

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Martin J. Walsh



Home Sweet Home

p. 14

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On the Cover:

Betinna, 83, and John Norton, 85, recently welcomed *Boston Seniority* into their Beacon Hill home. The Nortons signed up as hosts for an intergenerational homeshare program called Nesterly about two years ago to receive some help around the house after John was diagnosed with dementia. Lawson Ung, 29, is an Australian-trained physician and one of the couple's most recent housemates. Learn more about their story and other programs and services that can help you continue to live well at home on **page 14**.



Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



Main number: (617) 635-4366



Website: www.boston.gov/age-strong



Facebook: @AgeStrongBos



Twitter: @AgeStrongBos

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

Email us at BostonSeniority@boston.gov

From the Mayor's Desk

Chinatown is one of the many vibrant neighborhoods in Boston.



Chinatown is full of history and culture, and it's home to many small and locally-owned businesses. Lunar New Year should be Chinatown's busiest season. But instead, fears of the coronavirus have kept people away, including both residents and visitors. Some business owners told me their business has dropped by as much as 50%. All of the people working in these businesses have been impacted.

The City of Boston recently launched an awareness campaign to promote the small businesses in Chinatown, including a fun bingo sheet to encourage residents to explore the neighborhood and its history. The bingo sheet includes things like trying dim sum, sipping on bubble tea, buying fresh pastries, checking out public art, or taking a selfie in front of the signature gateway. We're also encouraging people to share photos with the hashtag #LoveBostonChinatown supporting small businesses in this beautiful neighborhood.

Of course, it is important that we continue to stay aware of updates and exercise precautions around this new virus. We encourage all Bostonians to use best health practices, such as:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Cover your cough and sneeze.
- Stay home if you are not feeling well.
- Call your primary care doctor if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms

As always, for the most up-to-date public health information, or for updates about current risks in Boston, call 311 or sign up for public safety alerts at [Boston.gov/AlertBoston](https://www.boston.gov/alertboston).

And let's remember that in Boston, we look out for one another.

Sincerely,

-Mayor Martin J. Walsh



Reader Submission



Qualities of a Woman

By Lillian M. O'Neal, 80, Jamaica Plain

Yes, let's talk about a woman...

She allows you to grace her presence everyday with qualities passed down from generation to generation. I'd say... She moves into another era into another time; forever changing things.

She sets new standards without reasons or rhymes
She possesses tolerance, determination, ingenuity, intuition, self-motivation, and integrity.

She can be charming, witty, moody, sweet, lovable and kind on her best days.

She can be domineering, cunning, conceding, scrupulous, shrewd, possessive, criticizing, revengeful, pushy and persistent.
She is remarkable, exciting, movable, excusable, patient, and successful; but... a woman never forgets.

For woman sets no boundaries, has no limits on her goals.

She is willing to accept challenges placed before her,
But... but... remember two things...

Sometimes... you may not be able to live with her

But one knows the truth...

you certainly can't live without her...

Yes... why don't we talk about a woman.

It's
Women's
History
Month!

Have a submission?

Submit your story or poem to
bostonseniority@boston.gov

► Employment

New Employment Training Opportunities for Boston Residents

By Steve Currier, Job Development at Operation ABLE

Operation ABLE has been awarded two grants that support important training for Boston residents looking to get back into the workforce.

The grant is from the Neighborhood Jobs Trust, a public charitable trust fed by linkage fees from developers of large-scale commercial projects in the City of Boston. The Neighborhood Jobs Trust is stewarded by the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. NJT-funded programs have had a profound impact on Boston's residents, with more than 2,300 Bostonians in the last few years accessing job training and education programs.

Operation ABLE has a 12-week Medical Office and Customer Service Training program, funded by the NJT Grant, that is instructor led, and offers training in MS Word, Excel and Outlook 2016, medical terminology, and regulatory information affecting the healthcare industry. The program also offers training in medical office procedures and administration, as well as in customer service and communication skills. It prepares participants for jobs in medical office registration/administration, such as Patient

Service Coordinator, Patient Access Representative, and Medical Office Administrator. Students then complete a six-week internship with ongoing job search assistance on a weekly basis.

The second grant - The Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grant - has been awarded to Operation ABLE for the first time. It is funded through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) and administered by the Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

Operation ABLE received the grant to train for jobs by offering an advanced eight-week FAST TRACK Medical Office Administrative Assistant Training program. This FAST TRACK training prepares participants for jobs in medical office registration/administration, such as Patient Service Coordinator, Patient Access Representative and Medical Office Administrator. Students in this program then complete a six-week internship.

For more information about these programs, please contact Operation A.B.L.E at 617-542-4180.



► Senior Spotlight

A New Song

By Andrew Higginbottom,
Age Strong Staff Assistant

On December 30th, 2019, Richard "Ritchie" Vernon walked on stage at the Seaport Hotel and World Trade Center to perform the National Anthem. Mayor Walsh and more than 2,000 Bostonians were in the crowd listening at the annual Senior First Night Celebration. The 63-year-old finished the song to a standing ovation. Following the anthem, Ritchie belted out a joyous rendition of Auld Lang Syne.

That moment meant a lot to Ritchie. He would have never imagined himself in this position just a few years ago. In 2014, he found himself homeless after losing his job and apartment in Indiana. He spent over two years facing harsh weather conditions in the Midwest.

"I became homeless in the summer of 2014," said Ritchie. "It was a hard time in my life. I probably would've gone insane if it wasn't for God looking after me. Prayer helped me a lot during that time."

With help from a friend, Ritchie left Indiana and hopped on a bus to Boston. He spent time in the Southampton Street Shelter when he got to the city and made some valuable connections instantly.

"I became friends with a lot of people in the shelter," said Ritchie. "I met case managers who would help change my life in the future."

"I met case managers who would help change my life."

In October 2018, Ritchie finally was able to get a place in the Chinatown neighborhood of Boston. Now, Ritchie has the stability to pursue a few of his dreams, which include writing an autobiography, recording a Christmas album, and running the Boston Marathon. He continues to look out for the homeless in Boston and is glad the City helped him get back on his feet.

If you are at immediate risk of becoming homeless, call the Office of Housing Stability at 617-635-4200.



► Healthy Recipe

Asparagus and Mushroom Salad with Shaved Parmesan

Provided by Melissa Carlson, MS, RD, Deputy Commissioner of Programs and Partnerships

It's National Nutrition Month, and what better way to celebrate it than a healthy home-cooked meal.

Do you need help applying for SNAP or home-delivered meals? Interested in attending one of our dining sites across the city? Call the Age Strong Commission at: 617-635-4366.

Ingredients

- 1 pound medium to thick asparagus, trimmed
- 1/2 pound mushrooms, stems trimmed even with caps
- 4 medium radishes, halved lengthwise and sliced thin crosswise
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 bunch watercress, coarse stems discarded
- a 1/4-pound piece Parmesan cheese at room temperature

Directions

RECIPE

1

With a sharp knife, cut asparagus diagonally into very thin slices and transfer to a large bowl.

4

Drizzle dressing over asparagus salad and toss gently. Grind pepper over salad.

2

Halve large mushrooms. Slice mushrooms very thin and add with radishes to asparagus. Toss salad gently.

5

Spread watercress on a platter and top with asparagus salad.

3

In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, mustard and salt. Add oil in a stream, whisking, and whisk until emulsified.

6

With a vegetable peeler, shave half to three-fourths of Parmesan into curls over salad, reserving remaining Parmesan for another use.

Source: epicurious.com

Nutrition Facts: Yields 6 servings, Calories 209, Carbohydrates 6g (2%), Fat 17g (26%), Protein 10g (20%), Saturated Fat 5g (24%), Sodium 397mg (17%), Polyunsaturated Fat 1g, Fiber 2g (9%) Monounsaturated Fat 10g, Cholesterol 13mg (4%)

► Scam Alert

Social Security Phone Scams

Source: *The Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)*

Social Security phone scams are the #1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission and Social Security.

Recently, these scams have skyrocketed. Scammers prey on emotion – generally fear – to get people to act.

While anyone can be on the receiving end of a scam, older people are frequently targeted, so they need to be able to recognize a scam call, end the call and report it.

Be AWARE – What Scammers Do:

- They say there is problem with your Social Security Number or account.
- They ask for personal information, such as your Social Security Number or bank account.
- They claim that to fix the problem or to avoid arrest you must pay a fine or fee using retail gift cards, pre-paid debit cards, wire transfers, or cash.
- They use caller ID numbers that look like official government numbers but are NOT. These calls are NOT from the Social Security Administration.

Social Security WILL:

- Mail you a letter if there is a problem.
- Mail you a letter with detailed information if payments are due. You have the ability to appeal the decision.
- Use emails, text messages, and social media to provide GENERAL Social Security information (not personal or financial information).

Social Security WILL NOT:

- Threaten you.
- Tell you that your Social Security Number has been or might be suspended.
- Call to demand a payment.
- Ask you for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Require a specific means of debt repayment, like a prepaid debit card, a retail giftcard, or cash.
- Demand that you pay a Social Security debt without the ability to appeal the amount you owe.
- Promise a benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money.
- Request personal or financial information through email, text messages, or social media.

Additional Resources to Avoid Financial Abuse:

- Add your phone number to the National "Do Not Call" Registry to prevent telemarketers from calling you. Charities, political organizations and surveys are excluded from the "Do Not Call List." To sign up, visit www.donotcall.gov or you can call 1-800-382-1222.
- For additional fact sheets on Elder Financial Abuse, visit WISER's website at www.wiserwomen.org

“Scammers prey on emotion, generally fear, to get people to act.”



Keep This Checklist Handy!

- If a caller states there is a problem with your Social Security Number or account: **HANG UP!**
- **DO NOT** provide the caller with money –cash, gift, wire transfers, or pre-paid debit cards – or personal information.
- **REPORT IT** to the Social Security Fraud Hotline 1-800-269-0271 or the Social Security Law Enforcement Team at the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) www.oig.ssa.gov

March Happenings: Ways to Fill Your Calendar

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

MARCH
16 "One Fish, Two Fish" & "Wildware Ceramics" Exhibits - **Time:** All Day
Location: BPL- Faneuil Branch, 419 Faneuil St., Brighton
Contact Info: 617-782-6705

MARCH
17 What you really need to know about Caregiving for a Person with Dementia: How Habilitation Therapy can help
Time: 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: O'Keefe Auditorium, Blake One, MGH Campus **Contact Info:** RSVP at 617-724-0406

MARCH
18 Oscar Wilde Film Series: The Importance of Being Earnest
Time: 5:30 pm -7:30 pm
Location: BPL - North End Branch, 25 Parmenter St.
Contact Info: 617-227-8135

MARCH
19 Free Thursdays at the ICA
Time: 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Location: 25 Harbor Shore Dr.
Contact Info: 617-478-3100

MARCH
20 Marnie Jain: In Close Proximity Exhibit
Time: All Day
Location: BPL - Jamaica Plain Branch, 30 South St.
Contact Info: 617-524-2053

MARCH
21 Yoga for Older Adults
Time: 10:00 am – 11:00 am
Location: BPL - Parker Hill Branch, 1497 Tremont St., Roxbury
Contact Info: 617-427-3820

MARCH
22 Art and Architecture Tour
Time: 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Location: Central Library in Copley Square, 700 Boylston St.
Contact Info: 617-536-5400

MARCH
24 Celebrating Ireland: March Films
Time: 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Location: BPL - South Boston Branch, 646 East Broadway
Contact Info: 617-268-0180

MARCH
25 Tai Chi
Time: 12:30 pm- 1:30 pm
Location: BPL - Mattapan Branch, 1350 Blue Hill Ave
Contact Info: RSVP at 617-298-9218

"Knowing is not enough; We must apply.
Wishing is not enough; We must do."

– Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

This Month...

Reminder about the National Census!

Our population in Boston is ever-changing and especially hard to count. This is why Boston depends on everyone to participate and be counted so that the national census accurately reflects the diverse people who call our city home. The Census is a constitutionally required nationwide survey conducted every 10 years to count the population in the U.S.A.

For the first time this year, you can respond to the Census online or by phone in 13 different languages. The National Census and City Census are both taking place this year, so please make sure you participate in both. For more information, visit: www.2020census.gov





Home *Sweet* Home

Home can mean so many things. It can mean pride in your neighborhood. It might be the place you have built a lifetime of memories, or where you started a new chapter. It is where you feel safe and comfortable. Like family, homes come in different shapes and sizes, but one thing is for sure: home is where the heart is. Whether you own or rent, this issue features stories and resources to help you continue to live and thrive in the places you call home.

-Your Editors

In-Home Services and Programs for *Older Bostonians*

Need a little help continuing to live independently?

The Elder Care Alliance is a nonprofit collaboration of the three ASAPs (Aging Service Access Points) that serve Boston—Boston Senior Home Care, Central Boston Elder Services, and Ethos.

ASAPs are nonprofit organizations which are committed to helping older people live independently in their homes and communities by providing high quality, affordable home and community-based care. ASAPs are governed by an elected board of elders and professionals.

Eligibility for services is based on age, income and need. Call Boston ElderINFO to request service information and apply for services: 617-292-6211 or e-mail bei@bshcinfo.org.

Home Care Services:



Home Delivered Meals: Provides well-balanced meals that meet Federal and State nutritional standards and specific dietary needs.



Chore Service: Helps ensure safety in the home and to correct or prevent environmental problems that are hazardous to an individual's health and safety.



Grocery Shopping: Provides and maintains an adequate supply of groceries in the home.



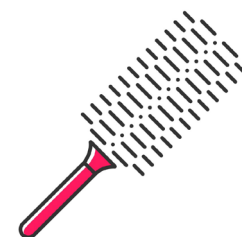
Homemaking Services: May include light housekeeping, cleaning the kitchen and bathroom, changing beds, laundry, menu planning, meal prep, and training for in-home management skills.



Laundry Services: Serves those who have no other means of having laundry cleaned.



Respite: Short stays at selected facilities for elders whose 24-hour caregivers are unavailable.



Personal Care: Assists the individual with activities like bathing, dressing, grooming, bed pan routines, eating, ambulating, and transfers.

Specialized Assistance:



Skilled In-Home Services
Includes skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and more.



Home Health Aide Services
Provides personal care in the home under the supervision of an RN.



Medical Escort
Provides companionship to and from any medical or dental appointment.



Money Management
Uses trained and insured volunteers to help balance checkbooks, budget monthly income, and run bank errands.



Companion
Provides socialization, escorts consumer to appointments and errands.

Serendipity: Sharing A Home

By Andrew Higginbottom, Age Strong Staff Assistant

On a winter night in her Beacon Hill home, 83-year-old Bettina Norton sits in her living room with her pet poodle, Caramella, who is trotting around her seeking attention. Sitting next to her are John Norton, 85, Bettina's husband and Lawson Ung, 29, an Australian-trained physician and the couple's guest for the last 9 months.

About two years ago, Bettina signed up for Nesterly, an intergenerational homeshare program, to receive some help around her home. The longtime Boston resident needed additional income and help after John was diagnosed with dementia.

“I knew that I was going to need support to take care of things around the house,” says Bettina. “We were very lucky to have found Nesterly.”

Nesterly is a program that connects hosts who have spare space in their home with people who are seeking a place to stay for longer than one month. Tenants can also exchange help around the house for lower rent.

Last year, Bettina paired with Lawson, and they have been the perfect match ever since. Before moving in with Bettina and John, Lawson was renting an apartment in Boston. His yearly lease was up and that was when he saw the advertisement for this program.

“I think, like all things in life, it was a matter of serendipity,” says Lawson. “I was far from home, and being halfway across the world can be an isolating and lonely experience. I think that was my major motivation for signing up for this.”

Since moving into the Beacon Hill home, Lawson has helped the Nortons with much needed help around the house.



Some of his duties include walking the dog and doing laundry.

“Lawson is so helpful and friendly,” says Bettina. “He does a lot for us and is a great companion. I expected that the guests that we have found through this program were going to help, but I didn't expect the connection we were going to make.”

Both of them would highly recommend this to anyone looking for a fulfilling and gratifying experience.

“This truly showed me that home is where the heart is,” says Lawson. “If you could meet other like minded people who you can share your experiences with then you are all the more better for that.”

Interested in learning more about becoming a host or homesharing in general? Call Nesterly at 877-958-8785 or email at: hello@nesterly.io

Benefits of homeshare

1. Financial

Homesharing provides predictable monthly income that can cover housing related costs, medical costs, or simply increase supplemental income.

2. Social impact

Housemates provide an opportunity for a new social connection.

3. Extra Hands

Having a housemate means sharing some household tasks, plus the opportunity to get extra help for a simple reduction in rent.

Homeshare by the Numbers:

▶ **\$6,500** is the average annual income someone in Boston makes through Nesterly.

▶ **40%** of Nesterly households get extra help around the house for lower rent.



► Struggling On A Fixed Income?

Maintaining and retaining a home on a fixed income can be challenging. If you're struggling to pay your mortgage or your taxes, or are worried that you're going to fall behind, the Boston Home Center can help you understand your options, connect you with resources, and work toward a solution. And, please remember, the advice is free, and services are confidential.

To learn more about the Boston Home Center programs, call 617-635-HOME (4663) or visit www.bostonhomecenter.com



► Need Home Repairs?

The Boston Home Center provides home repair services, including loans, to income eligible senior homeowners who live in Boston. There is a 0% interest, deferred home repair loan for everything from minor repairs to replacements of heating systems. Your loan amount will be determined by the necessity of your repairs, with health and safety repairs prioritized.



► Need To Replace Your Heating System?

Mayor Martin J. Walsh re-launched the Seniors Save program to help seniors replace failing heating systems to ensure they are ready for the winter to come. We encourage you to apply if you're over the age of 60 and need help replacing your heating system. Senior Save offers financial and contractor help.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Age-Friendly work promotes universal design best practices that allow people to age with dignity and respect in their homes and communities.



► Need A More Accessible Home?

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Offers a Home Modification Loan Program. This state-funded program provides loans to make modifications to the primary, permanent residence of elders, adults with disabilities and families with children with disabilities. This state loan program could help you or a loved one live more independently and comfortably at home.

For more information, contact: The Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership at 617-425-6637 or www.mass.gov/mrc/hmlp

Application Steps for Senior Home Repair



Obtain an application and see if you qualify at bostonhomecenter.com or call 617-635-3880



Contact your neighborhood agency: ESAC, Kit Clark, NOAH, TDC



Complete and mail your application to: 26 Court St., 9th floor, Boston, MA 02108



Check the status of your application at 617-635-HOME (4663)



Complete your project and pay your loan. (Loan is payable once home is no longer primary residence or refinance for cash out).

► In Boston, we Age Strong.

As part of the Health and Human Services cabinet, our mission is to enhance your life with meaningful programs, resources, and connections so together we can live and age strong together in Boston.



We can help with:

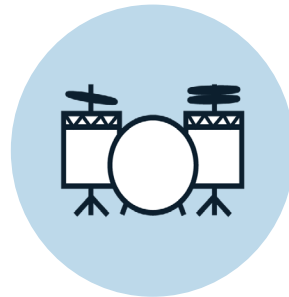
Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



Access to Information and Benefits:

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.



Outreach and Engagement:

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



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



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, 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 older loved one.
- Can connect you to trained Respite Companions who offer additional support to an individual living with dementia.



Around The World!

Age Strong Communications Director Cassandra Baptista brought Boston Seniority magazine to Kolkata, India, pictured here in front of the Victoria Memorial and in front of a masala chai shop.

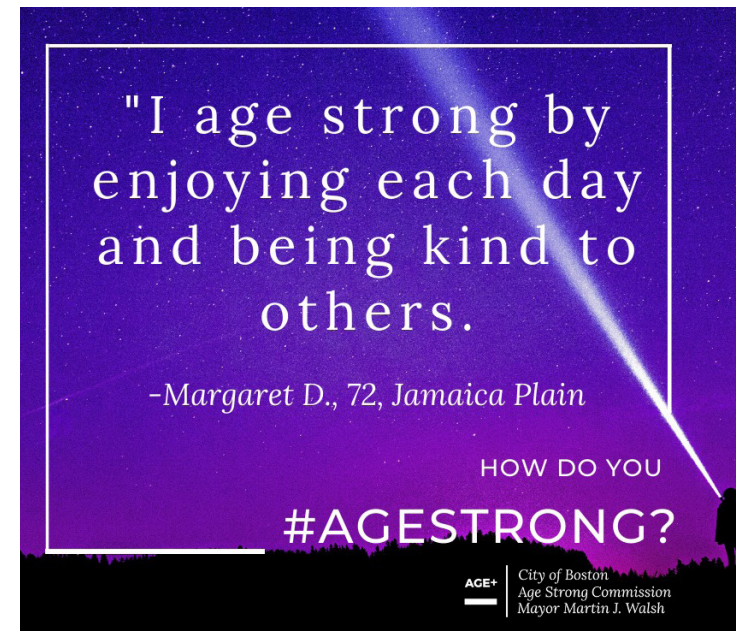
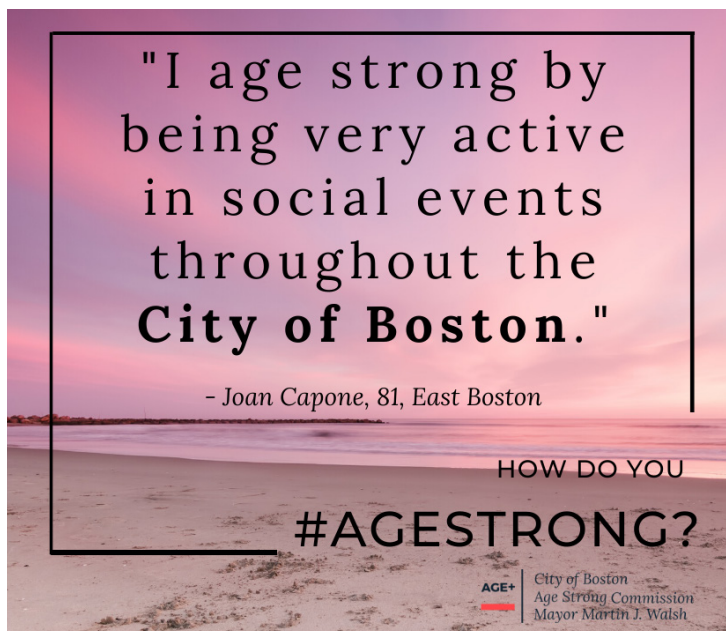


Seen on Social Media



Find us on Facebook and Twitter: @AgeStrongBos

On social media, we post on how you #AgeStrong. Here are a few!



Check it out...

Have you spotted our Age Strong public awareness campaign? You can find them on JCDecaux screens throughout the city.

Join the conversation and tell us how you #AgeStrong. Visit boston.gov/agestrongcampaign for more information.

Birthday Spotlight

Happy 100th Birthday to Mary Dewey!

Mary was one of the founding members of the BCYF Golden Age Center in Charlestown.

Photo (L to R): Charlestown liaison, Quinlan Locke from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services with Mary Dewey and Meaghan Murray, Director of BCYF Golden Age Senior Center.



The Flashback

Last month's answer: Bunker Hill School in Charlestown.

Can you guess?

Hint: This was taken in 1959.

► Seen Around Town





It's National Nutrition Month!
See page 8 for a healthy recipe, and call the Age Strong Commission at 617-635-4366 for more information about SNAP, home-delivered meals, and dining sites.

AGE+

Age Strong