

Built to Last 25 Years on Winchester Street



Julie Washburn, Brookline Senior Center Supervisor of Services and Operations and Yolanda Rodriguez, Chair of the Brookline Council on Aging and Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board Member.



Betsy Pollock, Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board President and a Brookline Senior Center Founder.



Inna Vagodny, RN, Suburban Home Health Care, Ting Wu, RN, Suburban Home Health Care, Michael Roper, President and CEO of Suburban Home Health Care and Brookline Senior Center Foundation Treasurer, Marisa Serrano, Development Director, Brookline Teen Center, Kasey Boston, Director, Brookline Teen Center.



Martin Kalikow, Denise Renaghan, Director of the Bay State Federal Charitable Foundation, a Founder of the Brookline Senior Center, Kenneth Jaffe, a Founder of the Brookline Senior Center, Donna Kalikow, a Founder of the Brookline Senior Center.



Taberna de Haro Paella Arrives!

*“Celebrating the Past,
Present, and Future”*



Emily Williams, Brookline Senior Center Director, Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board Member and Julie Washburn, Brookline Senior Center Supervisor of Services and Operations.

2026 marks an important milestone for the Brookline Senior Center. For 25 years, we have offered opportunities for older adults to participate in a variety of activities, make new friends, volunteer, and access life sustaining services. To mark this special occasion, we hosted “Built to Last – 25 Years on Winchester Street!”

The celebration honoring our founders was held on Thursday, April 30th at the Brookline Senior Center. Thanks to generous sponsors, guests, community contributors, and volunteers, our Celebration put the “fun” in fundraising. Music was provided by the Winiker Band, and featured food included dishes from Mei Mei, Mamaleh’s, Taberna de Haro, Rifrullo, and Wegmans.

Thank you to all who honored our past and launched us into the future!

A Place to Belong

Ever since I was in middle school, I have loved baseball and Fenway Park. Whenever I drive past it, I think about the extraordinary community that has been built there as a place that brings people together across generations and interests. On one day, people across the lifespan of Red Sox fans cheer together; on another, children play sports, Scouts gather, military groups hold events, or thousands come together for a packed concert. Different people, different generations, but a shared place and a sense of belonging. I often think about the Brookline Senior Center in much the same way. Through our recent Community Needs Assessment, more than 2,200 older adults shared their experiences, concerns and ideas about what it means to live in Brookline. Their voices are helping us reframe what our community needs to prioritize next.



Affordability matters because remaining in Brookline should not become impossible as people age.

Transportation matters because being able to get to a doctor, grocery store, program, library or friend's house is fundamental to independence. And social wellness and inclusion matter because health isn't only about medical care. It is also about having people to talk to, places to go, meaningful activities and the feeling that you are part of your community. Help us make sure every older adult in Brookline knows there is a place for them here, and as we look into future expansion.

When we celebrated our 25th anniversary, Built to Last, I was reminded that this building was created as a third place where older adults can remain active, independent and connected. We may not have the seventh-inning stretch or 37,000 seats, but we do have something just as important: a place to come together and belong.

If you believe every older adult in Brookline deserves that place, please consider making a gift to the Foundation, donating items for resale at our gift cart, or volunteering your time. Your support helps provide programs, transportation, meals and essential services ready to serve Brookline for the next 25 years.

Emily Williams
Director, Brookline Council on Aging & Senior Center

Support the Ruthann Dobek Fund

Your gift provides emergency assistance, funds social work internships, and ensures no older adult in Brookline faces a crisis alone. **Every dollar makes a difference.**

\$50 covers a week of emergency groceries

\$150 funds one month of transportation

\$500 supports a social work intern for a semester



Scan to donate or visit:
<https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/your-donation/>

Volunteer Appreciation Lunch 2026



Hermia Hall (above) was awarded the 2026 John & Molly Dolan Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of her 15 years of dedicated service to the Brookline Senior Center.

We celebrated ALL of our wonderful volunteers at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Lunch on April 15th. We simply could not provide the services that we do without our phenomenal volunteers.

Volunteers who received special recognition this year:

Yolanda Rodriguez – Advocate of the Year Award for her tireless advocacy on behalf of the Brookline Council on Aging and Senior Center.

Nominees for the Volunteer of the Year Award: **Jill Black, Eric Bloom, Mark Chadbourne, Clara Chin, Nancy Collins, Marcia Goldstein, Tara Greaney, Hermia Hall, Ann Harshman, Pam Hitchmoth, Kathryn Kilpatrick, Soo Moy, Fran Perler, Sandy Silbert, Zipora Vainstein, Allen Waxman, and the entire Newsletter Mailing Group.**

Brookline Library Putterham Branch – 2026 Community Service Award, in recognition of their shared commitment to serving older adults. Ginger O'Day, the Putterham Branch Library Manager, accepted the award.

Volunteer Coordinator Valerie Graf shared that a plaque will be displayed on the first floor in memory of Vivian Freeman, Brookline Senior Center's first Volunteer Coordinator.

Former Select Board representative to the Council on Aging John VanScoyoc offered words of appreciation. All volunteers were given plants, and some lucky winners received raffle prizes.



2026 Team Brookline runners

TEAM BROOKLINE
— ONE TOWN. ONE TEAM. —



Crossing the Finish Line for Others

We are grateful to have been included for the first time on Team Brookline in 2026, joining other local non-profit organizations including: The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health, Brookline Education Foundation, Brookline Library Foundation, Brookline Symphony Orchestra, Brookline Teen Center, and the Brookline Food Pantry.

Thank you to our 2026 runners, Charlie and Angie – and all who contributed!

\$19,401

raised by BSCF runners,
Angie Fang and Charlie Eagle

Brookline Senior Center: Brookline Non-Profit of the Year

The Charles River Regional Chamber honored Brookline businesses on June 24th, at the Hilton Garden Inn, and the Brookline Senior Center was awarded "Nonprofit of the Year."

This award belongs to ALL of the dedicated founders, dynamic leaders past and present, inspirational staff, invaluable volunteers, essential supporters, and beloved participants! We also share this award with each and every local nonprofit Brookline organization. Together, we work diligently to make Brookline a compassionate, innovative, vibrant community.

Throughout 2026 we are celebrating the Brookline Senior Center's 25th Anniversary. This honor, at this time, is especially appreciated.



Emily J. Williams, Director, Brookline Senior Center, Senator Cynthia Creem, MA State Senator, Betsy Pollock, Brookline Senior Center Foundation Board President, Deborah Good Miller, Brookline Senior Center Foundation Development Director, Chris Mutty, Former Brookline Chamber of Commerce Executive Director. Photo credit: Lucas Ziskin



Greg Reibman, President and CEO, Charles River Regional Chamber, Chuck Silverston, Owner, Bar Lunette, Nick Mallia, Operating Partner, Bar Lunette, Paul Epstein, BHS Social Worker and Brookline Teen Center Co-Founder, LeRoy Watkins III, CEO and Co-Owner, Viking Sports, David Leschinsky, Owner, Eureka! Puzzles & Games, Betsy Pollock, Board President, Brookline Senior Center Foundation, Emily J. Williams, Director, Brookline Senior Center. Photo credit: Lucas Ziskin.

Congratulations to our fellow Brookline Night Honorees:

The Chobey Hoy Award

Paul Epstein

Community Choice Award

Viking Sports

Retailer of the Year

Eureka! Puzzles & Games

Restaurant or Bar of the Year

Bar Lunette

We share the Brookline "Nonprofit of the Year" award with our extraordinary "sibling" nonprofits! We work together to make Brookline better.

Welcome to Our New Staff

Marty Cloherty is our new Van Driver. Our transportation program is an essential service that helps older adults stay connected to programs and the community, and we are happy to have Marty on board. He has many years of experience as a driver working for a COA and he truly enjoys getting seniors to where they want to go.

Zachary Costello is our new Medical Transportation Assistant. Zach was born in Boston, but raised in North Carolina. He moved back to the Boston area 2 months ago, and he is currently pursuing a career in Public Health, with an interest in providing support to under-represented communities. He lives with his partner and their 7-year-old beagle who they like to take on walks in parks around Brookline and Boston.

Jess Diulio is our new Clinical Social Worker. She is a former attorney who moved from CA to MA to be close to her mom. As she settled in, she began volunteering at local nonprofit organizations, including the Senior Center. Jess was initially a volunteer at our Information & Referral Desk and she subsequently accepted a position as the Senior Center's first Medical Transportation Assistant. Her time at the Center inspired her to apply to Boston College School of Social Work from which she recently graduated.

Krista Jarner, Editor of the Brookline Beacon, comes to us with a background in communications and creative writing. Krista enjoys sharing stories and information about all the wonderful program and services that the Brookline Senior Center has to offer.

Conor McDermott Welch was promoted to Clinical Supervisor for the social work staff this past year. Conor is certainly not new to the Senior Center though! He began his career here as a social work intern in 2019 and returned subsequently as a clinical social worker.

Lauren Walsh is our new Fitness Center Coordinator. Lauren brings many years of experience working with adults to improve their physical and mental well-being through fitness, wellness, and healthy aging programs. Her knowledge, enthusiasm, and commitment to helping seniors achieve their health goals will be a tremendous asset to our growing Fitness Center and the participants we serve.

Sebastian Ware, our Transportation Program Coordinator, grew up in Massachusetts and graduated from Boston College. He has experience working at an economic development nonprofit that specialized in programs for small business owners.

Brookline Study on Older Residents: Quick Facts (cont. p. 9)

24% of Brookline residents will be 60+ by 2040



Since Senior Center opened in 2001,
+48%
growth in Brookline's 60+ population

Fond Farewells

As we celebrate the Senior Center and look toward the future, we also pause to recognize the dedicated, recently retired staff members whose contributions have helped shape who we are today.

Maureen Deery, our longtime Brookline Beacon Editor, brought the Senior Center's stories, programs, people, and accomplishments to life for more than a decade, connecting our community through the written word. Maureen started with us as a volunteer and then briefly became our Volunteer Coordinator under the tutelage of our beloved Vivian Freeman. Maureen's "skill with the quill" made her transition to Newsletter Editor an easy one, and her love of photography allowed us to capture many happy moments at the Senior Center!

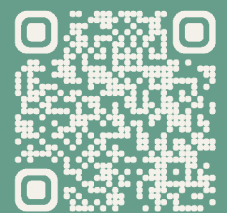
Olga Sliwa, LICSW, provided compassionate support to Brookline older adults and their families for over 20 years, helping countless people navigate life's challenges with dignity. Olga was always willing to lend an ear or a hand and she was an invaluable mentor for other Council on Aging staff members. She also helped shape the education of many of our social worker interns through her supervision over the years.

Sonia Wong, Administrative Assistant, was the quiet heartbeat of the entire department. She never sought the spotlight, but she touched every single project and process with unmatched skill and care. Her selfless dedication kept the day to day running smoothly, and her gentle, kind spirit made her a joy to be around. Sonia had a way of making the complex appear effortless; her contributions to the Council on Aging and Senior Center will carry long into the future!

We want to wish Maureen, Olga, and Sonia much happiness in their well-deserved retirements. Thank you for all that you have done for the Brookline community. You will all be missed!

UMass Boston, BSC, and COA Launch Joint Study

This year, Brookline launched a comprehensive needs assessment for its growing older adult population, which now exceeds 13,000 residents aged 60 and older. The project was made possible through a state earmark secured by Senator Cynthia Creem. In partnership with UMass Boston, the Brookline Council on Aging and Senior Center gathered information about the needs, priorities, and preferences of older adults through Town leadership interviews, focus groups, and a town wide survey. More than 2,000 older adults shared their voices through the survey, making it one of the largest community engagement efforts focused on aging in Brookline's history. The findings will be shared with the public and will help guide future planning, programs, services, and advocacy to ensure Brookline remains an age-friendly community for years to come.



Scan or visit:
<https://www.brookline.seniorcenter.org/>



Gallery 93

Gallery 93 at the Brookline Senior Center features rotating exhibits by local older adult artists. Every show is an invitation for people of all ages to experience beautiful pieces created with a variety of techniques and mediums. The gallery is open Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5 pm.



“Balloon by Midnight,” a digital print, framed by The Beacon Studio for the Gallery 93 exhibition, was created by Nyna Polumbaum in the 1990s. Photo courtesy of Judy Polumbaum

Brookline COA Awarded BCF Grant

The Brookline Council on Aging is grateful for a grant from the Brookline Community Foundation that was designed to help low-income and socially isolated older adults regain stability, connection, and independence via medical transportation support, personalized tech training, social service assistance, and engaging programming.



Terry Kwan, School Administrator from 1973–1982 and elected member of the Brookline School Committee from 1985–2003, at her 2025 Craft Fair table.



Treasures Galore! 2025 Craft Fair & Rummage Sale

Thank you to all of the crafters, volunteers, donors, and customers who made our annual Craft Fair & Rummage Sale a success!

2025 Craft Fair & Rummage Sale Total Raised:

\$8,055.75



Save the Date

Annual Craft Fair & Rummage Sale
November 13–14, 2026, 10 am–4 pm
Brookline Senior Center, 93 Winchester Street



Senior Center Hosts Oktoberfest Sing-along Fundraiser



On Thursday, October 1st, the Senior Center hosted Mel Stiller of Jacob Wirth fame for a sing-along in celebration of Oktoberfest. The event was accompanied by a delicious array of Bavarian pretzels, bratwurst, ice cream and new found friends! Thank you to those who participated in the fun and sponsored the event!

Thank you to our event sponsors!

Sue Reamer	Brookline Rotary	Chestnut Hill Realty	Wegmans
Tracy Clark	J.P. Licks	The Publick House	Halliday Construction
Coolidge Corner Community Chorus	Dream Spa Medical	Goddard House	The Newbury

From the BSC Foundation President



Betsy Pollock, MSW
Brookline Senior
Center Foundation
President

I thank each person, each business, each charitable group, each volunteer – everyone who made it possible for us to celebrate our Senior Center.

We celebrate life sustaining services, which include essential social services to help navigate loss or life changes, medical transportation, and emergency funding for food or fuel, just to name a few.

We celebrate stimulating activities, such as lectures, performances, singing, dancing, art appreciation and participation, inter-generational programs, games, and physical fitness.

With your ongoing support of this community treasure, we will ensure that the Brookline Senior Center thrives, evolves, and improves!

Creative Connections: Multigenerational Arts with BHS

Thanks to the vision of Emily Williams, Brookline Senior Center Director, and the leadership of Representative Tommy Vitolo, funding was secured to launch Creative Connections. Managed by Geri Barrison, Creative Connections was a six-week intergenerational arts program that brought teens and older adults together through creativity, storytelling, and shared experiences.

Participants explored photography, storytelling, fiber arts, music, and other creative activities while building meaningful connections across generations. Through collaborative workshops and conversations, the program fostered creativity, empathy, and community, culminating in a public Art Show and StorySlam celebrating the stories and artwork created throughout the summer.



11 
teen-senior pairs
in
Creative Connections

Serving Brookline: A Community Cookbook

By visualizing a community table where all are welcome, and foods from different cultures are enjoyed, we hope to share the joy and comfort that permeates the Brookline Senior Center.

“Serving Brookline” cookbooks were introduced at the “Built to Last, 25 Years on Winchester Street” 25th Anniversary Celebration on Thursday, April 30th, at the Brookline Senior Center.

Brookline residents and staff were asked to submit their favorite recipes, especially those from older family members and friends. Respondents’ recipes and memories of gatherings are included in the cookbook.



Buy your copy at the Brookline Senior Center or at the Brookline Booksmith!
For more information, check out the back page!

Thank You, Brookline Booksmith: The Community Cookbook



Brookline Booksmith has partnered with us to sell our "Serving Brookline" Community Cookbook — a collection of recipes from participants, staff, and neighbors. All proceeds benefit our programs and services, and the book is available for purchase at the Booksmith and the Brookline Senior Center.

**brookline
booksmith**

Support Brookline's Older Adults

Your tax-deductible gift to the Brookline Senior Center Foundation provides emergency assistance, social work support, and vital programs for older adults in our community.

**Give today and
make a lasting difference.**

Donate online:

[https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/
your-donation/](https://www.brooklineseniorcenter.org/your-donation/)

By mail:

93 Winchester St,
Brookline, MA 02446

Make checks payable to

Brookline Senior Center Foundation



Scan to donate

Donor Impact: Fitness Center Upgrade



Thanks to generous donors, we were able to purchase new cardio equipment and accessible weight machines for the Fitness Center. This equipment supports both individual exercise sessions and one-on-one training with our Fitness Coordinator.

900

minutes per week of 1 on 1
training in the Fitness
Center

Have you supported us? Look inside for your name on the list of Distinguished Supporters.

Brookline Senior Center
93 Winchester Street
Brookline, MA 02446

Mailing Address Area