

Nov 2018 Issue 10 Vol. 42

**Free Publication** 



Mayor's Letter **b.** 4



Flu Prevention p. 6



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# On the Cover:

Our cover stars this month are Hyde Park residents James and Cynthia Israel, both 72-yearsold, who have been married for 52 years. James is an Air Force veteran, who recently retired from the Environmental Protection Agency. Cynthia used to work at Mass General



Hospital. Together, they have four sons and seven grandchildren. "I'm grateful for life, reasonable health, and strength," says James. The secret to that strength? "I always say you have to have 25 laughs a day. It keeps you young and healthy." See **page 20** for more reasons they are grateful.

Martha Rios *Editor and Photographer* 

**Boston** 

**Seniority** 

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Stay Connected with the Commission on Affairs of the Elderly:



**Main number:** (617) 635-4366



Website: www.boston.gov/elderly



Facebook: @BostonElderlyCommission



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

Email us at Bostonseniority@boston.gov

# From the Mayor's Desk

# **Honoring our Veterans, Today and Everyday**

Veterans are honored members of our community. They embody the idea of service for the good of all. They've made countless sacrifices, and so have their families. We recognize their strong commitment to serving. When veterans come home, they continue to give back. They're leaders, mentors, first responders, parents, and grandparents. They make valuable contributions to our city.

Veterans and their families also face unique challenges. Many deal with deep wounds, both visible and invisible. Since I took office, I've worked to make sure this a city where veterans are honored and thanked every day. A city where vets know that they can ask for help and that they'll get it. A city where vets can really thrive, personally and professionally. It's what we owe them.

In Boston, we strive to go beyond a thank you. We're working to make Boston a place a where veterans know they are valued, not just on Veterans Day, but everyday, through our commitment to housing homeless vets, supportive housing, healthcare, recovery services, employment programs for vets with and without PTSD, and much more.

In Boston, we want everyone to call our city their home. And that especially includes our veterans, who deserve happiness, health, and support, after selflessly serving all of us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

-Mayor Martin J Walsh



Health Insurance

# Medicare Open Enrollment

Oct. 15 - Dec. 7

Do Not Ignore Your Medicare Mail

Picking a plan is an important and personal decision. Here are some things to think about as you compare Medicare plans to find one that meets your needs:

Does the plan cover the services you need? Think about what services and benefits you're likely to use in the coming year and find coverage that meets your needs. If you have other types of health or prescription drug coverage, make sure you understand how that coverage works with Medicare.

What does the plan cost? The lowest-cost health plan option might not be the best choice for you – consider things like the cost of premiums and deductibles, how much you pay for hospital stays and

doctor visits, and whether it's important for you to have expenses balanced throughout the year. Are the plan's providers and rules convenient? Your time is valuable. Where are the doctors' offices? Which pharmacies can you use? Can you get prescriptions by mail? Answers to these questions may help in deciding which plan is best.

\*Interpreters Available

During open enrollment you will have a chance to CHANGE your plan for next year. The Elderly Commission has trained **SHINE** (*Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone*) counselors who can help you understand plan changes as wall as other available options. Call us at 617-635-4366.

Source: Medicare.gov

# Infographic

# Fight the Flu: Prevention Tips

**Source: Boston Public Health Commission** 

The flu is a concern each year in Boston, especially from October through March, when most flu activity occurs. Fall is the best time to get yourself and your family vaccinated.

Influenza (often called "flu") is a contagious illness caused by the influenza virus. Symptoms include fever, cough, muscle aches, headache, runny nose, sore throat and general weakness. The onset of these symptoms may be sudden. Symptoms can range from mild to severe. Children, seniors, and people with other medical problems are at higher risk to develop severe illness if they get the flu.

Everyone six months and older should get the flu vaccine. Some people have a higher risk for serious illness, including the elderly, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or other conditions). Even people who do not have these high-risk conditions can get the virus with mild or no symptoms. However, they are still contagious and can spread the disease to high-risk individuals. If you have a high-risk condition, encourage everyone around you to get vaccinated.

# Did you know...

Flu symptoms usually start 1 to 4 days after a person breathes in the virus, but it can take longer. Most people can spread the flu virus 1 day before their symptoms begin until about a week afterward.

## How can I prevent the flu?



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.



Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.



If you become sick, stay home.



If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve



Clean surfaces in your home regularly with a household cleaner.



A person with the flu should stay home for 24 hours after their fever has gone away without the use of fever reducing medicine. For most people, this will be a minimum of 4 days.



Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand gel.



Avoid close contact with people who are sick when possible.



Getting vaccinated is the best protection against influenza.

For more information about the flu, contact:

Boston Public Health Commission www.bphc.org (617) 534-5611

Your Primary Care Provider









In the News

# Mayor Walsh and the Elderly Commission **Host Annual Senior Corps Volunteer Event**

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Boston's Commission on Affairs of the Elderly celebrated Boston's Senior Corps volunteers, who are mentors, coaches and companions to people in need. In celebration of seniors' powerful contributions to their community, the event, held at the Thelma Burns Center in Dorchester, was carnival themed. Two hundred volunteers from around Boston attended the nostalgic event, enjoying carnival- themed games and food.

"Everyone in this program is making a

real difference in people's lives," said Commissioner Emily Shea, addressing the senior RSVP and Senior Companion volunteers. "Today and every day, we celebrate and recognize your talents and skills, and we are thankful you are sharing your experience with the city."

Since 1972, the Boston RSVP program has helped match talented seniors over the age of 55 with non-profit agencies throughout the city. This year marks the 46th anniversary of Boston's RSVP program. The program has 263 volunteers and in 2017 volunteers served 37,788 hours in nonprofits across the city.

Since 1988, the Senior Companion Program has matched older adults (55+) with at-risk seniors to assist them to continue to live independently at home. This year marks the 30th anniversary of Boston's Senior Companion program.

The program currently has 50 volunteers, and in 2017 volunteers served 35,788 hours in nonprofits all over the city. There are currently 313 Senior Corps volunteers serving through the Elderly Commission.

### **Special thank you to:**

City of Boston's Office of Emergency Management, Mayor Walsh's office of Tourism Sports and Entertainment, and Walgreens

# Interested in **Becoming a Volunteer?**

At the Elderly Commission, we have a number of ways you can use your experience in the community!

Visit our office at City Hall or call 617-635-4366 for more information about how to join our team of volunteers.

**Events + Activities** 

# **November Happenings:** Ways to Fill Your Calendar

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



The City Talks: Belonging **Time:** 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Location: Museum of Fine Arts, 465 Huntington Avenue **Contact Information:** 617-267-9300; Free with

museum admission

**Color Your World:** 

**Coloring for Adults** 

**Time:** 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Location: BPL - West End

Branch, 151 Cambridge St.

Contact Info: 617-523-3957

**NOVEMBER** 18

**NOVEMBER** 

19

**National Novel Writing** Month Write-In

**Time:** 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Location: Central Library in Copley Square Contact Info: bostonnano@gmail.com



### **Computer Basics**

**Time:** 10:30 am - 12:30 pm **Location:** BPL - Codman Sq., 690 Washington St. Contact Info: 617-436-8214

Our next issue of Boston

Seniority will be our

annual calendar!



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### Yoga

**Time:** 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Location: BPL - Mattapan Branch, 1350 Blue Hill Ave Contact Info: 617-298-9218 bpl.bibliocommons.com



## **Downtown Boston Holiday Market**

Time: 11 am - 7 pm Mon-Sat:

11 am - 5 pm Sun

Location: 467 Washington St. Contact Info: 617-482-2139



**Time:** 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm **Location:** Trident Booksellers & Cafe, 338 Newbury St.

Contact Info: 617-267-8688



**Free Immigration Consultations with Volunteer Attorneys** 

**Time:** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Location: Boston City Hall, 1 City Hall Square, Room 806 Contact Info: 617-635-2980



# This Month ...

**Holiday Connections** with AT&T and the **Elderly Commission** 

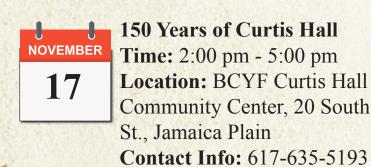
Join us for our annual holiday event!

December 7, 2018 7:30 am - 2:00 pm

### **Event features:**

- Free calls to anywhere in the world
- Information about how to use technology
- Complimentary breakfast/lunch
- Fun photos and a surprise visitor

For more info call Marybeth at 617-635-3959. Pick-ups will be available for groups of 8 or more.



# Caregiving Info

# It's National Family Caregivers Month Here is some helpful caregiving information.

Contributed by Boston Senior Home Care, which links older adults and individuals with disabilities to programs and services that help live independently in their own homes and communities. They also provide support, information, and resources to caregivers of family members, friends, or loved ones.

The Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) of Boston offers caregivers assistance and support to ease the strain and reduce the challenges of caregiving at no cost to the caregiver.

Caring for a loved one can often be difficult and frustrating.

We recognize the potential emotional, physical, and financial strain of caregiving, as well as its rewards.

Our FCSP empowers caregivers by providing information, education, support, and services that enhance the quality of life.

### What does FCSP offer?

- Information & Referral for services and resources available within the community
- Individual caregiver advising to identify short-terms goals, as well as long-term planning for care at home, in alternative community settings or in a facility
- Respite care for temporary relief from the demands of providing constant care
- Referrals for caregivers to local support groups
- Education and training offered
- Assistance available in Cantonese, English, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian

# Who is eligible?

- Caregivers providing care for family or friends who are over 60 years of age and/or with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD)
- Caregivers who reside in the City of Boston or who provide care for a Boston resident

For more information or to make a referral, call Boston ElderINFO at 617-292-6211

# **Savvy Caregiver Program**

Savvy Caregiver is a free, 6-week informative training for caregivers caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's and related dementias. The goal is to increase caregiver knowledge, skills, self-efficacy, and well-being. Interested in learning more about this ongoing program? Call Bernice Osborne at 617-938-5104 or email her at bosborne@bshcinfo.org

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the Administration for Community Living in collaboration with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and Elder Services of Merrimack Valley

# **Elderly Commission Resources**

Call us (617) 635-4366 for more information.



Memory Cafes, offered in English and Spanish, are welcoming monthly places for individuals experiencing memory loss and their caregivers.



**Respite Companions** offer friendship and are attentive to an individual living with dementia while giving the gift of respite to a caregiver.

# The Alzheimer's Association

Visit www. alz.org for more information.



The Alzheimer's Association is here all day, every day for people facing Alzheimer's disease through our free 24/7 Helpline: 800-272-3900. Our Helpline provides reliable information and support to all those who need assistance, such as individuals living with memory loss, Alzheimer's or other dementia, caregivers, health care professionals and the public.

**Bag Ordinance** 

# Boston, Bring Your Own Bag!

**By Stephanie Acquario**, Disposable Bag Reduction Coordinator, Environment

We know that single-use plastic bags have an impact on the environment. They often end up in City streets and gutters, abandoned lots, and even in trees. Through this ordinance, the City aims to reduce the use of disposable checkout bags by retail stores in Boston.

- Starting in mid-Dec, we're working together with our retailers to transitioning away from disposable plastic bags.
- Newspaper bags, garbage bin liners, produce bags not included
- These new bags will cost a minimum of 5 cents each, so bring your own reusable bag to avoid the cost!

### Tips for bringing your own bag:

- Clean your bags by using environmentally friendly cleaning supplies like spray disinfectant and wipes! If your bags are canvas, you can throw them in the washing machine when they're dirty!
- Keep your bags in your car, near your door, in your purse, or other visible places to make sure to remember them when you go shopping
- •You can purchase reusable bags at most retailers

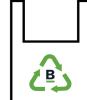
Send us a picture of you using your reusable bags at Boston retailers to stephanie.acquario@boston.gov.



# Facts about plastic bags (why bring your own bag?)

- Massachusetts residents are estimated to use more than 2 billion bags per year (about a bag per person per day)
- Plastic bags are used an average of 12 minutes, yet it takes a single plastic bag 500 to 1,000 years to degrade
- Eighty-five percent of all sea turtles will be injured or killed by plastics in their lifetimes, including the endangered leatherback turtles that summer in Massachusetts Bay before migrating to the tropics to mate
- During the 2011 International Coastal Cleanup, Massachusetts CLEANSWEEP volunteers collected 5,712 pounds of plastic bags, one of the most common forms of litter found.
- We're joining the 82 other cities and towns in Massachusetts that have approved plastic bag regulations.

**Have questions?** Visit boston.gov/plastic-bags



Age-Friendly Businesses

# It's Almost Time for the Holidays

By Nicole Chandler, Age-Friendly Boston

Before you spend money online or large retailer, consider what's in your neighborhood. Here are three reasons to shop locally:

- 1. Support your local community
- 2. Find unique items and specialty goods
- 3. Connect with neighbors/businesses

We launched the Age- and Dementia-Friendly Business designation in West Roxbury. The participating businesses committed to making improvements that create a welcoming space for people of all ages and abilities. Visit these businesses in the West Roxbury Main Street District.

- Milton Chiropractic and Rehabilitation and Bay State Physical Therapy
- Parkway Hearing
- Recreo Coffee and Roasterie and Boston City Hall
- Body Mind Systems Martial Arts Center/Human Harmonies
- BCYF Roche Center
- Cryotherapy West Roxbury
- Parkway Real Estate
- Local 338 Bagels & Coffee



For seniors 65+ with MassHealth 1-855-833-8124

**TTY:** 711

Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits may change on January 1 of each year. This information is not a complete description of benefits. Co-pays may vary based on the level of Extra Help you receive. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium unless it is paid on your behalf by MassHealth. Please contact the plan for further details.

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# The Health Benefits of Gratitude

Practicing gratitude feels good for the soul, but did you know that it's good for your body and brain? There have been scientifically-proven health and psychological benefits of living a grateful life.

In a 2012 study published in Psychology Today, grateful people reported feeling healthier than those who do not practice gratitude. Spending just a few minutes a day thinking about the things you're grateful for can help improve your relationships and even help you sleep better!

"Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for." -Zig Ziglar

# How to Develop a Gratitude Practice

- Pick out a special journal to write down your thankful thoughts. It doesn't need to be fancy, but it should inspire you to commit to this daily practice. See the Buzz on page 25 for a chance to win a complimentary journal!
- Choose a time of day to write in your journal. Many people start their day in the morning by jotting down some happy, grateful thoughts. You also could wait until evening to write about all the good things you encountered throughout the day.
- **Take your time and make it personal.** This journal is meant for
  your eyes only, so you don't need to
  rush or obsess over how it sounds.
- Feeling stumped? Consider different categories. Think about places, people, things, and events that you feel thankful for.
- Reflect on your previous entries. It can be a pleasant reminder of beautiful experiences and help inspire new thoughts for your journal.

Start your own gratitude journal with this template!

# My Gratitude Journal

# I am grateful for...

	Date:	Date:	
1.		1	
2		2.	
2		3.	
1		4.	
_		5.	
	Date:	Date:	
1		1	
2.		1	
3		2	
1		3	
		4 5	
	Date:	Date:	
1			
		1	
		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5.		5.	

"If you want to find happiness, find gratitude."



# Here's How We Can Help

We are focused on setting the City's direction for successful aging. We recently launched Boston's Age-Friendly Action Plan, which will serve as a guide in ensuring policies, programs, services and structures are in place to enable older adults to age well. The Commission is also dedicated to improving older Bostonians' lives by providing direct services and connecting you to important benefits and programs.

# Did you know?

It's National Diabetes Awareness Month.



# **Housing:**

The Elderly 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.



# **Access to Information and Benefits:**

Community Advocates connect seniors 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 access several tax relief exemptions and programs like the Elderly Exemption 41C, Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit and more
- Assist older adults with navigating systems including the aging network and city services.



# **Transportation:**

We are committed to helping people continue to lead independent lives by connecting them to transportation resources. We offer:

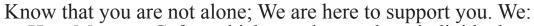
- Free wheelchair-accessible shuttles that provide door-to-door service for non-emergency doctor's appointments. Call (617)-635-3000 for more information.
- Taxi Coupons at discounted rates.
- Senior Charlie Card application assistance.

# **Volunteer Opportunities:**

We operate 4 volunteer programs in impact driven 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.
- Senior Greeters volunteer their time to greet guests of City Hall.
- Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program: Qualified senior homeowners get the opportunity to work-off up to \$1,500 on their property tax bill by volunteering for a City agency.

# **Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support:**



- Host Memory Cafes, which are 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 elderly loved one.

# **Outreach and Engagement:**

The Commission organizes dozens of 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.



Call us for more information at 617-635-4366!





### The Buzz

# **Around The World!**

Boston Seniority magazine was spotted at the Jardin Botanique in Montreal!

Betty Maher, from Roslindale made sure to pack her favorite magazine!



# **Seniority Spotlight**

Roslindale resident Joanne
Prince, longtime friend of
the Elderly Commission, was
honored last month for her
many contributions to the
City of Boston at this year's
LeadingAGE annual conference.



# S N S N S S T G L L S G N M M S P E R F U M E E D G N I E G E P H A T S R D M N M N S A S S S M E T I O A I C D S T H R D H N N H M G P A U A Y I F A S H I O N A P T S S R S E T R E N D T Z O W T I E T H N T T H A G I H A R E N O S S A S T R O N S L Y C G R H E I I T R T E A K B S I Y E S Y N E T I R K T A B S A C C E S S O R I E S G C E O U A A C L O T H E S S B D A P H S T Y L E D Y K A

### **Word Search**

Highlighted are the answers for the Fashion Word Search from our October issue.



# **Gratitude Journal Giveaway**

Let us know what you're grateful for this season for a chance to win a journal.

Emails us at bostonseniority@boston.gov by December 1st with:

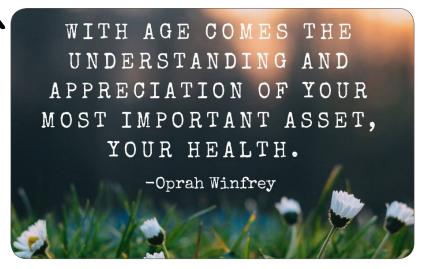
- your name
- age
- neighborhood
- phone number

# Seen on our Social Media

# #WednesdayWisdom

Find us on Facebook:

@BostonElderlyCommission
and Twitter: @AgingInBos





### Last month's answer:

Shows intersection in Upham's Corner in Dorchester.

# Can you guess?

From the Boston City Archives: Can you guess what neighborhood this is?

**Hint:** The photo was taken in 1903.



Commission Advertisements

# NEED A BUS BUDDY?

Get **one-on-one** guidance using Boston's public transportation.

# BECOME A BUS BUDDY

Experienced MBTA riders can **show others** the way!

Interested? Call 617-635-3988



The Elderly Commission

# BOSTONIA O. CONDITA AD P. COMMINE DONATA

# Uplift, Inspire, and Lend a Hand





Volunteer to Deliver Food to Older Adults

Flexible Schedule

Contact: Monique Carvalho, RSVP Program Coordinator Phone: 617-635-4374 Email: Monique.Carvalho@Boston.gov

# Stay Tuned For our Winter Issue

Boston Seniority's Special Calendar Edition for the New Year!





Mayor Walsh and the Elderly Commission want to celebrate with you!

Call Marybeth at 617-635-3959 for more information!



# **Registration Form Elderly Commission's Senior First Night**

Food, dancing and entertainment to ring in 2019!

<u>Transportation Sign Up Sheet</u>

Individual application only - No group registration allowed
Registration by Mail or Fax only
Will pick up 10 or more from various locations

Transportation pick-ups begin at 10:30 am - Doors do not open until 11:00 am

Last Name:	First Name:	Tel:		
Address:		Apt. #		
Neighborhood:	Zip Code:			
Language Snoken:				

# CENTRALIZED PICK UP LOCATIONS Allston/Brighton – Veronica Smith, 20 Chestnut Hill Ave. Mattapan – Church of the Holy 535 Spirit, River St. Allston/Brighton – JCHE Housing, 30 Wallingford Rd. Mission Hill – Flynn House, 835 Huntington Ave.

**Boston** – 334 Massachusetts Ave. North End - Nazzaro Center, 30 North Bennett St. **Boston** – Park Street Station – MBTA (Tremont and Park) Readville - St. Ann's Church, 82 West Milton St. Charlestown - Golden Age Center, 382 Main St. **Roslindale** – Roslindale Municipal Bldg, Roslindale Sq. Roxbury - Reggie Lewis, 1350 Tremont St **Charlestown** – 100 Ferrin Street **East Boston** – E.B. Social Center, 68 Central Sq. **Roxbury** – Shelbourne Community Center, 2730 Washington St. East Boston - Brandy Wine, 88 Brandy Wine Drive **South Boston** – West Broadway Task Force, 81 Orton Marrotta Way **Dorchester** – Keystone Apts. 151 Hallet St. **South Boston** – St. Monica's Church, Old Colony Ave. **Dorchester** – 645 Charles St. **South Boston** – S.B. Neighborhood House, 136 H St. **Dorchester** - Franklin Field, 100 Ames St. South End - Castle Square Apts. 484 Tremont St. South End /Chinatown - 5 Oak St.. **Fenway/Kenmore** – Kenmore Abbey, Kenmore Sq. Hyde Park - Blake Estates, 1344 Hyde Park Ave. West End - Amy Lowell - 65 Martha Rd. Hyde Park - Georgetown Apts. 400A Georgetown Dr. West End - Blackstone Apts. 33 Blossom St. Hyde Park - H.P. Municipal Parking Lot, Cleary Sq. West Roxbury - CVS & Walgreens Parking Lot Jamaica Plain - Julia Martin House, 90 Bickford St. **MBTA RIDE ID NUMBER Mattapan** – 875 Morton Street I DO NOT NEED TRANSPORTATION

Once this registration form is received an admission ticket will be issued in the name of the registrant and mailed to the above noted address.

# Seen Around Town



























