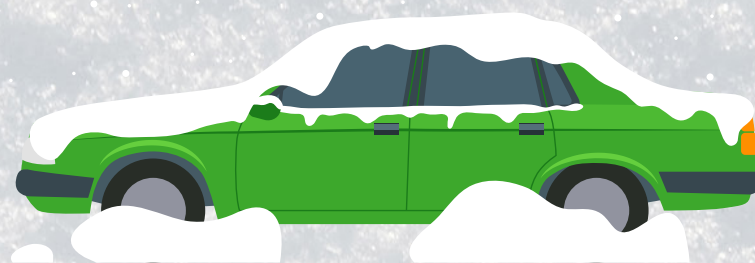
### If There's Snow on the Streets:

Please park at least 20 feet away from intersections and no more than one foot from the curb. This helps keep the streets open for plows and emergency vehicles.

Don't use your vehicle to block:

- Sidewalks
- Fire hydrants
- Ramps
- Driveways, or
- The street

For your safety, make sure to clear all snow at least one foot around your muffler before starting your engine. Blocked mufflers can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.



# To Do List



## Sign up for Emergency Alerts:

Emergencies can happen anywhere, anytime.

Our AlertBoston system is for residents, businesses, and visitors to the City of Boston. We'll notify you by phone, text, or email in the event of an emergency. By enrolling in AlertBoston, you're taking an important step to keep you and your family safe.

You can select different languages for alerts in our form at [boston.gov/emergencyalerts](http://boston.gov/emergencyalerts). If you would like alerts through TDD/TTY devices, please contact us at 617-635-1400 or [oem@boston.gov](mailto:oem@boston.gov).

## Important Phone Numbers:

Boston Police, Boston Fire, Emergency Medical

- Emergencies: 911
- Non-Emergency Requests: 311
- Age Strong Commission: 617-635-4366
- National Weather Service: 508-822-0634
- Boston Water and Sewer Commission: 617-989-7000
- City of Boston Tow Lot: 617-635-3900
- Eversource Gas and Electric: 800-592-2000
- National Grid: 800-322-3223

## ► In Boston, we Age Strong.

As part of the city's Health and 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:*

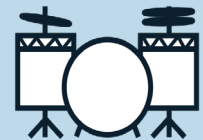
Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



### 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:

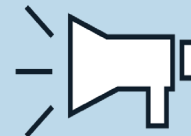
The Commission organizes many events and programs throughout the year. From large city-wide celebratory events to smaller neighborhood focused gatherings, we engage with older residents on many levels. During the pandemic we also host many programs online.



### 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](http://boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/age-strong-commission-weekly-digest).

**Boston's Age Strong Commission Weekly Digest**  
November 1-7, 2021  
Information & opportunities for Boston's older adults

WEEKLY DIGEST Table of Contents

- November Election
- Events November 1-7
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Flu Shots
- Día De Muertos

Stay Connected to Age Strong:  
City Hall, Room 271  
1 City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201  
617-635-4366  
[agestrong@boston.gov](mailto:agestrong@boston.gov)  
[boston.gov/agestrong](http://boston.gov/agestrong)  
f @AgeStrongBo

**2021 Medicare Annual Enrollment Period**  
Dates and deadlines you need to know

OCT 15 Annual Enrollment Period Begins  
DEC 7 Annual Enrollment Period Ends  
JAN 1 First date coverage can start

For 2021 Medicare Annual Enrollment, call Age Strong for an appointment with an advocate to see if you have the best plan at the least cost.

**Municipal Election**  
Tuesday, November 2, 2021  
On The Ballot:

- Office of Mayor
- Offices of City Councillor at-Large
- District City Council
- Three Ballot Questions

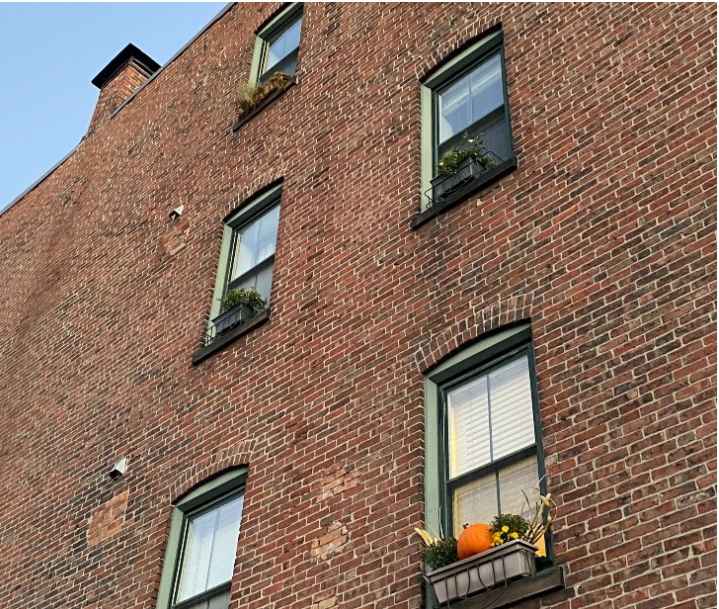
[boston.gov/elections](http://boston.gov/elections)

## Need Assistance?

Are you having trouble paying your mortgage? The Boston Home Center can help by offering Foreclosure Prevention and Intervention Counseling and Home Preservation Services.

Services are free and confidential.

Call 617-635-4663 or email [HomeCenter@boston.gov](mailto:HomeCenter@boston.gov) for assistance.



## Fare Free Bus Pilot

Have you heard? Boston's FREE Route 28 bus pilot program has been extended until December 31!

For more information go to [boston.gov/28bus](http://boston.gov/28bus).



## Recycling Clothing & Textiles

Did you know you can recycle your clothes and shoes in drop boxes across Boston? It's easy! Clean out the closet this weekend and give it a try!

View a map and list of sites at [boston.gov/clothing](http://boston.gov/clothing).

## Community Choice Electricity

Did you know that Bostonians have a choice of electricity provider? As part of Boston's plan to achieve carbon neutrality (our community will only release as much carbon pollution as our environment can safely absorb), the Department of Environment's Community Choice Electricity (CCE) program aims to give Boston residents the cleanest, most renewable energy at the lowest price, and at the most stable rate.

You can enroll to receive your electricity through CCE just by being an Eversource basic electricity customer. After opting in, Eversource will still manage your electricity, but deliver it via Constellation New Energy, Inc. who also supplies cleaner energy to 150 Massachusetts cities and towns. For more info, visit [boston.gov/departments/environment/community-choice-electricity](http://boston.gov/departments/environment/community-choice-electricity)



## Trash Day App

Do you know if your trash day is delayed? Are you sure you can recycle that? Download the FREE Trash Day app and get alerts about schedule changes and learn everything you need to know about trash, recycling, and even compost!

Learn more at [boston.gov/trash](http://boston.gov/trash).



# ► Seen Around Town





MAYOR MICHELLE WU  
& THE  
AGE STRONG COMMISSION

WISH YOU  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS  
&  
A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR!

