

What's News?



BCOA

Brockton Council On Aging
At the heart of active living.

JANUARY 2026 | MONDAY - FRIDAY 9AM - 4PM

DIRECTOR:
Janice B. Fitzgerald

Murder at the BCOA!

THE FRIENDS OF THE
BROCKTON COUNCIL ON
AGING PRESENTS:

A MURDER MYSTERY

WHO KILLED

A L S P U M O N I ?



THURSDAY, JANUARY 22ND AT 1:30 PM

\$10

Join the
Friends of
the BCOA
for a **killer**
good time!

The Friends of the
Brockton Council on Aging
will be hosting a Murder
Mystery Fundraiser filled
with twists, clues, and
plenty of laughs.

Tickets are \$10 per person, payable at the front
desk. When signing up, let us know if you'd like to
be a participant in the mystery or sit back as an
observer to watch it all unfold!

L I G H T R E F R E S H E M E N T S
P R O V I D E D

BCOA Health Clinics

All clinics take place at the COA.
Call 508-580-7811 for more information.
Payment is required to secure your appointment.
Brockton Seniors are given first priority.



Mobile
Medical
Foot Care

Mobile Medical Foot Care

Nurse Practitioner and Certified Foot Care
Specialist Donna Golden, will assess your
feet and lower extremities for circulation,
skin condition, and overall lower extremity health.

Services Include:

- Lower Leg & Foot General Assessment and Cleansing
- Edema/Excess Fluid Assessment
- Foot Measuring and Shoe Assessment
- Routine Foot & Nail Care
- Cutting Toenails
- Reduction of Thickened Hard Nails
- Reduction of Corns & Calluses
- Foot Care Education/Materials
- Physician/ Provider Referrals As Needed (PCP, Podiatry, Wound Center)

Appointments are 30-minutes long and begin on the *first Wednesday of every month.* **Cost is \$40.00 per person.**

Upcoming Appointments: January 7th



Professional Manicures with Joddie

*Treat yourself to a relaxing and refreshing
30-minute manicure, right here at the COA*

Services include:

- Removal of Old Polish
- Nail Clipping & Shaping
- Cuticle Care
- Soothing Hand Massage
- Fresh Polish

Cost is \$18 for service (cash or check).

Upcoming Appointments:

January 12th, February 9th, March 9th



Visiting Dental Hygiene

Services Include: Teeth cleanings, oral health
Education, and tips for maintaining a healthy
smile. **The cost is \$35 or free with MassHealth.**

Upcoming Appointments: February 5th

Walk-in Blood Pressure & Glucose Clinic

Thursday, January 29th at 10:00 - 11:00 AM - **Free**
By Brockton Board of Health



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Aging & Independence



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508-580-7811



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2

January 2026

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Sign up for programs by calling 508-580-7811 . For any program with a limited number of participants, Brockton Seniors are given first priority . We accept sign-ups for all programs and activities on or after the 1st of the month. <u>Please note: All payments are cash, check, or money order only.</u>				
9:00 Activities Committee Meeting 10:00 Board of Directors Meeting (Friends Meeting following) 10:00 Silver Boot Camp 11:00 Chess Club 1:00 Whist 1:00 Tonin' & Stretchin'	9:15 Line Dancing 12:00 Knitting & Crochet 12:00 Community Dining <i>Jerk Chicken</i> 12:30 Hand & Foot 2:00 Salsa & Merengue *NEW*	9:00 Tai Chi 10:00 Cribbage Lessons 11:00 Movin' and Groovin' 12:15 Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Meditation 2:00 Mah Jongg Lessons <i>*by appointment only*</i> No Zumba Gold	9:00 Art From Heart 10:00 Cribbage 12:00 Community Dining: <i>Egg Salad on Lettuce</i> 12:30 Tutoring with Greg 1:00 Movie: Eleanor the Great	2 9:00 Shoe City Walkers at Westgate Mall 10:00 Posture & Balance 11:00 Eldys' Yoga 12:00 Mah Jongg 12:15 Strong & Stable 1:30 Stress Relief for Parkinson's
12 10:00 Silver Boot Camp 11:00 Chess Club 1:00 COA Book Club 1:00 Whist 1:00 Tonin' & Stretchin' 2:00 Meet and Greet w/ BCOA Outreach Coordinator Rick Alvarnaz!	13 9:15 Line Dancing 11:00 "Ask a Funeral Director!" with Waitt Funeral Home 12:00 Knitting & Crochet 12:00 Community Dining <i>Sloppy Joe</i> 12:30 Hand & Foot 2:00 Salsa & Merengue *NEW*	14 9:00 Tai Chi 10:00 Cribbage Lessons 11:00 Movin' and Groovin' 12:15 Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Meditation 1:00 Mystery Book Club 1:30 Expressive Healing Workshop w/ Phil Hasouris No Zumba Gold	15 9:00 Art From Heart 10:00 Cribbage 12:00 Community Dining: <i>Beef Stroganoff Casserole</i> 12:30 Tutoring with Greg 2:00 Yoga & Wellness Workshop w/ Judy and Susan	16 9:00 Shoe City Walkers at Westgate Mall 10:00 Cell Phone Workshop with OCES 10:00 Posture & Balance 11:00 Eldys' Yoga 12:00 Mah Jongg 12:15 Strong & Stable 1:00 Parkinson's Support Group
Martin Luther King Jr. Day COA CLOSED 	20 9:15 Line Dancing 12:00 Knitting & Crochet 12:00 Community Dining <i>Pasta w. Meat Sauce</i> 12:30 Hand & Foot 2:00 Salsa & Merengue *NEW*	21 9:00 Tai Chi 10:00 Cribbage Lessons 10:00 Valentines Button Craft w/ West Acres 11:00 Movin' and Groovin' 12:15 Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Meditation 2:00 Zumba Gold 2:00 Mah Jongg Lessons <i>*by appointment only*</i>	22 9:00 Art From Heart 10:00 Cribbage 12:00 Community Dining: <i>Chicken Salad on Lettuce</i> 12:30 Tutoring with Greg 1:30 "Who Killed Al Spumoni?" Murder Mystery	23 9:00 Shoe City Walkers at Westgate Mall 9:30 Pet Pantry 10:00 Posture & Balance 11:00 Eldys' Yoga 12:00 Mah Jongg 12:15 Strong & Stable 2:00 Paint Craft w/ Auggie & Macey
26 10:00 Silver Boot Camp 10:00 Legal Consultations 11:00 Chess Club 1:00 Tonin' & Stretchin' 1:00 Whist 2:15 Women's Circle	27 9:15 Line Dancing 12:00 Knitting & Crochet 12:00 Community Dining <i>Chicken Marsala</i> 12:30 Hand & Foot 1:00 Musical Bingo w/ Brockton VNA 2:00 Salsa & Merengue *NEW*	28 9:00 Tai Chi 10:00 Cribbage Lessons 10:00 Brockton Fire Presents: Stop, Drop, & Roll With It 11:00 Movin' and Groovin' 12:15 Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Meditation 2:00 Zumba Gold	29 9:00 Art From Heart 10:00 Cribbage 10:00 BP & Glucose w/ Brockton BOH 12:00 January Special Community Dining: <i>Chicken Cordon Bleu & dessert from West Acres!</i> 12:30 Tutoring with Greg 1:00 Movie: Wicked: For Good	30 9:00 Shoe City Walkers at Westgate Mall 9:30 Office Hours Rep. Michelle Dubois 10:00 Posture & Balance 11:00 Eldys' Yoga 12:00 Mah Jongg 12:15 Strong & Stable 2:00 Scams & ID Theft w/ the Office of the Atty General



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AARP Tax-Aide Program for 2025 Income Tax Prep Assistance

The AARP Tax-Aide Foundation will again be providing volunteers certified by the IRS to help those who meet AARP guidelines in filing their federal and state income tax returns. The AARP Foundation offers free, personalized tax preparation and assistance to low and moderate income taxpayers. You do not need to be a member of AARP, a senior citizen, or a resident of Brockton to take advantage of this service.

Appointments may be made by calling 508-580-7811 beginning January 2nd for Brockton Seniors Only.

Appointments for preparing tax returns are available on Wednesdays at the Brockton COA, beginning February 4th through April 15th, starting at 9:00 AM each day.

To make your tax visit as efficient as possible, we ask that you complete our intake questionnaires before arriving for your appointment. You may pick up these questionnaires at the COA after you have scheduled your appointment. Please bring your spouse to your appointment if you are filing jointly.

Documents that you will need to bring:

- Your completed intake questionnaires
 - Your Social Security Card(s) and photo ID(s), and for your spouse if applicable
 - Social Security cards for all dependents you are claiming
 - All W2's, 1099s, and other tax-related documents for 2025
 - Mortgage Interest Statements for 2025, if any
 - Medical Expenses if they exceed 7.5% of your income (Please total expenses by category before your appointment)
 - Massachusetts Form 1099-HC for anyone who does not have health insurance from Medicare or Mass Health
 - Form 1095-A if you purchased health insurance through the Massachusetts Health Connector
 - Charitable contributions for which you have a receipt or written record
 - If claiming the Senior Circuit Breaker credit, bring your property tax (or rent costs) and water & sewer bills **paid** in calendar year 2025 (normally bills marked as "final" for fiscal year 2025 and "preliminary" for fiscal year 2026). Go to the Assessor's Office at City Hall to get a print out of your calendar year 2025 payments if you do not have the receipts.
 - A voided check if requesting direct deposit of any refunds
 - A copy of your 2024 federal & state income tax returns
- Our guidelines state that we may not prepare tax returns involving:
- Rental Income FOR MORE THAN 15 DAYS
 - Any virtual currency transactions or investments
 - Complicated Schedule K-1
 - Alternative Minimum Tax, Additional Medicare Tax, or Net Investment Income Tax.
 - Any sort of depreciation
 - Self-employment with expenses exceeding \$35,000, losses, employees, inventory, business use of home, or other complicating factors
 - Moving expenses
 - Returns for ministers, military or those that have farm income
 - Some investment income or itemized deductions that are not included in our training



Mayor's Message

As you are aware, our monthly newsletter must be sent to print 3–4 weeks prior to publication. Given that the new Mayor will be inaugurated in January, we will not have a Mayor's message to include this month.

STAY TUNED FOR FEBRUARY'S EDITION!!

To fill this space, we are highlighting some of our amazing volunteers! Interested in joining our volunteer team in the new year? Call Augusta at 508-580-7811.



From the Director's Desk

As we welcome the start of a new year, the Council on Aging extends warm wishes to each of you for a healthy, joyful, and fulfilling 2026. The beginning of January always brings with it a sense of renewal—a chance to set fresh goals, reconnect with one another, and embrace the opportunities ahead. We are deeply grateful for all who contributed to such a wonderful 2025. Your participation, volunteerism, and spirit are what make this center truly special.

With a new year comes a new season of programs, classes, and events. January's calendar is filled with many programs and activities, and we encourage everyone to **sign up early** to secure a place in the activities you're most excited about. Whether you're joining us for exercise classes, educational workshops, creative gatherings, or social events, we want to make sure you don't miss out. Early registration helps us plan more effectively and ensures we can accommodate as many people as possible.

This month also invites us to pause and reflect on the life and legacy of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, whose message of equality, service, and hope continues to guide communities across the nation. Dr. King's vision reminds us of the importance of treating one another with dignity, extending compassion to those in need, and working together toward a more inclusive and caring society. As we honor MLK Day, we encourage everyone to find small ways—through volunteerism, kindness, or connection—to embody the spirit of service he championed.

Please note that the Council on Aging will be **closed on New Year's Day (January 1)** as we ring in a fresh year, as well as on **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January 19)** in observance of the holiday.

Thank you once again for an incredible 2025 filled with friendship, learning, resilience, and a sense of family. We are excited for all that 2026 will bring and look forward to sharing another year of growth, support, and togetherness with each of you.

Happy New Year!

Janice



STARTING THIS MONTH



American Heart Association.

The Brockton Council on Aging, in partnership with the American Heart Association, will be offering free blood pressure monitoring as part of our Health & Wellness programs. Patrons can use a self-service station in the Health Room to check their blood pressure when the room is not in use. This initiative provides a convenient way for residents to check their heart health, get information, and find referral resources for follow-up care.



SPECIAL EVENTS



5



Gracious & Dignified Since 1928

"Ask a Funeral Director!" **Presented by** **Waitt Funeral Home**

Tuesday, January 13th at 11:00 AM

Waitt Funeral Home invites you to *Ask a Funeral Director*, a helpful conversation about end-of-life planning and the challenges that can occur when plans are unclear or incomplete. Following a short presentation, the funeral director will answer all your questions and provide down-to-earth advice.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up.



Meet & Greet with BCOA Outreach **Coordinator, Rick Alvarnaz!**

Monday, January 12th at 2:00 PM

Meet Rick Alvarnaz, Outreach Coordinator at the Brockton Council on Aging! Rick will share an overview of his role, explain what an Outreach Coordinator does, and discuss the many ways he can support older adults in our community. This is a great opportunity to learn about available resources, ask questions, and get to know the newest member of our team.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up today!



Essential Smartphone Skills for Seniors: **Empowering You to Stay** **Connected & Safe**

Friday, January 16th at 10:00 AM

Join us for a hands-on, supportive workshop designed specifically for older adults who want to build confidence and independence with their smartphones! Whether you're using an iPhone, Android or a Samsung Galaxy, this workshop will help you master everyday functions like making calls, sending texts, taking photos,

using apps, and setting up emergency features to stay safe.

In just one 60-90 minutes session, you'll:

- Learn the basics of your smartphone, including key parts and essential settings.
 - Discover how to stay connected with family and friends through calls, texts, and even voice typing.
 - Get creative with smartphone photography and explore fun editing tools.
 - Set up important safety features like emergency contacts, medical info, and location sharing.
- This workshop is perfect for beginners, with step-by-step guidance and plenty of opportunities for hands-on practice. With small group sizes and a relaxed, easy-to-follow pace, you'll leave with the skills and confidence to use your phone for communication, safety, and fun.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up! Spaces are limited!



EXPRESSIVE HEALING **WITH PHILIP HASOURIS**

Wednesday, January 14th at 1:30 PM

Join poet and facilitator Philip Hasouris for Expressive Healing – a creative, heart-centered workshop where art, poetry, music, and conversation become tools for emotional release and self-discovery. Whether you're navigating something difficult or simply seeking connection, this is a space to slow down, express freely, and rediscover your inner creativity. No experience necessary – just bring yourself.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

Brockton Fire Department **Office of Public Education**



Stop, Drop, Roll with it



First Aid & Burn Prevention

Wednesday
January 28, 2025
10:00am

Mary Cruise Kennedy Center
10 Father Kenney Way



Join Us

- ☑ Burn Prevention/Treatment
- ☑ Wound Care
- ☑ Choking Relief
- ☑ Burnt treatment



Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!
More info: preardon@cobma.us



Scams and Identity Theft **w/ The Office of the** **Attorney General**



Friday, January 30th at 2:00 PM

Michelle Pais, Community Engagement Coordinator from the Office of the Attorney General, will be joining us via Zoom for an in-depth informational presentation on Scams & Identity Theft.

In this session, Michelle will provide valuable tips on how to recognize and avoid common scams, protect your personal information, and safeguard your identity. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and gain practical advice for staying safe in today's digital and financial landscape.

This is an essential program for anyone looking to stay informed and protect themselves from fraud.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

Tired of Healthcare Hassles?



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- Make appointments and arrange transportation
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**BCOA Exercise Offerings****Silver Boot Camp**

Mondays at 10:00 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Get fit and stay fit! This class offers a mix of cardio, strength, and conditioning, with varying levels of intensity.

Tonin' & Stretchin'

Mondays at 1:00 PM – \$3.00 suggested donation

A fun, low-impact class that will have you moving and dancing right in your seat!

Line Dancing

Tuesdays at 9:15 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Learn the basics of line dancing, including simple steps and routines.

Tai Chi

Wednesdays at 9:00 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Start your day with the calming meditation and fluid movement of Tai Chi. *First class free for new participants!*

Movin' & Groovin'

Wednesdays at 11:00 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Stay active and challenged in this cardio and strength class designed to keep you fit and moving.

Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Meditation

Wednesdays at 12:15 PM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Learn various techniques to relieve stress, enhance relaxation, and gain personal insight.

Zumba Gold

Wednesdays at 2:00 PM – \$3.00 suggested donation

A fun, low-impact dance class designed to boost balance and coordination with easy-to-follow moves and lively music.

Yoga & Wellness Workshop w/ Judy & Susan

3rd Thursdays at 2:00 PM - \$3.00 Suggested Donation

Explore something new each month —an ever-changing blend of gentle movement, relaxation, and self-care.

Shoe City Walkers

Fridays at 9:00 AM at Westgate Mall

Join us for a group walk and get moving with a supportive community.

Posture and Balance

Fridays at 10:00 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Improve your posture, balance, and coordination through targeted stretching exercises.

Eldys' Yoga

Fridays at 11:00 AM – \$3.00 suggested donation

A gentle introduction to yoga to improve mobility and flexibility. *First class free for new participants!*

Strong and Stable

Fridays at 12:00 PM - FREE

This class offers Parkinson's group training, available for Parkinson's participants and their caretakers.

Meditation and Stress Relief for Parkinson's

1st Fridays at 1:30 PM - FREE

Join us for a relaxation class designed specifically for individuals living with Parkinson's and their caregivers.



Our exercise programs are funded, in part, by a grant from Old Colony Planning Council.

NEW CLASS!

Tuesdays at 2:00 PM – \$3.00 suggested donation

Dance, smile, and get your body moving in this Salsa & Merengue class led by instructor Steve Cavanaugh. With clear instruction and vibrant music, you'll learn foundational steps, improve coordination, and enjoy a fun, social workout each session.



Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

This exercise workshop is funded, in part, by a grant from Old Colony Planning Council.

**Tax Announcements****2025 Tax Season Update**

For the 2025 tax season, an **executive order** phases out paper refund checks...your **federal** tax refund check must be deposited to an account at a bank or credit union or to a prepaid debit card with a routing number and account number.

You **MUST** bring a 9-digit routing number and your account number with you to your tax appointment.

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit for 2025 Tax Year

MA residents who are 65 or older by Dec. 31 of the 2025 tax year who meet income eligibility guidelines may be able to receive a maximum of \$2,820 through this state-level program. Both homeowners and renters who are MA residents may apply. Eligible applicants whose calculated CB Tax Credit exceeds the total tax payable for the year will receive a refund check.

Income eligibility guidelines for the 2025 tax year:

- \$75,000 for a single individual who is not the head of a household
- \$94,000 for a head of household
- \$112,000 for married couples filing a joint return

The filing deadline is April 15, 2026.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Thank You & Goodbye!

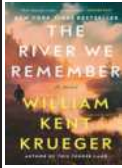
The Senior Learning Network officially concluded its operations in December. While we're sad to see this program go, we're excited about the future! We're actively working on developing new educational and engaging programming to bring the same sense of connection, learning, and enrichment to our community. Stay tuned for updates—there's more to come, and we can't wait to share what's next!

BOOK CLUBS

8

COA BOOK CLUB

**Monday, January 12th
At 1:00 PM**



The Coworker
by
Frieda McFadden

Coming up: 2/9/2026
Master Slave Husband Wife
by Ilyon Woo

MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

**Wednesday, January 14th
At 1:00 PM**



The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo
by
Stieg Larsson

Coming up: 2/11/2026
Sharp Objects
Gillian Flynn

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

MOVIES



Eleanor the Great (2025)

Runtime: 1 hour 38 minutes

Thursday, January 8th at 1:00 PM

After losing her lifelong friend Bessie, 94-year-old Eleanor uproots her life and moves to New York City. In her grief and isolation, she mistakenly joins a Holocaust-survivor support group and begins sharing Bessie's wartime memories as her own. That lie draws the interest of Nina, a young journalism student, and as their friendship grows, Eleanor's fabricated past spirals out of control. The film — a powerful meditation on grief, identity, and longing — marks Scarlett Johansson's directorial debut.



Wicked For Good (2025)

Runtime: 2 hour 18 minutes

Thursday, January 29th at 1:00 PM

Wicked: For Good plunges back into the magical land of Oz, concluding the saga of Glinda and Elphaba — once inseparable friends, now walking sharply different paths. As Elphaba hides from a world that fears her as the "Wicked Witch of the West," Glinda becomes a beloved public figure. When political unrest ignites and a furious mob rises against Elphaba, their friendship—and all of Oz—hang in the balance. Their final confrontation forces both women to confront painful truths, make heartbreaking choices, and decide whether they can change themselves and their world "for good."

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

OFFICE HOURS



**Office Hours w/
Rep. Michelle Dubois**
Friday, January 30th
at 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

ARTS & CRAFTS

Knitting & Crochet: every Tuesday at 12:00PM

Art From Heart: every Thursday at 9:00 AM



**Valentines Heart
Button Craft**
Wednesday, January 21st
at 10:00 AM

Join Katie and Amanda from Alliance Health at West Acres for another great craft! We'll be making Valentine's Day-inspired heart button art using canvases and assorted buttons to create a sweet holiday decoration.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

Limited Spots. *Brockton Seniors are given first priority*

Please note: If you sign up but can't make it, kindly let us know—otherwise, you may be prevented from signing up for future crafts.

A | Alliance
Health at West Acres



**Winter Night Painting
Craft**
w/ Auggie & Macey
Friday, January 23rd
at 2:00 PM

Join Auggie & Macey for another fun and creative craft session! In this workshop, they will guide participants step-by-step as we paint a beautiful winter night

scene using acrylic paints. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced painter, this is a relaxing and enjoyable way to explore your creativity and create a piece of art to take home. Bring your imagination and get ready for a fun, colorful, and inspiring afternoon!

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

Limited Spots. *Brockton Seniors are given first priority*

**HOW CAN WE HELP? Call 508-580-7811**

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach • Social Services • SHINE Program • Knox Box • Transportation • Fuel Assistance • Durable Medical Equipment • Senior Property Tax Work Off | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AARP Free Income Tax Assistance • Prescription Advantage Program • Safety Assurance • Support Groups • SNAP Benefits • Housing Applications |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



1-on-1 iPhone & Computer Tutoring with Greg
Thursdays 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM
 Call 508-580-7811 for an appointment



Surprenant, Beneski & Nunes
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Free Legal Consults w/ Surprenant, Beneski & Nunes, P.C.

Monday, January 26th at 10:00 am - 11:30 am

You can discuss the following topics:

- Foundational documents :
Health Care Proxy, HIPAA Release, Durable Power of Attorney, Advance Directive, Last Will & Testament
 - Trust Planning
 - Long-term Care Planning
 - Medicaid Planning / MassHealth for Nursing Home
- Call 508-580-7811 for an appointment.**



The next Pet Pantry is on:

Friday, January 23rd at 9:30-10:30 AM

Please note: The program is currently **full**, but we are accepting applications for the **wait list**. Please call **508-580-7811** for any questions.

**SHINE MESSAGE**

Happy New Year, everyone!

Now that Medicare Open Enrollment has ended, many people assume they're locked into their Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (Part D) or Medicare Advantage Plan until next year. The good news is that there are still certain situations where you may be able to make a change outside the Open Enrollment Period. This is called a Special Enrollment Period (SEP).

Open Enrollment to change Advantage Plan is January 1st - March 31st. You can also go back to regular Medicare as primary and supplement and Part D.

When you may qualify for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP)

- Moving out of your plan's service area
- Losing employer-sponsored health coverage
- Moving into or out of a long-term care facility
- In some cases, a government-declared disaster or emergency

When you make a change during an SEP, the new plan typically begins on the first day of the month after your request is received.

After the December 7 deadline, you're welcome to reach out to one of our SHINE Councilors with any questions. Turning 65 soon? Important note for MassHealth members

If you'll be turning 65 soon and you've been a MassHealth recipient, please keep an eye on your mail. You may receive a letter explaining that your MassHealth coverage could be ending or changing. At age 65, Medicare becomes your primary (first) payer, and eligibility rules for MassHealth can change.

You may be asked to:

- Provide updated proof of income and current assets, and
 - Submit a new MassHealth application going forward
- If this applies to you, please don't ignore those notices—opening and responding to them promptly can help prevent coverage gaps.

Please remember to check your Medicare statements for accuracy of your visits. We have encountered 2 fraud cases this past month.

Wishing you a healthy and supported start to the new year!

**OUTREACH MESSAGE**

I'm reaching out as your Outreach Coordinator to check in as the temperatures drop and the holiday season gets underway. This time of year can be especially challenging—between cold weather concerns, higher heating costs, and the emotional ups and downs many people experience during the holidays. Please know you are not alone, and the Council on Aging is here to help connect you with support.

Cold Weather Safety Reminders

As we head into colder days and nights, a few simple steps can make a big difference:

- Dress in layers and keep your home safely heated.
- Be cautious of icy sidewalks and steps—use handrails and take your time.
- If you use space heaters, keep them away from curtains, bedding, and anything flammable, and never leave them unattended.
- Keep emergency contacts and a flashlight handy in case of power outages.
- Be sure your Prescriptions are filled in case of a storm

Holiday Depression and Emotional Well-Being

The holidays can bring grief, loneliness, stress, or feelings of depression—even for people who usually feel okay. If you're feeling overwhelmed:

- Consider calling a friend, neighbor, or family member to talk.
- Try keeping a small routine (meals, sleep, a short walk if it's safe).
- Remember: asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

If you'd like someone to help connect you with local support services, we can help with that, too.

We're Here to Connect You to Resources

We have a Food pantry list available, and for Transportation, we can assist with Dial-A-Bat registration.

The Council on Aging can assist with information and referrals to local resources. If you or someone you know could use help this season, please get in touch with me at the Brockton Council on Aging. We would much rather you call early than struggle quietly.

With care and warm wishes,
Rick Alvarnaz

FUN & GAMES

Chess Club: Mondays at 11:00 AM

A weekly gathering of chess lovers of all levels.

Whist: Mondays at 1:00 PM

Join a welcoming group for this classic trick-taking card game.

Hand & Foot: Tuesdays at 12:30 PM

Try this fun, canasta-style card game that's simple to learn and always entertaining.

Cribbage Lessons: Wednesday by Appointment.

Call 508-580-7811 to schedule!

Mah Jongg Lessons: Wednesday, January 7th & 21st by appointment only.

Call 508-580-7811 to schedule!

Cribbage: Thursdays at 10:00 AM

Enjoy a relaxed morning of cribbage with a friendly group.

Mah Jongg: Fridays at 12:00 PM

Play this timeless tile game with a welcoming group.



A Mah Jongg friendly reminder:

If you join us for Mah Jongg, please plan to stay for the full session when possible. Leaving mid-way makes it difficult for others to continue playing, as the game requires a set number of players.

Thank you for your understanding!



MUSICAL BINGO!

Tuesday, January 27th at 1:00 PM

Your favorite hits from yesteryear combined with the fun of bingo! Fill up your bingo card and win prizes while you groove to classic hits from pop, rock and roll and R&B!

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

Musical Bingo is brought to you by Brockton VNA Hospice.

RETURNING!

1-on-1

CRIBBAGE LESSONS

Learn the game or sharpen your strategy with a seasoned instructor!

Appointments are available on Wednesdays between 10 AM-12 PM.



Call 508-580-7811 to book your session!



Get ready! A Cribbage Tournament is coming soon to the Brockton Council on Aging in March 2026 — more details to follow!

DISCUSSION GROUPS

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Dull Men's Club

Do you have what it takes to join the Dull Men's Club?

• **Monday, January 12th at 9:30 AM**

• **Monday, January 26th at 9:30 AM**

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up today!



The BCOA's Women's Circle

Monday, January 26th at 2:15 PM

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up!

SUPPORT GROUPS

• Parkinson's Support

Friday, January 16th at 1:00 PM

UPCOMING



STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT AT OUR UPCOMING TALENT SHOW !

Have a hidden talent you've always wanted to share? Here's your chance!

The Brockton Council on Aging is thrilled to host a Talent Show and we're inviting seniors of all abilities to sign up and take the stage. Whether you sing, dance, play an instrument, tell jokes, recite poetry, or want to showcase a unique skill, we want to see it!

Sign up now! Solos, duets, or small group performances are all encouraged. Whether it's your first time on stage or you're a seasoned performer, the spotlight is waiting for you!

We hope to perform on Thursday, April 30th at 2:00 PM, and practice sessions will be scheduled once we know who signs up. Don't miss this chance to make our Talent Show an unforgettable celebration of talent, fun, and community!

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up today!

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Martin Luther King Jr.

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“The time is always right
to do what is right.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

The Brockton Council on Aging
proudly celebrates
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
and honors his lasting legacy.



FRIENDS OF THE BCOA



FRIENDS OF THE BROCKTON COUNCIL ON AGING

We frequently get asked what the *Friends* are and what their role is at the COA. In short, **The Friends of the Brockton Council on Aging are a 501C3 non-profit organization that is interested in increasing and improving the resources and services of the Brockton Council on Aging.**

Essentially, they raise funds to support the COA.

Some of the upcoming fundraisers they have planned are:

• **Country Store:** Stop by and check out some beautiful handmade items created and donated by our local older adults. The Country Store will be open on the following dates in December:

• **Tuesdays 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

• **Fridays 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Outside of these times, please see a member of the Friends Group or a staff member in order to make a purchase.



The Council on Aging Board of Directors, staff and Brockton older adults wish to thank the Friends of the BCOA for their hard work and fundraising efforts in 2025.

If you have not made your annual \$10.00 donation to the Friends of the BCOA, please consider doing so today! Your support allows the COA to continue to meet the needs of the community and supports our programs and services as well as the needs of our center.

Please consider making a donation every year to the “Friends”.

Your support is greatly appreciated.



FRIENDS OF THE BROCKTON COUNCIL ON AGING

10 Father Kenney Way, Brockton, MA 02301

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Membership for **\$10.00 pp** _____ Additional Contribution \$ _____

Memorial Donation \$ _____ In Memory of: _____

Make checks payable to The Friends of the Brockton Council on Aging

January Menu

Meals are served at 12:00 PM. Menus are subject to change. Suggested donation is **\$2.50**.

Reservations are required 1 week in advance.

Call 508-580-7811 to sign up.

TUESDAY	THURSDAY
	1 NEW YEARS DAY COA CLOSED
6 Jerk Chicken Corn Muffin Collars Greens Red Beans & Rice Fried Plantains	8 Egg Salad Lettuce Bed Pasta Salad w/ Vegetable Spinach & Mandarin Salad
13 Sloppy Joes Tater Tots Scandinavian Vegetables Hamburger Roll Fruit Cocktail	15 Beef Stroganoff Casserole Broccoli Vienna Roll Fresh Banana
20 Pasta w/ Meat Sauce Italian Vegetables Parmesan Cheese Wheat Bread Hot Caramel Peaches	22 Chicken Salad on Lettuce Hamburger Roll Potato Salad Vinaigrette Coleslaw
27 Chicken Marsala Parslied Rotini Roman Vegetables Vienna Bread Clementines	29 January Special Chicken Cordon Bleu, Potato w/ Sour Cream Country Style Vegetable & a Special Dessert from Alliance Health at West Acres!

February Special Meal



February Special Community Dining Thursday, February 26th at 12:00 PM

Lunch:

*Baked Ziti
Meatballs w/ Sauce
Garlic roll
Parmesan Cheese*

Sign Up By Calling 508-580-7811.

Suggested Donation: \$2.50

**RSVP by:
1/26/2026**

Special dessert provided by:

A Alliance
Health at West Acres

January 2026 - MLK National Day of Service

Every year on the third Monday of January, we honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights leader and activist. Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a special holiday designated as an official National Day of Service that encourages volunteerism.

Volunteering strengthens our ties to one another and to our communities. By volunteering, you can interact with like-minded people who have a passion to help others. Volunteering also enables you to share your knowledge and talents, acquire new skills and gain valuable experience.

There are many organizations that rely on volunteers to help them fulfill their mission, from food pantries and senior service agencies to disaster services and human rights organizations, animal shelters, schools, churches and others.

Did you know? Research shows that volunteering can improve physical and mental health, especially for older adults, and can also reduce stress. Volunteering keeps you engaged and connected to others and to your community.

Join the volunteer movement on Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service. You can make a difference in the lives of others and the community.

Don't know where to start? Consider your interests and potential ways that you would like to help others. Think about your passion and purpose. There are many volunteer opportunities available, for example:

- Helping shape a younger generation by reading to children;
- Delivering meals to homebound older adults;
- Caring for dogs, cats or small animals at an animal shelter;
- Helping to build a new home for a family in need;
- Greeting visitors in a nature center or a museum;
- Driving/accompanying older adults to medical appointments.

Not sure how to become a volunteer? Or are you currently a volunteer seeking a new opportunity? Old Colony Elder Services (OCES), the largest nonprofit provider of in-home and community-based services for older adults and people with disabilities in Southeastern Massachusetts, can help. To learn about volunteer opportunities throughout Plymouth County and surrounding communities, please visit OCES' website, ocesma.org/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities. You may also search volunteer opportunities by visiting VolunteerMatch at: <https://www.idealists.org/volunteermatch>

Have questions about volunteering? Contact OCES' Volunteer Coordinator at 508-584-1561 or email volunteerdept@ocesma.org.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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Monique George	1 st	Jay Brunetti	12 th	Theresa DiMaddalena	17 th
Syed Hasan	1 st	Lorraine Peterson	13 th	Evora Regis	17 th
Alexander Markevitch	1 st	Norma Richards	13 th	Glenda Simmons	17 th
Marilyn Yelsoni	1 st	Donald Tessier	13 th	Dennis Blandin	18 th
Marcia Carfagno	2 nd	Shirliann Daniels	14 th	Fredi Walker	18 th
Frances Anita Badgett	3 rd	Fran Allain	15 th	Joanne Bishop	20 th
Jusselinda Jamssens	3 rd	Lenore Diamond	15 th	Birgit Maguire	20 th
Allan Slotnick	3 rd	Alma Downie	15 th	Marie A. Poyau	20 th
Dolores Langer	4 th	Marie Jones	15 th	Shirley Veiga	21 st
Loretta Kettenring	4 th	Cathy Clarkson	16 th	Ann Marie Benoit	21 st
Barbara Hayes	7 th	Pat Tierney	16 th	Joanne Nickerson	23 rd
Ann Kaiser	7 th	Lois Blackman	17 th	Norma "Cookie" Stephens	23 rd
Charles Vella	9 th	Carol Canale	17 th	Mary Bennett	25 th
Henry Madrigal	11 th	William Connor	17 th	Natalie Burns	25 th
Wayne Jermyn	11 th			Ralph Kilcup	26 th



Reminder: If you wish to have your name published in our newsletter, please write your name in the BCOA Birthday Book!



JANUARY NEW & RENEWALS



Yvonne Belizaire
Robert Bonnette
Shirley Bonnette

Terri DeGiso
Louis DeGrace
Denise Gillis
Dara Flynn

Marie Larionne
Astrid Panameno
Frances Zakszewski



JANUARY MEMORIALS



Dara Flynn in memory of Patrick Flynn

Denise Gillis in memory of Bill Gillis

Frances Zakszewski in memory of Joseph Zakszewski



Memorial Book in the Library

As a reminder, the Brockton Council on Aging has created a memorial book, ***In Loving Memory***, available in our Library. This book is a heartfelt tribute to BCOA members who have passed away, honoring them with care and respect using information received. It serves as a space for quiet reflection and remembrance of those we've lost. To help us keep the book accurate and complete, entries are based on a three-month look-back period from the date of notification. If you have information about someone who should be included, please let a staff member know.

We welcome you to visit the Library and spend a moment with the memories of our cherished community members.

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Paul Beckner, BC-HIS
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DIRECTORY

Mission Statement

The Brockton Council on Aging fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for adults aged 60 and older. We strive to understand and support the unique needs of older adults by providing access to vital resources and opportunities that promote independence and enrich their quality of life.

Food Policy Update

FOOD Effective immediately!!

To help us assure that food brought in and placed on the counter near the coffee is safe and displayed with proper utensils for serving, **food from the outside will not be permitted without prior approval from staff.** Any item not approved will be discarded.

Thank you for understanding

Janice

BCOA Weather Policy

Weather Policy

In the event of a snow emergency or inclement weather, please note the following:

- Staff and seniors should listen to local radio or TV stations for public school closings.
- If Brockton Public Schools are closed due to weather, Council on Aging programs will also be canceled. Staff will still be in the building unless a declared emergency is in effect.
- If the Mayor declares a state of emergency, follow instructions from local authorities. The Council on Aging is not an emergency site recognized by BEMA.

If you're unsure whether we are open, please call us at 508-580-7811 before leaving home.

Brockton Council On Aging Staff

Janice Fitzgerald.....Director
Lauren Conrad.....Assistant Director
Rick Alvarnaz.....Outreach Coordinator
Cauna Magner.....SHINE/Outreach Worker
Christina Briggs.....Program & Activities Supervisor
Macey Eccher.....Activities Assistant
Augusta Daluz.....Volunteer Coordinator
Ruthie Graham.....Receptionist/Secretary
Hugo Amado.....Custodian

Board of Directors

Jeanne Fuller-Jones.....Chair
David Andrews.....Vice Chair
Robert Beauchesne.....Secretary
Henry Soones.....Treasurer

Board Members:

Harriet Beasley
Paul Beckner
Carol Delorey
Robert Graham
Mary James
Gerald Koelsch
Anne McCormack

Alternates

Marge Shepard
2 Vacancies

**The Board of Directors meeting will be on
Monday, January 5th at 10:00 AM
at 10 Father Kenney Way, Brockton, MA 02301**

Friends of the Council on Aging Board

Fran Zakszewski.....Chair
Maxine Young.....Vice Chair
Lillian Dykes.....Treasurer
Vickie Green.....Secretary

Friends Board Members:

Martha Badgio, Gail Burman, Leonard Burman,
Diane Clinton, Donna Emschweiller, Laura Howard,
Melinda Howard, Dolores Langer,
Suzanne Larke, & Linda Reddin

The Friends of the Brockton Council on Aging, Inc.
is a non-profit organization that shall consist of individuals, associations, organizations, partnerships or corporations interested in improving the resources and services of the Brockton Council on Aging.

Activities Committee

Vicki Bassett - Gail Burman - Leonard Burman
Diane Clinton - Donna Emschweiller - Vickie Green
Jeanne Fuller-Jones - Laura Howard - Melinda Howard
Suzanne Larke - Linda Reddin - Bill Reddin
Henry Soones - Maxine Young - Fran Zakszewski



Elder Abuse Hotline Please use this number any time day or
800-922-2275 night to report suspected elder abuse.

Emergency Hotline
508-941-0292

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508-580-7811