

# Boston Seniority

Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh

## IT'S OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

p. 12 & 13

## City Hall turns 50!

p. 14 & 19

May 2018  
Issue 5  
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Free Publication



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See if we saw you! A photo series from social outings around the city.

## On the Cover:

Our cover star this month is Nicholas "Jerry" Leonard, 83 years old, from the West End. Jerry is a Senior Greeter and loves Boston City Hall. "Senior Greeters at the front of City Hall are not just pretty faces," he says. "We're respected. We can answer 99% of questions from visitors. We welcome tourists. I sit up front and see people come into the building in awe of the height and magnitude of the building." Interested in becoming a Senior Greeter or other opportunities with Boston City Hall? Call 617-635-5741.



# Boston Seniority

Published by the City of Boston's Commission on Affairs of the Elderly

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Website: [www.boston.gov/elderly](http://www.boston.gov/elderly)



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Twitter: @AgingInBos

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

Historic preservation is at the heart of Boston's identity.



Historic places protect our sense of identity as a city. Boston is filled with resiliency and character. That is something that we inherited from history, and something that we can see in our streets, buildings, and parks.

Preservation is about cherishing and protecting what is best in our city—in our environment and in our character. Older buildings are often very sustainable. There are other reasons, too, that we treasure our historic legacy. Most Bostonians live in 19th and early 20th century neighborhoods. Everyone sees value in protecting and preserving their homes and their streets.

The many projects that take place at our historic districts and landmarks are high-quality, high-investment projects that support Boston's economy. They bring capital into our neighborhoods and they create good jobs. Historic preservation plays a big role in the Main Street districts that promote neighborhood development and quality of life. And it's not just about buildings. Boston's historic open spaces, from the Boston Common to Franklin Park, give us places to gather with our families and enjoy nature.

In Boston, we're just as proud of our past as we are excited for our future. We balance historic preservation with forward-thinking development, especially as it relates to climate preparedness. In the Seaport, a historic Wharf building is being retrofitted for General Electric's campus.

As we plan for the future, we keep our history front and center. The preservation of our historic places is essential to our goals for having a vibrant, 21st-century city.

Sincerely,

*-Mayor Martin J. Walsh*



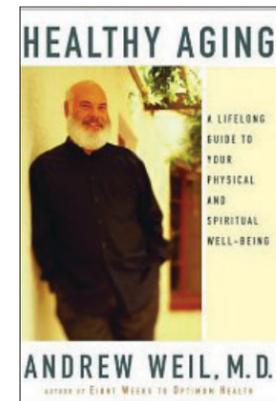
## ► Book Picks

# It's Older Americans Month.

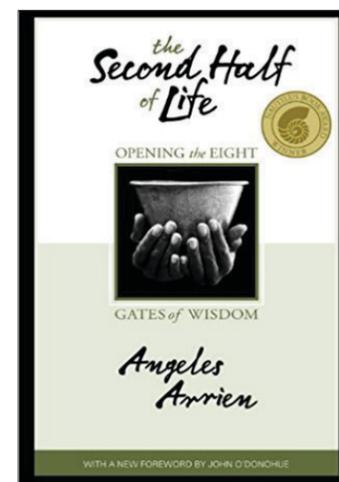
*Thrilled that you're old enough to celebrate? You should be!*

By Kathleen O'Connor

We're going to look in the mirror, smile back and consult three allies who reflect openly and supportively on challenges of aging. Enter Angeles Arrien (*The Second Half of Life: Opening the Eight Gates of Wisdom*); Andrew Weil (*Healthy Aging: A Lifelong Guide to Your Physical and Spiritual Well-Being*); and Rabbi Zalman Schacter-Salumi (*From Age-ing to Sage-ing: A Revolutionary Approach to Growing Older*).

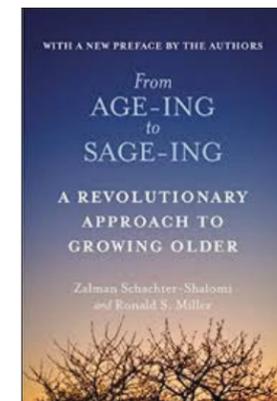


Though aging may not be reversible, Weil offers ways to avert conditions that hamper living and prolong well-being into older years. You'll also find insightful background on how the body ages and a thought-provoking appraisal of anti-aging products.



Arrien draws on imagery, archetype and myth. Give it a try and you'll find wonderful perspective: "If we truly understand what is required of us at this stage (of

life), we are blessed with enormous opportunity to develop and embody wisdom and character."



Increasingly apprehensive about old age, Reb Zalman tackled his fears. This book shares his journey to turn aging into meaning – his questions, his approach, how he dealt with the unknown, and the wonderful place his quest led him.

Visit your local library to check out these books at [www.bpl.org](http://www.bpl.org)

# May Happenings: Ways to Fill Your Calendar

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



**Return of the Swans**  
**Time:** 11:00 am  
**Location:** Boston Public Garden, 4 Charles St. 02116  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Wake up the Earth Festival**  
**Time:** 11:00 am  
**Location:** Jamaica Plain  
**Contact Info:** Spontaneous Celebrations, 617-524-6373  
Spontaneouscelebrations.org



**John Hancock Sports and Fitness Expo**  
**Time:** 11:00 am - 6:00 pm  
**Location:** Seaport World Trade Center, 200 Seaport Blvd., Boston  
**Contact Info:** 617-439-7700



**Swan Boats Open**  
**Time:** 10:00 am - 4:00 pm  
**Location:** Boston Public Garden, 4 Charles St. S,  
**Contact Info:** 617-522-1966



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:00 am - 10:00 am  
**Location:** Adams Park  
4225 Washington St., Roslindale  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 10:30 am  
**Location:** Winthrop Square  
55 Winthrop St., Charlestown  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Dog Licensing and Low Cost Rabies Clinic**  
**Time:** 10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
**Location:** BCYF Tobin CC  
1481 Tremont St., Roxbury  
**Contact Info:** Animal Care and Control 617-635-5348



**Lilac Sunday**  
**Time:** 10:00 am - 3:00 pm  
**Location:** Arnold Arboretum  
130 B St., South Boston  
**Contact Info:** The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University 617-524-1718

## May Neighborhood Coffee Hours Listed Below!



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 10:30 am  
**Location:** Flaherty Park  
130 B St., South Boston  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 10:30 am  
**Location:** Commonwealth Ave. Mall,  
15P Commonwealth Ave, Back Bay  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 10:30 am  
**Location:** Iacono Playground  
150 Readville St., Hyde Park  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



**Neighborhood Coffee Hour**  
**Time:** 9:30 am - 10:30 am  
**Location:** Mozart St. Playground  
10 Mozart St., Jamaica Plain  
**Contact Info:** Parks and Recreation, 617-635-4505



## Senior Corps Week April 29 - May 5

We celebrate the committed individuals who volunteer their time and energy to help others. Their stories of service display the positive impact one can create and the everlasting change one person can make for another.

Senior Corps volunteers work in countless ways to make communities stronger. Throughout the country, Foster Grandparents are mentoring and tutoring students, Senior Companions are helping older adults who are frail remain in their own homes, and RSVP programs are mobilizing volunteers to make an impact on issues such as disaster relief, the opioid crisis, independent living, and supporting veterans and military families.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, please call us at 617-635-4366.

# Stroke Awareness Month

What is a stroke? A stroke occurs when a blood vessel, which carries oxygen to the brain, is blocked by a clot, or bursts. When this happens, the brain is deprived of oxygen, and its cells and tissues begin to die.

### Types of stroke:

- **Ischemic strokes** - caused by a clot.
- **Hemorrhagic stroke** - caused when a weakened blood vessel bursts and bleeds into the brain, compressing the surrounding tissue.
- **TIA (transient ischemic attacks)** are also known as “mini-strokes”, and are caused by temporary clots.

### Signs and symptoms include sudden:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Trouble seeing or blurred vision in one or both eyes
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause

## Did you know?

Someone has a stroke every

**40** seconds in the U.S.

### Facts:



Every year, over 795,000 people in the U.S. have a stroke.



Family history increases the chance of a stroke.



Prevention Tip: Don't smoke. Smoking doubles the risk of strokes.



While stroke risk increases with age, 34% of people hospitalized for strokes were under the age of 65.



High blood pressure is the number-one cause of stroke. Try to maintain a healthy blood pressure of 120/80.



Prevention Tip: Eat a healthy diet that is low in saturated and trans fat, added sugars, and sodium.



Strokes are the leading cause of long-term disability.



High cholesterol causes plaque buildup in the arteries and blood vessels, which can block blood flow to the brain and cause strokes.



Prevention Tip: Engage in physical activity every day.

For more information and resources on stroke awareness go to:

American Stroke Association  
[www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org)

Boston Public Health Commission  
[www.bphc.org](http://www.bphc.org)



Photo credit:  
@bpdtennis

► Active Aging

## Tennis, Anyone?

By Marin Sklan

Walk into the Sportsmen’s Tennis and Enrichment Center on a Sunday afternoon, and the first thing you’ll notice is the Motown, with icons Barry Moody and The Temptations crooning over the loudspeakers. The occasion? The weekly meeting of the Boston Police Tennis Club. In case the music didn’t tip you off, this isn’t your average tennis club. Comprised of Southie Seniors, ladies ranging from 67 to 92 years old, members gather each week under the guidance of Officer Frank Williams, Jr.

Williams created the tennis club following the success of his Volley Against Violence and Boston Youth Tennis Programs, which have been running for nine years, and encourage positive decision making and skill building.

So why tennis? Williams’ love of the

sport had been lifelong, inherited from his father, whom he lovingly refers to as “the King.” An immigrant from the Dominican Republic, Williams’ father worked as a janitor at MIT, and it was there, on those campus courts, that he handed his son a racquet for the first time.

As a member of the force, Williams was looking for opportunities to enrich the communities he was already serving. With “the blessing” of his Chief, Williams created his youth programs. As they grew and gained support within the community, Williams expanded his sights, looking to other underserved communities in Southie. It was at this point that he met Carole Sullivan, the Director of Senior Programs at the South Boston Neighborhood House, which has been providing resources and programs for Bostonians of all ages, since 1903.

With gear, music, and cadets in tow, Williams started his senior tennis program at the Neighborhood house. The class expanded from five to over twenty participants, and had to move to Sportsmen’s, a venue large enough to accommodate the growing interest. His classes are structured around inclusivity, accommodating participants who bring canes and walkers. These ladies, whom Williams fondly refers to as “seasoned, recycled teenagers”, dance along to the music, work on their hand-eye coordination, and socialize.

As Carole Sullivan aptly put it “There’s such a stigma for older gals and guys - that they should be sitting around playing bingo. That’s not how they want to be portrayed, that’s not how they want to be recognized. This opens up a path that they, friends, and family would never believe. Someone gave them an opportunity, and they took it. Now they’re proud and walking a little taller.”

Williams’ work and enthusiasm has been so successful, his curriculum was adopted by Serve & Connect, a non-profit geared toward creating transformative police-community partnerships. He has also gone on to create tennis programs in Barbados, Cape Verde, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

When asked about the future of these programs, Williams said “The goal is to expand to more areas of the city. To Dorchester, Mattapan, etc. We’re having a good time, and we need to give back. There are three things you need in life: someone to love, something to do, and something to look forward to. If we can be that thing that people are looking forward to, that would be incredible.”

For more information on the Boston Police Tennis Club, call 617-343-4747.

► Neighborhood Voices

# How do you engage at every age?

This year's Older Americans Month theme is, "Engage at every age." Here's the answers you gave us when we asked how you engage.

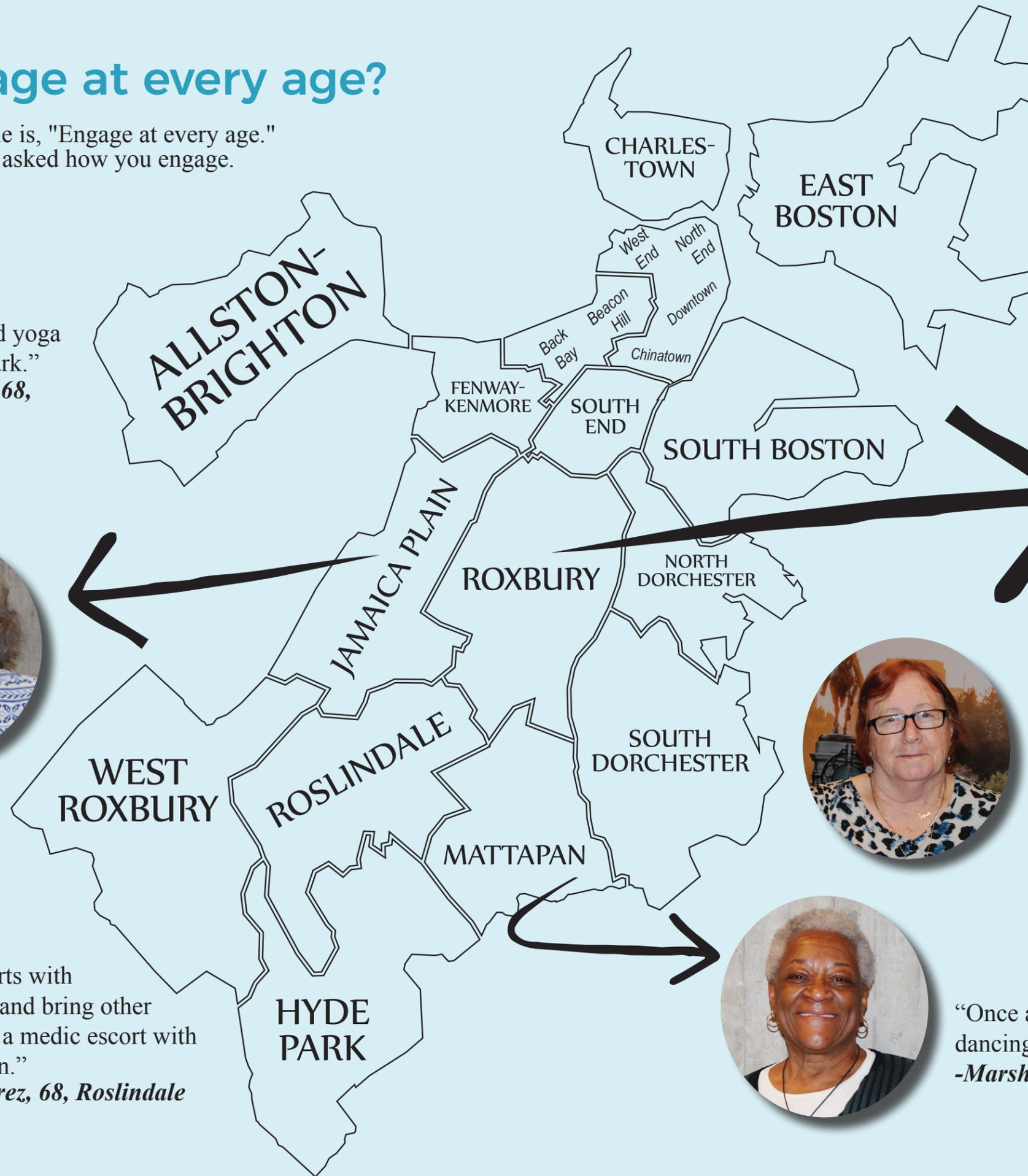


"I take tai chi and yoga classes at Kit Clark."  
- **Julian Zapata, 68, Dorchester**

"I do arts and crafts - crochet, knitting, mixed media - and give them to my friends."  
- **Tomasa Padilla, 72**



"I organize concerts with FriendshipWorks and bring other seniors. I am also a medic escort with Senior Companion."  
- **Marcelino Alvarez, 68, Roslindale**



"I cook for the homeless in my church."  
- **Myrna Davila, 64, North End**



"I participate in events in my building like movie and game nights."  
- **Beverly Broughton, 70**

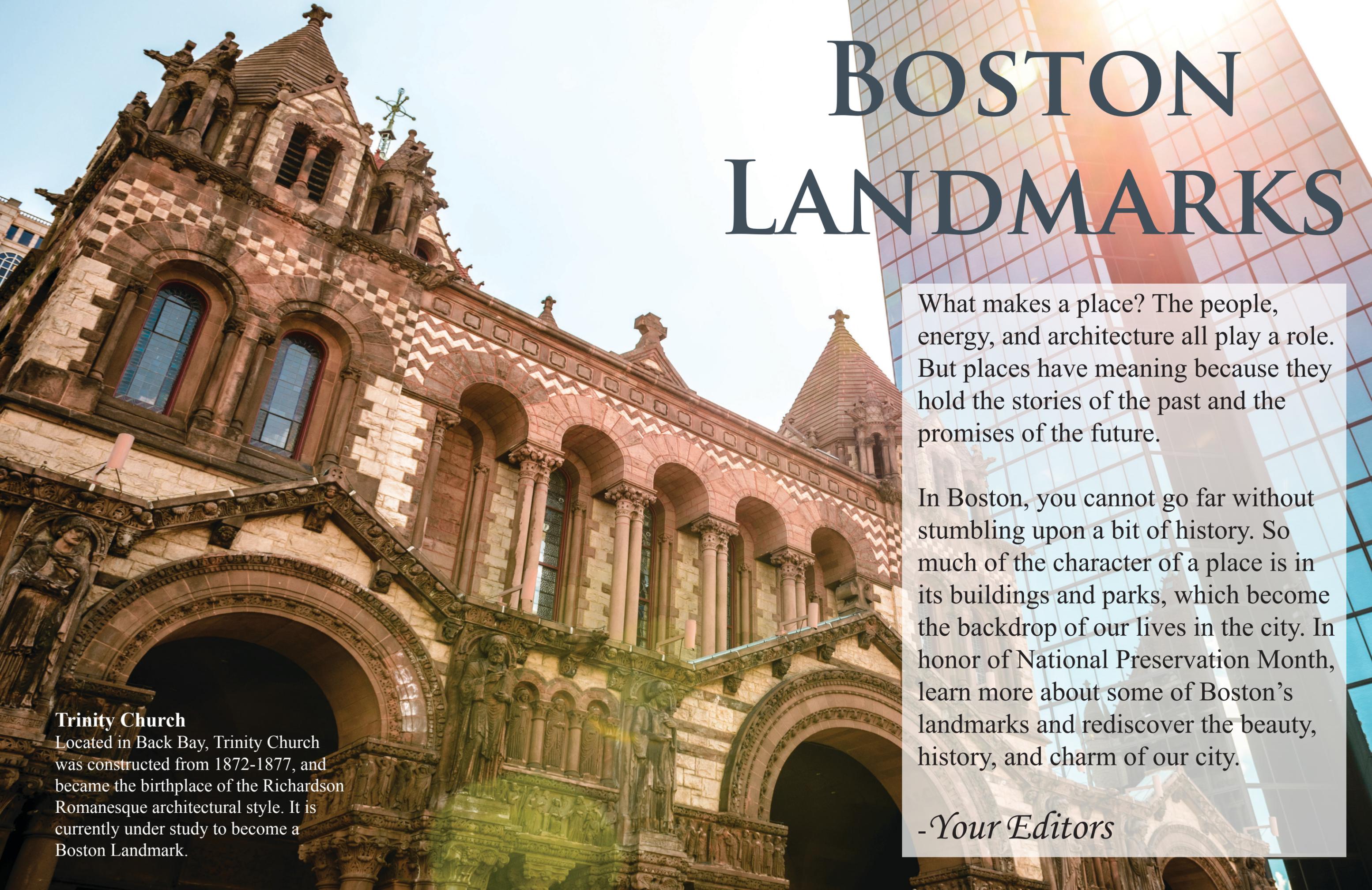


"I help my neighbor sometimes get to the bank."  
- **Veronica Durant-Ortiz, 73, Roxbury**



"Once a week, I do senior fitness and line dancing. All kinds of music, like salsa."  
- **Marsha Colbert, 72**



A low-angle photograph of the Trinity Church facade in Boston, showing its intricate Romanesque architecture with multiple levels of arches, columns, and a prominent spire. The building is constructed from reddish-brown stone with decorative patterns. A modern glass skyscraper is visible in the background on the right side of the image.

# BOSTON LANDMARKS

What makes a place? The people, energy, and architecture all play a role. But places have meaning because they hold the stories of the past and the promises of the future.

In Boston, you cannot go far without stumbling upon a bit of history. So much of the character of a place is in its buildings and parks, which become the backdrop of our lives in the city. In honor of National Preservation Month, learn more about some of Boston's landmarks and rediscover the beauty, history, and charm of our city.

*-Your Editors*

## **Trinity Church**

Located in Back Bay, Trinity Church was constructed from 1872-1877, and became the birthplace of the Richardson Romanesque architectural style. It is currently under study to become a Boston Landmark.

# It's National Preservation Month: *Celebrating our Landmarks*

Established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, this month-long observance is celebrated across the country by highlighting the historic places and cultural resources that have endured the test of time and enhance our lives. In Boston, Preservation Month is led by the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC).

Each year, BLC celebrates Preservation Month by creating a calendar of local events that helps promote the work of BLC and Boston organizations to preserve the history and architecture in neighborhoods across the city. As one of America's oldest cities, Boston has been at the forefront of the development of the nation. There are more than 8,000 properties designated as individual Boston Landmarks located within the City's nine historic districts. The BLC is the municipal preservation agency for the City of Boston's historic buildings, districts, structures, objects, neighborhoods and archaeological resources.

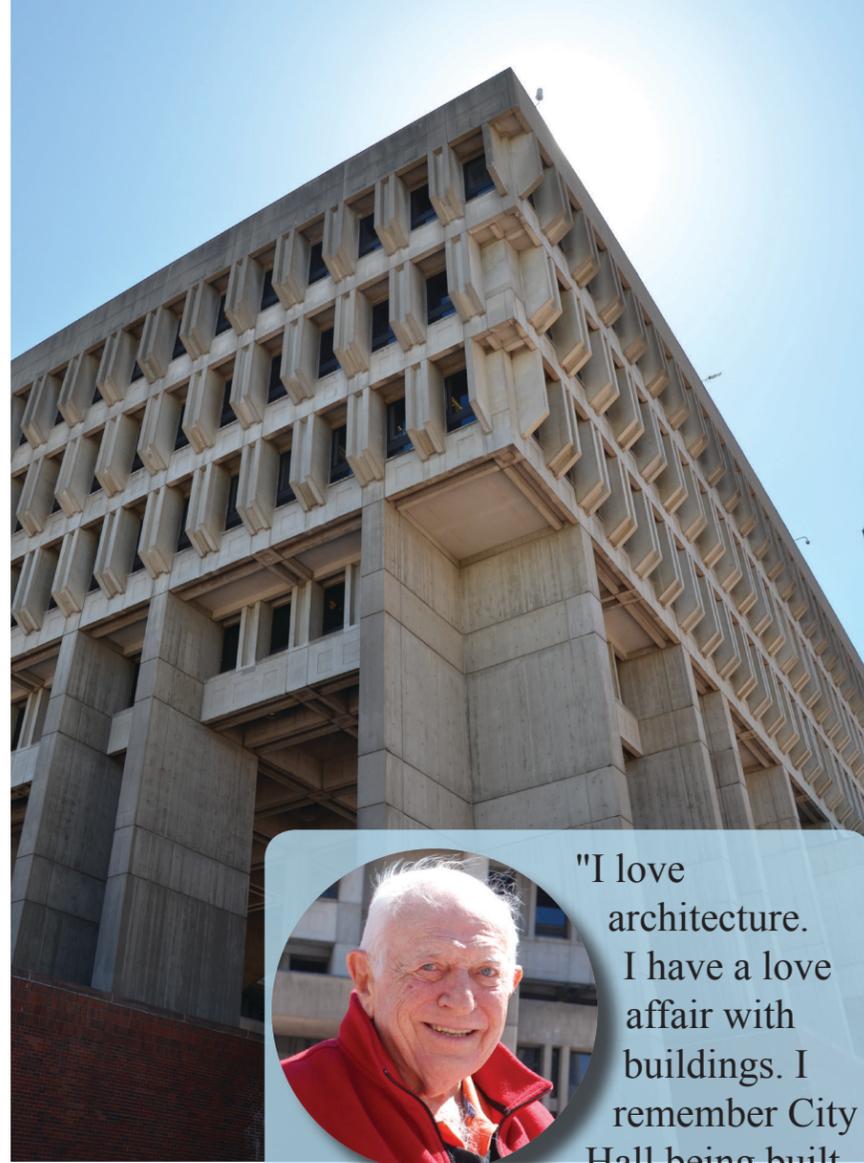
These are the buildings, structures, sites, and areas that inform us about the people that have lived and worked in Boston and the events that have shaped the city from its beginning to the present. The BLC and the local Historic District Commissions, along with the Boston City Archaeology Program, help keep Boston, Boston.

**Tell us what your favorite landmark is for a chance to win this fun bag giveaway!**

Email us by June 1st with your name, age, neighborhood and phone number at [bostonseniority@boston.gov](mailto:bostonseniority@boston.gov).



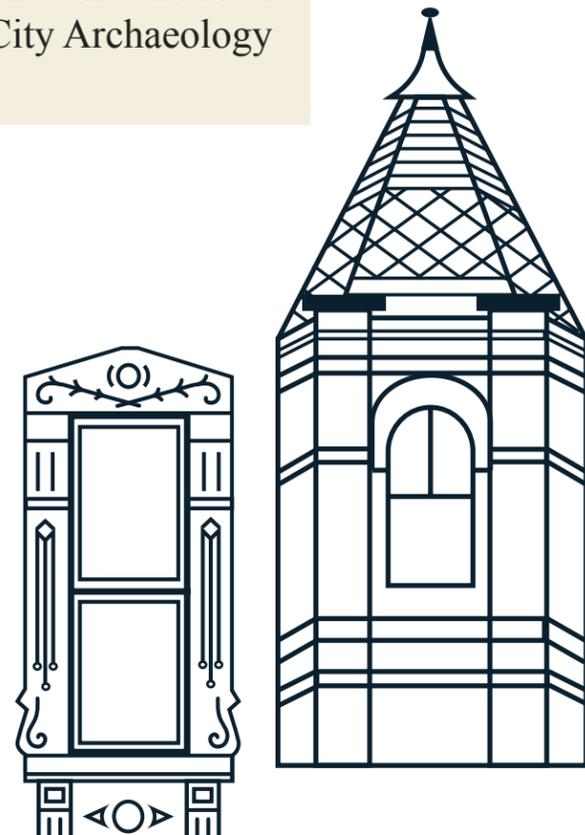
For more information on the Boston Landmarks Commission, call 617-635-3850 or check out their website at [www.boston.gov/landmarks](http://www.boston.gov/landmarks)



"I love architecture. I have a love affair with buildings. I remember City Hall being built."

The map room is the highlight of the building for me. Every single building is in a scale model. Architecturally, Boston City Hall is one of a kind in the world. This is a "wow" building. It's a semi-wonder. The brutalism, though not loved, is fascinating. It's not all over the world. You're not going to go to Paris and see something like this. America, especially New England, has its own beauty."

*-Nicholas "Jerry" Leonard, 83, from West End is a Senior Greeter at City Hall*



## Boston City Hall Celebrates 50 Years

More than 50 years ago, after receiving 256 entries in response to an international design competition for a new City Hall, the City chose a design by an unknown architectural firm, Kallmann, McKinnell, and Knowles. The intent of the design was to show an open and progressive city government. The building was completed in 1967.

The concrete modernist style accentuates the building's floor-to-ceiling windows, skylights, and grand staircase. In addition to galleries that highlight local Boston artists, the building also offers vistas of Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market.

### Getty Foundation Grant

Boston has received a 2017 "Keep It Modern" grant from the Getty Foundation, to fund a conservation plan for our iconic City Hall building, recognized as outstanding 20th century architectural feat.





# Boston's Preservation Month Calendar

This year's calendar has a wide variety of preservation-related events in nearly every neighborhood; check out some of the events listed below. The complete Boston Landmarks Commission Preservation Month Calendar is available online at: [boston.gov/preservation-month](http://boston.gov/preservation-month).

## Boston Public Library

Founded in 1848, the Boston Public Library is the second-largest in the U.S., surpassed only by the Library of Congress. It contains 19 million volumes, holds 10,000 free public programs, and lends 3.7 million materials annually.

▶ **May 12 at 11:00AM (Free)**  
**Walking Tour of Monument Square**  
 Loring-Greenough House\*,  
 12 South St, Jamaica Plain, 02130  
 For information or to RSVP go to:  
[www.jphs.org/events/](http://www.jphs.org/events/)



## Christian Science Plaza

Designated a Boston Landmark in 2011, the Christian Science Center spans 10.4 acres, and includes six buildings, a reflecting pool, and a children's fountain.

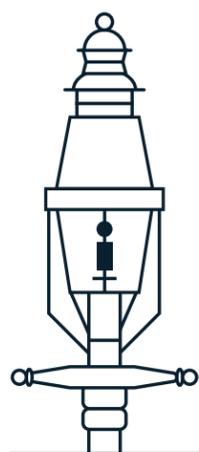


▶ **May 19 at 1:00PM (Free)**  
**Charlestown Navy Yard: Then & Now**  
 Charlestown Navy Yard Flagpole, 02129  
 For information or to RSVP go to:  
[www.nps.gov/bost](http://www.nps.gov/bost)

## Fast Facts:

The Oldest Landmark is...

**Boston Common**

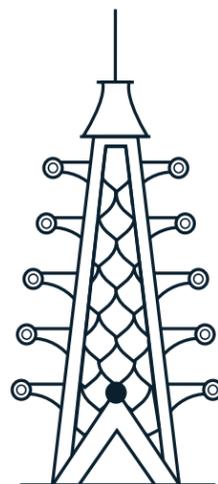


**101**

Designated Boston Landmarks

**80**

Pending Boston Landmarks



## Franklin Park

Franklin Park is a 527-acre parkland that extends into Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and Dorchester. It is Boston's largest park, contains the Franklin Park Zoo, and was designated a Boston landmark in 1980.

▶ **May 22 at 6:00PM (Free)**  
**Bay Village Walking Tour**  
 Begin at Eliot Norton Park, Charles St. South & Tremont St., Boston 02116  
 For information or to RSVP email:  
[joseph.cornish@boston.gov](mailto:joseph.cornish@boston.gov)

\* designated Landmark/pending  
 Note: Schedule may be subject to change.

► Healthy, Wealthy and Wyse

# Wyse says Goodbye to Readers after 30 years

Dear Healthy, Wealthy and Wyse Readers,

After thirty years of writing for *Boston Seniority*, I have decided to retire my column. I enjoyed writing about medical issues, medications, future trends in medicine and issues and concerns specific to seniors. I thank you for your comments, recommendations and suggestions.

I especially want to thank my friends and colleagues in the Elderly Commission. In 1984, I transferred from Boston City Hospital to work at City Hall. The staff at the Elderly Commission welcomed me to their team immediately. They introduced me to issues that were important to Boston seniors. I enjoyed their senior trips and boat rides, consulted on the original Seniors Count Program, and was a guest on programs. They introduced me to our dear friend, Dorothy Curran's Wednesday Evening Concerts on the Plaza.

I often walked through the Elderly Commission on my way to pick up my mail. The staff was always busy but they found time to say hello and give me updates on events and department news.

I am very grateful for knowing and working with such a delightful group of people. To our Boston seniors and Elderly Commission staff, I wish each of you good health, happiness and good fortune in the days ahead.

Warmest wishes,  
Geraldine C. Wyse, RN

Flashback to 1990 ↷



► Advertisement



# The Answer to Clear and Easy Phone Conversations

If you have difficulty using a standard telephone, MassRelay has the solution you've been looking for. Whether you are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking, there is a free and confidential relay service that will fit your need.

**Captioned Telephone (CapTel®)** lets you speak to friends and family over the phone and listen to their responses, while reading word-for-word captions on an easy-to-read screen.

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**Speech-to-Speech (STS)** features a specially trained Operator who will revoice your words as needed for improved clarity while you speak and listen through the phone.

**Hearing Carry Over (HCO)** lets you listen to your phone conversation and type your responses for an Operator to voice to the other person.

**Voice Carry Over (VCO)** lets you speak to friends and family and read their responses on the phone's screen.

**Deaf-Blind Service (DBS)** allows you to type your messages and read the other person's responses on a braille display.

**Spanish Relay** features a Spanish-speaking Operator trained to relay your conversation in any call type.

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To learn more about MassRelay, visit [Mass.gov/MassRelay](http://Mass.gov/MassRelay) or call us: 800.720.3480 (TTY) | 800.720.3479 (Voice)

# Here's How We Can Help

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

## Did you know?

**It is Mental Health Awareness Month. Talk to your physician for any mental health concerns.**



### Housing:

The Elderly Commission works to ensure that older adults are able to find and maintain housing. We can:

- Assist with housing search, application, and court advocacy.
- Connect older adults with other City and community agencies that can provide resources for home repair and other challenging situations like hoarding.
- Provide mediation and court advocacy



### Access to Information and Benefits:

Community Advocates connect seniors to a comprehensive array of resources, benefits, and information. We can:

- Assist with applications for public benefits like SNAP and LIHEAP.
- Ease the process of applying for, and receiving, Medicare benefits.
- Assist older adults access several tax relief exemptions and programs like the Elderly Exemption 41C, Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit and more
- Assist older adults with navigating systems including the aging network and city services.



### Transportation:

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

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

### Volunteer Opportunities:

We operate 4 volunteer programs in impact driven work across the city:

- *RSVP* matches seniors with valuable volunteer opportunities in Boston.
- The *Senior Companion Program* matches seniors with homebound persons who need assistance.
- *Senior Greeters* volunteer their time to greet guests of City Hall.
- *Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program*: Qualified senior homeowners get the opportunity to work-off up to \$1,500 on their property tax bill by volunteering for a City agency.



### Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support:

Know that you are not alone; We are here to support you. We:

- Host Memory Cafes, which are places where individuals experiencing memory loss and their caretakers can meet in a safe, social environment.
- Provide referrals and offer workshops, training, and support groups for those who are supporting an elderly loved one.



### Outreach and Engagement:

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



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



Commission Advertisements

# NEED A BUS BUDDY?

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

## BECOME A BUS BUDDY

Experienced MBTA riders can show others the way!

Interested? Call 617-635-3988



The Elderly Commission



# Uplift, Inspire, and Lend a Hand



## Volunteer to Deliver Food to Older Adults

*Flexible Schedule*

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

The Buzz

## Around The World!



*Boston Seniority* magazine was spotted cruising around Savannah, Georgia with Nancy Doherty from Jamaica Plain and her daughter Jullianne, who is the Director of Outreach and Engagement at the Elderly Commission.



## Here's a throwback *Boston Seniority* magazine cover from 31 years ago. It was published in May 1987.



**Last month's answer:**  
It was Charles River Bridge and Dam in the Beacon Hill/Esplanade area.

**Can you guess?**

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

**Hint:** The photo was taken in 1898.



# ► Seen Around Town



*Happy 80th Birthday to Alfreda Harris!*



*"I take care of my granddaughter on weekends. It keeps me young."  
-Danny*



*"I enjoy the direct contact with clients through the Senior Companion program."  
-Doris*



*A new friendship blossomed at the Senior Companion Volunteer meeting last month.*

*The Department of Innovation and Technology made paper flowers for seniors in honor of One Boston Day.*



A vibrant scene of a park with tulips, a pond, and a city building in the background. The foreground is filled with a dense field of tulips in shades of yellow, orange, and pink. In the middle ground, a pond reflects the sky, with a swan boat carrying several people. The background features a tall, modern city building under a clear blue sky, with trees in bloom. A large, semi-transparent pink circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing a quote.

**"The older I get,  
the more beautiful  
life becomes."**

*-Frank Lloyd Wright*

**Celebrating Older Americans Month**