

# Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission · City of Boston · Mayor Michelle Wu

I AM  
BLACK  
RESILIENT



Celebrating  
Black History  
Month p.16-23

February 2024  
Issue 2  
Vol. 48

FREE PUBLICATION



MAYOR'S LETTER  
P. 4



BPL BOOK PICKS  
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UPCOMING EVENTS  
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Welcome to our February issue of *Boston Seniority* magazine. Inside you'll learn about Black History Month, Chinese New Year, savings tips, and more.



# Boston Seniority

Published by the City of Boston's Age Strong Commission

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



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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](mailto:Bostonseniority@boston.gov)



# From the Mayor's Desk

## Hello Boston!

We hope you got your 2024 *Boston Seniority* calendar, filled with tips for aging strong in Boston and insight to potential savings you may be eligible for. It's not too late to get yours – we distribute them to 350 locations across the city, including grocery stores, community centers, and library branches. You can also stop by the Age Strong Commission at 1 City Hall Square, room 271 and ask for one!

In February, we celebrate Black History Month, paying homage to our black friends, neighbors and colleagues – as well as those who came before, paving the way for equality.

In this issue you'll find many topics within Black history, from book lists curated by Boston Public Library staff to learning about Boston's Black Heritage Trail, to honoring our Black veterans. To see how Boston celebrates, visit [boston.gov/equity-and-inclusion/black-history-month](http://boston.gov/equity-and-inclusion/black-history-month).

We also celebrate Chinese New Year in February (February 12) with our annual parade in Chinatown on February 18.

It's still winter in Boston, so stay warm, keep safe, and stay connected with family and friends.

Looking forward to seeing you out in the neighborhoods,

*Michelle Wu*

Michelle Wu  
Mayor of Boston

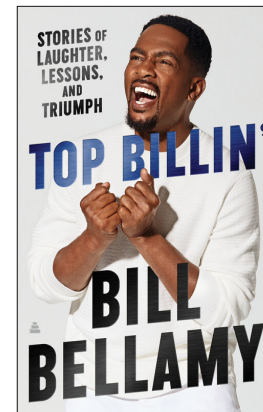


### ► Books

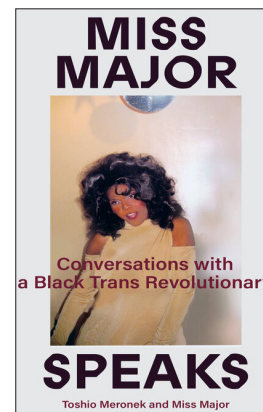
## BPL Book Picks

Source: Boston Public Library

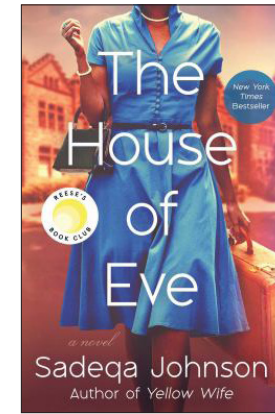
Black Is... is a list of books published in the previous year for all ages concerning the African American experience. This printing is part of the Boston Public Library's annual observance of Black History Month.



**Top Billin'**  
by Bill Bellamy  
Memoir. This hilariously candid memoir from an MTV trailblazer, stand-up comedian, and actor is an intimate, entertaining, and heartfelt tour through the exclusive, elusive, and eternally iconic world of '90s pop culture.

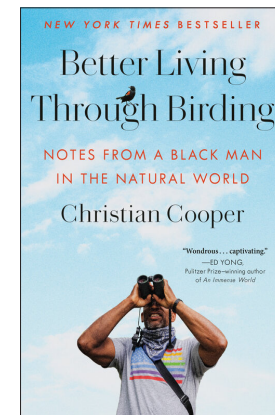


**Miss Major Speaks**  
by Toshio Meronek  
Memoir. A transgender elder and activist shares her legendary experiences of seeking justice, survival, and liberation, from participating in the Stonewall Riots to helping found one of America's first needle exchange programs.



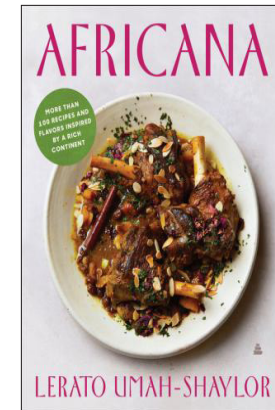
**The House of Eve**  
by Sadeqa Johnson  
Fiction. A heartrending book about two young Black women who strive to overcome their circumstances as they navigate race, womanhood, and motherhood in 1950s

America.



**Better Living Through Birding**  
by Christian Cooper  
Memoir. Cooper, whose encounter with a dogwalker went viral in 2020, invites readers into the world of birds and shares lessons from a life spent looking up

in this genre-defying blend of memoir, travelogue, and introduction to the art of birding.



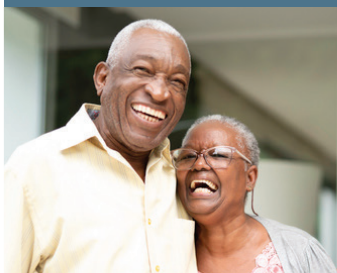
**Africana**  
by Lerato Umah-Shaylor  
Expressions. With over 100 recipes and flavors, this cookbook is a savory celebration of African cuisine from a West African food writer, television personality, and cooking teacher.

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

# FAST EASY FREE TAX PREP

Did you make  
**under \$64,000 in 2023?\***  
Then let ABCD prepare your taxes for **FREE!\*\***

**\*\*For those who meet eligibility requirements**



- Free Federal and State Tax Preparation
- Free Electronic Filing
- Free Direct Deposit
- IRS Certified Tax Preparers
- Services available in Multiple Languages

Please call your neighborhood service location for more information. By appointment only, locations are on the next page.

Talk to us about special tax credits like the Child Tax Credit (CTC), Senior Circuit Breaker, EITC and the Federal Affordable Care Act

**\*Tax services available by appointment only.**  
Please call your local ABCD site to schedule a consultation.

## ABCD TAX SERVICE LOCATIONS\*

**ABCD Allston/Brighton NOC**  
640 Washington Street, Ste 202/201  
Brighton, MA • 617.903.3640

**ABCD Mattapan FSC**  
535 River Street  
Mattapan, MA • 617.298.2045

**ABCD Roxbury/N. Dorchester NOC**  
565 Warren Street  
Dorchester, MA • 617.442.5900

**ABCD Central Office**  
178 Tremont St, 1st Floor  
Boston, MA • 617.348.6583

**ABCD Mystic Valley NOC**  
239 Commercial Street  
Malden, MA • 781.321.2501

**ABCD South Boston APAC**  
424 West Broadway  
South Boston, MA • 617.269.5160

**ABCD Dorchester NSC**  
110 Claybourne Street  
Boston, MA • 617.288.2700

**ABCD Parker Hill/Fenway NSC**  
714 Parker Street  
Roxbury, MA • 617.445.6000

**ABCD South End NSC**  
554 Columbus Avenue  
Boston, MA • 617.267.7400

**ABCD East Boston APAC**  
21 Meridian Street  
East Boston, MA • 617.567.8857

**ABCD Roslindale**  
18B Corinth Street  
Roslindale, MA • 617.477.3768

**ABCD North End/West End NSC**  
1 Michelangelo Street  
Boston, MA • 617.523.8125

**\* Tax services available by appointment only. Please call the ABCD site to schedule a consultation.**

## DON'T FORGET TO BRING

- Valid Government Issued Photo ID
- Social Security card or Individual Taxpayer ID Letter (ITIN) for you, your dependents and/or your spouse
- All 1099 forms – 1099G (unemployment), 1099R (pension payments), 1099INT (bank interest), 1099SSA (Social Security)
- All W2 forms from all jobs for 2023
- Proof of health insurance (health insurance cards, 1099-HC, 1095-A, etc.) for taxpayer, spouse, and all dependents\*\*
- Total child care expenses in 2023, and child care provider's name, address, and Employer Identification Number (EIN) or SSN
- All 1098T forms (tuition payments), receipts for materials and books and bursar statement
- Total student loan interest paid (1098E)
- A copy of last year's tax return
- Bank issued printed account and routing numbers for direct deposit of your tax refund (for both checking and savings account)
- Proof of ANY deductible out of pocket expenses (annual BWSC, 1098E, charitable receipts, etc.)
- Any mail from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR)
- Any mail from the IRS

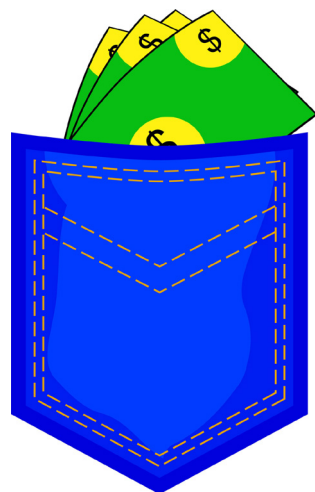
**\*\*Taxpayers who have received or expect to receive health insurance credits need to bring proof of ALL household income.**

**Without all documents, we cannot complete your tax returns**

# SENIOR CIRCUIT BREAKER TAX CREDIT

## PUT UP TO \$2,590 IN YOUR POCKET!

The Massachusetts “Circuit Breaker” tax credit provides tax relief for low to moderate income older adults age 65+. This tax credit is available for renters & homeowners. Additionally, residents may apply for this income tax credit even if they owe no income taxes.



### BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY:

- Must be a Massachusetts resident or part-year resident
- Must be age 65 or older by December 31 of the tax year
- Must own or rent residential property in Massachusetts and occupy it as your primary residence
- For tax year 2023, your total Massachusetts income doesn't exceed:
  - \$69,000 for a single individual who is not the head of a household
  - \$86,000 for a head of household
  - \$103,000 for married couples filing a joint return
- Homeowners can qualify if their property taxes & half of the water & sewer bills are more than 10% of their annual gross income
- Renters can qualify if 25% of their rent is over 10% of their total income for the year

### YOU ARE INELIGIBLE FOR THIS TAX CREDIT IF:

- You are married & your status is married, but filing separately
- You are a dependent of another taxpayer
- You receive a federal or state rent subsidy or you rent from a tax-exempt entity
- For tax year 2023, the assessed value of your principal residence exceeds \$1,025,000

### CONTACT THE MA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE FOR MORE INFO:

Call 617-887-6367 or visit [mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit](https://mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit)

## ► Feature Story

# Meet Boston Resident Huiling Zho

By Ruth Blackman, 88, North End



Meet Huiling Zhou, 84, born in Guangzhou City Guangdong Province in China. Huiling, her husband, and 4 young children came to America in 1983, where Huiling had a sister in Boston. She moved her family here for more opportunity while raising a family.

She worked in Chinese restaurants doing multiple jobs. She considers herself to be shy, but it never interferes with her determination to be hard working. No job was too small and she always gave her best.

**Huiling says volunteering makes her life more meaningful, and adds joy to her life.**

Upon her retirement and loss of her husband in 1993, Huling embarked on a new adventure. She joined the ABCD Foster Grandparent Program and volunteers 20 hours/week at the Josiah Quincy School. She is affectionately called PoPo, Chinese for Grandma, meshing Chinese and American culture.

Huiling says volunteering makes her life more meaningful, and adds joy to her life. When others complain of loneliness, her eyes twinkle and she urges them to become a Foster Grandparent.

While reading to those she fosters, children ask about her life in China. As she shares her stories, children light up, smile and laugh.

Huiling is also involved at the Park Street Church where she has many friends. I asked if she would consider marrying again. She smiled and said no, but confessed that she had been asked!

## ► Behavioral Health

# Historical Trauma

*By Libby Arsenault, LCSW,  
Behavioral Health Manager*

People may be familiar with the term trauma as it applies to the experience of war. A simple definition of trauma is an event or circumstance experienced by a person that poses a real or imagined threat to their physical and emotional safety. War is an obvious threat to a person's safety. However, circumstances less obvious might also threaten a person's sense of safety, such as being bullied or neglected.

Collective trauma refers to a traumatic event or series of events experienced by a community of people. The COVID-19 pandemic is an example of an event posing a threat to all our well-being. Natural disasters are another example of a shared traumatic event. Historical trauma describes a type of collective trauma experienced on a large scale by a massive group of people over their lifespan and across generations.

Historical trauma is defined as intergenerational trauma experienced by a specific group that has a history of being systematically oppressed. Examples of historical traumas include enslavement, wars, colonization, racism, and mass migration. The effects of historical trauma may show up as mental and physical health issues passed down from survivors' generations to subsequent generations.



The institution of slavery in America is an example of a historical trauma resulting in lasting health effects passed down from one generation to the next. One way effects get passed down involves a person's automatic bodily response to stress caused by trauma. Simply put, our brains produce elevated stress hormones. A heightened stress response over a long period can change how genes work and get passed down.

This transmission process of the effects of trauma is explained in the book *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* by Dr. Joy Degruy (2005, 2017), available at the Boston Public Library. Stay tuned for information on strategies for healing from historical trauma.

Please reach out to Age Strong's Behavioral Health Unit at 617-635-4366 if you are an older adult resident of Boston and would like assistance finding behavioral health care.

## ► Social Connections

# Boston Weather Can Be Frightful, But Connecting is Delightful Staying Social During Winter Months

*By Corinne White, Dementia Friendly Coordinator*

The winter season can make it difficult to maintain our usual social connections. It's cold, may be snowy or icy, and it gets darker earlier. Everyday issues including diminished mobility, decline in vision, depression, anxiety, and limited access to transportation can make it even harder.

The topic of loneliness and isolation has been gaining attention. Loneliness is the feeling that results from perceived isolation or unmet need between an individual's preferred and actual experience. In 2023, the U.S. Surgeon General published an advisory, calling loneliness an epidemic. It is an important topic because it has a significant impact on our health and well-being. When we reduce loneliness and social isolation, we can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death. It is even possible to reduce hospital admittances and recover from illness.

Social connections are a fundamental human need—as essential as food, water, and shelter. Our relationships and interactions with family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and others in our community are what creates social connection. People of all ages experience

loneliness, which means interactions with people of all ages can help mend it. Sometimes it might not feel so easy, but making any connection, even with a stranger, can help us to feel less lonely.

Here are some suggestions to combat loneliness and isolation this winter:

- Enjoy a hot beverage inside your nearby coffee shop and start a conversation with someone familiar or someone new!
- Make a trip to your neighborhood senior center or community center. If you are having a hard time getting out, join one of Age Strong's virtual classes.
- Phone a friend or family member, whether they live far away or close by, and even if you think they might be busy.
- Say hello and give a compliment to the person working at the pharmacy, grocery store or retail shop.
- Invite a neighbor over to watch a show or sports game, play a board game or work on a puzzle.

Small connections can help make a big difference! When you make the effort to connect, not only do you feel better, you help another person feel less lonely too!

► Event

# Celebrating Chinese New Year!

By Dillon Tedesco, Communications Coordinator



February marks the celebration of Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year. In Chinese culture, the new year is marked by the cycle of the moon. Chinese New Year begins on the second new moon after the solstice. This year, the new year falls on Saturday, February 10th.

Chinese New Year is a time of renewal. During the Chinese New Year, people clean their houses to rid themselves of the bad energy from the previous year. It also is an important family holiday, and many people travel to be with their families and reconnect during the celebration. Families enjoy meals together, decorate their homes, spend time visiting with each other, and exchange gifts of money, traditionally given in a red envelope.

Each year is represented by a different animal from the Chinese zodiac chart, and the animals repeat every 12 years. 2023

was the year of the rabbit, and 2024 is the year of the dragon. Check out the chart to your year on page 13 to learn about what your birth year animal is!

There are many ways to celebrate Chinese New Year in Boston, like the annual Chinese New Year Parade. This year, the parade is on February 18 in Chinatown. During the parade, Chinatown closes to car traffic and streets fill with dancing, music, and other festive performances. During the parade, expect to see offerings left outside businesses in Chinatown, a tradition meant to ensure good luck in the new year.

For interactive activities, you can head to the China Trade Center or the Pao Arts Center. Here, you can watch lion dance performances, fold origami, learn calligraphy, and more! To learn more about Chinese New Year, visit [britannica.com/topic/Chinese-New-Year](http://britannica.com/topic/Chinese-New-Year).

## 12 Chinese Zodiac Signs

Chinese zodiac animals have lucky meanings. Chinese people associate each animal with certain characteristics. It's believed that people born in a given year have the personality of that year's animal.



### What's Your Zodiac Animal?

Each zodiac animal's year comes around every 12 years, and each year is associated with a zodiac animal. The most recent zodiac sign years are shown below. Each Chinese zodiac animal has personality traits assigned to it by the ancient Chinese. Chinese people believe these traits will be embodied in people, according to their zodiac sign.

Zodiac Animal	Recent Years	Personality Traits
Rat	1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020	Quick-witted, resourceful, versatile, kind
Ox	1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021	Diligent, dependable, strong, determined
Tiger	1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022	Brave, confident, competitive
Rabbit	1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023	Quiet, elegant, kind, responsible
Dragon	1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024	Confident, intelligent, enthusiastic
Snake	1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025	Enigmatic, intelligent, wise
Horse	1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, 2026	Animated, active, energetic
Goat	1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, 2027	Calm, gentle, sympathetic
Monkey	1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028	Sharp, smart, curiosity
Rooster	1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, 2029	Observant, hardworking, courageous
Dog	1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, 2030	Lovely, honest, prudent
Pig	1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, 2031	Compassionate, generous, diligent

Source: [creativeartsguild.org](http://creativeartsguild.org)

# February Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

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

**FEBRUARY**  
**13**  
**The Scoop: Book Club -  
Black Buck by Mateo  
Askaripour**  
**Time:** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL South End,  
685 Tremont St., South End  
**Contact Info:** Christina,  
southend@bpl.org

**FEBRUARY**  
**14**  
**Valentine's Day Card-Making  
for All Ages**  
**Time:** 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL South Boston,  
646 East Broadway, South  
Boston **Contact Info:** Dani,  
617-268-0180

**FEBRUARY**  
**15**  
**Chair Yoga for Older Adults**  
**Time:** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**Location:** Central Library in  
Copley Square, 700 Boylston  
St., Boston **Contact Info:** Adult  
Programs Department,  
617-859-2129

**FEBRUARY**  
**16**  
**Special Collections Sampler:  
Black History Month**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 4:30 pm  
**Location:** Central Library in  
Copley Square, 700 Boylston  
St., Boston **Contact Info:**  
Special Collections,  
617-859-2043

**FEBRUARY**  
**17**  
**African-American Genealogy  
with Joel Mackall**  
**Time:** 11:00 am - 1:30 pm  
**Location:** BPL Mattapan,  
1350 Blue Hill Ave, Mattapan  
**Contact Info:** Maurice,  
617-298-9218

**FEBRUARY**  
**21**  
**The Point of View Book  
Discussion Group:  
The Other Wes Moore**  
**Time:** 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
**Location:** Central Library in  
Copley Square, 700 Boylston  
St., Boston **Contact Info:**  
Denise, ddeboer@bpl.org

**FEBRUARY**  
**24**  
**Creative Connections  
Computer Workshop**  
**Time:** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL Fields  
Corner, 1520 Dorchester Ave,  
Dorchester **Contact Info:**  
Alex, 617-217-1392

**FEBRUARY**  
**24**  
**An Artist's Talk with Shea  
Justice: History Unfolds**  
**Time:** 11:00 am - 1:00 pm  
**Location:** BPL Hyde Park,  
35 Harvard Ave, Hyde Park  
**Contact Info:** 617-361-2524

**FEBRUARY**  
**27**  
**Special Collections Open  
House: Black History Month**  
**Time:** 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm  
**Location:** Central Library in  
Copley Square, 700 Boylston  
St., Boston **Contact Info:**  
Special Collections,  
617-859-2043

"Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen." -Brené Brown

## Age Strong Commission Events

We can connect you to programs and outings that enrich your life in Boston. You can also take part in our virtual programs and classes.



For more information,  
call 617-635-4366 or visit  
[boston.gov/age-strong-events](http://boston.gov/age-strong-events)







## Celebrating Black History Month

Each February, we celebrate Black History Month, a time to learn about individuals and initiatives that have shaped our communities and collective histories. We take time to look at the challenges and the changes--and pay homage to those who helped pave the way for equality and equity.

-Boston Seniority Team

# 5 PLACES TO LEARN ABOUT BLACK HISTORY IN BOSTON

By Dillon Tedesco, Communications Coordinator

It's Black History Month, and Boston is full of important and interesting sites to learn about Black History. Check out this list of 5 places in Boston you can visit to learn about Black history this February:

**The African Meeting House.** Built in 1806, The African Meeting House is the oldest surviving Black church structure in the country. The meeting house was used for a variety of purposes over the years, including as a school, a lecture hall, a celebration space, adult education space, and more. Now owned and operated by the Museum of African American History, you can visit the African Meeting House at 46 Joy Street in Beacon Hill.

**The Roberts Gould Shaw and Massachusetts 54th Regiment Memorial.** This memorial commemorates one of the first African American regiments of the Civil War. The 54th regiment helped to increase public support of Black soldiers in the North, leading to a total of more than 180,000 Black soldiers joining the Civil War. You can visit this monument on Beacon Street, opposite the State House.

**The Embrace.** The Embrace is a new sculpture on Boston Common. This sculpture depicts Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in an embrace with his wife, Coretta Scott King. The Embrace tells the story of

King and memorializes his time in Boston, and you can visit it at 139 Tremont Street on Boston Common.

**Wally's Cafe Jazz Club.** Founded in 1947 by Joseph L. "Wally" Walcott, Wally's is an important cultural establishment in Boston. After immigrating from Barbados, Wally became the first African American to own a nightclub in New England. Its proximity to several top music institutions in Boston has helped contribute to the community culture of the club, with 3 different bands playing every night of the week. To enjoy an evening of jazz, funk, blues, and more, visit Wally's at 427 Massachusetts Avenue in the South End.

**The Charles Street Meeting House.** In April of 1836, a member of the Third Baptist Church (formerly housed in this location) invited several African American church members to join him in his pew to challenge the church's segregation policy. He was expelled from the congregation, and he set out to start the First Free Baptist Church. Forty years later, the African American community in Beacon Hill purchased the meeting house, and it transformed into not just a religious site, but a place for activism and community gatherings. The Charles Street Meeting House is not currently open to the public, but you can visit the location at 70 Charles Street in Beacon Hill.



Photo: nps.gov/boaf

## BLACK HERITAGE TRAIL

Many people who visit Boston will walk the widely known Freedom Trail. But, did you know that Boston also has a Black Heritage Trail? Our Black Heritage Trail is a 1.6 mile-long path through Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood, showcasing 10 important landmarks for Black History in Boston.

The Black Heritage Trail may be walked solo or with a guide, and it can also be visited online! In-person free tours are offered by the National Park Service in the summer and fall. If you want to visit the

Black Heritage Trail solo or in the off-season, you can download the free NPS app from your smartphone's app store and listen to a 23-minute audio tour while you walk the trail!

To enjoy the Black Heritage Trail from the comfort of your home, you can either download the app or visit the website. The website includes videos for each location with pictures, narration, and an audio transcript. To learn more about the Black Heritage Trail, visit [nps.gov/boaf](https://nps.gov/boaf).

# BLACK WOMEN LEAD HOMAGE TO BLACK WOMEN LEADERS IN BOSTON

By Dillon Tedesco,  
Communications Coordinator

When walking down Blue Hill Avenue in Dorchester, you may find yourself looking up at dozens of portraits Black women displayed on street lights – 212, to be exact. This is the Black Women Lead project, spotlighting Black women leaders and trailblazers throughout Boston’s history.

Led by Ed Gaskin of Greater Grove Hall Main Streets, the exhibition notes black women breaking glass ceilings in the arts, politics, education, science, and other areas.

The contributions of Black women have often been overlooked, and this project helps to ensure that their stories are told. Each banner features the name, portrait by artists Kamali Thornell and Brianna Young, and some of her accomplishments. This month, the Age Strong Commission had the opportunity to speak to some of the women featured in this special project.

**Carole Copeland Thomas**, 70 years old, has been a diversity professional and business owner for nearly 40 years. Throughout her life, Carole has been highly involved in her community through various organizations and committees, as well as chairing several boards. She has been active in her Black sorority, Delta

Sigma Theta, an organization that is active in public service and civic engagement. Carole says that it is a huge honor to be recognized through the Black Women Lead Project. “I know the sacrifices and the public service that all of the women have given through the years,” she shared. “To have the banners representing the 212 women for 2 miles along Blue Hill Avenue is a tremendous honor.” Carole also shared how important it is for Black women to be recognized at this large scale. “In this day and time, with so much rancor, and Black women being seen as disposable, to have the kind of recognition and visibility we are receiving, it is the other side signaling that we have a voice. We have influenced, we have given and sacrificed through decades, and we will continue to move forward as strong Black women.”

**Ché Madyun** lives in Dorchester near Dudley Street in Uphams Corner. Ché first moved to Dorchester in the 1970s, after becoming familiar with the community through people she met at Emerson College. At that time, there was a lot of vacant land. Through the 80s, as she started noticing gentrification in the South End and talking to her new neighbors that were pushed out of that area, she started thinking about what she could do to ensure she was able to raise her children



and stay in Dorchester. She attended a neighborhood community meeting and was introduced to a group of nonprofits that had convened to discuss what to do with the vacant parcels. There were over 1,000. At this meeting, the group presented a board structure that involved businesses and nonprofits, and residents. With community feedback, the group then offered a revised proposal - one that required at least 50% of members to be residents. Ché served as president on the board of this organization for 10 years, during which time they were able to acquire 30 parcels of the vacant land through eminent domain and put that land into a trust. This organization eventually grew to become the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, DSNI. “A lot of times people who weren’t intimately involved don’t realize that a lot of this work was done by volunteers. Volunteerism is usually not lifted up, so receiving this honor as one of the women leaders, as volunteers, is getting recognized,” Ché said. When it comes to the next generation of Black women leaders in Boston, Ché said, “A good leader makes sure it is not about you and your glory, but about the

glory of the community.”

We also spoke with Donna Williams, sister of the late **Beth Williams** - one of the Black Women Lead honorees. She grew up in Roxbury, and currently lives in Roslindale. “We were all raised with community in our heart, and Beth worked at several Boston Public Schools to help students. She rolled her sleeves up, she was on the board everywhere,” Donna shared about her sister. “She was mostly involved with helping people at Rox Tech. We hired people who had CORIs, and Beth was a forerunner in the fight of giving people dignity.” On seeing her sister represented through the Black Women Lead project, Donna said, “It’s the most wonderful thing. Beth has gone above and beyond for the community, and it’s really nice to know that she is among so many Black women who tirelessly give to the community.”

To learn more about the Black Women Lead project, visit [greatergrovehall.org/black-women-lead](http://greatergrovehall.org/black-women-lead) or visit the installation on Blue Hill Avenue in the Grove Hall neighborhood of Dorchester.

# Celebrating Our Black Veterans During Black History Month



During Black History Month, there are special events across the City honoring and recognizing Black Bostonians. This year, on February 24th, our Veterans Services Department hosts a special luncheon for Black Veterans. Hosted in Dorchester, the Black Veterans Appreciation Luncheon celebrates and honors the contributions and sacrifices of Black Veterans. At this event, the Veterans Services Department will honor deserving veterans with Community and Outstanding Service awards. If you are a Black Veteran that is interested in attending this event, RSVP is required, as space is limited. To RSVP, email [john.allison@boston.gov](mailto:john.allison@boston.gov) or call 617-241-8387.

In addition to events, the city also pays homage to Black veterans with The General Gourdin and African American Veterans Memorial, a community-initiated

public art project in Roxbury.

Formerly called Dudley Park, the area was reimagined as a community park. The local 272nd Field Artillery Battalion veterans association suggested dedicating the park to Brigadier General Edward O. Gourdin. Gourdin's history is closely connected with Roxbury. His accomplishments include being the first Black judge appointed to the Roxbury District Court; the first Black person in New England appointed to the Massachusetts Supreme Court; the first man in history to break 25 feet in the long jump, and a silver medalist in the event for the United States at the 1924 Paris Olympics. To learn more, visit [boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/public-art-boston/public-art-projects-boston/justice-edward-o-gourdin-veterans-memorial-park](https://boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/public-art-boston/public-art-projects-boston/justice-edward-o-gourdin-veterans-memorial-park)



## ► 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:*

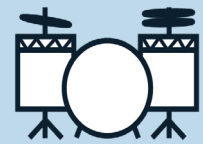
Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



### 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:

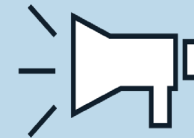
The Commission organizes many **in person and virtual** events and programs throughout the year.



### 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.

**Boston's Age Strong Commission Offers Discount**

# TAXI Coupons

- For Boston residents age 65+ & persons with disabilities
- Valid for taxis licensed by City of Boston
- Please show ID proving Boston residency
- Each coupon book costs \$5 (worth \$10)
- Please pay with cash
- Coupons don't expire (for a limited time each resident may buy 4 books/month)

**Coupons may be purchased in person at the Age Strong Commission, Rm 271 City Hall, 1 City Hall Square in Boston, 9am-5pm.**

**Visit [boston.gov/agestrong](https://boston.gov/agestrong) for a list of sites where taxi coupons may be purchased.**

**CITY of BOSTON**

**AGE+**

Age Strong Commission

► Health

## Walk with a Doc



Did you know that walking is one of the best exercises for people of all ages? Walking is a low-impact exercise that is free, accessible, easy on joints, and doable for many individuals who are unable to participate in more intense exercises.

Walking has been shown to improve life expectancy, and it is good for your heart, brain, muscles, joints, digestion, sleep, and more! In an effort to encourage more people to walk, AARP Boston sponsors “Walk with a Doc.” At these events, you’ll start the walk by getting a short

health discussion from a doctor or other healthcare provider, and spend the rest of the event enjoying a healthy, casual walk. When you attend Walk with a Doc, you are encouraged to ask health-related questions and socialize with others in a relaxed environment. For more information or to register for an upcoming walk, visit [walkwithadoc.org](https://walkwithadoc.org).

There are other walking groups across Boston. To find one near you, ask for the Events/Programs team when calling Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

► Recipe

# Honey & Ginger Roasted Turnips

By Melissa Carlson, MS, RD

Age Strong Commission Senior Director of Partnerships & Programs

### Ingredients:

- 2 pounds turnips, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried, divided
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon white-wine vinegar
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- Ground pepper to taste
- 3 strips thick-sliced bacon, diced and cooked

### Directions:

1. Position a rack in lower middle of oven; preheat to 425 degrees F. Toss turnips with oil, garlic, ginger and 2 teaspoons fresh thyme (or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme) in a large bowl. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet. Roast until starting to brown on the bottom, about 15 minutes. Turn the turnips over and continue to roast until tender and golden, 15 to 20 minutes more.

2. Whisk honey, vinegar and nutmeg in a large bowl. Add the turnips and toss to coat; season with pepper. Stir in bacon

and the remaining 1 teaspoon fresh thyme (or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme).

**Nutrition** - Serves 4, 158 Calories, 7g fat, 22g carbohydrates, 4 g protein



Source and photo: eatingwell.com



## SIGN-UP TODAY

Check out the latest news from Age Strong! We include events for older adults, volunteer opportunities, and much more.

Sign-up for updates at:  
[boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission](https://boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission)



## RECYCLING CARTS

A reminder to residents that if your recycling cart is damaged, you can dial 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500 to have a replacement delivered. Our new carts are engineered with 40% recycled material - including 10% of ocean bound plastics found near beaches, lakes & waterways.



## NEED AT-HOME TESTING KITS?

With respiratory illnesses spreading, it's a great time to stock up on at-home COVID-19 testing kits.

Visit [COVID.gov/tests](https://COVID.gov/tests) to get your free at-home testing kits.



# ▶ SEEN AROUND TOWN







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## SUPPORT GROUP FOR DEMENTIA CARE PARTNERS

Join our new, free support group where you can get information, learn about resources, make connections and share experiences.

### **Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) Roslindale**

6 Cummins Highway, Roslindale

**February 23, 2024**

**4th Friday of each month, 12pm-1pm**

## PLEASE RSVP:

Corinne White

617-635-3745

[corinne.white@boston.gov](mailto:corinne.white@boston.gov)

If you have barriers that prevent you from attending, please reach out and let us know. We may be able to help.

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## CITY OF BOSTON MEMORY CAFÉS

A Memory Café is for those living with memory loss, their loved ones and care partners.

### **BPL Codman Square Branch**

690 Washington Street, Dorchester

**February 14, 2024**

**2nd Wednesday of each month, 10am-12pm**

### **BPL Jamaica Plain Branch**

30 South Street, Jamaica Plain

**February 26, 2024**

**Last Monday of each month, 10:30am-12pm**

*Bilingual in English and Spanish*

AGE+

City of Boston  
Age Strong Commission

