

# *Celebrating*

42 YEARS




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AN APPRECIATION CELEBRATION

A Brookline Senior Center Foundation Event

April 27, 2025  
4:00–6:00 pm



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a patient –  
you're family.

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# A Note From the President

**Dear Brookline Senior Center Foundation Supporters and Ruthann Dobek Fans,**

Thank you! Your past, present, and future support enables us to have a vibrant Brookline Senior Center for older adults to participate in hundreds of programs, make new friends, volunteer, and access vital services. Because of you, many older adults maintain their independence and continue to be active members of our Town.

Our Town's municipal budget covers staff, building maintenance, and utilities – less than 70% of our total annual expenses. The Brookline Senior Center Foundation is responsible for raising the portion that the Town does not cover.

**What isn't covered by the Town?** Our many life-enhancing programs; transportation services including the van, van driver, maintenance and gas; an emergency fund for vulnerable elders with urgent needs; fitness program and scholarships; coffee and snack services, special meals, and more. All of these depend on grants, foundations, generous businesses, and compassionate donors like you.

Ruthann Dobek has tenaciously promoted the Brookline Senior Center Foundation. Ruthann's dedication was instrumental in getting our building established 25 years ago. Throughout the years, Ruthann recognized critical community needs and managed to find solutions and resources to address them. It is Ruthann's leadership that sets the tone of a welcoming, compassionate, uplifting culture within our walls. The Brookline Senior Center's reputation for being an inspiring place to work, volunteer, and participate is in large part due to Ruthann.

Like the Director of a theatrical production, Ruthann knows each staff person, volunteer, and participant's strengths and creates the scene so that each person thrives and contributes to the production. Life, like theater, offers an array of plot twists, and Ruthann has respectfully guided the Brookline Senior Center community forward.

Today we applaud – a standing ovation – the love that Ruthann shares with the Brookline Senior Center. Ruthann leaves her position and her mark. I wish my dear friend health, happiness, and the joy that Ruthann brings to all.

**Thank you, Ruthann!**

***Betsy Pollock*, MSW**

President, Brookline Senior Center Foundation



To contribute to the Brookline Senior Center Foundation go to: <https://brooklineseniorcenter.charityproud.org/Donate>

# Thank You to Our Sponsors!

## **Cheering from the Rooftops for Ruthann!**

Bay State Federal Charitable Foundation

Frank G. Caro Trust

Suburban Home Health Care

The Hamilton Company

Charitable Foundation

## **Blown Away by Ruthann!**

Brookline Rotary

## **Thunderous Applause for Ruthann!**

Brookline Bank

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## **Appreciation Dancing for Ruthann!**

Atkin Associates, LLC

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## **Singing Praises for Ruthann!**

Ruth Nemzoff Berman

Brookline Municipal Credit Union

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Rotary**



**A special thank you to Roche Bros. West Roxbury and Whole Foods Market Brighton**





# **An Appreciation Celebration!**

**April 27, 2025**  
**4:00 pm - 6:00 pm**

## **Registration & Reception**

Music by the Bo and Bill Winiker Band  
&  
Catered by Baker's Best

## **Welcome & Remarks**

Betsy Pollock  
Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board  
President

## **Brookline Rotary Award Presentation**

Ken Goldstein  
Partner of Goldstein and Herndon, LLP  
President of the Brookline Rotary  
&  
Candace Cramer  
President and CEO of Goddard House  
Incoming Rotary President

## **In Her Words**

Ruthann Dobek  
Former Director, Brookline Senior Center, Honoree

## **Closing Remarks**

Betsy Pollock

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# Public Service Award

**Brookline  
Rotary**



**Awarded  
Since 1941**

This prestigious award has been a cornerstone of the Brookline Rotary tradition since 1941 and is the longest continuously presented honor of its kind in Rotary District 7910, which encompasses 44 clubs across Massachusetts. Previous honorees include **Sandra Bakalar, Governor Michael Dukakis, Arthur Fiedler, Chobee Hoy, Dr. Thomas Grayboys**, and more than 75 other distinguished citizens who exemplify our motto.

**Rotary motto: Service Above Self.**

*"Ruthann Dobek embodies the very essence of public service. Her leadership, compassion, and unwavering commitment to the well-being of Brookline's older adults have left an indelible mark on our community. It is an honor to recognize her with this award."*

**Ken Goldstein, President of the  
Brookline Rotary Club**



## **Ruthann Dobek**

**2025 Award Recipient**

**Congratulations for your 42 years of  
dedication to the Brookline Community**



## In 42 Years...

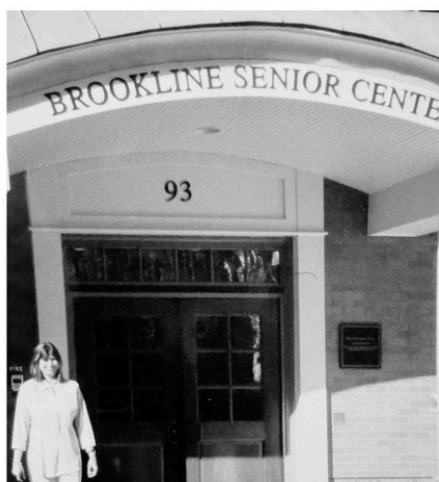
After a 42-year career at Brookline Council on Aging/Brookline Senior Center, 23 served as the Center's Director, Ruthann Dobek announced her retirement in 2024.

### **During her tenure, Ruthann:**

- Raised \$4,380,000, through a capital campaign, to design, build, and furnish the Senior Center
- Secured grants for programs and services
- Worked with the Senior Center Foundation to establish the Foundation's endowment
- Started the first BSC Craft Fair in 1984
- Designed the Home and Escort Linkage Program (HELP)
- Created employment opportunity programs for older adults
- Implemented new transportation programs and established Transportation, Resources, Information, Planning & Partnership for Seniors (TRIPPS)
- Created the Volunteer Program, including the intergenerational SHOP program
- Produced informational and educational publications for the community (Brookline Beacon, Elder Resource Guide, Ask a Geriatrician, etc.)
- Fostered and maintained partnerships with town agencies and other social service agencies in the larger community
- Mentored and supervised student interns, high school through graduate school, in the field of aging
- Increased BSC capacity around diversity
- Served as Co-chair of Age Friendly Cities Committee, resulting in Brookline being named the first Age Friendly community in New England (under World Health Organization standards)
- Co-founded Brookline Community Aging Network (BrooklineCAN) with renowned gerontologist Frank Caro

### **Ruthann was the Recipient of:**

- Boston University School of Social Work Alumni Association award in recognition of Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Social Work - 2001
- Massachusetts National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Social Worker of the Year Award - 2008
- Massachusetts Councils on Aging (MCOA) Innovator of the Year Award - 2015
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Distinguished Employer Award - 2018



## How Tenacity, Perseverance, and a Determined Trio

### Helped to Build the Brookline Senior Center

By Leanne Cordischi

In the 1980s many communities were creating senior centers and resource hubs for their seniors. Ruthann Dobek, as a recent social work grad, recognized that Brookline needed a senior center.

Dobek's social work colleagues Sue Welpton and Helen Sampson also saw the value that a center would bring the Brookline community. The optimistic trio approached their boss, Arlene Stern, numerous times about building a Senior Center for Brookline. The young women received several rounds of NOs. Ms. Stern was concerned that it would require too much work, money and aggravation. However, determined and armed with a frosted cake and some solid reasons why the community needed a senior center, Ruthann and her colleagues sat down one afternoon with their boss to discuss, over bites of cake, why the center would be such an asset in Brookline. Finally, Stern relented and agreed to move forward.

After the successful meeting, the team approached the Town of Brookline. Although Brookline recognized the need, the officials told Ruthann and her team "if you want it, you're going to have to show community support and come up with the money." The response made the team recognize the need to create a coalition, and they decided a press conference was needed

to begin to build a base of supporters. The team reached out to Senator Ted Kennedy's office and his son Ted Kennedy Jr. accepted an invitation to attend the press conference on behalf of his father.

The team continued to think of ways to pick up the pace and generate additional awareness and the much-needed funds. At an out of the box brainstorming meeting, Helen, one of the team members, volunteered that over her summer vacations she had worked at a Wisconsin music venue and had met Graham Nash, from Crosby, Stills & Nash. She suggested reaching out to him to see if he would be willing to participate in a fundraising concert on one of his future trips to Boston. Graham said that since the project was still in its "idea" stage, he was apprehensive about giving a concert for the project, but alternately agreed to attend the upcoming press conference to lend his support.

During the 1988 press conference, Nash told the crowd "don't let anyone tell you it can't be done. We should honor our mothers and fathers and our grandmothers and grandfathers...but we need not just good wishes but action." Ted Kennedy Jr. also spoke to the crowd of over 100 and urged the Town to move

forward to create a senior center for its residents. "We believe in maximizing the quality of life," Kennedy told the crowd. With both Ted Kennedy Jr.'s and Graham Nash's attendance at the Beacon Street Holiday Inn press conference and a passionate team, the event fueled the effort, and led to the growth of an enthusiastic base of supporters. Ultimately the plan outlined in the press conference also caught the interest and attention of Baystate Federal Bank Charitable Foundation, "*the fairy godfathers of the Senior Center.*" The Foundation graciously donated a half million dollars, kickstarting an unstoppable fundraising momentum.

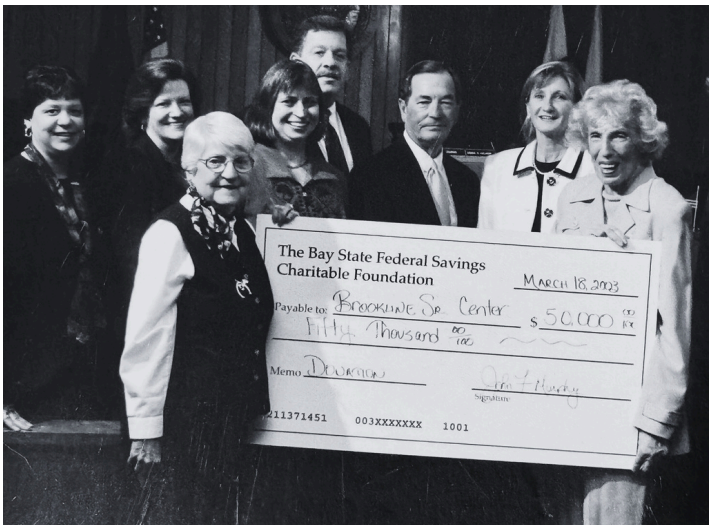
After several years of a "*foot on the gas*" effort, the team of a few became a committee and 4 and half million dollars was raised. With the funds in hand, Ruthann and the Project Committee set out to find a location to build the Senior Center and found an ideal parking lot site off of Beacon Street; which now houses the Courtyard Marriott. They envisioned a building where the Senior Center would occupy the first couple of floors, and the next floors would be rented out as medical offices, to serve as a consistent source of income for the center. Excited and energized, the team attended a town meeting ready to close the deal on the site. However, Town officials put up a major road block. In order for the team to purchase and build the Senior Center on the lot, the Town mandated that the team must commit to an additional 4 million dollars to build under-ground parking for the site, to replace the parking the town would lose by surrendering the space. Deflated but not defeated, the team left the meeting to look at alternatives.

Gordon Hurwitz, the team's architect, decided to approach his colleague Roger Stern, who owned a lot at 93 Winchester Street. He discussed with Stern the plan, the brutal town meeting and the need

for the Senior Center, convincing Stern to donate the property to the Town of Brookline. Stern made the donation with the provision that the only thing the Town could do with the land was to build a Senior Center.

So, with a confirmed site, finances and the supportive community, Ruthann began to plan the programming and needs of the building. Many meetings and architectural alterations later, the Brookline Senior Center opened its doors February of 2001.

Ruthann and the committee's foresight, tenacity, and ability to pivot when necessary, helped to build a valuable hub and resource for the Brookline community. Its thriving existence continues **25 years later** honoring a great idea, an excellent plan and a very determined woman, who will be remembered for helping to change a community!







# Congratulations

**Ruthann Dobek**

Celebrating over 40 years at the  
Brookline Senior Center  
leading a strong and  
inviting community.



39 Brighton Avenue  
Allston, MA 02134



MERRILL &  
MCGEARY  

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

*Thank you Ruthannn  
for your energetic and dedicated  
work on behalf  
of the seniors of Brookline  
over many years.  
We appreciate your good work.*

**Michael W. Merrill  
Cameron S. Merrill**  
Attorneys at Law



CELEBRATING  
RUTHANN DOBEK  
AND HER **DEDICATION**  
**TO BROOKLINE**  
**SENIORS.**

**BrooklineBank**



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Congratulations To **RUTHANN!**  
You Are a ROCK STAR!

Your Fan,  
*Barrie Atkin*

President, Atkin Associates LLC

<https://barrieatkin.com>

Thank you

**Ruthann Dobek**

for 42 years of unwavering service to Brookline seniors

---

**Rep. Kevin Honan**

**Rep. Bill MacGregor**

**Rep. Greg Schwartz**

**Rep. Tommy Vitolo**





A heartfelt  
thank you  
to Ruthann,  
local hero.

♥

Celebrating  
42 year of  
dedication.

 **LIZ LINDER**



*Thank you Ruthann for your  
40+ years of visionary leader-  
ship and dedication to the  
Brookline Senior Center.*

**Jennifer Read, CFP®, ChFC**  
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Brookline, MA 02446  
Tel (617) 485-4370  
[Jennifer@coolidgewm.com](mailto:Jennifer@coolidgewm.com)

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Thank you Ruthann Dobek  
for your steadfast partnership  
and tireless advocacy  
for Brookline's older adults.



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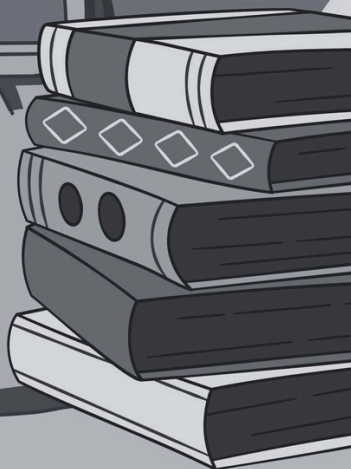
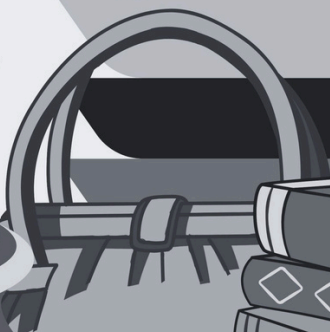
1426 Beacon Street Brookline 617 879 9980 [oliveconnection.com](http://oliveconnection.com)

All proceeds will benefit the  
Brookline Senior Center

Wednesday,  
**June 25**

**10:00am - 2:00pm**  
Brookline Senior  
Center  
93 Winchester St.  
Brookline

# Yard Sale



**Deals on  
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**If you have items to donate,  
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bins outside the Social  
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floor.**

**No clothes, furniture or items with plugs accepted**

# Notes of Thanks

On behalf of the entire School Committee, I would like to thank Ruthann Dobek for her incredible 42 years of work on behalf of seniors in the Town of Brookline! It has been a pleasure working with her. We wish her well in the next chapter of her life.

With Gratitude,

Helen Charlupski  
and  
the Brookline School Committee

Thank you, Ruthann!  
Thank you for your vision, your steady hand, your sense of humor, and your partnership. Thank you for creating this vibrant community enjoyed by so many! You will be missed!

Betsy Pollock

Ruthann showed the way -- and led --  
for Brookline to become a recognized  
leader in embracing older adults with  
attention, compassion and care. Little  
did I know, when I joined the Council on  
Aging as the Select Board liaison, that I  
would have a front row seat to watch a  
HERO in action! Thank you!

John VanScoyoc

Ruthann,

Thank you for your leadership  
and dedication to the  
Brookline Senior Center  
for over 40 years.

Richard and Winnie Rubino

To Ruthann Dobek,  
I am privileged to offer my thoughts for the "celebration  
of achievement" recognition booklet. I am one of  
hundreds and hundreds of individuals over your many  
years of service whose life has been truly enriched  
because of your commitment to Brookline residents  
and the larger community. Through your vision, the  
senior community has a second place to call home  
and thrive through the incredible wealth of ongoing  
programs of all kinds and countless special events.  
May you enjoy many blessings and a long retirement of  
joy. As one of many grateful recipients of your service  
and dedication. Thank you!

Elaine Kwiecien

Ruthann,  
with gratitude and admiration, we celebrate your incredible  
leadership and dedication to Brookline's older adults. Your  
vision, compassion, and unwavering advocacy have  
transformed lives and strengthened our community. Thank  
you for your years of service and inspiration—your impact will  
be felt for generations.

Your Friends at Goddard House

Thank you, Ruthann for all you have done for the seniors of Brookline. We are grateful beyond words for your steadfast commitment, always with grace and humour, and wish you the very best as you embark on a new phase of life.

*Toby and Larry*

We are all so grateful, Ruthann, for your 42 years of dedicated service to our community. We celebrate you and wish you all the best in the years to come.

*Michael Rubenstein*



Thanks, Ruthann, for your exemplary leadership over so many years. We have thoroughly enjoyed working with you during the decade in which we've been involved with the Brookline Community Aging Network (BrooklineCAN) and the Senior Center. You are simply amazing! We wish you the best in your well-deserved retirement.

David and Melissa Trevvett

Ruthann Dobek has contributed greatly, and in so many ways, to the well-being of Brookline's older adults. I particularly appreciate her role in the creation of BrooklineCAN--the Brookline Community Aging Network--and her work over the years in its ongoing successful programs and activities. I wish for her many well-deserved happy times ahead.

Ruth Seidman

Ruthann:

I am so proud of you and all that you have accomplished at the Brookline Senior Center. I am grateful and fortunate to have observed how skillfully you have utilized your talents, expertise, wisdom and wonderful nature to create an environment where all feel welcome and valued. You have been strong, brave and determined. Congratulations!

Love Mom  
(Patricia Dobek)

Dear Ruthann,  
You are one of a kind! Brookline is so lucky to have had you in its embrace for all these years. Wishing you only the best in this well-deserved next stage of your life!

Judy Meyers and Mark Pasternack

From all the residents and staff at Center Communities of Brookline, thank you for your collaboration and support of so many individuals in the community. We will miss you and wish you the best of luck in your next endeavor.

Ruthann,  
Thank you for all you have done for aging adults in Brookline! Thank you for your service and enjoy your next act!

With gratitude,  
Val Frias

We hope you have the healthy and relaxing retirement that you deserve.  
Thank you for the legacy you have created for the Town and its Senior Center.  
We will miss you.

Neil and Susan Wishinsky

Thank you Ruthann for getting the Senior Center built and giving so much to our seniors for many years!

Nancy Daly and Kevin Cavanaugh

Ruthann, you've created, cultivated, and inspired,  
making the Brookline Senior Center an innovative, welcoming  
place. Bittersweetly, we recognize you've retired.  
Deep gratitude for leading with dedication, love, and grace.

*Friends for Life,*

Brookline Senior Center Foundation

Nancy Daly

Co-Clerk, Director

Barr Jozwicki

Director

Kevin Lang

Vice President, Director

Debbie Good Miller

Administrator/Development Mgr.

Betsy Pollock

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Yolanda Rodriguez

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Kim Smith

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Director

Neil Wishinsky

Director

Sonia Wong

Director

Ruthann, Thank You for your vision,  
dedication, and grace!

*a Grateful Brookline Senior*

“

Levine Chapels is grateful to honor Ruthann  
for her dedication and service to the  
Brookline Senior Center and our community.

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## Ruthann Dobek

for her 42 years of dedication, including 23 years  
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Your unwavering commitment has enriched countless  
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**THANK YOU, Ruthann!**

We are thrilled to join everyone  
in celebrating Ruthann's legacy!

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i interviews, and inside information.

**The Brookline Beacon** is a monthly  
r publication highlighting all programs,  
services, and articles.

S You can access The Beacon, online,  
t anytime, at: [www.brooklineseniorcenter.org](http://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org).

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the Brookline Senior Center 617-730-2770

# Brookline Rotary



1941	Henry A. Varney Eugene Davis
1942	Judge Philip S. Parker Ernest B. Dane Erland F. Fish Edith E. Wright Gorham Dana
1943	Wilfred H. Ringer Orrin G. Wood
1944	William D. Paine William DeFord Beal
1945	Dr. Francis P. Denny
1946	Dr. Elliot Cutler Seldon R. Allen
1947	Rev. Ashley D. Leavitt Msgr. John T. Creagh Rabbi S. J. Abrams
1948	Dr. William P. Murphy Hon. Daniel A. Rollins
1949	Charles W. Taylor Charles F. Rowley
1950	Henry Renn Hon. Harold P. Williams
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1952	Dr. Charles C. Lund Albert P. Briggs
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1956	Mrs. Bertran K. Little Arthur Fiedler
1957	Milton Kahn Augustus W. Soule
1958	G. Peabody Gardner Robert B. Tyler
1959	Mrs. Viola Pinanski Hon. Philip G. Bowker

## Distinguished Public Service Award Recipients

The Distinguished Public Service Award is the Rotary Club of Brookline's highest service recognition. Since 1941, this annual award has been given to members of the community who have provided exemplary public service.

### Rotary Mission

We provide service to others,  
promote integrity, and  
advance world  
understanding, goodwill, and  
peace through our fellowship  
of business, professional, and  
community leaders.

*"We are people of Action. No  
challenge is too big for us. For  
more than a century Rotary has  
bridged cultures, connected  
continents, championed peace,  
fought illiteracy, poverty,  
unsanitary conditions and  
disease."*

1960	Edward R. Mitton Dr. Chester Scott Keefer
161	Arthur A. O'Shea Edward Dane
1962	Elmer O. Cappers Dr. John Franklin Enders
1963	Roland Hayes Arthur Shinnors
1964	Dr. George Packer Berry William T. Reid, Jr.
1965	Dr. Ernest Caverly James H. Henderson Dr. George C. Shattuck
1966	Boris Goldvosky Dr. William B. Castle
1967	Russell Hastings
1968	Thomas P. Kendrick, M.D. Alan R. Morse
1969	Francis W. Capper Benjamin A. Trustman
1970	Louise M. Castle Ben G. Shapiro
1971	Florence Peabody Dr.. Trygve Gundersen
1972	Kenneth B. Bond, Esq. Rev Edwin George Saphar
1973	Sylvia K. Burack Rev. George L. Blackman
1974	Theresa J. Morse
1975	Judge Reuben L. Lurie
1976	Arthur P MacKinnon
1977	Russell Phinney
1978	Ann E. MacDonald
1979	Dr. Alfred Frechette
1980	Robert I. Hunneman
1981	Msgr. Francis J. Sexton
1982	Justin L. Wyner

*"Rotary is a global network of more than 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves."*

## **To Learn More:**

### **Contact**

[brooklinerotary@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinerotary@gmail.com)  
617-963-0901

1983	Francis Caswell
1984	Marion Dubbs
1985	Evelyn Kirrane
1986	Richard T. Leary
1987	Rabbi Manuel Saltzman
1988	Bradford Wright
1989	Natalie G. Zuckerman
1990	Edward Schluntz
1991	Meyer Stern
1992	Richard P. Chapman, Jr.
1993	Sara Wallace
1994	Ruth D. Dorfman
1995	Henry T. Wiggin
1996	Robert W. Stern
1997	Stephen B. Goldenberg
1998	Harry Ellis Dickson
1999	Robert I. Sperber
2000	Sandra Bakalar
2001	James F. Walsh
2002	John J. Connors
2003	Michael S. Dukakis
2004	Agnes Rogers
2005	Thomas B. Graboys
2006	Chobee Hoy
2007	Judge Thomas J. May
2008	Margot Stern Strom
2009	Dr. Michael Shannon
	Rev. Jack Ahern
2010	Richard Kelliher
2011	Allen MacPherson
2012	Jim Margolis
2013	Marcia Zierk
2014	Paul Epstein
	Murray Liverman
2015	Robert "Bo" Winiker
	Betsy DeWitt
2016	Casey Hatchett

2017	Bobbie Knable
2018	Alan Balsam
2019	Frank Smizik
2023	Mel Kleckner
	Kim Kushner

Brookline Rotary  
Proudly Honors  
Our 2025  
Distinguished Public  
Service Recipient

**Ruthann Dobek**



*42 Years*  
OF SERVICE



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**To learn more about the ELF program and how it  
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<https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/services/medical-equipment/>



# BrooklineCAN!

Help your neighbors. Help yourself. Help your town.

In 2010, the Brookline Community Aging network (**BrooklineCAN**) was launched with the support and guidance of Ruthann Dobek. We are thankful for her commitment to advocate for a Brookline where older adults can continue to live and thrive.



**BrooklineCAN** is an all-volunteer organization. We work to keep older residents informed and engaged in our community. We advocate for older residents with all Town departments. Our goal is to make Brookline a better place for everyone.

Please join us at  
[www.brooklinecan.org](http://www.brooklinecan.org)



# Thank You!

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**Brookline Senior Center**  
**93 Winchester Street, Brookline, MA 02446**

Learn more about BSC at  
[Brooklineseniorcenter.org](http://Brooklineseniorcenter.org)