

Boston Seniority

Elderly Commission

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of Boston

FREE
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Email articles and comments to
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Mayor's Spotlight



Many of you have been closely following the health care debate taking place in Washington, D.C. and around the country over the past few months. This is a highly contentious issue that evokes strong emotion, and the debate is likely to continue for several months as Congress works on a final bill for President Obama to sign into law. But I want to stress, particularly to seniors in our city, that nothing has happened yet. No one should panic based on myths put forth by opponents of proposed legislation because their claims amount to nothing more than scare tactics.

As mayor, I fight for the best interests of everyone in Boston. Senior citizens are no exception, and I assure you that we are doing everything possible to protect our seniors.

Part of this effort is providing the most accurate information about what's happening in Washington. Three recurring myths sound frightening to all of us. But they are myths. First, the notion of forming death panels as part of reform defies the reality of any proposed health care bill. The House bill would stipulate that Medicare cover discussions between beneficiaries and their doctors for advance care planning; it also requires that beneficiaries receive information on end-of-life planning resources in the Medicare handbook. Additionally, quality measures on end-of-life care and advanced care planning would be included in the Medicare physician quality reporting program.

Another myth claims the proposed bills would result in cuts to Medicare benefits. The truth is that benefits would actually change for the better. Drugs would cost less. Patients would have more doctors to choose from. Information would flow smoothly from doctor to doctor

so that patients don't waste time filling out the same paperwork over and over again. The House bill and the two bills in the Senate would work to make Medicare, and every aspect of the health care system, more efficient and eliminate unnecessary subsidies to insurance companies.

A third common myth about the proposed legislation is that health care would be rationed. Once again, this is false. Nothing in any of the bills calls for limiting health care services. Current proposals would create a center for comparative effectiveness research to determine the most effective treatments and prevention strategies. This reform is not about cutting back health care services but making them work better, and at a lower cost, for everyone. The good news is that none of these myths are going to become realities.

Senior citizens in Boston should know that we are here to help. One way of getting the facts is by calling the Elderly Commission at (617) 635-4366 to learn more about the legislation or to get answers to your personal health care questions.

Misinformation is a powerful tool that makes a complicated—yet crucial—reform effort even more difficult to understand. I will continue to fight for the needs of the elderly by working with the Massachusetts delegation to assure that seniors' voices are heard and their priorities are known. We need to take care of our seniors because they paved the way for us.

**ARTSBOSTON LAUNCHES
ARTSBOSTON.ORG
TECHNOLOGY making it easier to
search for all arts events in Boston**

The new ArtsBoston.org website launched in May, becoming the country's first personal online arts concierge, helping locals and visitors navigate the many arts and entertainment options in Boston. ArtsBoston, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the performing arts in Greater Boston for almost 35 years, cultivated the support of dance, music, visual arts film and theatre groups to create a website where information is easily accessed and marketing efforts are leveraged to benefit the whole community.

In a nod to successful sites like TripAdvisor® and Netflix, Inc. where consumer reviews help facilitate an informed decision, ArtsBoston is utilizing Artsopolis, a software platform used in 18 U.S. markets. ArtsBoston.org is the **first of these markets to incorporate video, audio and a wide variety of social media tools** to help locals and visitors connect, learn and share. The new ArtsBoston.org will provide:

- Simple, easy, **one-stop access** to performances, exhibits, screenings and lectures; including links to **food, travel, and transportation** resources.
- A platform for arts organizations to post **audio** and **video**, links to **social networking** and **social media** sites, and a variety of ways to stay in the know about

what's hot in the Boston arts, including **email, mobile alerts, and RSS feeds.**

- Educated information through a compilation of **audience reviews** and **professional critiques.**
- The ability to **search by date, venue, genre, price** or a variety of tailored **“Plan Your Experience”** options.
- Access to **half-price ticket sales**, as well as direct access to best available full price tickets.
- A listing of all **free events** in Boston.

“As the media landscape continues to change, the arts community recognized the need for consumers to have an easy, consolidated online site to help make better-educated decisions,” **Catherine Peterson, Executive Director of ArtsBoston**, said. “By working across industries—the arts, tourism, and civic sectors—ArtsBoston.org addresses these changes and keeps Boston's cultural community one of the strongest in the nation.”

Mayor Thomas M. Menino of The City of Boston said, “Those of us who live here know how wonderful Boston's cultural community is, and ArtsBoston.org will certainly help both residents and tourists find the event or performance that will satisfy their entertainment cravings.”

“ArtsBoston.org will make it easier for everybody to participate in the hundreds of world-class arts and cultural institutions Massachusetts is home to,” said **Governor Deval Patrick**.

Visit <http://www.artsboston.org>.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Have you been following the debate?

Do you find the information confusing?

You are not alone!!

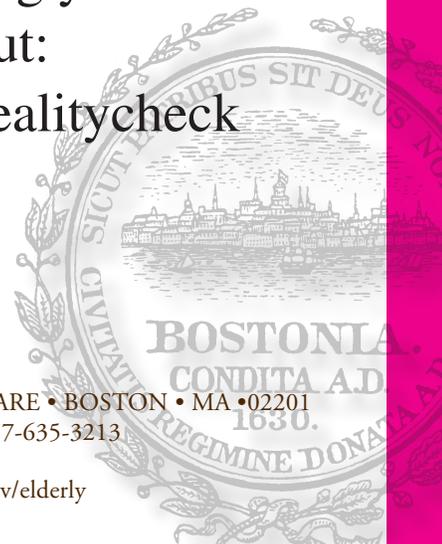
Please don't sit alone with your worries
or questions.

**Call us at the Elderly Commission:
617-635-4366**

Get your questions
answered today!

If you are interested in doing your own
research check out:

www.WhiteHouse.gov/realitycheck



NEW CAREER AT 89!

By Dorothy E. Morris

With sharp intelligence, native curiosity and a passion for politics, Mary Dorion, a life-long resident of South Boston, has embarked on a new career at the ripe age of 89! And it's due, in large part, to the poor economy.

A lively, vibrant woman, former homemaker, bookkeeper, and teacher, Mary began to think of writing her memoirs in the 1990s when her large family gathered at holiday dinners and conversations around the dinner table usually ended with the question, "Do you remember when?"

But it wasn't until Mary took a course with local writing coach, Jack Canavan, that she began to write with a purpose (and, yes, Mary uses a computer).

The catalyst was an article in a local paper about plans for Mayor Menino's Memoir Project sponsored by the The Commission on Affairs of the Elderly. The project would result in four volumes of essays by seniors from the various sections of Boston. Workshops conducted by Grub Street Press instructors were to be held weekly at Castle Island, and Mary signed on enthusiastically.

Mary's essay about her eighth-grade class at Perry School in South Boston was

originally selected for publication, but the instructors thought her piece about the Depression would have more historical interest.

In a short while, Mary was a published author when "Born before Plastic" was distributed by the Mayor's office in late 2007. After several interviews and books signings, Mary's new career, as a witness to the Great Depression, took off.

Last fall, Mary responded to an ad in AARP Magazine soliciting essays on the subject, "What I Really Know about Making Ends Meet." Mary drew on her vivid memories of the dire effect those Depression years had on her immediate family and offered some tips for surviving hard economic times. Her piece was published in the AARP Online in November 2008.

As our economy worsened in 2008 and 2009, Mary received a call last fall from an innovative history teacher, Carol Bynam, who asked Mary to discuss the Depression and the New Deal with her students at John O'Bryant High School. Mary addressed four classes for 45 minutes each.

"When I learned that Miss Bynam had given everyone copies of my essay from "Born Before Plastic," she said, "and had

discussed it, I tossed my script. After a ten-minute introduction, I answered questions from the students about life during those years and the usual teen questions about boyfriends and dating and what music we listened to, and what books I could recommend about that era, as well. I talked a little about the WPA and how it was designed to benefit all segments of society, including writers, artists, musicians, and the acting community.

“Miss Bynam had told me that some of the students were very concerned about what would happen to their families in the present economy. So I took time to reassure them that because of the New Deal and programs like Social Security, food stamps and unemployment compensation, which were not available in the twenties and early thirties, these times would not be as hard. I wanted to reassure them that they wouldn’t be out on the street or go hungry.”

Mary said the students never ran out of questions. Drawing on still vivid memories, Mary reported, “We were out on the street. Our house was foreclosed. We rented an apartment. That was the time of cold water flats and cheap tenements so something could be found. “I was not giving a history lecture. The Depression was just something that happened to me. I was willing to answer their questions simply, frankly, and non-judgmentally,

and my final message was, “It happened, we got through it, and we survived.”

Mary’s advice for surviving the recession? “Hang on, be practical, and take enjoyment in family, friends, fresh air, and anything that’s free.”



FREE

FREE

Introductory computer classes at Suffolk University.

For more information call Kate at 617-573-8251



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, please call Ed Conway at (617)327-6831 or e-mail him at edconway14@yahoo.com

5 Ways to Increase Your Brain Power

By Sondra Kornblatt

If you can't remember where you left your keys or the name of a new colleague, it's probably not stupidity or dementia. More likely, your brain has gotten caught in ruts and information overload. But you can help your brain learn and remember. Create new connections—big or small—and your brain becomes more active and stays flexible. Even the brains of older people can grow new neurons. Here are five ways to create new neural pathways and to help your brain stay plastic:

1. Laugh: It's good for your brain! Humor works in the whole brain, and quickly. Less than a half-second after you hear or see something funny, an electrical wave moves through the higher brain functions of the cerebral cortex: the left hemisphere analyzes the joke's words and structure; the right hemisphere interprets the meaning. Meanwhile, the visual sensory area of the occipital lobe creates images; the limbic (emotional system) makes you happier; and the motor sections make you smile or laugh. In short, laughter improves alertness, creativity, and memory. Those who study the new field of gelotology, which explores the benefits of laughter, have found that laughter lowers blood pressure, increases vascular blood flow and oxygenation of the blood, provides a workout to the diaphragm and

various other muscles, reduces certain stress hormones, increases disease and tumor killing cells, and defends against respiratory infections. Help your brain by smiling, reading a few comics, or faking a chuckle or two. It's infectious.

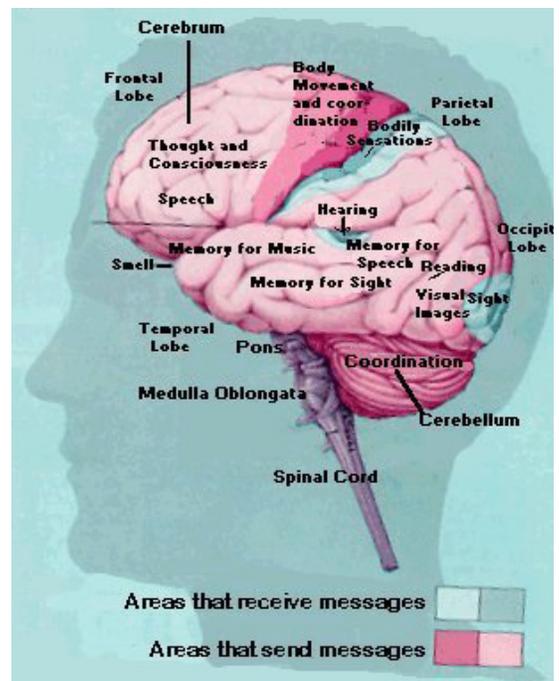
2. Exercise: Movement helps you think. The brain's cognitive and movement functions work side by side, sharing the same automatic process. When you solve a problem, you imagine moving through the steps. Exercise also stimulates the production of brain chemicals, such as BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), which encourages growth of new nerve connections. If you already exercise, great – keep going. If you resist exercising, then add variety to reengage yourself. If you don't exercise at all, then it's time to begin. Park two blocks from the store or the office, and walk the distance. Take the stairs rather than the elevator. The invigoration and joy of movement will build over time. Here are other suggestions: schedule a walk with a friend, join a gym, and mark out your exercise time on a calendar as a reminder of your commitment.

3. Balance light and darkness: Changes in light can affect the brain, even if you're not aware of it. For example, the lack of sufficient brightness in the wintertime can lead to seasonal affective disorder, otherwise known as the blues. When we move the clocks back and forth (from Daylight Savings to Standard Time), there are more accidents on the road. We need light. The brain uses it to enhance alertness. Even

ambient light positively influences hormone release and heart rate. We also need darkness to synchronize our body clock. Indoor lights, computers, street lamps, and television sets can create too much brightness at night. To restore the balance between light and dark, go outside in the morning for a walk in the daylight, use light boxes in the winter, turn off or dim the television and computer, darken the rooms of your house at dusk, and wear a good eyeshade when you sleep.

4. Learn: New skills help you do more than just say merci in French. Learning strengthens the whole brain. Start by simply trying new things: visit a new place, learn a song, and rearrange the furniture—they all stimulate your neurons. Or do normal things in odd ways, such as brushing your teeth with your left (non-dominant) hand, taking a new route home, or sleeping on the wrong side of the bed. At first you might feel a little awkward or silly, but then you will begin to enjoy the challenge. Learn something new like quilting or bridge, or take a community class in engine repair or gourmet cooking. You can also try a new or harder Sudoku or a crossword puzzle. As a reward, you'll come away with new skills and possibly give your brain a better chance against Alzheimer's.

5. Create: For years, scientists believed the right side of the brain was responsible for creativity. However, recent functional brain scans show that the whole brain engages in creative thinking. You can stoke your creativity by getting bored (reducing time spent watching TV and movies,

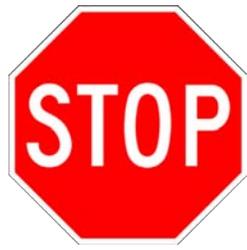


turning off the computer and video games, or not reading). Your brain will turn to itself for inspiration. You can also build time for creative experience: try a new craft, put a sketch pad on your desk, or make a date to spend a half hour each week writing, painting, knitting, or building a bird house. Pump the creative well, and you'll inspire yourself while building new neural connections.

Remember, your brain is flexible and alive regardless of your age, and no matter how many keys or words you misplace. By reducing stimulation and making little changes, you'll appreciate your wonderful brain. Start big or small, and you'll find your brain coming back to life.

Sondra Kornblatt is the author of "A Better Brain at Any Age: The Holistic Way to Improve Your Memory, Reduce Stress, and Sharpen Your Wits" (Conari Press, December 2008). Learn more at ww.redwheelweiser.com/.

When to



Driving

We want to continue driving as long as we can do so safely. However, for many of us the time may come when we must limit or stop driving, either temporarily or permanently. The following advice may be able to assist you or someone you care about.

Warning Signs



What are the warning signs when someone should begin to limit driving or stop altogether?

1. Feeling uncomfortable and nervous or fearful while driving
2. Dents and scrapes on the car or on fences, mailboxes, garage doors, curbs etc.
3. Difficulty staying in the lane of travel
4. Getting lost
5. Trouble paying attention to signals, road signs and pavement markings
6. Slower response to unexpected situations

7. Medical conditions or medications that may be affecting the ability to handle the car safely
8. Frequent “close calls” (i.e. almost crashing)
9. Trouble judging gaps in traffics at intersections and on highway entrance/exit ramps
10. Other drivers honking at you and instances when you are angry at other drivers
11. Friends or relatives not wanting to drive with you
12. Difficulty seeing the sides of the road when looking straight ahead
13. Easily distracted or having a hard time concentrating while driving
14. Having a hard time turning around to check over your shoulder while backing up or changing lanes
15. Frequent traffic tickets or “warnings” by traffic or law enforcement officers in the last year or two

If you notice one or more of these warning signs you may want to have your driving assessed by a professional or attend a driver refresher class. You may also want to consult with your doctor if you are having unusual concentration or memory problems, or other physical symptoms that may be affecting your ability to drive.



SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT SENIOR ID PROGRAM VISITS KIT CLARK CENTER

Recently, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Senior ID program visited Kit Clark Senior Services' Madden Senior Center located in Dorchester.

The Sheriff's Department Senior ID program provides Suffolk County Seniors with colored identification cards. The cards include a photo of the holder, his or her name, address, blood type, and medical history, and the name and phone number of the cardholder's physician and an emergency contact. The information is vital in an emergency situation and the ID card is an important aid to medical responders.

Sheriff's Department Deputy Justin Plaza and Deputy Director Ed Geary, Jr. greeted over 45 Vietnamese seniors at the center, took their photographs, and collected their completed applications to finalize the creation of their new secondary form of identification.

Kit Clark Senior Services outreach worker Lan Chi Pham was instrumental in bringing the Sheriff's Department ID program to the Social Group of Vietnamese Seniors who meet daily at the bustling center located along Dorchester Avenue in the Fields Corner

section of Dorchester. According to Pham, the Vietnamese Seniors have close to 150 active members who routinely visit the Madden Center, which is open Monday through Saturday. Seniors from a wide variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds utilize the Center as a gathering place for breakfast and lunch, fitness activities, recreation, education, and socialization.

"These seniors are very active and involved in Dorchester and the surrounding area," said Pham. "They helped clean up the neighborhood during Boston Shines in April and recently attended the Parade of Seniors event held at the J.F.K. Library."

Having such a large contingent of seniors who are so active in the community stresses the importance of having the Sheriff's Department ID card.

Pham agreed, stating, "In an emergency, the ID card could be really helpful for seniors in trouble." She continued, "Most of the seniors in the group only speak Vietnamese and this card could be very useful in dealing with language barrier issues during an emergency."

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has visited the Madden Senior Center on numerous occasions to bring this program to as many seniors as possible.



GALLOPING THROUGH HISTORY

By Mike Flynn

On August 18th, 1966, a race track in East Boston became the rock and roll Mecca of the universe as the Beatles played before 25,000 screaming fans at Suffolk Downs. At that time the people there probably did not know or probably just didn't care about the history of the place, which at one time housed what was not only the biggest grandstand in America, but possibly the largest clubhouse for horse racing in the world.

On July 10, 1935, about 40 days after Babe Ruth announced his retirement from baseball at Braves Field on Commonwealth Ave., America's newest and largest race track opened its doors just a few miles down the road to some 35,000 people. The Massachusetts Legislature had recently legalized pari-mutual betting, so in an incredible two months after breaking ground, Suffolk Downs rose from the mud on the East Boston-Revere line at a cost of two million dollars.

That first day had an opening card of 8 races, the first of which was won by jockey Carl Hanford. At the time Carl and his brother Ira had become famous riding up and down

the east coast, from Saratoga to Pimlico and Ira would become known as the jockey who rode Seabiscuit before owners Charles and Marcella Howard and the legendary jockey Red Pollard brought the horse to national prominence. Suffolk became the place to go and be seen that first year. (People dressed to the nines in those days to go to the track, unlike just the select "big" of today, such as the Kentucky Derby.) Standing room crowds 40-50 deep would pack into the front of the grandstand.

On October 16th of that year, Suffolk created what would become its signature attraction, the Massachusetts Handicap or as it has been called since, the Mass Cap. It became instantly popular with fans, jockeys and owners alike. Some of the biggest names in all of racing history have competed in the Mass Cap with no bigger a name than Seabiscuit with Red Pollard aboard winning in 1937 in front of 40,000.

The following year the Mass Cap was to feature the showdown between the defending champ and Triple Crown winner War Admiral. It was to be the race of the year. 60,000 fans jammed into Suffolk but alas, it was not to be. Seabiscuit was a last minute scratch and War Admiral finished fourth with a lot of money going to probably just a couple of people who put it all on Menow, the eventual winner.

During the war years, attendance understandably dwindled. Racing became a diversion although with the frequent air

raid drills, the conflict was probably not far from anyone's mind. In 1942 the legendary Whirlwind became the first Triple Crown winner to take the Mass Cap. At wars end the crowds returned, some tens of thousands daily, breaking previous attendance records.

Eddie Arcaro, the only jockey to ever win two Triple Crowns, rode Chochise to victory in the 1950 Mass Cap, his first of two. The end of the decade saw the advent of the one mile night harness race, another national first. Entering the Swingin' Sixties (sorry, Beatles reference) the track saw many new renovations and innovations under new manager Bill Veeck ("As in Wreck", the title of his autobiography) who was quite a character. He had previously owned three professional baseball teams, and as owner of the Cleveland Indians, had signed Larry Doby, the first African – American to play in the American League. But he also hired Max Patkin "The Clown Prince of Baseball" as a coach and sent midget Eddie Gaedel up as a pinch hitter for the St. Louis Browns. (He walked). He was also known to have drilled holes in his wooden leg to use as an ashtray. To Suffolk he brought chariot races and mini-skirted beauties as runners for the bettors. And when his daughter was denied access because of her age, he petitioned the legislature to change the state statute. He fought the law and *he* won.

In the Seventies Suffolk struck a blow for Women's Lib as one of the few tracks

in the country to allow women jockeys (At the time the silly name given them was jockettes.) and they flourished for years winning more than their share of purses. The 1973 Mass Cap was won by Riva Ridge, the second Kentucky Derby winner to do so following Whirlwind.

The most exciting Mass Cap that ever took place was in 1987, and few of our local lads had a hand in it. Dorchester's own Chris McCarron, who would go on to win two Kentucky Derbies, two Belmont and two Preakness was aboard Waquoit, a locally bred steed trained by Guido Federico, also from Dorchester. Astride Broad Brush, whose pedigree included War Admiral and Man O' War, was Eddie Arcaro who is tied with Bill Hardtack with five Kentucky Derby wins and leads in the Belmont and Preakness with six in each. After nine furlongs of back and forth battle, it came to a bob of the head at the line for the locals to take it by a nose. But just two years later and too many sparse crowds management decided racing was no longer profitable and Suffolk was closed.

Yet on the chilly first day of January of 1992 racing came back to the track under new owners, Sterling Suffolk Racecourse with James Moseley as chairman who oversaw huge renovations. 1995-1996 saw the Mass Cap return with a bang with two time Horse of the Year, Cigar, winning back to back titles, the '96 victory being the 15th consecutive on the way to a record tying 16 in a row. The following two years also saw

another Horse of the Year, Skip Away, match Cigar with consecutive victories. Today Suffolk stands as not just a memorial to its brilliant past but possibly a hint of where this “Sport of Kings” is headed. Crowds have been sparse and the patrons in the concourse don’t exactly dress to the nines anymore, but a new management team has been brought in to revitalize the track. If it is already a haven for wagering, what is the problem with slots, argue proponents? The Turf Club and the Terrace Banquet Room abutting it are beautiful venues. The Mayor holds his annual Valentine party there for East Boston seniors. Several concerts have been held there recently and I’m sure other ideas are brewing. Unfortunately the 2009 Mass Cap has been scrubbed but it has been before and came back. Will it again? For a peek back at what was, the wonderful “Suffolk Downs” by Christian Teja is a pictorial record of

the famous people and events which make up the Suffolk story. It can be found at any bookstore.

Suffolk is not just a part of the fabric of Boston history, but of America’s itself and it should not be allowed to fade away. So much of what makes this country great lies in its history and Suffolk has as much as anywhere. If you have not visited lately take a trip down Rte 1 and take a right at that big blue sign. Walking through the concourse to the grandstand, imagine the crowds that once lined the betting windows hurrying to get theirs in before the next race. Or the historic figures and match-ups that once played out there on the oval in front of you. Maybe, as you are walking down that concourse, you may even faintly hear the echoes of “She loves you ya ya ya.”

Image from www.suffolkdowns.com

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Just US Senior Fellowship



Greetings! We are the Just US Senior Fellowship from the Eliot Congregational Church of Roxbury, Rev. Dr. Evan C. Hines, pastor. We began in 1986 and then went on hiatus for a moment but we are back - reformed and rejuvenated.

We held elections, celebrated with a house warming BBQ that has become a tradition in September, participated in a study group led by a doctoral candidate at Boston College entitled "Understanding Religiousness and Spirituality among African American Older Adults"; sponsored our First Annual Harvest Fair in October and shared a Sunday morning service with our children from the Saturday church school. We named it "Alpha and Omega" and it has become a November tradition. We ended the year with our first speaker's bureau; we were visited by Joice Burwell of Kit Clark Senior Services who provided us with excellent information regarding the changes in Medicaid, in particular Part D. We have increased our activities to include Christmas baskets, Shoe Box Ministry, and providing assistance to the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet. One of our happiest celebrations is our Anniversary held

in May. It is an afternoon program and we have a wonderful time. Guest speaker, singers, musicians, liturgical dancers and lots of praise and worship!

The Harvest Fair is coming, October 31st. Tables will be available if you are interested. Our Fall Foliage Tour happens October 12th, Columbus Day! We seem to

have a penchant for Cracker Barrel in New Hampshire. The food is wonderful and the gift shop has something for everyone.

We continue to celebrate with our church family and with something we call Mission and Outreach and Mission and Inreach. Outreach is a "meet and greet" where we invite other churches to come and break bread with us – to meet and greet one another. The Inreach is to invite the organizations of the church to our Saturday meeting; to share with us who they are, what they do and how we could assist them in achieving their goals for 2009. To date we have received 7 organizations – tada!

We meet the second Saturday of the month, 12 noon in the parlor. A light repast is prepared for the fellowship moments we share after our meeting. You are most welcome to come and participate with us. The church office number is 617-445-7525. Our address is 56 Dale Street Roxbury, MA 02119. I am Cheryl Murray, president, and I can be reached at 617-506-0931. Should I not be available, please leave a voicemail message and I will call you back!

Simply Homework

A short story by Willie Pleasants

My parents achieving the American dream in Springhare, Massachusetts was a dysfunctional work in progress. My father held temporary jobs while my mother felt she had to work sixty hours a week to compensate.

Unfortunately over-work and unhappiness killed her on my eighteenth birthday. It was her heart - it gave out. The week before her death we were having our usual argument about the importance of homework.

“You can do better than me, Edgar, if you take homework seriously!” she said. “Why is that so important?”

“It keeps you out of trouble and it’s the foundation for a good education.”

“Your degree in Social working hasn’t made you rich.” I mouthed back.

Despite our disagreement, I missed and oftentimes wished she was still with me. Money from her life insurance saved our home from foreclosure, but was wasted on my first year of college. I just walked out of school and never went back. In an attempt to avoid arguments with Dad, I took a job at the supermarket around the corner from my one-room flat. The store manager told me that if I kept up the good work he would put me into the manager-trainee program in a couple of years. I couldn’t wait that long.

Roger, my friend, had told me about a great opportunity. So, I got dressed to execute the plan. Black pants, blue hooded jacket, and a baby blue shirt. I loved those colors.

I looked handsome passing the mirror as I paced back and forth. Then, “homework, homework,” Mother? I thought as I looked around... it couldn’t be. It was foolish to give credence to a voice from the dead.

Later that night, I got off the city bus on the north side across the street from the Seven-Eleven store. It was June 17, 1987 about ten p.m. People were busy coming and going until eleven when the store became empty. I crossed the street and entered the store, walked up to the counter, and demanded thirty thousand dollars. Roger said the money from the lottery ticket sales would be there.

“We don’t have that kind of money!” the clerk said. “Give me that money!” I demanded again, holding a gun while keeping an eye on the front door. Suddenly, the same voice I heard in my room was clearer, “you did no homework!” As the cold chill of fear grabbed me, I dropped the gun, ran out of that store so fast that I ran out of my shoes. Scared! I didn’t stop running until I was home under my bed.

The next morning when I didn’t show for work my manager called. After accepting my apology he said, “Did you hear about some fool trying to holdup the Seven-Eleven last night?” “Do they know who did it?” I asked regretting my action. “No, the idiot took off like he saw a ghost. The jerk hadn’t bothered to check. The new owner had stopped selling lottery tickets a month ago.”



Partners HealthCare

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Health and Fitness Walk*



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Volunteer Experience can Provide Hidden Opportunities in Today's Challenging Times

Jamaica Plain, MA - Is there a silver lining to the hard economic times in our country? Even if you are experiencing challenging times, there is a way to lift your spirits while filling a need in your community. The message of public service is one Americans have been reminded of by President Barack Obama's administration, however finding a time and place for it can be challenging. That is unless you ask volunteers like Jeff Veum.

"I wanted to feel useful and productive, and get some structure back in my life," says Veum, a volunteer at Little Brothers -- Friends of the Elderly, a national network of non-profit, volunteer-based organizations committed to relieving isolation and loneliness among the elderly. After his wife accepted a new job out of state, Veum soon found himself moving to a new community and searching for work. He decided to offer his time to help others in need, and in turn, received much more than he expected.

"People who are not employed -- voluntarily or otherwise -- lose more than just a paycheck, but also the feeling of belonging to a

team and working with others for a common purpose. I gained back that sense of belonging and meaningfulness through my volunteer experience," Veum says. As an added bonus, Veum was able to network with other volunteers which helped in his job search.

"We have seen an influx in the number of Americans looking for an outlet to share their skills and time in order to help others," says Lea Ames, National Executive Director, Little Brothers -- Friends of the Elderly. "In fact, our volunteers have increased at a rate of 5.4 percent in our U.S. chapters over the last year."

"My professional career has been focused on non-profits. After being laid off, it was a logical choice to continue to give back to the Boston community," Says April Kreyssig from Boston. She adds, "I am grateful that Little Brother's allows me to use my skills and expertise to help others."

Whatever your economic status, there are benefits that can be realized when you set aside time to provide needed service in your community. In addition, there may be hidden benefits for those trying to build up their resume for getting back out in the workforce. Here are some tips for turning volunteer opportunities into something more:

1. Use the volunteer experience as an opportunity to step outside of your comfort zone and perhaps develop an expertise that you haven't been able to fully tap in your current or past job. This will only help to build

your portfolio and show your depth of skills and outgoing attitude. Volunteering can be as valuable as an internship and provide a bridge between work experiences.

2. We often hear about the importance of networking and what better time than now to expand on the contacts you have. Whether you are a volunteer and/or full-time employee of an organization, getting out and meeting people from different walks of life can help you make key connections or even a new friend.

3. As a volunteer, you will find yourself gaining a new perspective on life and seeing the good in people around you. Many volunteers will tell you that they get rewarded by the positive reinforcement they receive from “giving back.”

4. As an added benefit, volunteering can also provide a new direction for people in the job

or career that they want to pursue moving forward. You may enrich your life by developing a new facet of it through volunteering and the new people and experiences that you encounter.

5. Look around your own community for volunteer opportunities that can fit into your lifestyle. Little Brothers -- Friends of the Elderly is celebrating its 30th anniversary of service in Boston this year and will commemorate with special visits and social events for “Old Friends” this fall. Contact <http://boston.littlebrothers.org/> or call (617) 524-8882 for more information.

No matter what your circumstances, making the most of your free time can benefit both you and those around you. You can find a way to reveal that silver lining in today’s challenging times.

First Realty Management salutes all the competitors in the Mayor’s Health & Fitness Walk, especially our senior residents of the following apartment communities:



First Realty
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Brandywyne Village, East Boston
Burbank Apartments, East Fenway
Camelot Court, Brighton
Cummins Towers, Roslindale
Stony Brook Commons, Roslindale



The Internet Improves & Enhances Seniors Lives



What one tool can allow you to communicate with friends and family from around the world, view photos and videos, research any subject, and shop without leaving your chair? It's the Internet! Whether you use a computer to go online from your home, the library or a community center, the Internet can help make a difference for today's seniors in three significant ways: 1) stay connected and informed 2) stay active and healthy 3) stay in your community.

Stay connected and informed:

The Internet allows you to communicate with friends and family who are down the street or across the country. Imagine exchanging photos, watching videos and sending birthday cards – so many ways to stay in touch. There are also online shopping services that make it easy to buy your groceries or holiday gifts without having to worry about transportation or weather concerns.

The Internet also provides an opportunity for social networking, with sites where people play bridge and exchange information about favorite recipes and vacation spots. Medical and government benefit forms are increasingly online and can be accessed and completed more quickly using the Internet. It's also a great source for news and weather updates.

Stay active and healthy:

The technology of the Internet provides innovative services such as telemedicine and remote medical monitoring that can help those in medical need get care without repeated trips to the doctor's office. These devices can also be mobile, allowing you to go to the park or out for a walk while still under the care of medical monitoring technology. The opportunity to go online isn't just with a desktop computer anymore; with advances in technology, you can also go online with "smart" wireless phones.

Stay in your community:

The Internet can make it easier to live in your home and community longer and maintain a higher quality of life when you are connected with family and friends, and have a support network that includes health care professionals and others in the helping community.

While the Internet provides great benefits, it is also important to make sure you establish safety and privacy practices when online. Be careful before opening or forwarding any unfamiliar files or links to avoid "catching" computer "viruses." When using the Internet from any location, make sure you check all communications carefully and never

provide unsolicited personal, financial information such as your social security or bank account number over the Internet. Read privacy policies on websites, use privacy settings to help control others access to your personal information, ask family or friends for assistance, and check out www.consumerprivacyawareness.org.

Enjoy the new world of information and opportunity the Internet has to offer, stay connected, and stay safe.



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Your Body is an Instrument of Expression ...

and mine still has a lot to say.

If you're a cancer survivor like I am or you want information about preventing cancer, go online to download a FREE electronic copy of *The Cancer Survivor's Guide*, a nutrition guide with more than 100 cancer-fighting recipes.

—Dorothy Hamill



Photograph by Stirling Elmendorf

www.CancerProject.org/Guide



Our creativity empowers us to have fun, enjoy ourselves, accomplish goals and conquer fears by helping us to dream up methods to turn ordinary, mundane activities and stressful situation into opportunities. This story is a perfect example of a determined lady, at the age of 65, used her creativity to release the voice of an old ghost.

Growing up I was never allowed near a river, pond, ocean, boat or birdbath, for that matter, without mother screaming, "You're going to drown!" Like all good children I believed my mother. Childhood is long gone and so is mother but I've kept her dire warnings very much alive. If I leisurely walk into a room with an aquarium her voice comes blasting back to me, "You're going to drown!"

At some point in my mid-thirties I decided to be a grownup and take responsibility for this excessive fear of water. I signed up (several times) for swimming classes at the Y. I always got as far as the door but would turn around and drag myself home.

I was approaching retirement, I questioned how I could have let this fear get so out of hand for all these years. I thought, "It's now or never "get a hold of yourself," you are a creative writer, make it fun, think "outside of the box." So, I signed up for scuba classes at the Y. "What a genius I am, how clever to shift my focus and just step beyond my fears," I thought.

Class preparation was exciting and I really got into the "under the sea" stuff and diving with sharks. I thought the lessons would be fun and I could hardly wait for scuba classes to begin.

At the first class, the coach introduced himself; he was a kind of no nonsense man. We sat on benches alongside the pool reviewing the lesson book. I had never been more prepared!

Things were going very well and I was ecstatic! Everyone was lining up. And while I couldn't make out what the coach was saying, I got in line anyway. "JUMP!!!" he said. Did he say JUMP?? In the water?? This couldn't be right; something had gone very wrong. The bottom was falling out of my dream. One by one, my classmates were jumping in the pool and SWIMMING. This was worse than being at the front door of the Y!

"Well, you're next," the coach said to me, "backstroke, breaststroke, the usual drill." My body started to quiver and my heart pounded like thunder in my head. And then I heard the chilling voice of my mother whispering over and over, "You're going to drown, you're going to drown."

"Okay, let's go. You're holding up the class." The coach was annoyed with me. The hazy image before my eyes was the door to the "Y" when I first approached it. The voice in my head had become my voice and I was saying out loud, "Stop this madness, open the door, just OPEN THE DOOR!" The words "I can't swim" and "I am afraid of the water" came out loud and clear, again, this time in front of everyone at the pool.

"Very funny," the coach said, "now get on with it." The class stopped swimming and was wait-

ing for my answer. I repeated, “I can’t swim; I am afraid of the water.” What part of this did he not understand? I was getting a little upset. However, it was also a little easier to admit my fears. “Oh, very funny,” he said, “I get it. Where are the hidden cameras and what show are you with?” The class thought this was some kind of joke being played on the coach. What would it take for this man to understand? Again, in a low controlled voice, I said, “there is no camera and there is no show. I can’t swim. I am afraid of the water!”

He was bewildered and said, “Let’s say you are telling me the truth. Whatever made you sign up for a scuba class?” I opened my mouth to speak but he interrupted, quite sarcastically, “I know, I know, you can’t swim and are afraid of the water.”

I felt like crying. And when the class laughed, I almost lost it. I managed to say, “As I’ve said, I have an overwhelming fear of the water. I don’t like having this fear in my life; it’s taking over. It’s starting to be in charge of me. As a creative writer and problem solver I was thinking how I could resolve my problem, get out of my rut, be safe in the water and have fun. I thought using a mask, flippers and goggles would make me feel supported and protected. I wanted to see for myself the amazing world under the seas. But, I forgot my great fear of swimming and drowning.”

The class cheered as I picked up my towel and headed for the locker room. I had given it my very best shot and had had enough! The coach motioned to the rest class to continue with the drill. “Where are you going?” he said. “Give me five and then meet me in the shallow end

of the pool.” The first lesson he gave me was to sit on the edge of the pool with the water up to my knees. I was shaking so hard I could barely sit still. The coach never left me, he just keep talking. “Good for you,” he said, “You passed your first class. You’ve been in the water for five minutes and you haven’t run away. Go take a hot shower and come back. We will do it all over again.”

Standing in the hot shower, my heart was racing. I thought I could leave this place right now. I almost did. I turned off the hot water, wrapped the towel around me, looked at the door to the pool and heard mother was screaming at me, “You are going to drown.” I don’t think so, I said to her, in a strong new voice. I walked out the door and sat down at my end of the pool.

“Great beginning; you deserve a GOLD MEDAL,” the coach said. “I will see you next week.” And he did see me, week after week and hot shower after hot shower. Finally, the day came for me to go underwater. My coach offered me his hand. I shook my head no. I went under and was smiling.

Coach said, “It’s up to you now to practice what you know about swimming and hot showers. Come back to me when you can swim laps.” That scuba class was a life makeover for me and my coach was a guardian angel. “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.”

Now I love to swim and my favorite stroke is a very stylized backstroke I developed by watching videos of Olympic swimmers and old films of a lady named Esther Williams.

HEALTHY

Peanut Noodles with Shredded Chicken & Vegetables

Ingredients:

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup smooth natural peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chile-garlic sauce, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 8 ounces whole-wheat spaghetti
- 1 12-ounce bag fresh vegetable medley, such as carrots, broccoli, snow peas

Instructions:

1. Put a large pot of water on to boil for cooking pasta.
2. Meanwhile, place chicken in a skillet or saucepan and add enough water to cover; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low and simmer gently until cooked through and no longer pink in the middle, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board. When cool enough to handle, shred into bite-size strips.
3. Whisk peanut butter, soy sauce, garlic, chile-garlic sauce and ginger in a large bowl.
4. Cook pasta in the boiling water until not quite tender, about 1 minute less than specified in the package directions. Add vegetables and cook until the pasta and vegetables are just tender, 1 minute more. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the cooking liquid. Rinse the pasta and vegetables with cool water to refresh. Stir the reserved cooking liquid into the peanut sauce; add the pasta, vegetables and chicken; toss well to coat. Serve warm or chilled.

Serves: 6 (1 1/2 cups)

RECIPES

Creamy Tarragon Chicken Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup walnuts, chopped
- 2/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/2 cup low-fat mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon dried tarragon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 1/2 cups diced celery
- 1 1/2 cups halved red seedless grapes

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Arrange chicken in a glass-baking dish large enough to hold it in a single layer. Pour broth around the chicken. Bake the chicken until no longer pink in the center and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the breast registers 170°F, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board until cool enough to handle, then cut into cubes. (Discard broth or save for another use.)
3. Meanwhile, spread walnuts on a baking sheet and toast in the oven until lightly golden and fragrant, about 6 minutes. Let cool.
4. Stir sour cream, mayonnaise, tarragon, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add celery, grapes, the chicken and walnuts; stir to coat. Refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour.

Serves: 8 (1 cup)

Latino Multigenerational BBQ
A collaboration between the
Latino/a Student Cultural Center at
Northeastern University and
La Alianza Hispana Adult Day Health &
Drop in Center

July 22, 2009 was the 4th annual BBQ lunch co-hosted by La Alianza and Northeastern University's Latino/a Student Cultural Center. Each year's BBQ has a different theme. Last year's theme was a Hawaiian BBQ. This year's theme was Multigenerational BBQ. It was attended by 30 seniors and staff from La Alianza Hispana, staff and volunteers from the Latino/a Student Cultural Center at Northeastern University and La Unidad Latina. La Unidad Latina also sponsored the event. La Unidad Latina is a fraternity addressing the shortcomings of

academic institutions in meeting and addressing the needs of Latino students in higher education. La Unidad primarily seeks to take a leadership role in meeting the needs of the Latino community through cultural awareness, community service and promotion of the Latino culture and people.

The day consisted of a walk-through of the beautiful gardens of Northeastern University, the singing of La Alianza's anthem, and a delicious BBQ. Additionally, the Northeastern University Latino Center was given a surprise gift from La Alianza. It was a framed collage of last year's BBQ.

It was a festive event even though the weather was unseasonably cloudy and cool. The seniors really enjoyed themselves.

La Alianza Hispana Adult Day Health &
Drop in Center "El Mundo De La Felicidad"
Agradece Un Dia Maravilloso De Vida

Por Maria Elisa Avellaneda
Coordinadora de Actividades

El 22 de Julio de 2009, se realizo el evento mas importante del Adult Day Health & Drop in Center de La Alianza Hispana, programa que cariñosamente hemos bautizado: "El Mundo de la Felicidad"

Durante cuatro anos consecutivos el Latino/a Student Cultural Center de Northeastern University, ha invitado a nuestros envejecientes a un especial evento de verano. En el 2008 la invitación fue a un BBQ Hawaiano, en el 2009 fue a un BBQ Multigeneracional.

Ese día, pasaron cosas maravillosas en la vida de nuestros envejecientes, la planeación y logística del evento fueron extraordinarias: Se inicio dando la bienvenida a cada uno de nuestros envejecientes recorriendo los bellos jardines de la Universidad. A la sombra de los árboles, entonamos las notas del Himno del Programa, creado desde Junio del 2004 por dos envejecientes del programa, Porfirio Rivera, quien escribió la letra y Cristina Lopez, quien compuso la música, luego, los regalos, los chistes, los refranes no se hicieron esperar mientras nos deleitabamos con el BBQ, la variedad de ensaladas, postres y bebidas.

No encontramos palabras para agradecer y felicitar a cada una de las personas que hicieron posible este evento, pero si podemos garantizar que cada uno de nuestros queridos envejecientes disfrutaron de un día desbordante de salud y bienestar.

(Spanish article)

La Alianza Hispana BBQ



Ana Chang, Maria Elisa Avellaneda and Atonio Perez



Enjoying a game of Dominoes.



Eva & Domingo have been married for 60 years.



Anna Gonzalez & Thomasita Mercado enjoying the day.



Pedro & Jilma have been a wonderful couple for 46 years.



Maria Lopez



Helping the BBQ run smoothly.



Maria Pabon strikes a pose.

RSVP



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Kathleen Giordano, Producer
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The Elderly Commission

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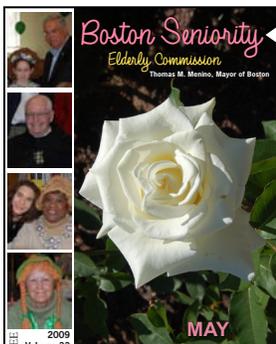
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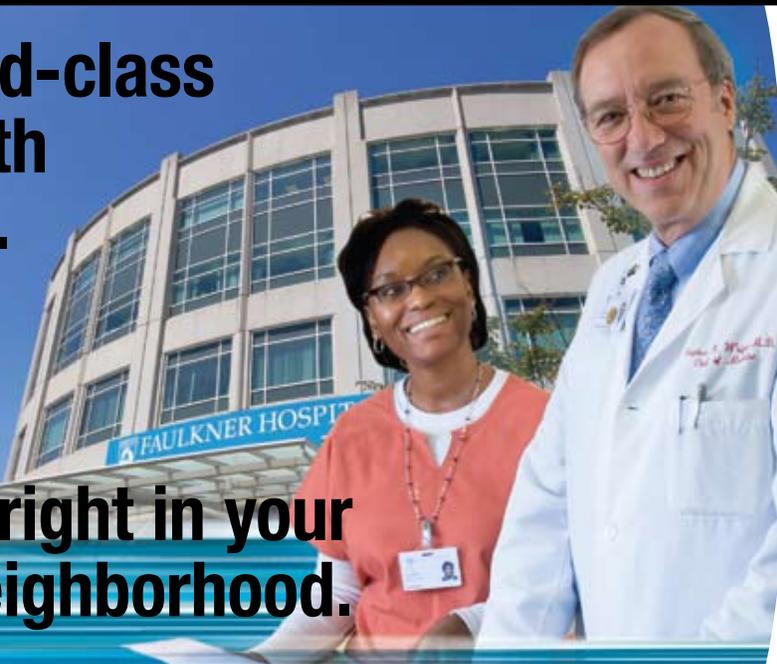
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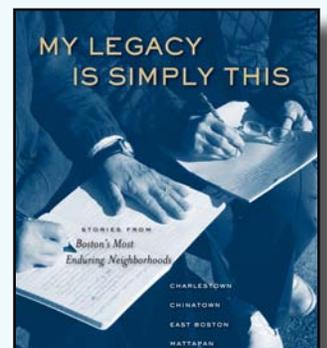
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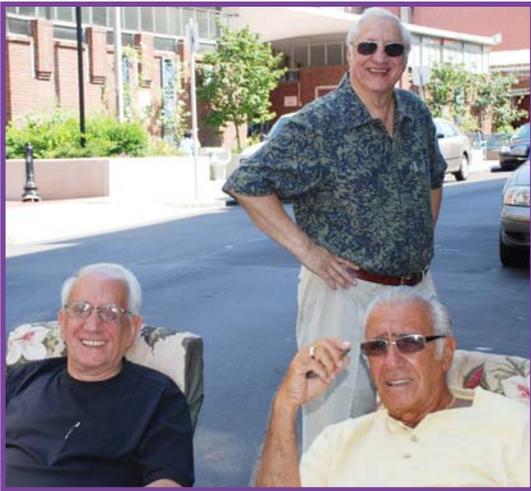
Mary, Ida & Provi



Great smile!



Mayor Menino greets Jenny Contrado.



Anthony & Sam relaxing as their friend looks on.



Theresa



Theresa & Kathy



Mary & Millie



Mayor Menino with Ida.



Paula



Siblings: Frank & Penny



Francis, Francis & Lily



Dolores

Bocce with Mayor Menino



Calculating for a perfect throw.



Having fun with Mayor Menino in the North End.

Mayor Menino tries to playfully distract his friend during Bocce.

Dorothy Curran Wednesday Night Concert Series



Enjoying the concert.



A parrot tries to cut in on author Marilyn Marsiglia & her dance partner Kenneth Lager.



Commissioner Greenberg with Barbara McDonough.



Norma Rogers & Charles O'Brien



Marjorie Dolerey hits the dance floor.

Special thanks to the Parks Department for the great concerts.



Mt. Washington Boat Trip on Lake Winnepesaukee



Marion Repucci, Carol Emmett, Mary Thomson & Ida Cennamo of East Boston Harborside Community Center.



Sarah Vacinca poses with Mt. Washington's mascot.



Ruth Moy, Anita Wing & Alvin Wing enjoying the boat ride.



Dorothy Scott with Simplicity the clown.



Maddie McComiskey & Elaine Anoli



Greetings from Joe Decinti & Ed Pomfred



Lee Grant & her sister Kay Greene.



Ignus Thomas, Peg Hurson & Deloris V. Anderson taking it easy.



Vun Lay Lin & Tong Y Tchen



Shirley White, Miriam Sanchez, Grace Locker, Gladys Grullon, Marsha Colbert & Carmen Dias smile for their close up.

BLAKE ESTATES



Frances Bowens &
Yvonne Johnson



Jeanette Mankavech



Mayor Menino poses with
Juan Batista & Enriqueta Cordero.



Mayor Menino with Ana
Ighrayeb & her friend.



Commissioner Greenberg
with Jean Arns.



Vincent Paola & Jocelyn Early



Janice McRae &
Annette Cheatham



May Khoury & Johanna Creed



Polly Mills



Gladys McLaughlin



Elsa Cordero



Jean Ross



Shirley Davies, Ethel Meloski &
Lena Sacramona

The Mayor's 14th Annual Senior Spring Garden Party

