

## VALUED VOLUNTEER



### Fran Perler's

path to Brookline began in Brooklyn, NY, where she was born and raised. After earning her PhD in genetics in North Carolina, she moved to Boston in 1978 for a postdoctoral position. Four years later, Fran settled in Brookline and worked in biotech for more than three decades, conducting research in both basic and applied biology. After retiring in 2015, Fran began coming to the Brookline Senior Center to stay active; playing ping pong and using the Fitness Center. Soon, the once busy researcher found countless ways to contribute to the Senior Center and the Town of Brookline.

In 2017, Fran began volunteering at the Senior Center's weekly food distribution program. Earning her nickname, "the vegetable lady," she set up systems to make sure that every visitor, no matter when they arrived, had equal access to fresh produce. She also helped raise funds for a new refrigerator for the food distribution program's perishable items.

Fran then joined the Council on Aging Board in 2018, and remains an active member to this day. She served as co-chair of the COA's Recreation Committee, and organized a bird photography class. Fran currently leads the Senior Center's Investors Group, chairs our Parking Working Group, and enjoys participating in our Karate class and the Current Events group.

When the Senior Center was shut down during COVID, Fran started a jigsaw puzzle and social group outside on her porch to keep people connected during that time. She also began hosting regular ping pong games at her home, which have continued through today.

Fran's impact stretches beyond the Senior Center. In 2024, she became a Brookline Town Meeting member and has since co-sponsored warrant articles on tree protection and rodent mitigation. She also serves on the Town's Advisory Committee and was active in ROAR (Recruiting Older Adult Residents), an informal group working to increase seniors' representation on town boards and committees.

Nature lovers may also recognize Fran from Halls Pond Sanctuary, where she volunteers serving on the Friends of Halls Pond board and maintenance crew; planting, maintaining trails, and clearing invasive species.

No doubt Fran has energy and drive, both here at the Senior Center and in the greater Brookline community. "I hate being bored. Science teaches you how to multitask and problem solve. What can we do to make things better? I set my sights on a goal, often accomplishing it through grassroots efforts, being persistent and patient." Fran's dedication has made a real difference in our community, and we are so thankful for the time and generosity she shares with all of us.

*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 at 617-730-2743 or [vgraf@brooklinema.gov](mailto:vgraf@brooklinema.gov) and learn about volunteer opportunities at the Brookline Senior Center.*