

NOTES for BROOKLINE SENIOR CENTER VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT

APRIL 13, 2022 – 12:30 PM

via Zoom and in-person at Senior Center Room 304

ENTERTAINMENT: Beginning at 12:30 PM, Wendee Glick (vocals) and Bill Duffy (piano) provided lively entertainment performing songs from The Great American Songbook.

PRESENT were members of the Council on Aging, volunteers, Council on Aging staff, and members of the public.

WELCOME: At 1:15 PM, COA Chair Yolanda Rodriguez welcomed everyone to the 2022 Volunteer Appreciation Event and extended gratitude on behalf of the Brookline Council on Aging / Senior Center for all the volunteers' contributions over the past two years.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Senior Center Director Ruthann Dobek led the room in a moment of silence for those dedicated and caring volunteers who are no longer with us, and for the lives lost throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

REMARKS FROM VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: Ruthann introduced new Senior Center Volunteer Coordinator Valerie Graf, who proceeded to welcome all to the event, and made a brief personal introduction. Valerie expressed an eagerness to work with and recruit volunteers at the Senior Center, and welcomed those interested in volunteering or expanding their volunteer hours to contact her at ygraf@brooklinema.gov or 617-730-2743.

RECOGNITION OF NOMINEES FOR THE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS:

Ruthann recognized the efforts of staff and volunteers that allowed the Senior Center to continue to provide essential services to the community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Ruthann announced the following nominees for the Volunteer of the Year Awards:

- **Marcia Goldstein**- “Marcia tirelessly came in throughout the pandemic [to work] the ‘Grab-and-Go’ lunch”
- **Michael Weston**- “Michael never missed a day providing ‘Grab-and-Go’ lunch and getting the newsletter out during the pandemic”
- **Mimi O’Connor**- “Mimi provided the Food Commodity Program throughout the pandemic”
- **John Seay**- “We were one of first Town buildings to offer hybrid and Zoom meetings thanks to donated equipment and John’s expertise in getting us set up.”

SPECIAL AWARDS: Ruthann announced and honored the recipients of two special awards:

- **STUDENT AWARD- Emily Rindermann** (Johnson & Wales doctoral capstone student intern)- “Emily chose the Brookline Council on Aging as her capstone project. She came in January 2022, and did everything from transportation to running a program, providing support for our Tech Buddies program, helping with income tax appointments and helping with lunch. There wasn’t one program this whole semester that she didn’t involve herself in and dedicate herself to.”
- **COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD- AARP Tax Program Volunteers** George Chin (Coordinator), Doug Behr, Jade Carrel, Chris Dippel, Carol Franklin, Tanya Gurian, Constantine Hanzis, Kathy Harris, Rose Mandelbaum, Hernan Mosquera, Ed Palo, Edye Rulin, Monica Wheeler

JOHN & MOLLY DOLAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD- Ruthann announced the recipient of the John & Molly Dolan Volunteer of the Year Award: George Chin (AARP Tax Program Coordinator) Ruthann noted,

“The first program in 2020 that the Senior Center brought back besides the Grab-and-Go lunch during the pandemic was the AARP Income Tax program... We had to do special contactless appointments that year (2020), and George and his team prevailed. Year two (2021) was also contactless, making it safe for the volunteers and everyone coming into the building- over 200 appointments completed with COVID protocol that year. [There were] over 200 appointments this year with 12 volunteers.”

REMARKS ON BEHALF OF SELECT BOARD: Select Board representative to the Council on Aging John VanScoyoc welcomed all to the event and provided a brief personal introduction. John gave accolades to COA Chair Yolanda Rodriguez and COA/ Senior Center Director Ruthann Dobek. He expressed pride and congratulations on behalf of the Select Board, recognizing the COA’s early pivot to remote and later, hybrid, meetings, programs, and events during the pandemic. John praised volunteers, Council on Aging members, and patrons of the Senior Center for their service, commitment, and vivacity.

REMARKS FROM THE DIRECTOR: Ruthann thanked John for his remarks, dedication to older adults, and for acting as Council on Aging liaison to the Select Board. Ruthann also thanked Julie Washburn, Jamie Jensen, and Jessica Milley-Gee for helping to plan and facilitate hybrid meetings at the Center.

Ruthann urged all to be active participants in the upcoming Town election on May 3, and to seek information on candidates and their positions on issues relevant to older adults. Yolanda encouraged older adults to be “ambassadors to the Senior Center,” by bringing awareness to the older adult constituency and relevant issues.

QUILT RAFFLE: Yolanda drew a winner for the Quilt Raffle (Betsy Pollock), and thanked the Brookline Bees, whose beautiful quilt hung over the Senior Center lobby and was donated to raise money via raffle for the Center. The raffle brought in over \$1000 toward funding Center programs and entertainment.

Participants were offered grab-and-go cookies and fruit cups, as well as an array of other goodies (t-shirts, plants, buttons) as they event came to a close.