

Putterham Library Expands Programs in Chestnut Hill for Seniors and All Ages

- *Miriam Rosalyn Diamond, Council on Aging Communications Specialist*

Ginger O'Day, Brookline Public Library's Putterham Branch Supervisor, has been augmenting and expanding onsite (and online) events for patrons of all ages since her appointment over a year ago. She is particularly interested in providing opportunities for seniors to learn, connect, and engage on a variety of topics. "We don't have a Senior Center (in South Brookline)" she states. "I'm more than happy to provide programs to seniors who live out here."

Ginger also oversees the location's collections and personnel. The sole full-time librarian based at Putterham, she also supervises a part-time librarian who specializes in children's services and another who offers tween and teen services. Ginger has determined that a "sense of community is a priority." While the programs are open to anyone in town, South Brookline is a "very residential community." As the only library in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood, Putterham also serves local residents of Boston and Newton.

The branch opened at its current location in the early 1960s. Ginger has found that "we have seniors who have been coming here since high school." It is recognized as "a 3rd space," a place for people to congregate outside of home, school or work. Patrons may benefit from "free access to information, entertainment, any (book) title you would want," use of computers and wi-fi, a location that welcomes pets, and air conditioning in the summer. The staff also provides a range of free experiences from crafts, exercise and performances to educational discussions and refreshments. Registration is not required to attend in-person events. Ginger recommends arriving on time to ensure entry as space may be limited.

Recurring programs for adults include:

Gentle Chair Yoga with Keith Beasley, **held weekly on Fridays from 10:30 - 11:30 am**. People can attend these sessions in person or sign up on the website (see below) to join online.

The long-standing hybrid **Council on Aging Book Group** - where participants "can read things we wouldn't usually read," from graphic novels to photography - meets from **2:00 - 3:00 pm on the third or fourth Monday of the month**. The library has copies of the book available for loan. People can view meeting dates and sign up for the Zoom link at the library website below.

Ginger recently introduced a monthly **Wisdom Café at 12 noon on the first or second Fridays of the month**. The programs consist of "special guests sharing their wisdom on a variety of topics... in a very laid-back casual setting" complete with free coffee and pastries from Cheryl Ann's Bakery. Upcoming topics include:

April 11 –The Brookline Pollinator Pathway

May 2 – Accessing Archives about Brookline History with reference librarian Samantha Valentine

June 13 – (Free) e-library resources (including ebooks, audio books, movies, and newspapers) **with Ginger O’Day**

In addition, the branch hosts a variety of special events, such as on **April 5 between 10:00 am and 11:00 am**, when members of the **Harvard Alpaca Ranch** will bring 2 alpacas to inform and delight attendees of all ages.

The library also offers storytimes for preschoolers, “read to a dog” sessions for children in grades K - 4 seeking to practice literacy skills, and a weekly “crafternoon” for tweens and teens. Monthly **intergenerational Origami lessons** with Jingting are scheduled for **April 12, and May 3 from 2:00 to 3:00 pm**.

Ginger delights in her role engaging and connecting with local residents. She says “I’m really lucky to be here.”

The Putterham Library is located at 959 West Roxbury Parkway in Chestnut Hill. It is typically open Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 9 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 am to 6 pm, Fridays and Saturdays 9:30 am to 5 pm. Event information is available at <https://www.brooklinelibrary.org/> People with programming ideas or suggestions are welcome to contact Ginger at goday@minlib.net