



## ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR & RUMMAGE SALE

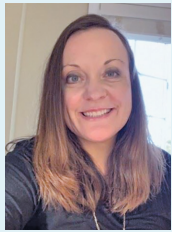
Fri., Nov. 14, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and  
Sat., Nov. 15, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Proceeds will benefit the programs and  
services of the Brookline Senior Center.

**April 30th Celebration  
Plans for 2026**

*Stay Tuned*

## Welcome Emily Williams!



Emily Williams, the new Brookline Senior Center Director, brings a robust background in gerontology and management, as well as enthusiasm

that's contagious. She has hit the ground running, listening and learning about the Brookline Senior Center and the community at large. Emily would like to hear your suggestions and concerns: [ejwilliams@brooklinema.gov](mailto:ejwilliams@brooklinema.gov)

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# Center Connections

ADDING LIFE TO THE YEARS

Brookline Senior Center

Summer 2025

**Appreciation and kudos** to all who joined us on April 27th or donated to celebrate Ruthann Dobek's phenomenal career and secure the future! Guests enjoyed the popular Bo and Bill Winiker Band, a delicious reception, inspiring remarks, and best of all, fantastic company. Special gratitude to our generous sponsors and other donors who made it possible for us to reach our goal of \$100,000. Proceeds will support transportation, food security, counseling, and a variety of programs to promote socialization and fend off isolation.

## APPRECIATION

# Celebration

Celebration Photo Credit: Liz Linder Photography



Representatives Greg Schwartz and Tommy Vitolo with Ruthann Dobek and Glenn Boghosian



Ruthann Dobek and Brookline Rotary Guests (left to right): Bill Winiker, Richard Segan, Bo Winiker, Ken Goldstein, Ruthann Dobek, Glenn Boghosian, Candace Cramer, Elias Audy, Joyce Graff, Bernard Greene, and Carol Pineiro



Nancy Daly (center) responds to Betsy Pollock's question, "Whose Day was Improved by Ruthann Dobek?"



Ruthann Dobek and Betsy Pollock



Emily Williams and Carol Caro

Ruthann was presented with the Brookline Rotary's 2025 Distinguished Public Service Award, and a "Talking Resolution" from State Rep. Greg Schwartz and State Rep. Tommy Vitolo. She also received accolades from Candace Cramer, President and CEO of Goddard House and President of Brookline Rotary; Ken Goldstein, Goldstein and Herndon, Immediate Past Brookline Rotary President; and Betsy Pollock, Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board President.



Soo Moy, Sherry Lee, and Jamie Jensen, Program Manager, Brookline Senior Center



John VanScoyoc, Town Select Board Member and Select Board Liaison to the Council on Aging Board and Emily Williams, Director, Brookline Senior Center



Jean Stringham and Julie Washburn, Supervisor of Services and Operations

**"To have my career at the Brookline Senior Center acknowledged and celebrated was truly an honor and greatly appreciated."** Ruthann Dobek



## Message from Emily Williams, Brookline Senior Center Director

Dear Neighbors and Community Partners,

I've thoroughly enjoyed meeting many of you! And, I look forward to connecting with more!

This year the Senior Center will welcome the UMASS School of Gerontology to perform a **Needs Assessment**. We'll have an opportunity to hear from a variety of stakeholders. Their input will enable us to serve our older adults in the most productive ways.

The Senior Center is a lively place! On any given day you can see a chorus singing Broadway musical hits or rock tunes, seamstresses sewing, painters painting, dancers dancing, movie goers watching a film, and music lovers listening to live music. **We're in full-swing!** There are countless ways to stay physically fit, learn a new hobby, or socialize with a new or longtime friend. **Come join us!**

Emily Williams  
Director

## Message from Debbie Good Miller, Administrator/ Development Manager



Though I've lived in Brookline my entire adult life, I was not aware of the depth and breadth of the Brookline Senior Center until working there this year. Staff, board, volunteers, and participants maintain a culture of inclusion and warmth.

The compassionate people and unusual variety of resources cannot be overstated. The Center is a place where older neighbors thrive. Heartfelt appreciation to all of our donors who make this possible!

## Senior Office Assistant Hired for the Brookline Senior Center Foundation



Anja Kuhlman is the Brookline Senior Center Foundation's new Senior Office Assistant! Anja is a Brookline resident and a Florida Ruffin Ridley School parent. We're delighted to have Anja on our team!

## NEW: The Ruthann Dobek Fund!

Thanks to the generosity of Doris Toby Axelrod and Larry Marks, a Ruthann Dobek Fund has been created.

"In setting up this fund, we were inspired by Ruthann's leadership, creativity, caring, and commitment of the staff. We are delighted to support the Senior Center in her honor."  
- Toby Axelrod

**These funds will be utilized to support:**

### Client Emergency Fund

Examples include grocery store gift cards when there is no other funding available, a new mattress for a low-income senior experiencing joint and back pain, or new furniture and kitchenware for a formerly unhoused client.

### Brookline Council on Aging Social Work Intern Stipend Program

These stipends support hands-on training opportunities for students in aging-related fields, helping to expand the pipeline of professionals in geriatric care. By supporting more interns, the program strengthens the Brookline Senior Center Social Work Department and contributes to the broader goal of developing the aging services workforce.

Would you like to honor Ruthann? Donations can be made here:  
[brooklineseniorcenter.charityproud.org/Donate](https://brooklineseniorcenter.charityproud.org/Donate)  
Or scan here:



Lawrence Marks and Doris Toby Axelrod  
with Ruthann Dobek

Photo Credit: Liz Linder Photography

## Thank You, Sonia Wong!

We are extremely grateful for Sonia Wong's dedication, knowledge, and countless kindnesses throughout her time as the former Brookline Senior Center Office Assistant. After recently retiring, with over a decade of service to the Brookline Senior Center, Sonia has joined the Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board as our Assistant Treasurer.



Left to right: Martin Anderson,  
Sonia Wong, and Tobey Taylor

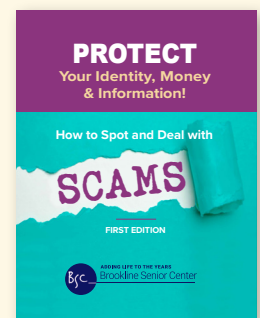
Photo Credit: Liz Linder Photography

## New Free Senior Center Publication Empowers People to Avoid and Respond to Scams

According to the US Federal Trade Commission, consumers lost over \$23.7 billion through scams and fraud in 2023 alone; at least \$7.1 billion was stolen from people over age 60.

**Protect Your Identity, Money & Information! How to Spot and Deal with Scams** is a free publication, edited by Miriam Rosalyn Diamond, Communication Specialist at the COA. "This booklet empowers readers to learn steps they can take to decrease the likelihood of getting conned or having their identity stolen. It also provides direction for individuals who suspect that they may have been misled or swindled, an increasingly common experience these days," states Ruthann Dobek, Retired Director of the Brookline Council on Aging/ Senior Center.

The booklet is available at the Brookline Senior Center. An electronic copy may be accessed at: [www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/2025/01/important-information-how-to-spot-and-deal-with-scams/](https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/2025/01/important-information-how-to-spot-and-deal-with-scams/)



## Combating THE HIGH COST OF INCONTINENCE

Incontinence can be costly. According to GoodRX, an adult can spend anywhere between \$50 - \$200 a month on incontinence supplies.

Unfortunately, most of these supplies are not covered by insurance. When insurance does cover the cost, the supplies are often a brand or style that is not preferred by the consumer. As a result, most people who experience incontinence issues end up covering the cost of supplies out of pocket. With many on a fixed income, supplies can come at the cost of other important items such as food, medication, and transportation. People who experience issues with incontinence often rely on supplies to feel comfortable engaging in their community, which is critical for physical, mental, and emotional health.

The Brookline Senior Center's Equipment Loan Fund (E.L.F.) accepts and redistributes donations such as incontinence supplies (Chux, Depends, and booster pads) as well as gently used pieces of durable medical equipment, such as canes, walkers, shower chairs/benches, commodes, and bed rails.

**In FY25, E.L.F. rehomed over 600 pieces of equipment, as well as hundreds of packages of incontinence supplies.**

If you are in need of incontinence or other supplies, or interested in donating, please contact the **E.L.F. Program directly at 617-730-2752** or visit our Wish List at [tinyurl.com/2s4kbffr](https://tinyurl.com/2s4kbffr). Thank you to Katie McClean, HELP Program Coordinator/Social Worker, and Anne Essaran, HELP Counselor/Social Worker for their exceptional work and this important information.

## Volunteers are Valued!

We are truly thankful for the countless hours and talents that our volunteers generously share with us every day. Their dedication and generosity never cease to impress us. Their contributions make the Brookline Senior Center a very special place, and we value each of our volunteers, past and present.

### 2025 Volunteer of the Year Nominations:

**Sara Lee Bloom (Winner of Volunteer of the Year Award)**

**Clara Chin  
Annahita Forghan  
Marsha Goldstein  
Joyce Graff  
Hermia Hall  
Ann Harshman  
Pam Hitchmoth  
Sherry Lee  
Betty Lew  
Fran Perler  
Kelley Pope  
Kalpana Row  
Sandy Silbert  
Allen Waxman**



Some of our Volunteer of the Year nominees! From left to right: Clara Chin, Joyce Graff, Hermia Hall, Fran Perler, Betty Lew, Sandy Silbert, Sherry Lee

### Applauding our 315 Volunteers!

Check out our Valued Volunteer Booklet at: [bit.ly/3UT0ycS](https://bit.ly/3UT0ycS) Learn and be inspired.



**PLEASE  
SAVE  
THE DATE**

**Spring Celebration,  
Tastes, Toasts  
and Tunes!**



## Going the Extra 26.2 MILES

Thank you, Divya Rajaraman and Thomas Smythe! Your incredible generosity in running the Boston Marathon to support the Brookline Senior Center is greatly appreciated! Thanks to your efforts and the support of many others, including a generous benefactor, \$10,000 was raised to support Brookline Senior Center programs and services.



**Divya Rajaraman and Thomas Smythe,  
Brookline Senior Center Boston Marathon Runners.**

*Thank You!* **Rock Voices** hosted a concert and contributed all of their raffle proceeds to the Brookline Senior Center Foundation!



## Message from Betsy Pollock, Foundation Board President

It has been my pleasure to collaborate with my dear friend Ruthann Dobek throughout the past thirty plus years. Celebrating Ruthann's extraordinary legacy at our April Appreciation Celebration was bittersweet. Fortunately, Ruthann has agreed to remain with the Senior Center Foundation as an Honorary Advisor.

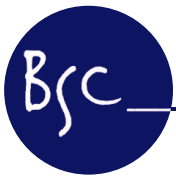
The Foundation Board is delighted to welcome Emily Williams as our new Director! The Brookline Senior Center will thrive in Emily's excellent hands. I know that Emily will harness her abundant energy to bring the Brookline Senior Center to the next level.

**We're here to help!**

**Betsy Pollock  
President**

**What's Happening?** You can find the Center's monthly **Senior News & Events** on our home page at [brooklineseniorcenter.org](https://brooklineseniorcenter.org)



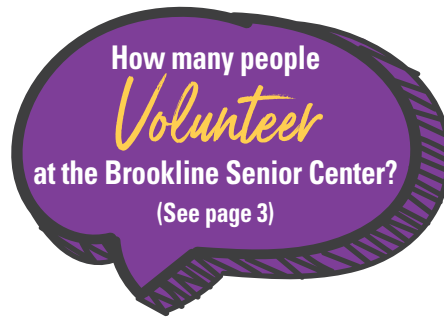


ADDING LIFE TO THE YEARS

Brookline Senior Center

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## Center Connections

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR OUR SPECIAL SUPPORTERS

### Brookline Booksmith! Recipient of the 2025 Brookline Senior Center Community Partner Award!\*

In February 2025, the Booksmith selected the Senior Center to be a recipient of their community fundraising initiative, and 276 customers made donations at their cash registers over a long weekend.

*Donations funded a Zumba class, art classes, sessions of bereavement support, a classical music concert, and a lecture on historical Brookline.*

**Thank You Brookline Booksmith! Thank You to All Who Participated!**

*\*Presented at our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on April 9th.*



Valerie Graf,  
Volunteer  
Coordinator, and  
Alex Schaffner,  
Community  
Engagement  
Coordinator,  
Brookline  
Booksmith

### Visiting Volunteers Create Win-Win

The Brookline Senior Center's newly launched "Visiting Volunteers" program connects older adults with volunteers for weekly social visits. After completing training with social worker Sharon Sandalow, the first group of five volunteers began visiting their assigned older adults this past fall and the second group of seven volunteers began this past spring. Each month, they reconvene at the Senior Center to share experiences, discuss articles on aging, and learn from one another. Thoughtfully guided by Sharon, they have not only built meaningful connections with their seniors but also have formed bonds within the group.

If you have a skill to share and would like to be one of our valued volunteers, please reach out to **Valerie Graf, Volunteer Coordinator 617-730-2743**  
[vgraf@brooklinema.gov](mailto:vgraf@brooklinema.gov)

*Thank you!* to the Town of Brookline for awarding two Team Brookline 2026 Boston Marathon bibs to the Brookline Senior Center Foundation! **More information to follow.**

**Support Brookline's Older Adults.**

**DONATE HERE:** [brooklineseniorcenter.charityproud.org/Donate](http://brooklineseniorcenter.charityproud.org/Donate)

**OR SCAN THE QR CODE:**

