



# Boston Seniority

## Elderly Commission

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of Boston



FREE

2012  
Volume 36  
Issue 9

October

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Commission on Affairs of the Elderly.***

## *Boston Seniority*

**Volume 36 Number 9**

**Published by the City of Boston**

*Commission on Affairs of the Elderly*

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Printed by Hannaford & Dumas

Boston Seniority is supported in  
part by The Executive Office of  
Elder Affairs.

# Mayor's Spotlight

## **Mayor Menino Announces Major Step Forward for Water Transportation in East Boston**

*Federal Grant will Fund Two City-Owned Boston Harbor Ferries*

Mayor Thomas M. Menino announced the City of Boston has been awarded \$1.28 million in federal grant money for the purchase of two ferries. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds will assist in the implementation of ferry service between East Boston, South Boston, and Charlestown. The new service will meet the growing demand for transportation across Boston Harbor and boost economic opportunity by creating new transit connections between Boston residents and jobs.

“The car is no longer king in Boston and I’m proud to announce a new way to move people around the City,” said Mayor Menino. “The inner Harbor ferry service will decrease congestion and improve air quality while investing in new affordable transportation infrastructure and adding value to Boston’s waterfront communities.”

The Boston Redevelopment Authority will manage the grant funds and purchase of two passenger ferries. The terms of the FHWA grant requires that

the City match the \$1.28 million by 20 percent, or \$320,000 for a total anticipated purchase price of \$1.6 million.



Mayor Menino also thanked MassDOT and Secretary of Transportation Richard A. Davey for their assistance and U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood for investing in water transportation in Boston.

An operator will be chosen to manage the day to day operations of the ferry through an RFP process this fall. The ferry service is projected to set sail in 2013 with fare and route details currently under review.

The new ferry service will enhance Boston’s water transit a key part of Mayor Menino’s Boston Harbor planning objectives. Additionally plans are underway to rehabilitate the East Boston Marine Terminal in Maverick Square.

The FHWA grant is part of more than \$363 million awarded nationally to fund a variety of highway improvements, from interstate rehabilitation and reconstruction to technologies that result in improved safety and reduced construction congestion.

# Mayor's Garden Contest

in the Park, Friends of Blackstone and Franklin Squares, September 15 – 30.

## Contestant: Irene Roman

Dad built the fountain in 1929. The water used to spout out of the mouth of the fish. She got into gardening gradually. In high summer the backdrop of her garden are red, white and pink crawling roses.



## Second place winner: Armando Lombardi

Armando has been gardening for over 44 years. He has been working and expanding his garden since he arrived from Italy. He has over 20 varieties of vegetables in his garden that his wife uses to make original Italian recipes.



## Contestant: Tess Monaghan

She is from County Kerry Ireland and her husband of over 52 years is from Galway Ireland. She has entered the contest for 10 years running.



## Third place winner:

### Gary and Carol Chaffee

Gary and Carol have been working together in their garden for over 20 years. Gary does the maintenance and Carol plants and cares for the flowers. The Zen garden was inspired by Gary's trip to Japan.



## First place winner: Myrna Balk

Myrna is a retired social worker and now spends most of her time working in her garden or sculpting. She used to weld large pieces, which can be found in her garden and now works with bamboo. Recently Myrna exhibited her work at the Sculpture





# RSVP BOSTON

## Volunteer Opportunities

Boston RSVP has an array of volunteer opportunities to choose from. Call us today to receive an informational packet on the RSVP Program, a volunteer opportunities booklet, and directions on how to sign up for the program. Take the time, make the call, help out in your community!

*For more information on the RSVP Program or to sign up, please call*

*Anique Langlois, RSVP Administrative Assistant at 617-635-3988*

### **Boston Partners in Education**

Boston Partners in Education has been mentoring public school students on the frontline for over 40 years. We match struggling K-12 students with volunteer academic mentors who provide students with the skills they need to graduate, the self-esteem they need to succeed, and tools and guidance to achieve their dreams. Become a volunteer academic mentor and make a difference in the life of a child in your community. All it takes is one hour of your time per week.

**Horizons for Homeless Children** is looking for volunteer Playspace Activity Leaders (PALs) in shelters throughout Boston. An ideal PAL is patient, dependable, and sensitive to homeless issues. Prior teaching experience is a plus, but not required. During a Playspace shift, you will prepare and lead age-appropriate activities with fellow PALs, coordinate clean-up after the

shift, and communicate with the staff at the shelter and Horizons for Homeless Children. We will provide ongoing support, including workshops, opportunities to join the PAL Council, and domestic violence training if you are interested. As a senior, you will be an especially amazing mentor figure.

### **Faulkner Hospital Volunteer Program**

We celebrate diversity, welcoming all potential volunteers who would like to enrich their lives by donating their time in a healthcare setting. Rounders visit our medical and surgical units to interview inpatients about their hospital stay. Visitor/rounders also meet with oncology/hematology outpatients in our Dana Farber Cancer Institute regarding their experience with care and services. Volunteer support increases staff efficiency and morale and serves an important role in efforts to improve our patients' experience.

**The “Refugee Independence through Service Enhancement” (RISE) Program** is funded by the state of Massachusetts to help refugees integrate with local communities and gain self-sufficiency. RISE seeks to train local and highly-qualified volunteers to become key participants in the successful resettlement of refugees. In partnership and coordination with staff at refugee resettlement agencies, the volunteers will provide practical support and help establish links to community during the initial months of refugee resettlement.



# SCP HIGHLIGHT

**Did you know that the Boston Senior Companion Program has the highest ratio of men to women volunteers in the state of Massachusetts?** Currently, 33 percent of our volunteers are male. Chicopee only has 13 percent males, Lowell only has 23 percent males, and Worcester only has 24 percent males.

**We would like to extend a warm thanks to our male volunteers for all the hours they contribute to the program and for compassion they extend to their clients.**

## **List of male volunteers:**

Jose Alvarez	Henry Francois	Thomas Mullen
Santelly Celestin	Admira Isidor	Happy Nguyen
Frithe Celestin	Willie King	Dumond Ovilmar
Mark Clougherty	Fu Kang Lin	Daniel Roman
Nelson DaSilva	Maximiano Lopes	Robert Smith
Jose Delvalle	Arthur Marshall	Julian Zapata
Jean Felix	Phillip Mitchell	

**To become a Senior Companion please call 617-635-3987.**



*Clara was one of the original Senior Companion Volunteers since 1989.*

*You will surely be missed.*

*Clara Bell Exum*

*November 1933 - August 2012*

## **Elderly Commission Customer Service Survey**

Here at the Elderly Commission, it is our constant goal to improve the level of customer service that we provide to you, our seniors of Boston. Please take a quick moment to complete this survey and let us know how we are doing. Thank you! Please mail survey to:

**Customer Service Survey, Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, Boston City Hall, Rm 271, One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201**

1. How often do you interact with the Elderly Commission staff and in what setting?
2. What neighborhood of Boston do you live in?
3. Is the staff courteous and friendly?
4. Is your interaction with the staff typically in person or over the phone?
5. If in person, do they smile and make eye contact when they are helping you?
6. If over the phone, does the person answer in a pleasant & professional manner?
7. Do they listen to what your needs are and suggest possible solutions?
8. Is a message taken when the person you're trying to reach is unavailable?
9. Do you know about and enjoy the Elderly Commission events that happen throughout the city?
10. Are you pleased with the level of service that the staff provides you at these events?
11. Overall – please let us know how you would rate the level of service that you receive from the Elderly Commission staff:

POOR\_\_\_\_\_ AVERAGE\_\_\_\_\_ GOOD\_\_\_\_\_ EXCELLENT\_\_\_\_\_

Seniority

## Backpacks and Children

School has started. Do you feel bad for the young children walking home from school with backpacks that are as big as they are?

When we were younger, did we have that many books to take home each night? Did we carry enormous book bags? What is in their back packs that make it look so heavy?

Are the children in pain? What damages do these back packs cause over a life time of schooling? Do they carry computers in their bags?

Many grandparents are raising grandchildren and/or you may want to share this information with your own children.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has several suggestions to help reduce a child's chances of pain and injury.

- Make sure the child's back pack has a padded back with wide shoulder straps with padding. These back packs are more expensive.
- Use the compartments inside the back pack to make sure it is well-organized for example, pencils in one pocket, water bottle and tissues in another, cell phone in another.

- Place heaviest items in the back.
- Avoid overloading the back pack. Weekly, clean it out, discard unnecessary papers, uneaten food, etc., rinse inside to avoid smells and crumbs.
- Know the child's body weight. Do not exceed more than **20% of the child's weight!!**
- Remind the child to always use both shoulder straps to avoid injury.
- Some schools do not allow rolling backpacks. Check with the school. It may be easier for a young child to use a back pack on wheels.
- Books can be both heavy and expensive. Can some of the child's homework be found on the internet?

How many children go to their pediatrician complaining about back pain, sore muscles, general aches and pains? The source of the problem could be back packs that are too heavy for a small frame.

## Bowels and the Elderly

No one wants to talk about his/her bowels. As we get older, bowels become a big part of our lives!!

Bowel control problems (also called fecal incontinence) can occur at any age.

Bowel problems are more common in older adults. Many adults wear adult disposable diapers so they don't have "an accident" while they are outside their home.

According to the US National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse, there are several common causes for bowel control problems.

- Having diarrhea.
- Having damage or weakness in the sphincter muscles or nerves.
- Having inability of the rectum to stretch properly.
- Having hemorrhoids.

- Getting older, due to changes in muscles and tissues.
- Sustaining damage to the pelvic floor muscles after giving birth.
- Sensitivity to medications or foods.

It is important for you to speak to your doctor about your bowels, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. A few bouts of diarrhea can make you dehydrated - a serious issue in the elderly. Your doctor will refer you to a gastroenterologist, a specialist in esophageal, stomach and bowel issues. This doctor will discover the cause of your problem and treat you to help avoid any future problems.

**BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY**

**Was your knee joint replaced over the last 5 years?**

**Are you having trouble doing things you need to or like to do around your home and in your community?**

**Are you at least 50 years old?**

If it's been at least 12 months since your knee joint surgery, you might be interested in a Boston University study on daily activities after knee replacement.

Participants will be paid \$50 and your travel costs will be paid. To find out more about this study call toll free 866-269-1027 or email [enact@bu.edu](mailto:enact@bu.edu)

**Don't Miss**

*The Elderly Commission*

**On Radio**



**Tune into:**

**Zumix Radio**

on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m.  
and Mondays at 9:00 a.m.

Streaming on the internet at

**[www.zumix.org](http://www.zumix.org)**

**WJIB 740 AM** on Sundays  
at 8:30 a.m.

For more information please  
contact: Deputy Commissioner  
Tula Mahl  
at 617-635-1922

## **The Department of Public Health wants to remind residents to be vigilant about protecting themselves from mosquitoes**

All residents are urged to continue taking personal precautions to protect against mosquito-borne illnesses, including Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile virus (WNV). These include using insect repellent, covering exposed skin when outside, and avoiding outdoor activities between the hours of dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are at their most active.

Peak times for mosquitoes are from dusk to dawn. Use mosquito repellent any time you are outdoors, but especially during peak times. And remember, being outside even a short time can be long enough to get a mosquito bite. If weather permits, wear long-sleeves, long pants and socks. Use mosquito netting on baby carriages or play yards when your baby is outdoors.

Keep mosquitoes out of your house by making sure screens are repaired and are tightly attached to doors and windows. And prevent mosquitoes from breeding by removing standing water around your house from places like wading pools, recycle bins, and flower pots. Mosquitoes can begin to grow in any puddle or standing water that lasts for more than four days

## **Choosing an Effective Repellent**

When choosing a repellent, look at the active ingredient on the product label. Repellents that contain DEET work very well against mosquitoes. In general, higher concentrations of DEET don't work better, they simply last longer. You should use less than 30 percent DEET on kids and infants over 2 months. Don't use any DEET on infants less than 2 months old. Whatever product you choose, be sure to read the label to see what the concentration of DEET is and how often it should be reapplied.

There some other products that are proven to be effective against mosquitoes. They are permethrin, picaridin or IR3535. A number of "natural" products are available for use as mosquito repellents, but tests show that most of these products do not provide the same level of protection or work as long. The exception is oil of lemon eucalyptus, which provides as much protection as low concentrations of DEET.

Learn more about how to protect yourself at [www.mass.gov/dph/wnv](http://www.mass.gov/dph/wnv)

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1-800-992-9392



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## GRILLED VEGGIE PANINI (serves 4)

### Ingredients:

- 1 small eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1 zucchini, thinly sliced
- 2 Portobello mushrooms, cleaned and sliced on a diagonal
- 2 roasted bell peppers
- 8 oz of fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup of pesto
- 4 thick slices of sourdough bread
- Salt and pepper

### Directions:

1. Preheat a grill pan over medium high heat.
2. Drizzle the eggplant, mushrooms, and zucchini with some olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Grill the veggies for a few minutes on each side on the hot grill until they develop grill marks or have softened. Remove on a plate and drizzle some balsamic vinegar on top and set aside
4. Spread 1 tablespoon of pesto on the bottom piece of bread and place mozzarella on top. Layer the veggies on top and top off with another slice of cheese before placing the bun on top.
5. Brush both sides of the sandwich with oil and grill them on a grill pan or panini press until the cheese is melted and the outside is crunchy.

## AVOCADO BLT (serves 2)

### Ingredients:

- 1 ripe avocado, pitted
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, more or less based on your preference
- 1 tablespoon of fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 sliced tomato
- 4 slices of thick bacon
- Some lettuce
- 4 slices of bread, toasted
- Salt and pepper
- 2 teaspoons of extra virgin olive oil

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees and roast the bacon in the oven on a baking sheet for about 10-15 minutes or until it's crunchy.
2. In a small bowl, add half the avocado with lemon juice, parsley and salt. Mash until it's a nice and creamy consistency.
3. Spread half the mixture on a slice of bread. Pile some slices of tomatoes seasoned with salt and pepper and one teaspoon of olive oil. Add 2 slices of the bacon on top.
4. Add some lettuce.
5. Slice the remaining half of the avocado and pile that on top of the lettuce. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Add the bun on top.
7. Eat it with your friends.

# Woodworking at UESP

By: Paulette Sewell-Reid



The therapeutic effect of working with wood can be described as almost euphoric. Our men, some of whom had a career in woodwork, benefit from a sense of well-being. Aside from the tactile engagement and social interaction, the knowledge that they still retain the creativity and the love of working with their hands is the most rewarding.

Woodworking is relaxing; it awakens the senses, builds self esteem and healthy relationships. It provides a sense of purpose, it evokes conversation; relieves stress by keeping the mind focused and the body active. It takes team work, an eye for detail and a sense of fun, frivolity and competitive spirit to design a replica house or a cabana.

Our men require certain adjustments and accommodation to meet special needs. Impaired vision, physical ability and loss of strength and balance make woodworking challenging but oh so much fun.

For more information on Woodworking at UESP, Please contact Paulette Sewell-Reid at 617-440-1615 ext. 224

At Upham's Elder Service Plan our men approach woodworking with the same vigor. One of the unique attributes



of doing woodwork is that no pieces are the same. Armed with crafts stick, regular glue and a vivid imagination ESP men create projects such as replica houses, wishing wells, money boxes, and napkin holders.



**Don't Wait Until It's Too Late!**

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**October 15 – December 7**

**Medicare plans change every  
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**This is the time to decide on  
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say 3.**

**Once you get the SHINE  
answering machine, leave your  
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A volunteer will call you back  
as soon as possible.**

**~ Or ~**

**For assistance from a Medicare  
customer service representative  
24 hours/day, 7 days/week, call  
1-800-MEDICARE.**

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# Columbus Day

By: John H. O'Neill III

We have all learned how Christopher Columbus set out to prove it was possible to reach the Far East by sailing West. What Columbus did not know, was that there is a large land mass between the two. He was born in Genoa, Italy. With the backing of Spain's Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand in 1492, Columbus set sail with three ships known as the: "Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria."

Ships have been helpful in times of war and in times of peace. There are US Navy ships docked probably all around the world. The sailors are ready to help at any time. Usually, a sailor spends perhaps six months at sea and then has six months of shore duty.

Karen Lynch Downes, (1957-2012), like Columbus, found the ocean quite interesting. Serving in the navy seemed the perfect career. After graduating from Boston College in 1979, she worked in

the public affairs branch of the US Navy, helping to prepare press conferences for the Joint Chiefs and other officials. In short, there were official announcements due to the work of Downes, who was born in Jamaica Plain. She worked in Washington D.C and, at one time, in Hawaii.

Naval personnel are promoted during their service. Celebrations are held honoring those promoted. The public affairs officials could very well have arranged the celebrations.

In 1862, during the Civil War, Union Army Brigadier General Daniel Butterfield ordered an arrangement of a French bugle call to signal lights out. The new arrangement resulted in what is commonly known as: "Taps." The piece is played at sundown and at military funerals.

Christopher Columbus received great accolades for his accomplishments. My friend Karen ( Officially: Commander Downes) received Full Military Honors for hers.

*\* Article "1967 RED SOX" in the September issue was written by John H. O'Neill III*

***Volunteer Opportunities***

At One Of Boston's Premier Historic Sites

**Castle Island Association**

~ 617-268-8870 ~

**www.bostonfortindependence.com**

# Bingo in East Boston

This summer Teri De Simone and Joan Capone held Bingo for seniors at the East Boston Central Square Center. Bingo is usually scheduled during the winter but these past few years has become a success during the summer.

Everyone comes out to play and has a wonderful time.



**Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly** will be celebrating the **Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, Passover** and **Easter** Holidays with visits, home-cooked meals (kosher if needed), and flowers. Many elders are alone on these holidays, so we send a volunteer to their homes to deliver a meal and provide a friendly visit.

If you are or you know of elderly men and women who have no friends or family to spend the holiday with and they fit the eligibility criteria please make a referral.

## Eligibility criteria:

1. No family involvement on the holiday

2. 70+ years of age
3. Boston resident
4. Low-income
5. Must live independently
6. Willing to receive a visitor



## How to make a referral:

Contact the elder(s) you have in mind to ensure their desire to participate

**Call (617) 524-8882 or Email [aseubert.bos@littlebrothers.org](mailto:aseubert.bos@littlebrothers.org)**

**Please make all Thanksgiving referrals by Thursday, November 15th and all Christmas/Hanukkah referrals by Friday, December 14th.**

# Together we can make a difference.

The Tufts Health Plan Foundation strives to make a positive difference for the Commonwealth's older adults by promoting healthy lifestyles and the delivery of quality health care.

**TUFTS**  **Health Plan**  
FOUNDATION



[www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org](http://www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org)  
@THPFoundation

In September we printed some information about The Ride. We are sorry to announce that the program had only been a pilot program and it is now suspended. Additionally, the Back Bay Senior/TAP Sales Office at Back Bay Station is closed.

Customers requiring a Senior Pass, Transportation Access Pass (TAP), Visually Impaired Pass, or RIDE CharlieCard are asked to visit the new CharlieCard Store located in the Downtown Crossing Station concourse adjacent to the Arch Street exit.

CharlieCard Store Hours:

Monday – Friday 8 AM to 5:30 PM

Saturday and Sunday Closed

For more information, contact the MBTA Customer Communications Department at 617-222-3200.

Attention:

## **Memoir Project** coming to ROSLINDALE!

### **The Memoir Project**

aims to capture the stories of Boston seniors over an extended period of time by teaching senior residents the rudiments of memoir writing. Learning these skills will give you a practical and meaningful way to turn memories into coherent narratives with lasting value.

A book will be published!

By capturing these stories, we intend to document the living history of Boston and, by doing so, provide a greater understanding of the city's past and present for all its residents.

Class will start Thursday, October 25, 2012. It will be held in Roslindale, place to be determined, one day a week for eight weeks. Every Thursday from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

No writing experience necessary, just life experience!

Space is limited call to RESERVE a seat

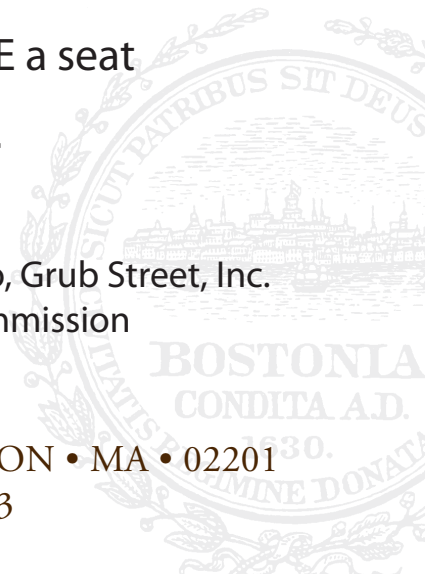
Tula Mahl at **617-635-1922**

Sponsored by Mayor Menino, Grub Street, Inc.  
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WEBSITE: [www.cityofboston.gov/elderly](http://www.cityofboston.gov/elderly)



# Healthy Recipes

*Recipes submitted by  
Mary Nemec, Senior Volunteer  
Approved by our expert nutritionist  
Melissa Carlson, MS, RD*

## Czech Potato Pancakes (Bramboraky)

### Ingredients:

- 4 large potatoes
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup milk
- 4 heaping tablespoons flour
- 1 clove garlic
- Pinch of pepper
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil

### Instructions:

1. Peel potatoes and grate with a grater.
2. Heat milk until hot (be careful not to burn it).
3. Squeeze all liquid out of the potatoes with your hands and place them in large bowl.
4. Immediately add the hot milk to the potatoes and mix until combined. This prevents them from turning brown.
5. Finely mince the garlic or put through press and add to bowl.
6. Add the egg, flour, garlic, pepper and salt. Stir until all ingredients are combined. The consistency should be more like a thick batter than a dough.

Add more milk if it is too thick, or more flour if it is too thin.

7. Heat oil in a non-stick skillet.

8. For each pancake, pour a ladle full of potato mixture into skillet and spread out until it is about 1/2 inch thick and 7 inches in diameter.

9. Cook on each side, turning only once, until golden brown.

10. Drain on paper towels

**Makes:** 4 potato pancakes



### The Elderly Commission

#### Seniors are you eligible?

Food Stamp requirements have changed for most senior applications. The Department of Transitional Assistance no longer counts -

- \* savings or retirement accounts
- \* your car
- \* your home
- \* or other assets

For more information or to complete an application contact:

Lorna Pleas at 617-635-4335 or email  
lorna.pleas@cityofboston.gov

# Snickerdoodle Cookies

## Ingredients:

- 3/4 cups (360 grams) all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups (300 grams) granulated white sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla

## Coating:

- 1/3 cup (66 grams) granulated white sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

## Instructions:

**1.** In a large bowl whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder.

**2.** In the bowl of your electric mixer (or with a hand mixer), beat the butter and sugar until smooth (about 2 to 3 minutes). Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Beat in the vanilla extract. Add the flour mixture and beat until you have a smooth dough. If the dough is soft, cover and refrigerate until firm (about one to two hours).

**3.** Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (190 degrees C) and place rack in the center of the oven. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

**4.** Shape the dough into 1 inch (2.5 cm) round balls.

**Coating:** In a large shallow bowl mix together the sugar and cinnamon.

Roll the balls of dough in the cinnamon sugar and place on the prepared pan, spacing about 2 inches (5 cm) apart. Then, using the bottom of a glass, gently flatten each cookie to about 1/2 inch (1.5 cm) thick.

Bake the cookies for about 8 - 10 minutes, or until they are light golden brown and firm around the edges. The centers of the cookies will still be a little soft. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack to cool.

Can store in an airtight container, at room temperature, for about 10 - 14 days.

**Makes:** About 4-5 dozen cookies



# What Was My Day Worth?

## “Don’t Retire, Inspire”

By: Augusta Alban



From time to time I ask myself, what is each day all about? Each day in my life, that is like no other and will never happen again. What value can I place on it?

I started to recall this day, a smile came to me, I remembered this morning after struggling with one of those automatic ticket machines at the train station that was refusing to take my money, although clearly posted on it was a sign that said it was programmed to take my money. Again I carefully tried to smooth out every wrinkle on that bill as best as I could, not that the machine would ever know. Carefully I guided it into the slot; I was convinced this machine was only interested in **new money**, but who isn't these days? AGAIN REJECTED!

Miss, may I help you with that? Was that a human voice coming out of the air? I turned in that direction. A pleasant looking man standing behind the ticket window was offering to help me. Laughing I asked are you a real person? Yes I am he said with a big smile. I can do anything that machine can do, maybe a few things it can't and at the same time I smile and I am friendly. A real person with a real smile, such a deal, how can I refuse your offer? He did all he said he could do he applied value to my card told me my balance and even handed

me a receipt. We had shared something in common, an exchange of kindness and humor something we are losing in this society. Something a machine is unable to give us. We looked at each other with a knowing that comes only from age and wisdom. The sound of a human voice asking to help another human, computer voices are programmed to ask the same question, but somehow it just isn't the same.

Have we lost or are we rapidly losing a human way of thinking and acting or is this just part of the dumbing down of America. I am now the owner of a state of the art laptop computer; this machine is so qualified that it can read to me in its computer voice whatever I wish it to read. But in order to understand this machine and make it work I must attend the Apple school. This machine is so wonderful and I am grateful to have it, but I don't want a trade off, I want it ALL. I want to be able to talk and laugh with another human and still be able to take advantage of the miracles of technology. Why must it be one thing or the other?

Over thirty-five years ago I read an article on languages we would need in the future to live and work in the USA. This is the USA - we only need English

I said! Although according to those across the pond, Americans don't speak English. Well the article continued we must be able to know and understand three different languages, three again this is the USA! They were referring to, English, Spanish and computer. Back 35 years ago, you know "the dark ages" very few people ever talked about Microsoft or Apple. No one had ever heard of iPhone, iPad and iwhatever. I love and use it all! I don't want to give up something so wonderful as a human voice asking if they could help, or the human sound of sharing laughter. I want IT ALL, is that too much to ask?

## Don't Retire, Inspire!

Hosted by Augusta Alban

Tune in to find out how Boston seniors are INSPIRED everyday

On BNN channel 9 on Fridays at 2:30 p.m. and repeated on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m.

On Boston City TV, Comcast channel A-24 and RCN channel 16, Tuesdays and Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.

Collaboration between  
Mayor Thomas M. Menino,  
the Elderly Commission  
& Suffolk University



Correction from the September 2012 Issue - Page 16:

Barbara Reid teaches aerobic classes at the Roxbury YMCA Monday - Friday at 9:00 am - 10:00 am.



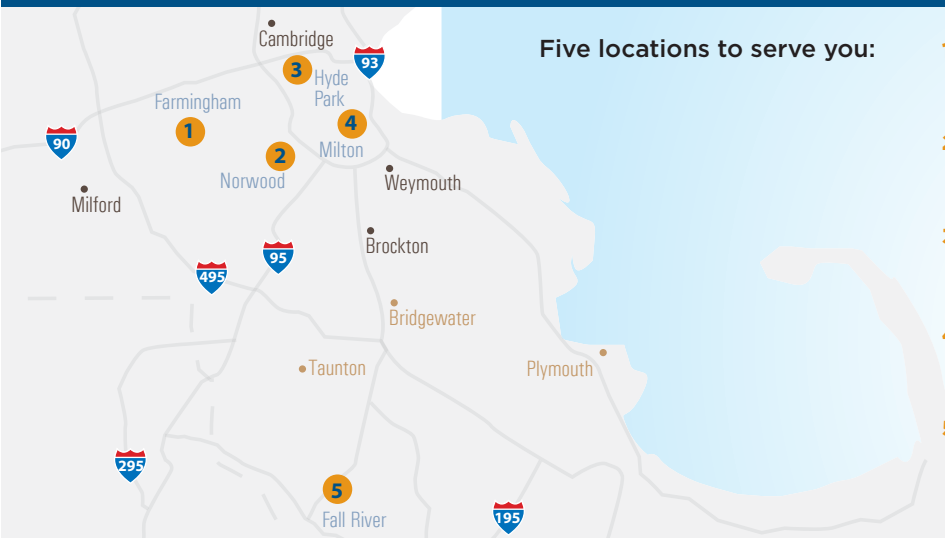
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- 5 Parkwell Nursing and Rehabilitation Center**  
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Phone 617-361-8300 Fax 617-361-7725



## **An estimated 50 million Americans are affected with tinnitus. Are you one of them?**

*What you need to know if you suffer from a highly annoying ringing or buzzing in your ears.*

If you have ever experienced a ringing, buzzing or even roaring in your ears, even when there is nothing around you actually creating that noise, then you know what it's like to have tinnitus. For an estimated 50 million people, tinnitus doesn't permanently go away. It can be so annoying that it can lead to fatigue, stress, sleep problems, concentration troubles, anxiety and depression. The good news is that new options exist for tinnitus management including a breakthrough sound therapy tool.

### **You may be surprised by what can causes tinnitus**

A common cause of tinnitus is exposure to loud sounds, which can damage the sensory cells of the inner ear. Tinnitus has also been associated with ear infections, aging, excessive ear wax, high blood pressure and even sensory nerve disorders. Activities that may cause tinnitus include smoking, drinking alcohol or caffeine, and taking excessive amounts of aspirin or antibiotics.

### **What to do if you think you have tinnitus**

Start by being evaluated by a hearing healthcare professional. Some hearing healthcare professionals have general experience with tinnitus while others are specifically trained in managing tinnitus. He or she can help you determine the best options for managing the condition. If there are no specific medical issues involved, there are still several steps you can take to help reduce the severity of your tinnitus or help you cope better with the noise.

### **Tinnitus management**

**Hearing aids.** In as many as 90 percent of cases, someone experiencing tinnitus also has a hearing loss. The use of hearing aids to amplify sounds can help to make the ringing or buzzing less distracting.

**ZEN.** The real breakthrough today comes from advanced hearing instruments that make use of fractal technology and offer a harmonic sound program called ZEN. This type of program generates soothing sounds and chimes that show great promise as a sound therapy tool to relax patients and distract their attention from their tinnitus. It's like a wearer having a spa for their ears. Patients will happily make this trade-off to finally get some relief from their tinnitus. The innovative Zen program is available inside premier-level wireless hearing aids such as the new CLEAR AND FUSION.

The discreet wireless hearing aids that offer ZEN also offer ultimate performance in noise, ultimate hearing of soft and distant speech, an Audibility Extender that takes high pitched sounds out of your range of hearing and actually moves them into your range of hearing, and many other features to help you hear better at home, at work, on the telephone or in a noisy restaurant.

**Noise suppression.** Electronic devices with pillow speakers that produce “white noise” may help you to sleep better at night.

**Additional lifestyle changes that may help you to either avoid tinnitus or make the symptoms less bothersome:**

- **Avoid likely irritants.** Limit your exposure to things such as loud noises or nicotine that may worsen your tinnitus.
- **Manage stress.** Stress can aggravate tinnitus worse. You may get relief through relaxation therapy, biofeedback or exercise.
- **Limit your alcohol intake.** Alcohol can increase blood flow, especially in the inner ear area, which can contribute to tinnitus symptoms.
- **Use hearing protection.** Exposure to loud noise or listening to loud

music through headphones can, over time, damage the nerves in your ears causing hearing loss and tinnitus.

- **Manage your cardiovascular health.** Regular exercise and good nutrition can help prevent tinnitus linked to blood vessel disorders.

Learning as much as you can about tinnitus and ways to alleviate symptoms can help you cope. For the millions of people of all ages who experience this annoying condition, the ZEN Program is by far the most promising option for tinnitus management.

If you are interested in learning more about the latest wireless hearing device options like CLEAR and FUSION, call the consumer hotline number: 1-866-WIDEXUSA. Or visit [www.widexusa.com](http://www.widexusa.com).



**Basketball**



Seniors over age 60 who are interested in playing Basketball are welcome to join us every Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Roslindale Community Ctr, 6 Cummings Hwy

You can just shoot around or you can participate in 3 on 3 Half Court games.

For more information call Ed Conway at (617)327-6831 or e-mail him at [edconway14@yahoo.com](mailto:edconway14@yahoo.com)



# Health Care Matters

## Getting Answers to Your Health Coverage Questions

By: Ron Pollack, Executive Director,  
Families USA

No matter how savvy you are, if you've ever used the health care system, there's a good chance that you've been confused by something relating to your health coverage at one point or another. It could be a letter from Medicare or a private insurance company saying that a service you need isn't covered, or that your coverage is changing. It might be a bill from a doctor or lab that you didn't expect and don't understand. It might be a brochure you read or a sales pitch you heard that left you with a lot of questions.

Health coverage can be confusing. Over the past decade, the number of coverage choices has increased. Television, mail, and the internet now bring us an overwhelming amount of information, and it's not always reliable. So where can you turn for personalized, unbiased help with health insurance problems? Fortunately, there are free resources in every community that can provide you (or a loved one) with individualized counseling and assistance.

If you have a question about Medicare coverage, a good place to start is the

1-800-MEDICARE hotline. The staff is trained to answer the most commonly asked questions about Medicare benefits, including individualized questions about your coverage. It's a great way to get basic personalized information.

If you need one-on-one counseling to take a closer look at your problem and help you figure out your options, you can contact your local state health insurance assistance program (SHIP). SHIPs exist in every state, though the names of the organizations vary from state to state. They are designed to provide free, unbiased counseling and assistance to people with Medicare. This help can be as simple as explaining how benefits work. It can involve meeting face to face or over the phone to figure out which prescription drug, Medigap, or Medicare Advantage plans make the most sense for your particular situation, and which additional benefits you might be eligible for. Or, if you disagree with a bill you got or with a decision by Medicare or your Medicare Advantage or drug plan, SHIP counselors can help sort it out and file a request for an exception or an appeal (if needed). Many SHIP counselors are trained volunteers who are members of the community. To contact your SHIP, call 1-800-MEDICARE and request a referral to your local SHIP, or go to [www.shiptalk.org](http://www.shiptalk.org) and click on "Find a State SHIP."

Need more help? Local area agencies on aging can connect you with legal services organizations in your area. Check [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov) for a list of resources. National nonprofits like the Medicare Rights Center ([www.medicarerights.org](http://www.medicarerights.org)) and The Center for Medicare Advocacy ([www.medicareadvocacy.org](http://www.medicareadvocacy.org)) can also help.

What if you're not covered by Medicare? Many states have consumer assistance programs staffed by insurance experts that focus on other health insurance issues. For example, these programs help you file an appeal if your private insurance plan denies a claim. They can advise you on Medicaid issues or help you understand your rights and choices if you lose job-based coverage. You can find contact information for consumer assistance programs online at [www.familiesusa.org/resources/program-locator](http://www.familiesusa.org/resources/program-locator). The health care law provided much-needed funding to strengthen consumer assistance programs, and they are going to have an increasingly important role to play in the next few years.

So the next time you or a loved one feel baffled by the complexities of Medicare or other types of health insurance, take a deep breath. It's perfectly normal. And remember, you're not on your own—there's help out there for you!

## Do you have knee pain?

### *Interested in taking part in a Research Study?*

We offer a **Strength Training Program** for persons with knee arthritis at **Boston University**

To take part in this research study you must ...

- have **knee arthritis**
- be 55 years or older
- be willing to participate in a **Strength Training Class** 2 x per week for 6 weeks
- attend 4 visits at **Sargent college**
- continue to **Strength Train** at home for 2 years

For more information call  
**617-353-2725**  
**ENACT - BOOST STUDY**



*Stipend available*

## Need a Ride?

**Senior Shuttle**  
**617-635-3000**

Scheduling Available:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Please give at least 2 business days advanced notice. Priority is given to seniors scheduling rides for medical appointments.

(Some restrictions may apply)

# POWERFUL TOOLS *for Caregivers*

By: Elizabeth Downton

If you are a regular reader of the Boston Seniority Magazine, you may have heard that there are services for people who are helping frail seniors stay in their own homes, “aging in place”. There is a new program, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, to help empower caregivers. Powerful Tools is a six (6) week series of seminars which present techniques to help take the pressure off you as a caregiver and to improve your relationships with fellow caregivers and your care recipient. You are given the opportunity to rehearse these techniques and to give your input on topics and techniques.

I bet that you are thinking “that sounds good, but I’m way too busy to go to a six (6) week workshop, even if it is helpful”. Many caregivers feel that they can’t get anyone to help out while they’re out or it’s too much trouble to call around to find someone. They skip regular check-ups and ignore their own health. They feel that they do not have time to be sick. However, illness happens. If you become ill, who will take care of your frail elder? The workshop series on Powerful Tools starts with a segment on taking care of you and why that is important. We meet each other (you are not alone), identify problems you have in your caregiving and brainstorm solutions.

There will be a discussion on the possibility that the caregiver will become seriously ill

and unable to continue caregiving. This is part of the effort to enable caregivers to understand the importance of self care. At the end of every meeting, each person makes an action plan for the coming week concentrating on what he (she) can do to care for himself (herself).

Communication is a key aspect of the caregiver’s relationship with the care recipient and other helpers. The caregiver’s relationships and ability to effectively communicate with others will directly affect both the caregiver’s stress level and his (her) relationship with the care recipient. Therefore Powerful Tools emphasizes communication and dialogue. A number of different techniques are studied and practiced. These methods are meant to enable the caregiver to talk reasonably with people who are argumentative or disagreeable. Seminar participants are encouraged to try the different approaches at home to find out what works for them. There is a reporting session at the beginning of all except the 1st meeting so the caregivers can discuss how the techniques worked in their circumstances and ways the tools can be modified to work better in individual situations.

Other important topics studied include examining and evaluating your emotions (negative self talk makes everything harder), making difficult decisions and keys to successful family meetings. Caregivers are encouraged to participate fully in the exercises included with these topics. It is especially important to recognize your

emotions because they play such a key role in the ease or difficulty of your caregiving responsibilities. Furthermore, unless you have a good understanding of your own emotions, you will be unable to make difficult decisions wisely or participate in successful family meetings. Participants receive a certificate upon completion of the series.

The following are some comments made by people who have completed the Powerful Tools for Caregivers seminars.

- “There was a common bond. We were all dealing with some of the same issues. We shared our stories and learned ways to cope. I learned that it was important to take care of me.”
- “About the time the class began, I was at my wits end. The communication tools will work toward maintaining a better atmosphere and contribute to improved attitudes for both of us...it will never be easy, but it is easier than it was 6 weeks ago!”

- “This class covered so many subjects that I find useful now and I have an important reference material I can depend on.”

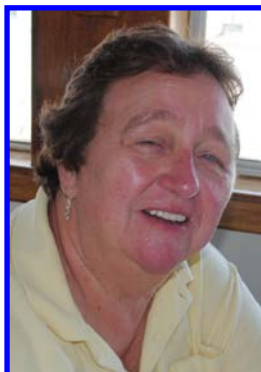
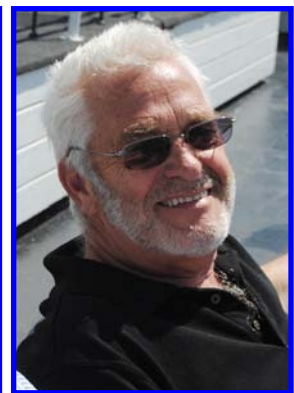
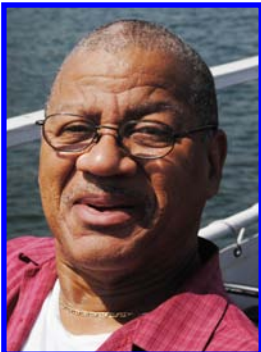
Powerful Tools is the single most important thing that you can do for yourself and for your frail elder. At the completion of this series, you will have a number of useful tools/techniques at your disposal as well as some new resources to turn to for advice and understanding when you hit a bump in the road. During the meetings strong bonds frequently develop among the people attending the seminars. These bonds in themselves are another powerful tool for the caregivers.

For more information on Powerful Tools please contact Betsy Downton at 617-635-3979 or by email at [elizabeth.downton@cityofboston.gov](mailto:elizabeth.downton@cityofboston.gov).

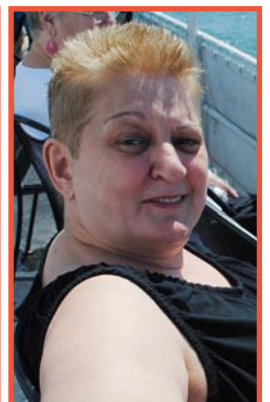
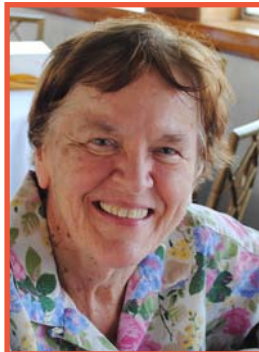
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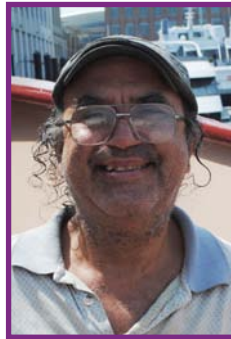
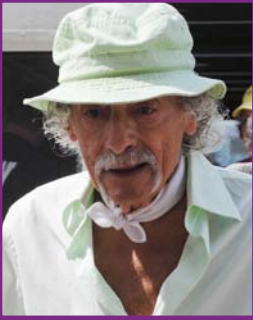
# LGBT Boat Trip



# Mayor Menino's Summer Boat Ride



# Advisory Council Picnic



# City Fresh Picnic in the Park



Mayor Thomas M. Menino  
&  
The Commission on Affairs of the Elderly  
present



**Saturday, November 10, 2012**  
**10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. at Boston City Hall**

**If you are interested in participating, please complete this registration form and  
return by Friday, October 19, 2012 to:**

Mary Beth Kelly / Commission on Affairs of the Elderly  
One City Hall Square, Room 271  
Boston, MA 02201  
or Fax: 617-635-3213

Registration entitles participants to:

- \* Participate in Workshops
- \* Benefits Enrollment
- \* Health Screenings & Information
- \* Flu Shots
- \* Vendor Booths
- \* Lunch

*Please print clearly*

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood & Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Language Spoken \_\_\_\_\_

Workshops will be held in the morning and afternoon. Please pick your **1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th** choices by assigning numbers **1 - 4** in the boxes below. You will be assigned on a first come first serve basis.

☐

**Cooking Demonstration**

☐

**Thai Chi**

☐

**Massage**

☐

**Fit for Life**

**Space is Limited. Advanced Registration Required.**

