Bostom Semiority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Michelle Wu



October 2023 Issue 8 Vol. 47

FREE PUBLICATION



MAYOR'S LETTER P. 4



SCAM ALERT P. 8



UPCOMING EVENTS P. 14

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Boston Seniority

Published by the City of Boston's Age Strong Commission

Michelle Wu *Mayor*

Emily K. Shea Commissioner

Ami Bennitt

Director of Communications

Martha Rios *Editor and Photographer*

Dillon Tedesco
Staff Assistant and Writer

1 City Hall Square - Room 271 Boston, MA 02201

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



Main number: (617) 635-4366



Website: boston.gov/age-strong Email: agestrong@boston.gov



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

Hello Boston Residents!

Welcome to October! After a busy summer, we welcome cooler weather, beautiful fall foliage, and one of the most beloved seasons in New England, fall!

We continue to celebrate Latinx Heritage Month through October 15 throughout Boston, with specific fun at the Fiesta en la Plaza, arts and cultural activities on our City Hall Plaza.

Inside, you'll find a list of books recommended by the Boston Public Library, and learn about Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead), and meet some of Age Strong's volunteers.

Don't forget to make an appointment with your Age Strong Advocate during the annual Medicare Open Enrollment period (October 15-December 7) to assess your medical and prescription drug coverage, and to find out if you qualify for the Medicare Savings Programs. These important programs can help you lower health care costs and save money. Thanks in large part to your advocacy, more folks are eligible. Call 617-635-4366 or attend one of 9 events throughout the city (see inside for details).

I look forward to seeing you out in the neighborhoods,

Michelle Wu

Michelle Wu Mayor of Boston

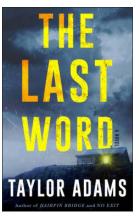




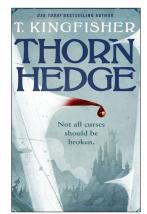
BPL Book Picks

Source: Boston Public Library

Every month staff from across the Boston Public Library system recommend their favorite books for all ages across a variety of genres. We hope this list inspires you to keep reading! Some of these titles may be available in other formats or languages. Check our catalog for availability. Place a hold or check one out today and enjoy a good book!



The Last Word by Taylor Adams Thriller. After leaving a one-star review of a poorly-written horror book, Emma Carpenter starts believing she is being stalked by the author.

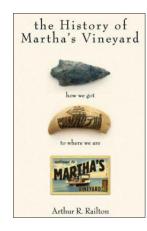


Thornhedge by T. Kingfisher Fantasy. A fun, interesting re-telling of the Sleeping Beauty story.



Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer Memoir/Nonfiction. Kimmerer is both a botanist and a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Here, she combines her knowledge of plants and personal stories into one beautiful

and heartbreaking memoir.



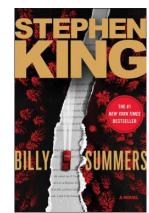
Vinevard by Arthur R. Railton Nonfiction. A history of Martha's Vineyard, from its geological origins and colonization, to its place in the

modern imagination as

an exclusive summer

The History of Martha's

destination.



Billy Summers by Stephen King Fiction. Billy Summers is a killer for hire and he'll only agree to a contract if the target is a truly bad person. Now he wants out but is offered one last hit.



BOSTON For more titles or BPL info, visit bpl.org or LIBRARY call 617 536 500 call 617-536-5400.

2023 ANNUAL MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT EVENTS



OCTOBER 15 - DECEMBER 7

- Meet with trained SHINE* counselors to find the best coverage for the least cost
- Review your overall medical and prescription drug coverage

WHAT TO BRING: LIST OF PRESCRIPTIONS, MEDICARE/OTHER INSURANCE CARDS, YOUR MEDICARE.GOV USERNAME/PASSWORD IF ALREADY SET UP

*Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18

10am - 3:30pm East Boston Senior Center 7 Bayswater St., East Boston

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

10am - 3:30pm BCYF Nazzaro 30 North Bennet St., North End

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25

10am- 3:30pm Kroc Center 650 Dudley St., Dorchester

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

10am - 3:30pm Central Boston Elder Services 2315 Washington St., Roxbury

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

10am - 3:30pm Mattapan Branch Library 1350 Blue Hill Ave., Mattapan

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

10:30am - 3:30pm West Roxbury Branch Library 1961 Centre St., West Roxbury

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20

10am - 3:30pm Veronica B. Smith Senior Center 20 Chestnut Hill Ave., Brighton

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

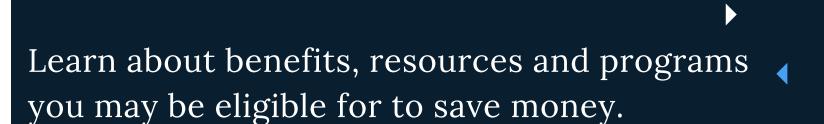
10am -3:30pm Grove Hall Branch Library 41 Geneva Ave., Dorchester

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

10am - 3:30pm South Boston Neighborhood House 136 H St., South Boston

Call 617-635-4366 to schedule your appointment for these events or to make a counseling appointment for another time.

MEET YOUR AGE STRONG ADVOCATES IN-PERSON THROUGHOUT BOSTON'S NEIGHBORHOODS...



Call the Age Strong Commission at **617-635-4366** to connect with your neighborhood Advocate or visit **boston.gov/agestrong** to view the days/times Age Strong advocates are in your neighborhood.











Scam Alert

Don't Get Scammed!

By National Council on Aging

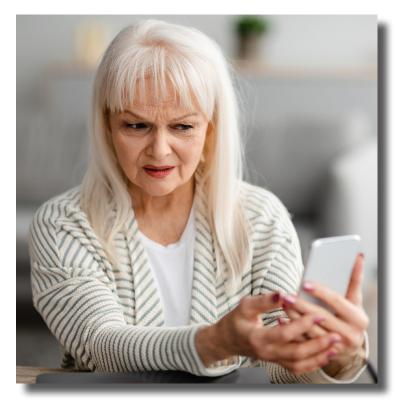
Unfortunately, older adults are often the target of scams. Scammers have a lot of practice using ploys to catch you off guard. One scam to keep an eye out for is fake text messages.

Text message scams are becoming more common. According to a recent report, scammers sent 225.7 billion spam texts in 2022. Scammers can only call one person at a time, but they can send a text to hundreds of people at once. Here are some signs of a fake text message so you can stay safe and protect your finances.

A text with a link saying you have won a prize. If you don't remember entering a contest, you likely have not won. When you click the link and enter your information, scammers are able to use that to access your bank or other personal accounts. DON'T CLICK ON IT.

A text asking for private information to avoid consequences. This could look like: First Money Savings bank is closing your account due to an overdue balance of \$231.23. Please reply with your username and password to confirm account information. DON'T CLICK ON IT.

The message seems as if it comes from someone who knows you, but their



message contains no information relevant to your life. This could look like this: Hi! How have you been? :) Let's catch up this weekend. Visit my profile at this link. DON'T CLICK ON IT.

Falling victim to a scam is always upsetting. We like to assume the best of people, so learning that someone targeted you feels bad. But, there are steps you can take if you have been a victim of a scam. First, contact your bank. They may be able to stop or reverse any scam transactions. Second, contact your local police department. They may have other calls about similar scams. Finally, contact the Federal Trade Commission, who keeps track of scams across the country, and will be able to help you if you file a report at consumer.ftc.gov.

Celebration

Day of the Dead



The Day of the Dead, or el Día de los Muertos, is observed in Mexico and by Mexican communities around the world, late October/early November. On the Day of the Dead, the border between the worlds of the living and the dead becomes blurred. During this time, the dead are able to cross into the world of the living.

This holiday is joyful not solemn, and to celebrate, families make ofrendas (offerings) and visit the gravesites of those who have passed. To help open the border for family members to cross over, ofrendas will often have pictures of loved ones who have passed on. Ofrendas usually also have candles, marigolds, sugar skulls, and food.

To celebrate the Day of the Dead in Boston, you can visit Copley Square to view the City ofrenda from October 31 through November 2. If you have a picture of a loved one you would like to be included in this year's ofrenda, visit diademuertosboston.tumblr.com.

Feature Story

Who are Boston's Older Adults? Meet Tabitha Goggins

By Ruth Blackman

Ms. Tabitha is a 105-year old woman who wakes up every morning with thoughts of how to make it a good day not only for herself but another person. She's lived by this all her life and believes that living a holy life is important.

She was born in St. Louis, Missouri to a hard-working family which raised their children to value church and education. Though a small family, ties were strong. She notes fond memories of her grandfather who impacted many of her life's decisions.

Tabitha went to college, married shortly after, and moved to Boston. She experienced a great tragedy when her 3-year-old grandson was killed while crossing the street. She also lost her husband. Her strong faith got her through.

She spent over 10 years as an ABCD Foster Grandparent and volunteered at the Hennigan School, assisting students needing extra help. Mention that time and you will see Tabitha smiling. Despite her age, she recalls certain students and parents she helped. Tabitha is also a songwriter, writing over 100 songs.



It was a challenging adjustment to downsize her home into an assisted living community. She continues focusing on the bright side, investing in her faith, giving back, helping the needy exercising, and reading.

Health

Mental Illness Awareness Week is October 1-7

By Dillon Tedesco, Age Strong Communications Staff Assistant

During Mental Health Awareness Week, we raise visibility about mental illnesses, break harmful stereotypes, and support those living with it. *Boston Seniority* magazine met with Age Strong's Behavioral Health Manager, Libby Arsenault to learn about mental health in older adults and what you can do to improve yours.

Why is Mental Health important to our overall health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Our mental health impacts our eating and sleeping habits. Research shows that our brains register both physical and emotional pain in the same area.

What are some things you can do to take care of your mental health?

Human beings are wired for connection, so socializing as often as possible can help maintain our mental and physical health. To connect with other older adults, check out Age Strong's Monthly To-Do List for upcoming free events and activities. Other ways to maintain our mental health include regular



exercise, eating healthy food, practicing mindfulness, and focusing on positivity. Creative activities such as painting, writing, music, singing, cooking, and dancing provide an outlet for our emotions, allowing us to clear our minds and increase positive thoughts. Medical providers sometimes prescribe medication for managing our mental health, like they do for our physical health. If you have concerns about your mental health, you can call your PCP or talk to a medical professional.

What are some of the resources Age Strong offers related to mental health?

At Age Strong, we can connect older adults with resources that best match needs. We can refer constituents to therapists, counselors, and support groups for long-term behavioral health support, and offer short-term, goal-focused phone calls to bridge the gap until resources engage. Age Strong offers groups on wellness-related topics for varied cultural communities. Be on the lookout for a group near you or call Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Approximately 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. It is important to know the facts and catch it early.

Breast cancer accounts for 30% of new cancer cases in women annually. The earlier cancer is caught, the easier it is to treat. To help catch it early, do regular self-examinations and get a yearly mammogram. Self-examinations help you notice unusual changes. Find tips on selfexaminations at breastcancer.org.

There are myths about causes, including using underarm antiperspirant, wearing a bra, and keeping your cell phone near your chest-these are false. To help

prevent breast cancer, maintain a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, eating fruits and veggies, and reducing the amount you smoke and drink alcohol.

Know your family history. Those with a family history of breast cancer are at a higher risk than the average woman. If you have a family history of breast cancer, be sure to tell your doctor.

While thinking about breast cancer may be scary, the 5-year survival rate for all women diagnosed is over 90%. Knowing the signs will help you to be prepared. For more information Breast Cancer Awareness Month, visit nationalbreastcancer.org.

Resources

Walk to end Alzheimer's

By Dillon Tedesco, Age Strong Communications Staff Assistant

The Walk to End Alzheimer's is October 15. Boston Seniority Magazine talked with Corinne White, of Age Strong's Dementia-Friendly team, to learn about Alzheimer's and the importance of the walk.

Tell us a little bit about Alzheimer's?

Alzheimer's disease is a brain disorder that gets worse over time. It's the most common type of dementia and affects memory, thinking, and behavior. Over time, symptoms become severe, impacting a person's daily life. Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging, but the greatest known risk factor is increasing age. Currently there is no cure.

Why is the Walk to End Alzheimer's important?

It's the world's largest event to fight Alzheimer's disease. Led by the Alzheimer's Association, the event raises awareness and funds for care, support, and research.

How can someone living with Alzheimer's find support in Boston?

People can find support through their doctor's office or community health center. There are also Memory Cafes, caregiver support groups, in-home support programs, adult day health programs, and senior centers.

How can folks participate in the Walk to End Alzheimer's?

People can start or join a team by registering for the Walk at act.alz.org. Then, on October 15th, participants come together at this large community event that celebrates the commitment to end Alzheimer's disease.

For more information or support on Alzheimer's or dementia, call Boston ElderInfo (617-292-6211), the Age Strong Commission's Dementia-Friendly Unit (617-635-3745), or the Alzheimer's Association's 24/7 helpline (800-272-3900).



Events + Activities

October Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

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

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Special Collections Sampler: National Hispanic Heritage Month

Time: 9:30 am - 4:30 pm Location: Central Library in Copley Square, 700 Boylston St., Boston Contact Info: Kathleen, specialcollections@bpl.org



Emmanuel Music: Breathe with Bach

Time: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Location: BPL Lower Mills, 27 Richmond St., Dorchester

Contact Info: Elise, 617-298-7841



Friends of the West Roxbury **Branch Library: Used Book** Sale

Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm **Location:** BPL West Roxbury, 1961 Centre St., West Roxbury Contact Info: Sheila,

617-325-3147



Movie Mondays at West End

Time: 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm **Location:** BPL West End. 151 Cambridge St., West End Contact Info: Casey, cabbott@bpl.org



October Films: Movies that **Thrill - The Innocents**

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:45 pm Location: BPL South Boston, **OCTOBER 25**

Job and Volunteer Fair for **Retirees and Seniors**

"Happiness is not by chance, but by choice."

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm Location: BPL Roslindale, 4246 Washington St., Roslindale Contact Info: 617-323-2343



American Mahjong Club

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm Location: BPL North End, 25 Parmenter St., North End **Contact Info:** northend@bpl.org



Book Club Café

Time: 11:00 am - 12:15 pm Location: BPL Honan-Allston, 300 North Harvard St.,

Allston Contact Info: Paul,

617-787-6313

Age Strong Commission Events

-Jim Rohn

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



For more information, call 617-635-4366 or visit boston.gov/age-strong-events





Meet Some of Our Age Strong Volunteers!

You may know that the Age Strong Commission offers events and resources for older adults. But, did you know that Age Strong also has a large team of volunteers who share their time in a variety of ways. Maybe you could benefit from a volunteer helping you – or maybe you could help another older adult?

Age Strong offers many ways you can volunteer that fit your lifestyle:
Senior Greeters welcome residents to
Boston City Hall and help them find
where they need to go on site. RSVP
Volunteers are trained to lead workshops
or provide companionship. Some
volunteers participate in our Property Tax
Work-Off Program, where they volunteer
in exchange for money off their property
taxes. Some of our volunteers work out in
neighborhoods, others work with our staff
at City Hall.

This month, we talked to three volunteers to learn a little more about their programs.

Denise Harris, 71, from Roxbury, is a volunteer who leads an opioid awareness workshop. "Having an addiction has no cap on age," says Denise. "As a retired medical professional, I used to see a lot of [overdoses]. I've seen the good, the bad, and a lot of the ugly. Now that I'm at this point in my life that I could help in any way I can, it's important to me to put my time to good use."

Jacqueline Cain, 70, from Hyde Park, volunteers with the RSVP companionship program. As a companionship volunteer, she helps older adults who need help with tasks at home. "This is a great program if you care about people," says Jacqueline. "It gets me out of the house and I get to meet other people. I truly enjoy helping people."

Janice, who is in her 70s and from Dorchester, is a volunteer with the Bus Buddy program. "Bus Buddy is a program that helps seniors that are independent, but not comfortable riding the T, learn how to use public transportation safely," says Janice. When asked about her experience as a volunteer, Janice said "The training is good. They answer all my questions. There are several apps we can

use to help navigate the T. Volunteering as a Bus Buddy allows me to help seniors that would otherwise be stuck in their home, get out of the house and live their lives."

If you want to learn more about becoming an Age Strong volunteer, call Age Strong at 617-635-4366.









Volunteer Opportunities

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

Boston RSVP volunteers invest their unique talents in improving their community. In return they receive the training & support they need to make a difference.

Senior Companion Program (SCP)

Senior Companions offer one-on-one services to those who have difficulty completing everyday tasks. They can assist with:

- Grocery shopping, paying bills, and telephone calls
- Applying for benefits
- Accompanying to medical appointments
- Providing companionship
- Alerting doctors and family members to potential health problems

Senior Companions can also provide short periods of relief to primary caregivers. Because of this program, thousands of residents can live with dignity in their own homes.

Senior Property Tax Work-Off Qualified senior homeowners can work off up to \$1,500 on their property tax bill by volunteering for a City agency.

Bus Buddy Program

Volunteers will be matched to people 60 and over, teaching them how to plan trips and navigate routes along the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA).

To learn more about Age Strong's volunteer opportunities, call 617-635-4366.

"It is not enough to be compassionate. You must act."

-Dalai Lama

A Big Thank You To Our Volunteers!











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.

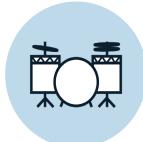
We can help with:



Access to Information and Benefits:

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

- Assist with applications for public benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and fuel assistance.
- Ease the process of applying for, and receiving, Medicare benefits.
- Assist older adults in accessing several tax relief exemptions and programs like the Elderly Exemption 41C, Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, and others.
- Assist older adults with navigating systems including the aging network and city services.



Outreach and Engagement:

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



Transportation:

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

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



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



Volunteer Opportunities:

We operate volunteer programs that impact our work across the city:

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



Housing:

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

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



Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support:

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

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

FREE ONLINE WEBINAR

RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES FOR THE FALL AND WINTER: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Friday, October 27, 1-2pm

Get an overview of respiratory illnesses and find out important tips as we approach fall. Presentation will include updates on COVID-19, Flu, and RSV.







Featuring: Sarimer Sanchez, MD, MPH Infectious Disease Physician Boston Public Health Commission

Join at the link below: meet.google.com/oyr-akga-bwb





City of Boston Age Strong Commission



WE ARE MOVING!

Beginning October 17th, watch Boston City TV on COMCAST CHANNEL 26!



CHANNEL LINE-UP



Comcast 26 New Channel! RCN 13 Verizon Fios 962



Comcast 9 RCN 15 Verizon Fios 2161



Comcast 22 RCN 3 Verizon Fios 963



Comcast 6 New Channel! RCN 83 Verizon Fios 2160





Comcast 1072

Boston's Age Strong Commission Offers Discount

Coupons

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

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

Visit boston.gov/agestrong for a list of sites where taxi coupons may be purchased.









DAY OF WEEK	TIME	PROGRAM
MONDAY	9:00AM - 10:00AM	CHAIR YOGA
MONDAY	11:30AM - 12:30PM	MEDITATION
TUESDAY	11:30AM - 12:30PM	LATIN DANCE
WEDNESDAY	11:30AM - 12:30PM	YOGA
THURSDAY	11:30AM - 12:30PM	LATIN FIESTA
FRIDAY	11:30AM - 12:30PM	ZUMBA

Join the classes listed above by zoom link here:

bit.ly/ZoomAgeStrongVirtual



For more information on our events call **617-635-3979** or visit **boston.gov/age-strong-events**

CITY of BOSTON





SIGN-UP TODAY

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

Sign-up for updates at: boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission





COVID-19 TESTING AND FLU VACCINATION

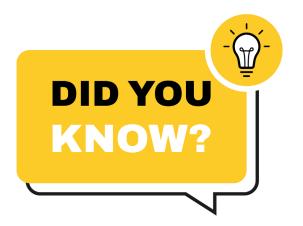
City Hall and Bolling Building sites will remain open to employees and the public for free flu vaccination and distribution of covid rapid test kits. Sites info: **Boston City Hall** - 1 City Hall Square, Boston

Mondays, 7am-1pm & Wednesdays, 12pm-5pm **Bruce C. Bolling Building** - 2300 Washington St, Roxbury Thursdays - Saturdays, 12pm-6pm

FAIRMOUNT COMMUTER RAIL LINE FREE OCTOBER 14-29: DURING RED LINE REPAIR

From October 14-29, the MBTA will close the Red Line's Ashmont Branch and Mattapan Line for repairs. During this 16-day closure, shuttle busses will be provided and the Fairmount Line on the Commuter Rail will be free of charge.

Fairmount Line fall/winter schedules are available at mbta.com as well as an alternate travel guide at mbta.com/RLwork or call 617-222-3200.





OPEN STREETS BOSTON

Open Streets Boston events help people experience streets as public spaces where communities thrive. City streets transform into vibrant, pedestrian-friendly boulevards where people can dream, play, and explore.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15 - EAST BOSTON Meridian Street from Maverick to Porter and Bennington Street, from Porter to Day Square *subject to change 10am-3:30pm Visit openstreetsboston.org to learn more.

RECYCLING CARTS

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



MATTRESS RECYCLING

The City of Boston requires an appointment for collection of all mattresses and box springs. If you live in a building with six units or less, to schedule your appointment, please dial 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500.



SEEN AROUND TOWN











SENIORITY | October 2023



































MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

VOTING DATES AND DEADLINES

OCTOBER 28

Voter Registration Deadline at 5 p.m.

OCTOBER 28 - NOVEMBER 3

Week of Early Voting

OCTOBER 31

Deadline to Request a Vote By Mail or Absentee Ballot at 5 p.m.

NOVEMBER 6

Deadline for (qualified) In Person Absentee Voting Ends at 12 p.m.

NOVEMBER 7 MUNICIPAL ELECTION DAY

Deadline to Return All Ballots to a Drop Box or the Boston Election Department at 8 p.m.

CHECK YOUR VOTER INFORMATION

Is your voting information current? Have you changed your address? Do you want to know if your polling location has changed? Scan the QR code and find out.

For more information please call **311** or visit **boston.gov/election**



