

BOSTON SENIORITY

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu

February 2025

Issue 2

Vol. 49



LEARN ABOUT BOSTON'S BASIC CITY SERVICES

MAYOR'S LETTER:

P. 4

UPCOMING EVENTS:

P. 14

PROPERTY TAX

CLINICS

P. 18



CITY of BOSTON



FREE PUBLICATION



AGE+ | Age Strong Commission

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Go behind the scenes at Boston's public works department, find out about upcoming programs, & more!



Older adults staying active at Age Strong's East Boston Senior Center.



BOSTON SENIORITY MAGAZINE

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STAY CONNECTED WITH THE AGE STRONG COMMISSION!



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

Email us at:
BostonSeniority@boston.gov



MAYOR'S LETTER

Hello Boston!

Winter is in full swing in our city, and we've launched a web page with cold weather safety tips, resources, and phone numbers to call to keep you warm. Check it out at: bit.ly/bos-cold-weather.

February is Black History Month, and we're taking the opportunity to reflect and remind ourselves that Black history is American history—and Boston's history. We hope you'll join us as we celebrate the critical role that Black leaders, artists, advocates, and workers have played—and continue to play—in shaping our nation and our city. Visit our webpage to learn more: bit.ly/bos-BHM.

In this issue of Boston Seniority Magazine, we highlight the work of the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center, an anchor for Boston's Asian community for more than fifty years. We also kick off a three-issue look at some of Boston's basic city services: The nitty gritty work that keeps our city moving. We'll go behind the scenes to get to know the City workers whose everyday jobs makes Boston a better home for everyone.

Thanks for reading, and I hope to see you (bundled up!) out in community,

Michelle Wu

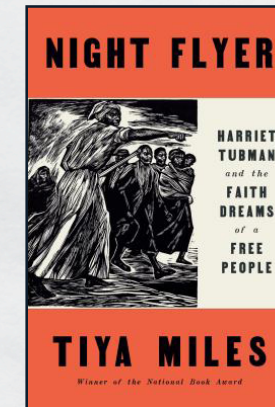
Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston



BPL BOOK PICKS

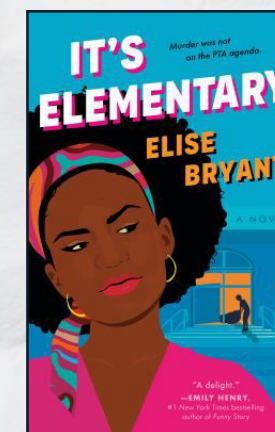
Source: Boston Public Library

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.



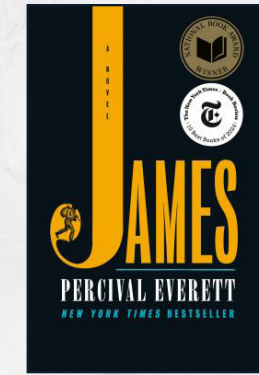
Night Flyer
by Tiya Miles

Transforming a fantastical figure from a bygone time into an accessible, modern-day inspiration, Miles reckons with the myth and truth behind Harriet Tubman, an American everyone knows and few really understand.



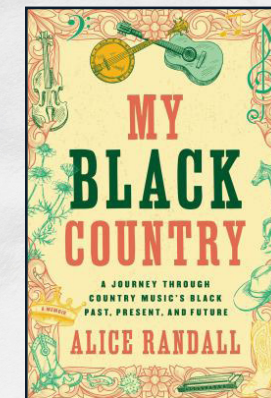
It's Elementary
by Elise Bryant

When an elementary school principal vanishes, an overworked single parent suspects a domineering PTA president of foul play.



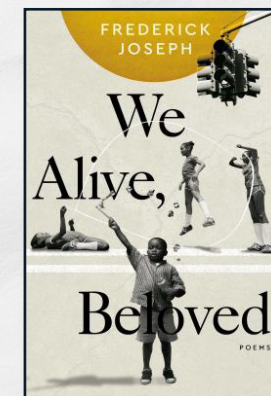
James
by Percival Everett

A retelling of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, both harrowing and ferociously funny, told from the perspective of Jim, Huckleberry's friend and an escaped slave.



My Black Country
by Alice Randall

Alice Randall reflects on her search for the first family of Black country music as she celebrates the storied history of the music genre.



We Alive, Beloved
by Frederick Joseph

Poems from a bestselling author and activist celebrates the beauty of being Black and holding onto moments of joy, love, resilience, and inspiration in a fast-moving, modern world.

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

AGE STRONG SENIOR CENTERS

By Sarah Smith, Age Strong Staff

Senior centers offer a valuable community space for many older adults. They provide social opportunities, wellness classes, arts, and more. Age Strong operates two senior centers: The Veronica B. Smith Senior Center (Brighton), and the East Boston Senior Center. Below are a select upcoming events in February. For more information, visit www.boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/senior-centers.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT VERONICA B. SMITH SENIOR CENTER



Guitar Class

Wednesdays at 1:00pm

Mat Yoga with YogaHub

Fridays at 2:00pm

Arts & Crafts

Tuesdays at 1:30 PM

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT EAST BOSTON SENIOR CENTER



Depression Presentation from McLean Hospital

Wednesday, February 26th at 1:00pm

Strength & Balance Class

Mondays at 10am

Black History Month Lecture

Tuesday, February 18 at 12pm

DON'T REPLY TO "WRONG NUMBER" TEXT SCAMS!

By Sophia Wang, Age Strong Staff, Source: AARP



We all get texts from unknown numbers—the sender acts like they know you, but sent the text to the wrong person. Do NOT respond to these, even if they seem innocent. Scammers want you to reply so they get your information, earn your trust, then convince you to fall for their scam.

How It Works

You get a text from someone you don't know, something like "when is the meeting today?" or "are you joining me for lunch?" seeming like it's just from someone who sent the message to the wrong number. Out of politeness, you may feel compelled to respond, letting the sender know they got the wrong person, but end up texting back and forth, because they responded nicely and kept texting. This is exactly what scammers

want: reply to their texts and keep interacting. They build a relationship, sometimes even a romantic one, and try luring you to send them money. This is a long con, can last for months, and these criminals will use fake personas and photos to appear credible, before defrauding you for money, usually by telling you to invest in a cryptocurrency or other scam.

What You Should Do

If you receive a text from someone you don't know, you should:

- **Simply ignore and DO NOT reply.** Even if you engage with the scammer briefly, or respond with "stop," they mark your number as active, leading to more scam texts.
- **DO NOT click on links in the texts.** This leads to malware installing on your device.
- **Block suspicious numbers.** Block numbers that send you suspicious texts so they stop contacting you.
- **DO NOT share ANY personal information.** Don't share your full name, address, Social Security number, or ANY other personal information to someone you only know from a foreign text.



LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

Hello Boston!

I want to start by saying thank you for the outpouring of love and support as my family has celebrated the arrival of our newest member, baby Mira. Your messages confirmed what we already knew: Boston is and will be the best possible home for our daughter.

Our mission at the City is to make that true for every resident and family. And that means making Boston an affordable place to live. Last year, my team and I negotiated with Boston's business leaders to draft legislation designed to protect residents—especially older adults living on fixed incomes—from an anticipated spike in residential property taxes. And while the legislation was approved by the City Council and the State House, it never went up for a vote before the State Senate because a single Senator blocked

it three times during informal session in December. In walking away from the compromise we'd worked so hard on, the Senate and business groups decided that the City's projections didn't amount to a serious enough increase. As a result, last month, residents experienced a steep increase in their property tax bills—one that has made it even harder to afford to live in the city we call home.

We've heard from so many of you that January's increase is coming at a time when, already, it felt like you were barely hanging on. Which is why, last month, I introduced an expanded residential tax relief package to provide financial assistance to Boston residents impacted by the spike in property taxes. The legislation would provide immediate relief for all residents, and for older residents specifically, it

would expand eligibility for the "41C" senior exemption—and increase the exemption amount.

And while we are hopeful that stakeholders and legislators at the state level will join us in delivering the relief our communities need, I also want to take this opportunity to share a list of existing resources to help you save money on your property taxes:

- **Boston's Residential Exemption** can reduce your property tax bill by **up to \$3,984**. The deadline to apply for this reduction is **April 1**.
- **The Senior Exemption "41C"** offers qualifying older residents **up to \$2,000 in tax relief**. Applications are due **April 1**.
- Our **Senior Property Tax Deferral Program** allows qualifying older adults to defer all or part of your property tax bill, **a 1% loan paid back when**

the property is sold or transferred. Applications are due **April 1**.

- Age Strong's **Property Tax Work-off Program** invites older adults to "work off" **up to \$2,000** from your property tax bill by volunteering with City departments. Apply by **July 11**.

If you have any questions about any of these programs, our amazing Age Strong team is here to answer them. Feel free to call us at (617) 635-4366 and your neighborhood advocate will help make sure you're getting all the savings you're eligible for!

See you out in community,

Michelle Wu





VBS Board, Age Strong Commissioner Emily Shea, Mayor Michelle Wu at Boston City Hall.

Age Strong & the Veronica B. Smith Senior Center sincerely thank the VBS Board of Directors for their many years of dedication & service to making the senior center a welcoming & warm place for Allston/Brighton residents. We also thank them for the generous donation, which will help expand programming & provide upgrades to the center.

AGE STRONG'S SPRING ROWING OPEN HOUSE!



FEBRUARY 21 | 10AM-12PM

- Learn about our 3 rowing programs
- Tour the boathouse
- Meet the trainers
- Free continental breakfast



Scan Me!

RSVP BY FEBRUARY 18 FOR THE OPEN HOUSE
ROBERT.LINSCOTT@BOSTON.GOV OR 617-635-4250

Harry Parker Boathouse, 20 Nonantum Road, Brighton

Spring Rowing Programs

Conditioning* Mondays & Fridays: Feb. 24-May 26

Beginner's Rowing* Thursdays: June 5-Oct. 9

Rowing Skills** Thursdays: June 5-Oct. 9

* No experience necessary! ** Rowing experience preferred

CITY of BOSTON

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Commission

CRI
Community Rowing Inc.

SOME AGE STRONG VOLUNTEERS ARE CITY HALL GREETERS

By Sarah Smith, Age Strong Staff

Age Strong's Volunteer Unit runs a handful of volunteer programs, including its City Hall Greeter Program. These volunteers are Boston residents, age 55+, who welcome City Hall visitors to the building.

City Hall Greeters are stationed at City Hall entrances and provide friendly assistance to those visiting. They help answer questions and offer directions to various city departments.

One of these volunteer greeters is Messaoud Khaled who previously volunteered with Boston's ABCD (Action for Boston's Community Development). He enjoys volunteering to "give back to the city" and his community.

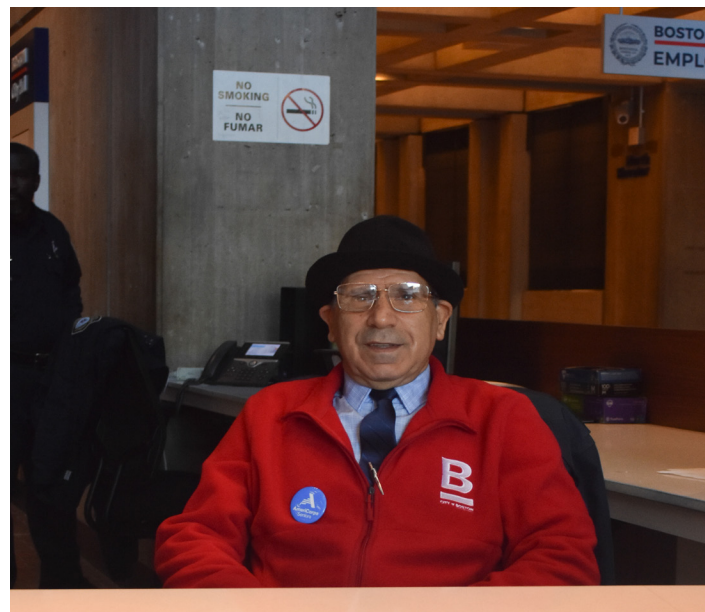
After working as the head of Social Work and Human Resources, as well as head of production for Eriad Setif for 27 years, Khaled moved to the U.S. from Algeria in 2006 with his wife and three daughters. They've lived in Downtown Boston since 2017. What he admires most about Boston is that "there's everything in Boston."

Through his own experiences

and through those of his daughters, he's witnessed that "Boston offers many opportunities to people of all different backgrounds." He appreciates the public transportation, variety of things to do, and how "close together everything is."

"There is no better place to age than in Boston," he shares. "Boston is strong."

To learn more about Age Strong's volunteer programs, visit boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/volunteer-opportunities-older-people or call 617-635-4366.



AGE STRONG & SPONTANEOUS CELEBRATIONS' SENIOR WELLNESS OPEN HOUSE



Scan Me!

FEBRUARY 25 | 10AM-12PM

- Learn about & sample our upcoming wellness classes
- Meet Age Strong & Spontaneous Celebrations staff
- Free continental breakfast

RSVP BY 2/21 TO

ROBERT.LINSCOTT@BOSTON.GOV | 617-635-4250

Spontaneous Celebrations, 45 Danforth Street, Jamaica Plain

Wellness Class Schedule

Tuesdays (Starting March 4)

Mindfulness: 9:15-10:15AM

Chair Yoga & Rhythmic Flow: 10:30- 11:30AM

Gentle Pilates for Core & Mobility: 12-1PM

Thursdays (Starting March 6)

Senior Sound Bath: 9:15-10:15AM

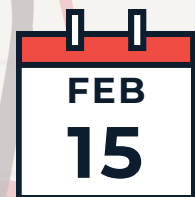
Breath & Flow Meditation: 12 PM-1 PM



▶ **EVENTS + ACTIVITIES**

FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS

* Please note events are free and are subject to change



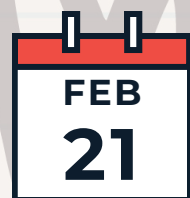
Crochet Club
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
BPL Lower Mills,
27 Richmond St,
Dorchester
617-298-7841



Games for Seniors
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
BPL Faneuil Branch,
419 Faneuil St, Brighton
617-782-6705



JP Writers' Corner
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
BPL Jamaica Plain,
30 South St, Jamaica
Plain
617-524-2053



Adult Coloring
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
BPL West End,
151 Cambridge St,
West End
617-523-3957



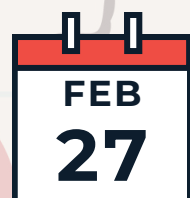
**Black Veterans
Appreciation Luncheon**
10:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Boston City Hall,
1 City Hall Square,
Boston
617-241-8387



**Creative Connections
Computer Workshop**
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
BPL Grove Hall,
41 Geneva Ave,
Dorchester
617-427-3337



**Art & Fashion of
Headwrapping**
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
BPL Mattapan,
1350 Blue Hill Ave,
Mattapan
617-298-9218



Gentle Yoga
5:00 PM – 5:45 PM
BPL South End,
685 Tremont St,
South End
617-442-6186

AGE FRIENDLY LIBRARIES

By Andrea Burn, Age Strong Staff

Boston's public libraries are more than just places to borrow books. They are spaces where all ages are welcome, where imagination is sparked, and money is no obstacle.

Learn a language, acquire new skills, or attend art or meditation classes; you can check out “Hygge” kits with items to create a warm, cozy atmosphere. In spring, many libraries offer free gardening seeds and can be the “go-to” when everywhere else has run out of COVID tests or eclipse glasses.

Boston public libraries are certified “age and dementia friendly” by the Age Strong Commission. Library staff regularly receive training to improve communication skills with older adults, including those with memory loss.

Age Strong staff visited all 26 branches and met with head librarians. We observed that library

staff are genuinely interested in serving the public—no matter the age. Almost all branches offer resource tables, community rooms, large print and audio books, computers, technology help, printing services, and public restrooms. There are many seating options, including deep leather chairs to curl up in and read as well communal tables for more formal study.

Every branch is unique, reflecting the people and interests of each neighborhood. The Roxbury branch has a teaching kitchen, the Central branch has two social workers on staff, the West Roxbury, Egleston Square, Connolly and Central branches offer outdoor spaces, a refuge from the bustle of the city.

The Roslindale branch offers Age Strong “memory kits” for caregivers to engage loved ones with memory loss. Codman Square has a community garden, JP's Centre Street branch has a senior chorus. So much to choose from!

Visit bpl.org for more. To become an Age Friendly Business, visit boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/age-friendly-businesses.



Age Strong's Dementia-Friendly Memory Cafe at the Codman Square Library.



BOSTON'S BASIC CITY SERVICES

With busy lives, we as Boston residents may take our basic city services workers for granted. As we get to work, raise families, and engage with our community, our many dedicated city staff keep our streets safe and clean; remove our trash and recycling; and keep lights burning brightly.

Boston's Public Works Department provides basic services for the city, essentially the "motor" of how our city runs. It oversees construction, maintenance, and cleaning of 802 miles of roadways, two major drawbridges, 68,055 city-owned street lights, removal/disposal of 260,000 tons of solid waste, and diverts 44,000 tons of recycling.

Over the next few issues of *Boston Seniority Magazine*, we'll go "behind the scenes" to meet different basic city services staff and share more about how their collective work contributes to the quality of life of Boston's residents. In this issue, we dive into the Street Operations and Street Lighting Divisions. In upcoming issues, stay tuned for Transportation, Waste Reduction, 3-1-1, and Parks and Recreation.

-Boston Seniority Magazine Team

PUBLIC WORKS' STREET LIGHTING DIVISION

By Age Strong Staff



Mike Donovan with awards earned by Street Lighting Division.

The Public Works Street Lighting Division is responsible for the maintenance and repair of 71,000 electric streetlights and 2800 gas lights across the City of Boston. Under the direction of Superintendent Mike Donaghy, the Street Lighting Division currently has 30 full time employees that include mechanics, engineers, electricians and inspectors. To ensure there is coverage 24/7/365, Street Lighting personnel work 3 weekday shifts that include an overnight and emergency crew to respond to urgent matters

(knocked down poles, etc).

One of the many dedicated Street Lighting Division personnel includes Mike Donovan, a South Boston native who has worked in the Public Works Department for 50 years! He began his career in the Highway Division performing a range of tasks including fixing potholes, emptying trash receptacles and clearing snow during winter storm operations. From there, he moved over to the Boston Transportation Department and eventually made his way to the Street Lighting team where he has worked for the last 39 years.

“The amount of institutional knowledge Mike Donovan brings to the table is immeasurable,” stated Superintendent Donaghy. “He can pretty much tell you a story about every street light in the city, and he has formed great working relationships with residents in every neighborhood – they appreciate his hard work and dedication to his craft.”

For Mike Donovan, working for the residents of Boston is a privilege. “A career in city services is a good, steady job that’s incredibly rewarding – each day you’re improving the quality of life for residents,” he stated. “You learn

and develop skills, troubleshoot issues, and play a key role keeping our neighborhood streets properly lit and safe.”

With 39 years of service, Mike knows that technology and training continue to evolve. It’s why he’s quick to embrace energy-efficient lighting technology such as LED (Light Emitting Diodes) that drastically reduce our carbon footprint.

He was excited to see the Street Lighting Division and the Madison Park Electrical Program form a partnership and provide recent graduates a pathway for employment into city government. To date, the partnership has proven incredibly successful. “When the graduates begin their careers with Street Lighting, we pair them with senior mechanics and engineers to show them the ropes,” he says. “After a few months, they are off and running.



Mike Donovan switching on Christmas tree lights on the Mayor's Enchanted Trolley Tour.



They’re eager to learn and doing a fantastic job.”

As Street Lighting Supervisor, Donovan also oversees the lighting of Boston’s nearly fifty Christmas trees as part of the Mayor’s Enchanted Trolley Tour. His team decorates all the trees with lights and oversees the actual tree lighting to the delight of neighborhood residents. “It’s a really nice tradition and I’m always honored to play a part.”

So, does Mike see retirement in his future? “One day, maybe, but I still really enjoy the job and my colleagues. I let the young guys do the heavy lifting (jackhammering, etc.), but I still talk to shift supervisors daily and go out on jobs. Ultimately, it’s all about helping our residents and strengthening our city – that’s tough to walk away from.”

PUBLIC WORKS' STREET OPERATIONS DIVISION

By Age Strong Staff

One of Boston's Public Works' divisions is its Highway Field

Operation Division, responsible for the 24 hour/day, 7 days/week care for the city's streets and sidewalks. Over 200 city workers are specially trained to make sure our city streets machine operates at top efficiency year in and out.

Street operations fixes potholes, empties litter baskets, and picks up litter across all neighborhoods. They respond to car accidents, weather incidents, resident requests—sometimes serving 200 cases a day. “By calling 3-1-1 or using the 3-1-1 app, residents let us know where we're needed. Our team is usually able to address the issue within 24 hours,” says Daniel Nee, Superintendent of Street Operations for Public Works.

The litter basket team and Hokeys maintain city trash receptacles and collect general street litter. “Hokeys are our first line of contact, they're the folks who keep our streets clean,” Nee says. Different neighborhoods have different litter needs, he explains. In some, seagulls are actually the culprits, tearing open trash bags and spreading litter around.

Street Operations also



includes street sweeping, both daytime and overnight. Residents can see the schedule online at boston.gov/departments/public-works/street-sweeping-city. In addition, residents can receive “no tow” reminder emails about upcoming street sweeping or call 3-1-1 with specific questions.

Nee started with Public Works when a teen, as a seasonal small construction worker. Like many city Public Works staff, Nee, with PWD for 22 years, advanced through many roles, including litter, inspection, construction, equipment operation, highway craftsmen/pavers, and hoisting. “There's plenty of opportunity for advancement,” Nee says. “Many of us have grown together for decades. There's so much

comradery and pride in keeping our streets clean and safe for our residents.”

During winter, Nee's team also plows and de-ices all public streets in Boston. “It's really about getting to pavement,” he emphasizes. “We plow and salt continually, so first responders like police and fire can keep our residents safe, no matter the weather.”

“Snow affects every aspect of a city's operation,” he says. “Fire trucks need to turn corners and connect to hydrants. Ambulances need to get to hospitals. Sometimes it's actually the difference between life and death.” Nee's team is spread over 10 districts across the city, including district yards housing salt sheds. “Each district knows to pay special attention to their individual problem areas,” he says, “like certain hills, where ice blacks up fast, need more frequent attention.”



There's many long and tireless nights managing Boston's snow/ice. “This is when our training and teamwork pays off,” Nee says. “We keep going until we see pavement.”

The Streets Operations team works closely with other city departments like Neighborhood Services, Inspectional Services, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and the Water/Sewer Commission. Some public works cases are interconnected, requiring collaborative response from multiple city departments, the state, private property owners or utilities.

When asked what he'd share with young folks or those considering joining Public Works, he says, “come on down, join on as a Hokey. You'd be surprised how much direct impact you can have.”

To learn more about Boston's Public Works, call 617-635-4900 or visit boston.gov/departments/public-works.

PARTNER PROFILE

By Jordan Rich and Sophia Wang, Age Strong Staff



Age Strong has partnered with The Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center for decades. We recently interviewed Executive Director Ruth Moy, Associate Director Megan Cheung and Communications Coordinator Vincent Wu about their programs and services.

Please share how GBCGAC started The Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center (GBCGAC) has served Boston's Chinese older adults since its founding in 1971. It began with a grassroots effort led by neighborhood advocates recognizing a dire need for services tailored to Boston's Chinese-speaking older adults.

Volunteers transformed the storefront of 239 Harrison Avenue into a drop in center for elders to

gather and socialize. Boston's Age Strong Commission, known then as the Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, provided part-time staff to prepare and serve Chinese meals to participants daily.

By 1972, the GBCGAC became a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, followed by Older Americans Act funds, enabling expanded reach. In 1973, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs awarded a start-up grant that helped GBCGAC develop vital programs and services. Today it serves over 4,000 older adults annually.

What are the barriers to providing services to Chinese older adults?

Barriers include language/cultural challenges, shortage of bilingual staff, and difficulty navigating

healthcare. Also, stigma about age-related diseases and mental health can prevent seniors from seeking or accepting support. We need continued outreach, education, and culturally-competent services, continually to make an impact.

What programs and services do you offer?

GBCGAC provides many services including adult day health programs for seniors with psychosocial and nursing needs; social services assisting with applications, referrals, and interpretation; senior centers with activities, wellness programs, and social connections; nutrition programs serving 3,800 cultural meals daily to homebound elders as well as nutrition education; behavioral health programs offering counseling, workshops, and support groups; social day programs, focusing on cognitive and social stimulation for those with dementia; health and wellness programs for healthy lifestyles through fitness, mindfulness, and education; senior community service employment program to find employment; and SHINE counseling to assist with navigating healthcare.

Most GBCGAC services and programs are free and open to the public. However, the Adult Day Health program requires prior

authorization from participants' insurance.

Administrative Office: Offering SCSEP & SHINE Programs
-75 Kneeland Street, Suite 204, Boston

Adult Day Health and Senior Centers

-Hong Lok House, 25 Essex Street, Boston
-Quincy Tower, 5 Oak Street West, Boston
-Brighton House, 677 Cambridge Street, Brighton

Upcoming Location: Spring 2025

-GBCGAC Health & Wellness Center, 216 Lincoln Street, Boston



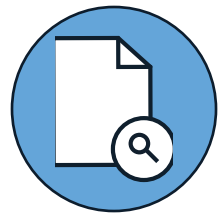
▶ IN BOSTON, WE AGE STRONG.

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.



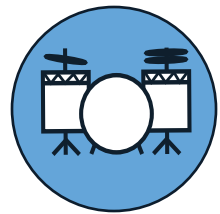
We can help with:

Call us for more details at 617-635-4366



AGE STRONG ADVOCATES

Our Advocacy and Benefit Specialists connect older adults to resources, benefits & information including health insurance counseling, food access applications, referrals to fuel assistance, tax relief exemptions, protective services & more.



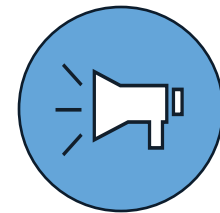
EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

Age Strong produces a variety of events & programs specifically for older residents, including celebrations for Black Heritage, Hispanic Heritage & LGBTQ+ Pride. We host our programming in community spaces around Boston with various focuses such as fall prevention, mindfulness, arts, cooking & more.



TRANSPORTATION

We are committed to helping connect older adults to all of the transportation options available, such as our Age Strong Shuttle, Taxi Coupons, and more.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We can connect you to a variety of volunteer opportunities based on your interests, location, and preferred time commitment.



AGE & DEMENTIA FRIENDLY BOSTON

Our Age & Dementia Friendly work helps create a Boston where people can age and live well in community. We hold Memory Cafes for those experiencing memory loss and their care partners to meet in a safe, social environment, as well as support groups for care partners to learn about resources and share experiences.



HOUSING SUPPORT

Our housing advocates can help older residents learn about tenants rights, eviction prevention, navigate housing eligibility, and assist with housing applications.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

By Sarah Smith, Age Strong Staff



February is American Heart Month – to raise awareness for heart disease, currently the leading cause of death in the U.S. During this time, the American Heart Association (AHA) encourages everyone to learn about heart disease and begin taking steps to reduce risk.

Heart disease refers to conditions affecting the heart and blood vessels, including coronary artery disease, Endocarditis, congenital heart defects, and others. There are ways, though, to lower your risk of developing heart disease and help to keep your heart healthy.

The AHA recommends increasing physical activity, eating a healthy/balanced diet,

getting quality sleep, and stopping smoking to improve your heart health. Further, they encourage regular doctor visits to track your “heart numbers,” and make sure anything abnormal is caught early.

“Heart numbers” are the 5 indicators of heart health: blood pressure, total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and BMI. For example, nearly half of U.S. adults have high blood pressure, putting them at risk for heart disease and stroke. Knowing your numbers helps to correct them early on.

American Heart Month aims to support people living with cardiovascular conditions, advancing research, and increasing access to affordable health care.

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

By Edzani Kelapile, Age Strong Staff

Each February, we celebrate Black History Month to learn about individuals and initiatives which 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.

The origins of Black History Month trace to 1915 and the efforts of author Dr. Carter G. Woodson (the 2nd African American to earn a Ph.D from Harvard University), who founded the organization now known as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).

The ASALH began Negro History Week in February of 1926, chosen due to the birthdays of notable figures in African American history: Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Fredrick Douglass (celebrated February 14). In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford expanded the then Black History Week into a month-long celebration, with Congress passing a law in 1986 that designated February as National Black History Month. Since then, we celebrate the lives and achievements of African Americans, past and present, as well as reflect on the work needed

to achieve equality and justice for all.

In Boston, we can explore the Black Heritage Trail, a 1.6 mile path in Beacon Hill; The Museum of African American History, New England’s largest museum dedicated to the contributions of African Americans; and the Museum of the National Center for Afro American Artists, dedicated to Black heritage, by showcasing Black visual art. If you’re in the mood for music, step into Wally’s Jazz Cafe, founded in 1947 by Joseph L. “Wally” Walcott, the first African American to own a New England nightclub.

Visit the City of Boston’s Black History website for programs, events, and resources: bit.ly/bos-BHM.



Mayor Wu at Age Strong's Black Heritage Luncheon in Dorchester, 2024.

Looking for things to do? Here's a sampling from our community colleagues and Age Strong partners. You can also sign up to receive our Monthly To-Do calendar via email, outlining lots of free activities across Boston neighborhoods: boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/age-strong-commission-monthly-do

ABCD North End/West End Neighborhood Service Center

Knit and Stitch Class

1 Michelangelo St, North End, MA 02113

Every Thursday, 10:30am to 12pm

Materials and machines are provided.

Contact: 617-523-8125

BCYF Flaherty Pool

Senior Swim (55+)

160 Florence St. Roslindale, MA 02131

Every Tues, Thurs, & Fri 10:15am to 11:15am

Contact: 617-635-5181

Kennedy Center in Charlestown

Tai Chi Class

55 Bunker Hill Street, Charleston, MA, 02129

Every Monday, 10am

Contact: Kim Kyle, 617-241-8866, kkyle@kennedycenter.org



The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center

Older Adult programming

650 Dudley St, Boston, MA 02125

Every Thursday, 10:30-2PM.

Programming varies monthly but often includes workshops, classes, and guest speakers.

Contact: 617-318-6900

Boston Public Library Codman Square

Tech Help by Appointment

Ayuda técnica por cita

690 Washington St, Dorchester MA 02124

Wednesdays, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Contact: Ana, (617) 436-8214

Appointment needed.

Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center

Mental Health Support Group in Mandarin & Cantonese

75 Kneeland Street, 2nd floor, Chinatown, 02111

Mandarin: 2nd Friday, 11:15am to 12:15pm

Contact for Mandarin: Kira Huang, 617-357-0226, jhuang@gbcgac.org

Cantonese: 1st and 3rd Friday, 10:45am to 11:45am

Contact for Cantonese: Kande Li, 617- 357-0226. Ext. 208, qli@gbcgac.org

▶ SEEN AROUND TOWN





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GET YOUR PROPERTY TAX QUESTIONS ANSWERED!



Find out if you're eligible for **tax exemptions, tax deferrals** & other potential savings like the **Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, SNAP, Fuel Assistance** & more



Feb. 10, 11am-3:30pm
Second Church
44 Moultrie St., Dorchester

March. 4, 11am-3:30pm
BPL Honan
300 N Harvard St., Allston



Feb. 12, 12-3:30pm
BCYF Nazzaro
30 North Bennet St., N. End

March 6, 11am-3pm
BPL Mattapan
1350 Blue Hill Ave, Mattapan



Feb. 13, 11am-3:30pm
BCYF Curtis Hall
20 South St., Jamaica Plain

March 7, 11am-3:30pm
BPL East Boston
365 Bremen St., East Boston



Feb. 18, 12-3pm
BPL Nubian Square
149 Dudley St., Roxbury

March. 11, 11am-3pm
BPL Lower Mills
27 Richmond St., Dorchester



Feb. 19, 11am-3:30pm
BCYF Blackstone
50 W. Brookline St., S. End

March. 20, 11am-3:30pm
Knights of Columbus
545 Medford St., Charlestown



Feb. 20, 11am-3:30pm
BCYF Hyde Park
1179 River St., Hyde Park

March. 28, 11am-3:30pm
Boston City Hall
1 City Hall Square, Boston

SCAN
ME

Feb. 24, 11am-3:30pm
BPL Roslindale
4246 Washington St.,
Roslindale

March 26, 11-3:30 pm
Boston Elks Lodge
1 Morrell St., W. Roxbury



March 3, 11am-3:30pm
BPL South Boston
646 E Broadway, S. Boston

March 27, 11-3:30 pm
BPL Grove Hall
41 Geneva Ave, Dorchester



617-635-4366 | boston.gov/prop-tax-clinics

AGE+ Age Strong Commission



Water and Sewer Commission



Home Center



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Civic Organizing



Assessing



Worker Empowerment

CITY of BOSTON