

TOWN OF MOUNT DESERT, MAINE
Guidelines for the
Selection of the Eldest Citizen
to hold the
BOSTON POST CANE

The Boston Post Cane tradition was established in 1909 by Edwin Grozier, Editor and Publisher of the *Boston Post Newspaper*. On August 2, 1909 in letters sent to 700 Boards of Selectmen of towns in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, Grozier asked them to be trustees of the 700 ebony, gold topped canes that he had contracted to be made during the previous year. A special cane was presented to the Board of Selectmen in 431 towns in New England who responded to the letter, to be presented as an honor to each town's oldest resident. The recipient held the honor as long as he/she lived (or moved from the town). Upon his or her death (or move) the cane would be awarded to the next oldest resident. A stipulation in the letter was that the Cane would belong to the town and not the resident who received it.

The canes were all made by a New York manufacturer from ebony shipped in seven-foot lengths from the Congo in Africa. They had a 14-carat gold head two inches long, decorated by hand, and ferruled tip. The head was engraved with the inscription "Presented by the Boston Post to the oldest citizen of (name of town) - To Be Transmitted". The Board of Selectmen was to be the trustee of the cane and keep it always in the hands of the oldest citizen. In 1930, after considerable controversy, eligibility for the cane was opened to women.

Fewer than two hundred of the original canes still exist; some communities have facsimiles to replace their lost canes. The Town of Mount Desert's cane is an original. Although the recipient must be the oldest person residing in the town.

To provide for preservation and public awareness of the tradition and protection of the cane from loss or damage, the Board of Selectpersons for the Town of Mount Desert, Maine hereby establishes the following protocol for the selection of the *Eldest Town of Mount Desert Citizen* and the rightful holder of said title and for the appropriate recognition of said citizen.

Eligibility and Selection:

The holder of the Cane must be 90 years old or older and must reside in the Town of Town of Mount Desert for at least the last 25 years. A resident who is temporarily living elsewhere qualifies as a recipient of the cane while local, legal residence is maintained, and a local mailing address is current. If a situation arises where these conditions cannot be met, the Board of Selectpersons may modify these requirements by a majority vote at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

The term 'resident' refers to a person who has physically resided year-round at a fixed, permanent, and principal home in the town.

The Selectpersons recognize that numerous individuals establish residency in our town late in life. Therefore, the determination of who the eldest citizen is shall be made by the Town Clerk. Furthermore, the Selectpersons recognize that the eldest citizen may not wish to receive the title

and therefore asserts that in such cases the recognition will be made to the next eldest citizen that wishes to hold the title.

Method to Search for Oldest Resident:

The Town Clerk shall cause to be placed a notice in the local newspaper (and in other locations where official notices are placed) announcing the search for nominations for the title of Town of Mount Desert's Eldest Citizen from among those residents who are at least 90 years older and have been a resident of the town for at least the last 25 years.

All nominations must be received in the Town Clerk's Office 30 days from the date of the posting of the notice. The search may also include an informal survey, voter registration, general public knowledge, civic groups, and churches or by nomination from family or friends. A nomination form may be obtained from the Town Clerk's Office or on-line at <https://www.mtdesert.org/town-clerk>

Presentation:

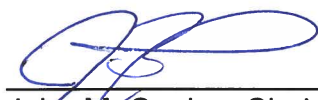
The Chairperson of the Town of Town of Mount Desert Board of Selectpersons or his/her designee shall bestow the title of "Eldest Citizen" upon the selectee and present him/her with a certificate and replica cane signifying the honor and shall cause the name of the honoree to be inscribed on a plaque to be displayed along with the original Boston Post Cane at the Town of Town of Mount Desert municipal Office.

The location of the presentation will be determined according to the circumstances of the honoree.

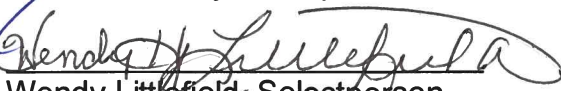
The recipient will retain this honor as long as the individual lives even though another resident may become eligible. The Town Clerk's Office must be notified if the recipient of the Boston Post Cane dies or otherwise refuses or returns the honor. At that time the Town Clerk shall determine the new oldest resident of Town of Town of Mount Desert.

If the decision is made to no longer display the Boston Post Cane at the Town Office, it would be placed in the custody of the Town of Town of Mount Desert Historical Society.

Given under our hands, this 3rd day of January, 2022.



John MacCauley, Chairperson




Wendy Littlefield, Selectperson



Geoffrey Wood, Selectperson



Matthew Hart, Vice-Chairperson



Martha Dudman, Selectperson