

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu

CELEBRATING GRANDPARENTS

p.16-23

Sept. 2022
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Free Publication



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In this issue you'll meet a variety of Boston older adults and learn about how being a grandparent brings them joy, as well as find a list of books recommended by Boston Public Library to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month. You'll also meet José Massó, long-time host of WBUR's "Con Salsa!" Latin jazz radio show.



Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



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Website: boston.gov/age-strong
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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

Hello, Boston!

Welcome to the September 2022 issue of Boston Seniority Magazine.

I hope you've been taking full advantage of your summer in Boston—whether visiting our parks or taking free fitness classes, enjoying a free summer concert or dance party, or connecting with your community at our Open Streets events in Jamaica Plain and Roxbury. If you missed the last two Open Streets, there's one more coming up on September 24 in Dorchester. These events are great opportunities to catch up with friends, meet neighbors, connect with City resources, and support local businesses.

I also hope that you've been staying cool through the recent heat waves—we opened BCYF cooling centers, splash pads at our parks and playgrounds, and some of our public pools to make sure everyone has access to cooling opportunities.

September is the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month. This is an opportunity for us to celebrate the influence of Hispanic Americans to our national history, culture, and achievements. For this month's Boston Seniority, our friends at the Boston Public Library have compiled a list of books by Hispanic authors. Inside, you'll also find an interview with the celebrated Boston-based jazz musician José Massó.

This month also celebrates National Grandparents Day! In this issue, you'll meet a handful of Boston's older residents, who will share their joys of being grandparents. We've also included resources for grandparents who are directly involved in raising their grandchildren.

Towards the end of this month, we'll usher in the fall—and hopefully some cooler weather! The fall is a beautiful season here in Boston and across the New England region so make sure to step outside and take in the vibrant colors of the changing seasons.

I'll see you around our neighborhoods,

Michelle Wu

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

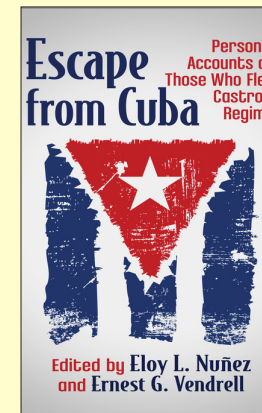


► Books

BPL Staff Book Picks

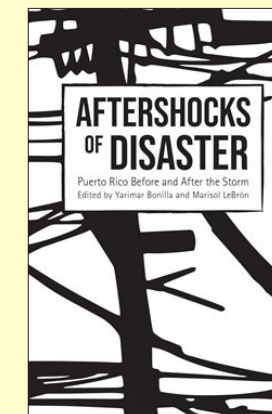
Source: Boston Public Library

Latinx Life is a list of recent books concerning the Latinx experience, and is published as part of the Boston Public Library's observance of Hispanic Heritage Month each year. The BPL owns print editions of all titles, and many are available in eBook and audiobook formats as well.



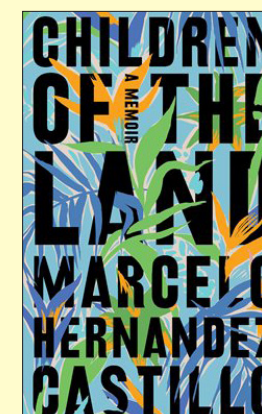
Escape from Cuba
by Eloy L. Nuñez and Ernest G. Vendrell

When Castro overthrew the government of Cuba in 1959, thousands fled the country. Nuñez shares the stories of many who landed in the U.S.



Aftershocks of Disaster
by Various Authors

Survivors of Hurricane Maria provide essays, poems, and photographs illustrating the struggle to survive and prevail in the wake of catastrophe.



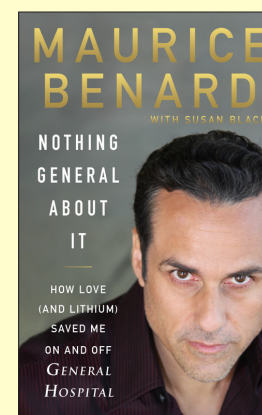
Children of the Land
by Marcelo Hernandez Castillo

A young Mexican American man describes his search for his identity while living with the trauma and heartache of his family's undocumented experiences.




Spirit Run
by Noé Álvarez

At 19, Álvarez dropped out of college to join Peace and Dignity Journeys: a four-month long road race from Canada to Guatemala.



Nothing General About It
by Maurice Benard

The popular soap opera actor details his struggles with fame, fatherhood, and bipolar disorder while using his success to help others living with mental illness.

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

Q&A with Con Salsa's José Massó

By Andrew Higginbottom, Communications Staff Assistant, Age Strong Commission

For over 47 years, José Massó has hosted WBUR's bilingual show "Con Salsa," bringing salsa and Latin jazz to the Greater Boston area. Massó, honored into the Broadcasting Hall of Fame, was also recently named one of the most influential people in Boston by Boston Magazine.

In a recent interview with *Boston Seniority Magazine*, Massó shared about Latin music's influence and more.

Tell us a little bit about your background. Where are you from?

I was born in 1950, in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, at the Rodríguez Army Hospital in the former Fort Brooke. My father, José Carmelo Massó, served in the U.S. Army, with his three brothers, retiring as Major after twenty-three years of active duty. He saw combat in Europe during World War II and was transferred to Japan as Captain when I was four. I learned English at the Army base school in Japan. I spoke Japanese in the neighborhood and maintained Spanish at home. Returning to Puerto Rico, no one spoke Japanese, so I lost the language, but continued English at school and Spanish everywhere else.

What first interested you in music?

I was six, living in Japan, when my father took the family to a life changing concert in 1957 featuring Pérez Prado, the iconic Cuban bandleader often called "The King of the Mambo." Unlike Korea, where Prado

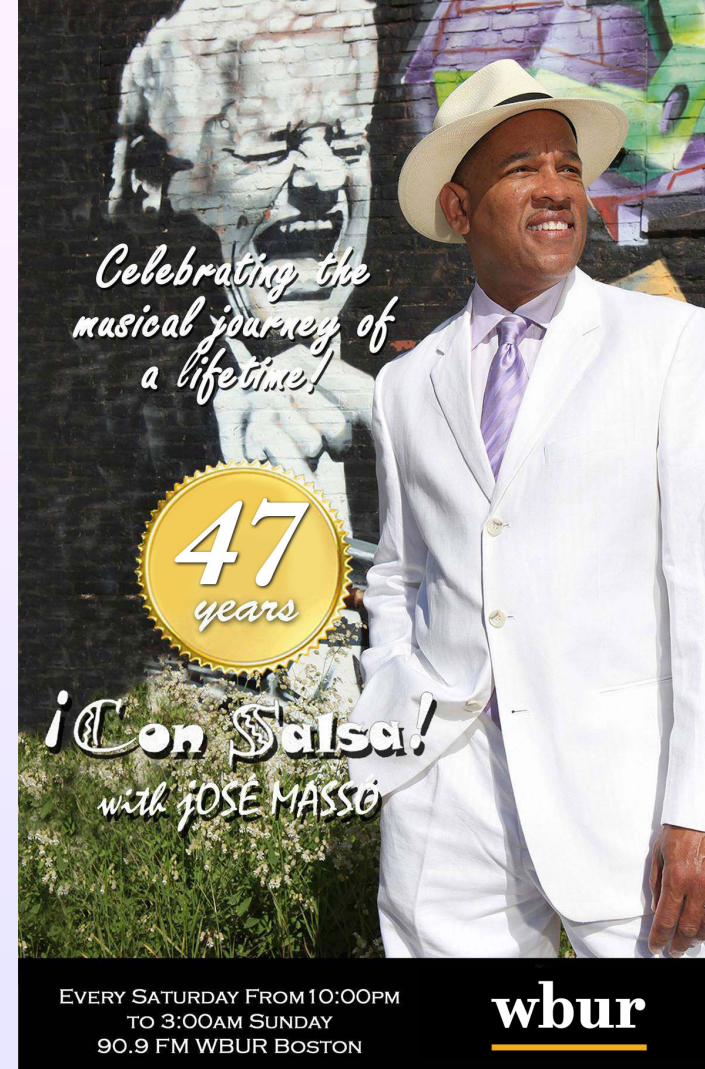
performed only military engagements, in Japan he played to 90,000 ecstatic Japanese fans during a single week of his month-long tour. When my father took us to his concert, Prado featured a twenty-two-piece band and I fell in love with Afro-Cuban rhythms and jazz. Sixty-five years later, I still have in my possession the concert program with his autograph.

How did "Con Salsa!" start?

After college, in 1973, I began my professional career as a high school teacher in Boston Public Schools. I taught Bilingual Ed at the old Copley Square High School, now the Muriel S. Snowden International School, on the corner of Newbury and Dartmouth in Back Bay.

The majority of my students were from Puerto Rico. Many were from the smaller cities, towns, and rural areas of the Island, few from the capital, San Juan. Most were the first in their families to attend school on the mainland. Although proud of their roots, they experienced different degrees of culture shock.

Several students urged me to consider a career in radio, suggesting I would have a broader audience than the students gathered in the classroom. They asked me to imagine sharing the poems of Jacobo and Felipe Luciano, former Young Lord and Last Poet and Nuyorican poet and playwright, Pedro Pietri.



Thanks to my former students Jesús Pitre, Benjamin Pitre, Wanda Rosa, and Marilyn Rodríguez, I have shared these poets' work "¡Con Salsa!" for forty-seven years. In 1975, I welcomed listeners to the first airing of "¡Con Salsa!" on WBUR 90.9FM. Since then, every time I prepare, during meditation and prayer, I thank those who, without knowing, inspired me to do what I do and be who I am. "Con Salsa!" airs Saturday nights 10pm to 3am.

What kept you passionate about music for nearly 5 decades on air?

I began my journey on radio not only to entertain, educate and inform, but to serve as a bridge between cultures, emphasizing the many contributions of Afro-Latinos to our history and culture. I do so with

the utmost respect for the music and its true pioneers and defenders who always understood its positive unifying power and its unique ability to smash barriers of every type.

Music and "¡Con Salsa!" have influenced my work during the past fifty years in education, community affairs, communications, media, politics, government, entertainment, sports, academia, philanthropy, and consulting to serve as a change agent, a bridge between cultures, races, ethnicities, and languages.

How has Latin music influenced the City of Boston? Do you think it has helped give Latinos in Boston a sense of pride in their heritage and identity?

Boston has welcomed a growing number of musicians from the Caribbean and Latin America to Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory. Many have become internationally renowned. Several have made Boston their home. Their contributions to the local music scene are immeasurable and the prestige that they bring to our community and city is priceless. Their presence at festivals, concerts and community gatherings have served as celebrations for Latino heritage and as a bridge between cultures and races.

The celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month serves as an opportunity for the city to uplift our artists as the international stars they are, who proudly represent our Latino communities throughout Boston and worldwide.



NOTICE

MBTA Orange line will be closed from August 19 - September 18

TRAVEL OPTIONS DURING ORANGE LINE SHUTDOWN PLAN AHEAD & ALLOW FOR LONGER TRAVEL TIMES

FREE SHUTTLES (ADA compliant)

- Between Forest Hills & Back Bay/Copley
- Between Oak Grove & State/Government Center
- Take the Green Line between Government Center & Copley
- Wheelchair accessible vans available upon request

COMMUTER RAIL

- Commuter Rail travel in City of Boston is free during shutdown
- When boarding, show the conductor a CharlieCard/CharlieTicket
- Cards/tickets don't need to have value on them
- Applies to Zone 1, 1A, 2
- Needham, Providence/Stoughton & Franklin/Foxborough Lines
- Free CharlieCards at Boston Public Library branches & City Hall
- Visit mbta.com/commuter-rail for maps/schedules

BLUEBIKES

- Free 30-day Bluebikes passes will be available for all
- Allows unlimited number of 45-minute trips at no
- Visit bluebikes.com to sign up & view bike locations

AGE STRONG SHUTTLE

- Boston residents age 60+ may schedule free rides to medical appointments Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm. Call in advance 617-635-3000. First come, first served.

DISCOUNT TAXI COUPONS

- Boston residents age 65+ or those with disabilities may purchase discount taxi coupons which can be used on Boston licensed cabs. Call 617-635-4366 or visit boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/how-buy-taxi-coupons.

Visit boston.gov/orange-line to stay up-to-date!

► Resources

Library Card Sign Up Month

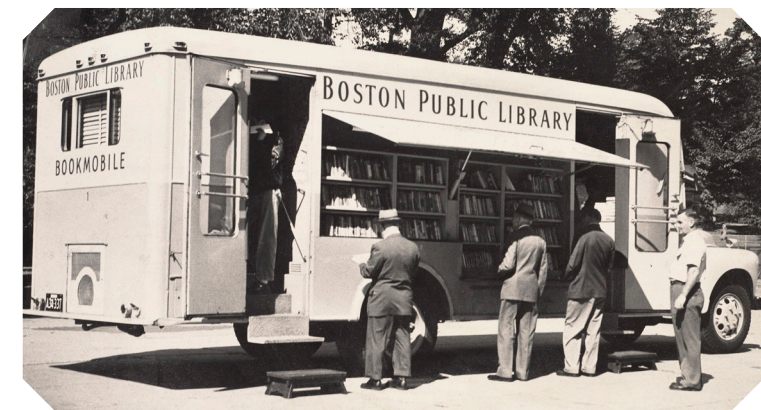
By Pat Kelleher

Growing up in Boston in the late 1950s/early 1960s, the visit to my neighborhood from the Boston Public Library's Bookmobile was a red letter day. Although we had yet to reach seven or eight years old, my sister and I were allowed to walk around the corner alone, show our library cards, and walk away with a week's worth of picture books and stories. Magical.

Bookmobiles are a thing of Boston's past, but libraries are very much still here and they are so much more than lenders of books. With September being library card sign up month, it's a good time to revisit all of what the free plastic card offers.

With 25 branches spread across the city, at the Boston Public Library, "books are just the beginning"--and printed books are now joined by other book formats. There are downloadable ebooks to be read on a computer or tablet--and an audiobook collection available for those who prefer spoken word or who may have reduced eyesight capacity. According to BPL, e-book and audiobook circulation reached 3 million in 2020!

Don't know how to download a book for reading or listening? The branch libraries are there to help. Beginner level basic computer classes are offered in the central



library and in every branch --to make an appointment, call 617-859-2323.

Here are some services available with your card:

- Laptop computers and internet access to your home (available to those who do not otherwise have access to computer equipment and internet).
- In-person and virtual book clubs.
- Museum passes: all branches have free passes to the Museum of Fine Arts, the Children's Museum, and the New England Aquarium.
- Classes, workshops, lectures: every branch has something different. Check out the events calendar online: bpl.org/events

You can apply for a library card at the front desk of any library location in Boston. You must have a picture ID and proof of Massachusetts residency. A MA driver's license satisfies both. For more information visit bpl.org or call 617-536-5400.

► Scam Corner

3 Simple Tips to Stop Scammers Now

Source: National Council on Aging

Whether it's a telephone call from a government impostor or a promise of free medical equipment, scam artists continue to target older adults in an attempt to get rich quick. Don't be the next victim. Here are three tips to help detect and prevent financial scams.

Hang Up on Government Impostors

The best way to avoid impost scams is to not accept calls from unknown sources. Also, don't call back numbers you don't recognize if they have not left a message. If you do accept one, hang up immediately if you suspect it is a scam. A big red flag is if the caller requests payment via gift card or wire transfer or threatens arrest for non-payment. Be sure to report the call to your local law enforcement or register a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov

Check your Medicare Summary Notice

Your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) can help combat scams. Medicare sends this notice every three months explaining which services and providers billed Medicare on your behalf, what Medicare paid them, and any amount you might owe. Check your MSN regularly to identify any suspicious activity, such as



a bill for equipment you didn't receive or from an unfamiliar provider. Contact 1-800-MEDICARE or the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol program at 800-892-0890 if you do spot something fishy.

Protect Your Identity

Anyone can become the victim of a data breach or hacking, even if you safeguard your personal information. Once scammers have your sensitive information, they can use it to open new lines of credit, file fake tax returns, and more. You can protect yourself by freezing your credit, setting up alerts, and monitoring your accounts. If you suspect you've already been a victim of identity theft, visit IdentityTheft.gov to report theft and make a recovery plan.

► Recipe

Mediterranean Pasta Salad

Ingredients:

- 3 cups uncooked fusilli pasta
- 2 heaping cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups arugula
- 1 cup Persian cucumbers, sliced into thin half moons
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup basil leaves, torn
- ½ cup minced parsley
- ½ cup chopped mint
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts

Dressing:

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, more for drizzling
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon herbes de Provence, or dried Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ¾ teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare the pasta according to the package directions, or until slightly past al dente.

2. Meanwhile, make the dressing. In a



lemon juice, mustard, garlic, herbes de Provence, red pepper flakes, and salt. (Note: the dressing will have a strong flavor, it'll mellow once it coats all of the pasta salad ingredients).

3. Drain the pasta, toss it with a little olive oil (so that it doesn't stick together) and let it cool to room temp. Transfer to a large bowl with the tomatoes, chickpeas, arugula, cucumbers, feta cheese, basil, parsley, mint, and pine nuts. Pour the dressing and toss to coat. Season to taste with more lemon, salt, pepper, and/or a drizzle of olive oil, if desired, and serve.

Source/photo credit:
loveandlemons.com

September Awareness

Citizenship Day is September 17

On September 17, 1787, the Founding Fathers signed the U.S. Constitution. Each year, on September 17, Americans celebrate Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. During this time, the U.S. Citizenship and Information Services (USCIS) encourages Americans to reflect on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and what it means to be a U.S. citizen. For more information, visit uscis.gov/citizenship.

National Voter Registration Day is September 22

60% of eligible voters are never asked to register. Getting registered to vote is just the FIRST step in getting #VoteReady! Making a plan to vote, knowing what's on the ballot or providing time off for employees to vote is all part of ensuring everyone has their voice heard at the ballot box. National Voter Registration Day is a nonpartisan civic holiday celebrating our democracy, first observed in 2012. Nearly 4.7 million voters have registered to vote on the holiday to date.

NVRD involves volunteers and organizations from all over the country hitting the streets in a single day to create broad awareness of voter registration opportunities to reach tens of thousands of voters who may not register otherwise. According to U.S. Census, as many as 1 in 4 eligible Americans are not registered to vote. NVRD wants to make sure everyone has the opportunity to vote. For more information, visit nationalvoterregistrationday.org.

National Good Neighbor Day is September 28

National Good Neighbor Day was created in the early 1970s by Becky Mattson of Lakeside, Montana. In 1978, United States President Jimmy Carter issued Proclamation 4601: "As our Nation struggles to build friendship among the peoples of this world, we are mindful that the noblest human concern is concern for others. Understanding, love and respect build cohesive families and communities. The same bonds cement our Nation and the nations of the world. For most of us, this sense of community is nurtured and expressed in our neighborhoods where we

give each other an opportunity to share and feel part of a larger family...I call upon the people of the United States and interested groups and organizations to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and activities."

Get to know your neighbors. Host a block party, invite neighbors over for a BBQ, help a neighbor with a project, or go for a walk around your neighborhood. Be the good neighbor. Because, good neighbors make great neighborhoods. Learn more at nationalgoodneighborday.com.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

We showcase their diverse histories and contributions to public life, culture, language, and identity. We celebrate through a wide range of events. We're proud to celebrate the vibrant cultures, art and history of Hispanic Americans with programs featuring the achievements of Latinx actors, musicians, educators and more. Each story adds a distinct and dynamic perspective to our country's

shared history. During Hispanic Heritage Month and beyond, we continue to embrace the diversity of cultures and generations within the Latin American community.

This year, the Latinx Employee Resource Group (ERG), a network of employees within the City of Boston, is spearheading events during the month. The group is building on its mission to promote the diversity and professional development of its members.

For more information, visit boston.gov/national-hispanic-heritage-month

September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month is observed each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. These include extreme heat, earthquake, flood, hurricane, pandemic, power outage, thunderstorm, tornado, tsunami, wildfire, and many others.

The government website ready.gov outlines how to become prepared, how to make a plan for each potential emergency, tools, and more. Each family has different needs – like whether there are young

children, anyone disabled, needs for translation, money, evacuation, dietary needs, and how to include pets.

You can sign up for emergency alerts through the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management at boston.gov/departments/emergency-management. For non-emergency issues, call 311.

For more information visit ready.gov, or call 311.

September Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

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

SEPTEMBER 8
Sonny and Perley — The Great American Songbook, International Cabaret, and Bossa Nova
Time: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Location: Central Library in Copley Square, 700 Boylston St., Boston (Rabb Lecture Hall, Boylston St. Building, Lower Level) **Contact Info:** 617-859-2129

SEPTEMBER 9
House Dance Party
Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Location: 1 City Hall Square, Boston **Contact Info:** Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment, 617-635-3911

SEPTEMBER 13
Parks Summer Fitness: Yoga
Time: 6:30 am - 7:30 am
Location: Doherty Playground, 349 Bunker Hill St., Charlestown
Contact Info: Parks and Recreation - Jennifer, 617-635-4505

SEPTEMBER 14
Parks Summer Fitness: Line Dancing
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: Franklin Park (Near the Golf Clubhouse), 1 Circuit Dr., Dorchester **Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation - Jennifer, 617-635-4505

SEPTEMBER 15
Aaron Larget-Caplan Concerts
Time: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Location: BPL - Uphams Corner, 500 Columbia Rd., Dorchester **Contact Info:** Georgia, 617-265-0139

SEPTEMBER 16
Friends of the Connolly Branch Annual Book Sale
Time: 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Location: BPL - Connolly, 433 Centre St., Jamaica Plain
Contact Info: Fran, connollyfriendsjp@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 19
Weekly Chess Club
Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Location: BPL - North End, 25 Parmenter St., North End
Contact Info: 617-227-8135

SEPTEMBER 22
Poetry Reading with Harris Gardner
Time: 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Location: BPL - East Boston, 365 Bremen St., East Boston
Contact Info: James, 617-569-0271

SEPTEMBER 25
2022 Watercolor Painting Workshops
Time: 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Location: Allendale Woods, 75 VFW Pkwy, West Roxbury
Contact Info: Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505

"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."

- Unknown

Open Newbury Street



Newbury Street will be car-free on **Sundays** from **10 a.m.** until **8 p.m.**, from Berkeley Street to Massachusetts Avenue.

- ▶ September 4
- ▶ September 11
- ▶ September 18
- ▶ September 25

For more information, visit [boston.gov/departments/transportation/open-newbury-street](https://www.boston.gov/departments/transportation/open-newbury-street) or call 617-635-4680.



Happy National Grandparents Day!

September 11th is National Grandparents Day! A grandparent's relationship with their grand and great grandchildren is a unique one. Read about Boston grandparents and what brings them joy...

-Boston Seniority Team



Celebrating Grandparents

Boston Seniority Magazine spoke with Boston residents from various neighborhoods about being grandparents.

Interviews by Eliza Nicholson, Communications Intern & Andrew Higginbottom, Communications Staff Assistant, Age Strong Commission



Janice Grace, resident of Charlestown, has three grandchildren and four great grandchildren. “My grandchildren’s names are Jessica, Brendan and David,” she says. “I love them to death, they bring me so much joy! Every June 17th they all come to my house to watch the Bunker Hill parade go by. We have a big family party. It makes me so happy.”

Shashi Pinni, Roslindale resident, has two grandchildren. “Their names are Amara and Maya.” According to Shashi, “I enjoy my grandchildren, because they can say anything and I don’t have to discipline them. I really love my grandchildren more than anything, every day I pray for them. We play games like chess, bingo and other games. They always keep me on my toes. I tell them

“enjoy your life, but study well. School is more important than anything else. Education is something no one can take from you.” Shashi came to the U.S. from India to be closer to her grandchildren. “My granddaughter is like my coach. Every time she sees I have not done my steps, she turns off the TV and tells me I must go on a walk, so I can live many years.”

Olga Davila has 9 grandchildren. “I spoil them. I give them a lot of hugs and kisses. When they were little, I took them to the park, to get pizza, go bowling—whatever they like.” When asked what wisdom she’d like to pass on, Olga shares “stay in school and create a future for yourself, so you can do something for your own children.” When asked to share a memory

she says “I was chasing my grandson all over. I said ‘come over here, I’m gonna put you in the stroller,’ and he would just run all over the place. I love how much energy they have.”

Michelle Pierre, Hyde Park resident and Age Strong receptionist, has two grandchildren. “I like taking care of them, and feeling like I am a part of their lives. I like to do arts and crafts with them. They love to paint. I always tell my grandchildren to finish their schooling, because it’s the most important thing.” A funny thing Michelle shares about her grands is “they like to call me by different names. Sometimes it’s grandma, but sometimes they switch and call me nana.”

Eleanor Lovejoy, resident of Dorchester has 6 grandchildren and one great grandchild. According to her, the best part about being a grandparent is “you love them, but you can always send them back home.” Eleanor loves to spend time with them. “We do board games, we go to family cookouts, I bake with them, it’s a lot of fun.” When asked what wisdom she’d pass on, she shares “be true to yourself and be good to others.” She is proud of them and their successes. “I go to their graduations and award ceremonies—and to see them help in their communities.”



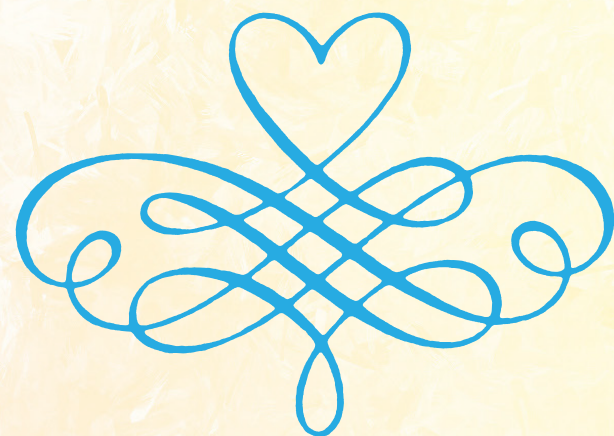
Michelle with her grandchildren



Harry Pierre of Brighton has two grandchildren. “It’s fun to be with them,” he shares. “My favorite part is being able to enjoy my family. In the spring I took my grandson to soccer, lacrosse, and swim practice. I loved that. Being a grandparent brings me so much happiness. I love to spend time with them.” According to Harry, “they’re always funny. They’re both really curious and it’s fun to learn and explore with them.”



Harry having fun with his grandkids



Mattie with her lovely family



Mattie Deed, resident of Roxbury, has four grandchildren. “I get to love them unconditionally, and spoil them whenever I see them and then send them home. I

like taking them to the movies or neighborhood gatherings like Roxbury Open Streets.” When asked what wisdom she’d like to pass on, she shares, “love the body and the space that you’re in. Respect yourself and respect others. When you do that, you can create the environment you want to see in the world.” She continues, “my life is so rich and full because of my grandchildren and I’ve accomplished what I was put here to do, which is to leave a lasting legacy. My favorite memory is cooking for them. They love my cooking. I also love when they come stay at my house, and come to church with me on Sundays.”



Jose with his family

José Massó, Hyde Park resident, has 7 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren. “Now that I am retired,” he shares, “I spend more time with them daily. I get to hear about their days and meet their friends. I love being at their theater performances, dance recitals, or football games. I love how much they love my

wife’s (their grandmother’s), cooking—her rice and beans! Our grandchildren are witty! When one was two, he heard me say I was tired. He said, ‘well, if you’re tired, why don’t you just go to bed!’” According to Jose, “everything I do is for the benefit of my children’s children and their children in the future.”

"Love is the greatest gift that one generation can leave to another."

—Richard Garnett

KINnections Program: Resources for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Boston’s Age Strong Commission supports a variety of nonprofit organizations who provide support and services to older adults in Boston. One is the KINnections Program housed within the MSPCC (Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Children).

Specifically, KINnections provides resources and support for grandparents raising their grandchildren. It aims to strengthen families by offering information on guardianships, housing/rental subsidies, food, transportation, education, and legal services. The program also connects these families with each other at family-focused activities, support groups on positive parenting and raising healthy families, as well as respite care for grandparent/ caretakers.

As part of KINnections’s focus on positive youth development, it partners with Cradles to Crayons who provide essentials to children, including clothing, shoes, jackets, books, and toys.

For more information call 617-983-5850 or visit mspcc.org.

► 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:

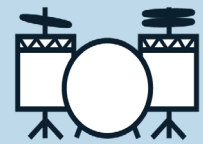
Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



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:

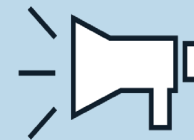
The Commission organizes many **in person and virtual** events and programs throughout the year.



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.

Preventing Suicide, Providing Hope

(Sept. - Suicide Prevention Month)

By Libby Arsenault, LCSW, Behavioral Health Manager, Age Strong Commission

Older adults have a greater risk of dying by suicide compared to any other age group in the United States. Men age 75+ are the most at-risk. It's important to know the risk factors and how to help yourself or someone else who may be in need of support. Suicide is often preventable.

The most common risk factor for suicide is depression, which often goes undiagnosed. Depression is **NOT** a usual part of aging. Signs of depression include loss of interest in things that are usually found enjoyable, social isolation, personal hygiene neglect, mood changes, complaints of physical ailments, and increased alcohol or drug use. Stressful life events such as the death of a loved one can increase suicide risk, as well as having access to weapons or narcotics. Warning signs include not taking medications, changing eating habits, giving belongings away, and putting affairs in order.

Those who have positive coping strategies, a sense of purpose in life, social connections, and access to mental health care can combat risk. If someone is showing risk signs, start a conversation with that person. While it may feel

uncomfortable to talk openly, try saying, "I've noticed you've been feeling down lately. What's going on?" Don't be afraid to ask more direct questions, as they may save a life. If you or someone you know is in danger of suicide, call the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Hotline), go to the nearest emergency room, or call 911.

The 988 Lifeline was implemented by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in July 2022, offering free 24/7 access to crisis counselors who help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crises, or any other kind of emotional distress. Services are provided with translations in over 250 languages.



Supporting Sobriety & Raising Awareness of Addiction Recovery

(Sept. - National Recovery Month)

By Libby Arsenault, Behavioral Health Manager, Age Strong Commission

Over one million adults aged 65+ live with a substance use disorder (SUD) in America. Alcohol, opioid/heroin, and cocaine use is on the rise, as is misuse of prescription medications. The good news is that recovery from SUD is possible. Recovery is defined as "a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential."

Unique risk factors for SUD apply specifically to older adult populations. Physiological changes happen naturally as people age, making it more difficult for their bodies to absorb and break down drugs and alcohol. About one third of adults in their 60s and 70s use five or more prescribed medications daily, increasing risk for harmful interactions between alcohol/drugs. Major life events such as retirement, moving to a new home, or the loss of a loved one puts older adults at greater risk. Genetics, chronic pain, and mental health disorders also play significant roles in SUD.

National guidelines suggest two alcoholic drinks or less in a day for men and one drink or less in a day for women as moderate consumption. Older adults



have less tolerance for alcohol. If you are concerned about your pattern of substance use, you can take steps towards beginning your recovery process. Your primary care doctor can arrange for screening, assessment, and treatment for SUD. Or choose a mental health therapist who specializes in SUD in older adults. There are free recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. Including family, friends and caregivers throughout treatment and ongoing recovery improves outcomes. It's never too late for recovery!

For more information, contact the Mayor's Office of Recovery services at 617-534-2730 or visit boston.gov/government/cabinets/boston-public-health-commission/recovery-services



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
 August 15 - August 21, 2022
 Information & opportunities for Boston's older adults

WEEKLY DIGEST
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Polling Locations
 Events August 15-21
 ADA Day
 Boston Movie Nights
 Age Strong Shuttle

IMPORTANT MESSAGE!
 Your polling location may have changed.
 Check your polling location online here:
sec.state.ma.us/VoterRegistrationSearch
 For more information please call 311 or visit boston.gov/election

NEW POLLING LOCATIONS
 Boston has added 20 new voting precincts to adjust for population change over the past decade. The new voting precincts will make voting more convenient with reduced wait times and increased voter access.

VOTING DATES AND DEADLINES

AUGUST 27 Voter Registration Deadline at 5 p.m.	SEPTEMBER 5 Deadline for (qualified) In Person Absentee Voting Ends at 12 p.m.
AUGUST 27 - SEPTEMBER 2 Week of Early Voting	SEPTEMBER 6 STATE PRIMARY DAY Deadline to Return All Ballots to a Drop Box or the Boston Election Department at 8 p.m.
AUGUST 29 Deadline to Request a Vote By Mail or Absentee Ballot at 5 p.m.	

CITY OF BOSTON Election

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
 @AgeStrongBos

AGE+ City of Boston Age Strong Commission

Falls Prevention Week

This year, Falls Prevention Week is September 18-24 and is a nationwide effort to raise awareness on preventing falls, reducing falls risk, and helping older adults live without the fear of falling. Here are some things to consider when preventing falls:

Review your space: consider removing throw rugs & pet toys. Review your medications: some can make you lightheaded/dizzy. Try to gain more muscle/balance with yoga/tai chi. Check your vision: make sure your glasses have the most current prescription, so you can best see where you're walking. Install railings, hold bars throughout the home. Wear shoes with a rubber grip for better traction. For more information visit ncoa.org.

Cost Savings Strategies

Did you know that the **Medicare Savings Plans** can help you pay for Medicare premiums and make you eligible for BIG SAVINGS on your prescriptions? Check these current 2022 numbers. If you have Medicare and your income and assets are similar to those below, you might qualify!

Medicare Savings Plans	Gross Monthly Income Limit	Asset Limit*	Application to use	Benefits
MassHealth Senior Buy-In (QMB)	\$1,473 (individual) \$1,984 (couple)	\$16,800 (individual) \$25,200 (couple)	MassHealth SACA-2 or Buy-In 1-800-841-2900	Medicare A, B premiums, deductibles and copays, automatic full extra help with prescription costs
MassHealth Buy-In (SLMB, QI-1)	\$1,869 (individual) \$2,518 (couple)	\$16,800 (individual) \$25,200 (couple)	MassHealth SACA-2 or Buy-In 1-800-841-2900	Pays Medicare B premium & full extra help with prescription costs

*Primary residence and one vehicle are not counted

To learn more, call:

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

▶ **Ethos at 617-522-6700**



Age Strong Shuttle

Boston residents age 60+ may schedule free rides to non-emergency medical appointments. Call in advance, 617-635-3000.

Scheduling Available:

Monday – Friday
 8am – 4pm

Memory Café

A Memory Café is for those living with memory loss, their loved ones and care partners. Engage in free social and artistic activities on every **2nd Wednesday of every month from 10-12pm.**

Sep 14 | Oct 12 | Nov 9 | Dec 14

Location: Codman Square Library
 690 Washington Street, Dorchester
 Bilingual (Spanish) | Light refreshments served

For more information & to RSVP, contact Corinne White:
 617-635-3745 or corinne.white@boston.gov



► Seen Around Town



IMPORTANT MESSAGE!



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For more information please call **311** or visit boston.gov/election

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