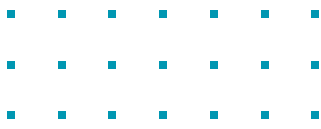


# BROOKLINE SENIOR CENTER

# ANNUAL 2023

# REPORT





## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The Brookline Council on Aging is a resource for residents over 60. Our mission is providing social services that allow people to remain independent. We operate the Senior Center five days a week with some evening and weekend programs.

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### OUR PRIORITY

#### VULNERBLE OLDER ADULTS

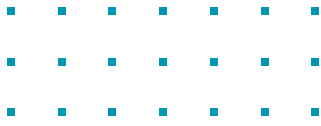
- Women over the age of 60
- Older adults of color
- Older adults not proficient in English
- LGBTQIA+ older adults
- Oldest and frailest residents
- Older adults living in public housing
- Financially insecure older adults



2020 Census data was released, showing that there are 13,222 residents over the age of 60 in Brookline. This is almost a 20% increase from 2010.

### OUR SERVICES

- Case management, mental health support
  - Clutter/Hoarding Task Force
  - Home care: meal prep, errands, cleaning, shopping
  - Income tax prep, job search, computer skills, property tax work-off
  - Health: blood pressure, podiatry, hearing, flu clinic, vaccine clinics
  - VIBRANT assistive program for visually impaired
  - Legal clinic
  - Advocacy
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- Transportation: medical and eye appointments, bus, van, TRIPPS ride sharing
  - SHINE Medicare counseling, Farmer's Market Coupons, fuel assistance, Digital Navigator services
  - Food pantry, food commodity program, daily lunch
  - Fitness Center
  - Medical equipment loans
  - PARC (Parking Access for Residents' Caregivers)
  - Support groups: bereavement, Alzheimer's, mindfulness, spirituality
  - Monthly Newsletter, Elder Resource Guide, Ask a Geriatrician Educational, recreational programming
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## OUR SUCCESSES



- The Town of Brookline joined the AARP nation-wide Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. Network members demonstrate ongoing commitment to provide robust services and programs that ensure their communities are livable for residents in all life stages.
  - Brookline was the first New England community recognized into the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in 2012.
  - The Senior Center was the recipient of a 2023 Community Emergency Preparedness Appreciation Award on September 21, 2023.
  - In June 2023, Brookline Senior Center was awarded a Community Building Grant from the AARP of Massachusetts to support outreach on transportation options and resources in the community. This project provided transportation for low to moderate income seniors to two important community events.
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## OUR 2023 INNOVATIONS

- We created monthly infographics to highlight COA programs and services. To view the infographics and their statistics please visit <https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/our-stats-2023-infographics/>
- In late summer 2023, the Senior Center launched a small volunteer Medical Escort Program. This initiative responded to an ongoing need seen by Senior Center staff for older adults who needed an escort home from medical procedures, due to requirements by doctor's offices after certain procedures. This was particularly true for those living alone or without caregiving support. A request for volunteers was forwarded by the Office of Emergency Preparedness to the Medical Reserve Corp to ask for volunteer medical escorts. Six MRC volunteers responded and the program currently has 5 trained volunteers.

A quote from a participant:

“*Thank you so much for arranging transportation and medical escort. I really and truly from my heart appreciate it. The volunteer was marvelous and came back with me in the taxi. I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you so very much!*”

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## INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR TRANSPORTATION

The COA has surpassed pre-Covid numbers of requests for transportation service and the program continues to grow. In FY 2022 the total number of subsidized rides was 4,305 rides. In FY 23, the total for subsidized rides dramatically increased to 7,666. This was an increase of 78%. The cost per ride is currently \$16.71 demonstrating the cost effectiveness of this program.

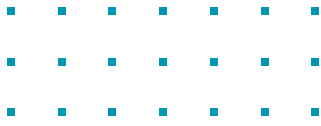
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## VOLUNTEER UPDATE

- April's Volunteer Appreciation Event's recipients of the 2023 John & Molly Dolan Volunteer of the Year Award were Lyudmila Lugovyer and Dick Morse, both COA English language conversation (ESL) teachers for 20+ years.



- Over 260 active volunteers taught classes, staffed the food insecurity programs and reception, and served as board members and advisors.
  - The 2023 Volunteer Survey revealed a diverse group of volunteers with language proficiency. Fifteen languages are spoken by COA volunteers - 40% of our volunteers write/speak a language other than English, 27% are willing to help in a language they know well, 30% are interested in learning or practicing another language.
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## BROOKLINECAN (Brookline Community Aging Network)

- Promoted services and activities that make Brookline a place to age gracefully. <http://www.BrooklineCan.org>
- Hosted educational events and the annual Candidate's Forum
- At their September 7, 2023 Annual Meeting: Re-Emerge and Re-Engage: How to Thrive in a Post-Pandemic World, Candace Cramer, President & CEO of Goddard House, spoke and provided resources including:

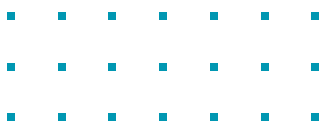
The U.S. Surgeon General's 2023 Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community [https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/nSf\\_CAD91os6jXngSGt89L?domain=hhs.gov](https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/nSf_CAD91os6jXngSGt89L?domain=hhs.gov) (outlines steps individuals can take to enhance their connections & ease loneliness)

Practical advice from the report highlights the work that is happening at the Brookline Senior Center. This included suggestions to:

1. Nurture your relationships through consistent and high-quality engagement.
2. Stay close to your inner circle of close friends and family to promote mental and physical health.
3. Prioritize weekly social connections to connect with people by person, by phone or electronically.
4. Join a group that interests you, serve and support others, participate in your community.
5. Participate regularly in social, spiritual and/or community groups of interest.
6. Fearlessly seek help of family, friends, counselors or health care providers during times of struggle with loneliness or isolation.

BrooklineCAN and the Brookline Council on Aging are proud to continue to play a significant role in ending social isolation and loneliness.

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## BUDGET

- The Town provided less than 70% of the operating budget.
- The Council, with help from its nonprofit, the Brookline Senior Center Foundation, supplemented the balance with federal, state and private grants along with donations and proceeds from the Annual Benefit.
- The state increased its funding in 2023 to \$14 per elder.
- The COA's FY23 budget was \$1,063,833.
- Salary portion = \$911,776 currently funding 11 full-time and 4 part-time positions.

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## AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT SUPPORTED COA

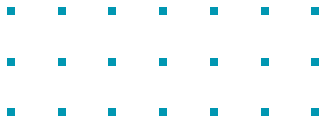
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were essential for dealing with post-pandemic issues. The COA focused funding on our vulnerable population:

- Food insecurity (received \$100,000.00)
- Transportation access (received \$359,824.00)
- Technology (received \$57,968.00)

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## GRANTS

- Three Family Foundation grants were underwritten for the Drawing for Pleasure class, monthly birthday parties, and the Volunteer Recognition Event.
  - Grants from ITN America provided free rides to eye appointments.
  - State Representative Tommy Vitolo provided a \$50,000 grant for social isolation and loneliness.
  - The COA partnered with the Brookline Chamber of Commerce and Brookline Food Pantry to purchase and provide local restaurant meals and funding. Meals were distributed in the community.
  - Brookline Community Foundation supported the Tech Buddies program, allowing COA to distribute over 200 tablets. The COA also provided one-on-one education and support on digital technology.
  - Jewish Family & Children's Services (JF&CS) provided funding for art programs to decrease social isolation and loneliness.
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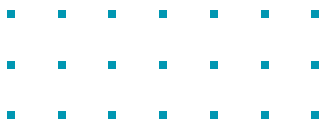


## PROGRAMS

We offered both online and in-person programming including:

- Art Workshops
  - Boomers and Beyond Trips
  - Field Trip to State House
  - Springwell Nutrition Talks
  - Savvy & Safe Workshop
  - Stress Reduction & Meditation
  - Legacy Writers Group
  - "Love, Loss, & What I Wore" Play
  - Concerts
  - Dance, Fitness, Karate and Chair Yoga Classes
  - Intergenerational Fridays
  - Walking Groups
  - Words Galore, Rainbow Jeopardy and other interactive group games
  - Craft and Rummage Sale
  - Gallery 93 Art Exhibits
  - iPhone /iPad basic classes
  - Chinese New Year and Autumn Moon Festivals
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## COA STAFF RETIREMENTS

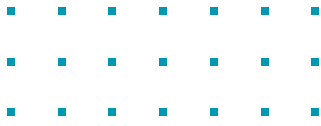


After 24 years, social worker Freddi Langenthal retired in June 2023. She was a devoted, compassionate clinician who advocated for her clients. Her colleagues recall how she not only would find housing for those who were unhoused, but made sure that their new apartments had the necessary furniture and amenities. One of Freddi's clients, age 97, noted that over a 10-year period, Freddi helped her and her late husband in the difficult moments of [their] life. "She was always very kind and highly professional. I am very grateful to her and your agency for always being there when we needed something. We will miss her. Wishing good and healthy retirement to our beloved Freddi."



James Tong retired in September, 2023. Mr. Tong had been employed as a Building Custodian at the Council on Aging since November of 2016. Prior to his custodial position, Mr. Tong was employed by the Council on Aging as a bus driver from 2004-2016. Mr. Tong was a dedicated employee who cared about Brookline's older adults. In both his roles at the COA, he was caring and competent in all aspects of his job. This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, where he ensured that the Senior Center was clean, safe and able to be open for essential services. Mr. Tong always took pride in making sure the Senior Center was well-maintained and functioning at a professional level.

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## COA BOARD

- Provided both in-person and remote meetings
- Welcomed Associate Members Susan Howards, Peggy Maguire, and Kelley Pope
- Fran Perler became a Citizen Member of the Council.
- Yolanda Rodriguez continued as Chair of the Council with Judith Chasin as Vice-Chair.

## THANK YOU

Because of our staff, volunteers and board we were successful. We are grateful to those that make Brookline a desirable place to live, and continue to enrich our services and welcome increased community involvement.



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To learn more about BSC please visit [brooklineseniorcenter.org](http://brooklineseniorcenter.org)