



Town of Braintree

January 2026

# THE PENN CHRONICLES

*"Live, Learn, Laugh and Be Happy"*

Mayor Erin V. Joyce

71 Cleveland Avenue  
Phone: 781-848-1963

Sharmila Biswas: Director  
Mary Howland: Outreach Coordinator

Michelle Metro: Volunteer /Activities Coordinator  
Frank DeFrancesco: Transportation Services

Most of our activities are open to everyone, some programs are for Braintree Residents only  
Please note, you may sign up for **ALL** activities on or after January 2nd, **after 9:30 AM**

*Greetings Everyone,*

**Happy New Year! Here's hoping that 2026 brings you Peace, Good Health, Happiness and Tranquility!**

Once again we are gifted with a brand new year and once again I feel it came too soon. However, time and tide waits for no man, so we have no choice but to get acclimated with it and make the best of it.

End of 2025, there was a wave of senseless acts, which shocked us all. Wishing the families of the victims to have the strength to carry on. Unfortunately, the senseless acts are happening quite frequently these days and sadly we are getting desensitized. Regrettably, one of the recent incidents was too close for my comfort and shook me up a bit. For those of you, who care about me, rest assured, my family and I are totally fine. I was just riddled with a lot of "what ifs" and of course counting my blessings. This new year, I am hoping to see and witness more random acts of kindness and civility. Let us all take a deep breath and enjoy our family and friends and let the anger and impatience take a back seat.

Now, for the happy news, in the month of December, Elder Affairs was bustling with laughter, happiness, food, various programs and trips. The building was beautifully decorated with lights, Christmas trees, wreaths and ornaments. Thanks to John, our Custodian, who just takes charge and has a great final production. The Highway Department delivered us a beautiful live tree, which was placed on the patio. Like every year, it was decorated with lights and the Outreach staff put on the tags bearing names of items needed in people's daily lives. The outpouring of people's kindness was overwhelming. Outreach staff filled big bags with many items, delivered them and got happy tears and smiles in return. Thanks to Frank and Glen for helping us deliver the gifts.

I wish to thank every agency and departments who often help us reach the impossible. Senator Keenan and his staff, Mark Cusack and his staff, Executive Office of Aging and Independence, ( formerly EOE), for helping us navigate through the maze of grants and earmarks, our Board members, Mayor Joyce and last but not least, all of you. You are the reason we are here everyday and because of you we keep striving to make 71 Cleveland Avenue a happy and a welcoming place.....a place where you would want to keep coming back. Let us all look forward to a happy, kind and a healthy 2026..... *Sharmila*



## Cornhole



## League

**Date: 1st and 2nd Monday (this month only)**

**Time: 1:00**

**Where: 71 Cleveland Ave**

**Please call to sign your  
team of 2 up @ 781-848-1963**

## Alzheimer's Caregiver Group

**January 27**

**Time: 4:00 PM**

**Presentation by Michelle Sonia  
President and CEO  
Seniors Helping Seniors**

Seniors Helping Seniors provides in-home care for seniors by seniors through hiring more active mature adults to help others in need of support. To ensure the best possible match of caregivers and clients, the team considers not only the care requirements, but also the personality traits, background, hobbies and interests of each client and caregiver. The compassionate caregivers use their own life experiences to relate to clients while providing services like companionship and socialization, personal care/ADL assistance, memory loss support/dementia care, light housekeeping, transportation, and respite/family caregiver relief. The result? Genuine connections, the ability to age gracefully at home longer, and a rewarding experience for all involved.

**To learn more please sign up and join us  
Call 781 848 1963 to sign up**

## Spa Day



**Date: January 23**

**We offer your choice of  
Manicure and/or Pedicure**

**Sign up for 1 or both.**

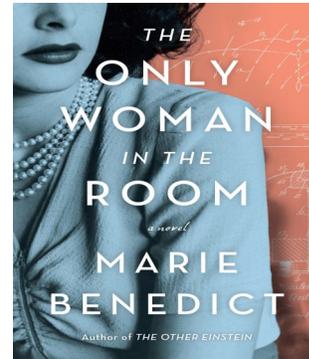
**By appt. only  
781-848-1963**

## Book Club

**Date: January 16**

**Time: 10:30**

**Book: "The Only Woman in  
the Room"**



**Crafts with  
Ginny and Nancy**

**January 26**

**Time: 1:00**

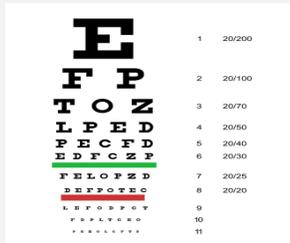
**Type of Craft: Eucalyptus Wreath for  
Valentines Day!**

**Cost \$5.00 per person  
Don't miss the FUN!!!**



## Low Vision Support Group

No meeting in January  
Where: 71 Cleveland Avenue  
Will resume in February.



## Shopping Shuttle Schedule

**Reservations:** please call 781-848-1963; 48 hours in advance.

Pick-up time between: 9:30 to 10:00 AM  
Return time between: 11:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Tuesday, January 6 Shaw's  
Tuesday, January 13 Stop & Shop  
Tuesday, January 20 Shaw's  
Tuesday, January 27 Stop & Shop

**Friday January 9 - Special Shopping Trip:**  
Dollar Store, Holbrook

## Services and Activities

- **Outreach:**  
Information & Referral  
Advocacy  
Friendly Visitor & Library Express
- **Transportation:** please call 48 hours in advance to reserve. **No voice mail messages**  
Medical Van Rides  
Senior Center Activity Rides  
Shopping Shuttles
- **Recreation:**  
Social Activities  
Special Events & Educational Seminars  
Day Trips  
Health and Fitness Classes
- **Support Groups:**  
Low Vision Meetings  
Alzheimer's Support Meetings
- **SHINE:** health insurance counseling; **please call for an appointment**
- **Ask the lawyer:** free consultations; 2 times a month; **please call for an appointment**
- **Medical Equipment Loans:**  
wheelchairs, walkers, canes, shower seats and commodes; **please call ahead.**



## The Giving Tree



Elder Affairs wishes to thank everyone for the outpouring of kindness you demonstrated. Our Outreach staff delivered bags filled with gifts, hope and joy to people who would otherwise not have a gift to unwrap on Christmas morning. Thank you for making a difference and bringing a ray of sunshine.

## Note from the Health Dept.

Vaccines are an easy but powerful way to protect your health during this year's respiratory illness season. As we age, our immune systems naturally weaken, making older adults more likely to become seriously ill from infections like Influenza (flu), RSV, and COVID-19.

Staying up to date on these vaccines is one of the most effective ways to keep yourself and loved ones safe, to maintain your independence, and to prevent serious health setbacks.



## Meet with Mayor Joyce

**January 12**

**Time: 1:00 PM**

**Where: 71 Cleveland Avenue**

Mayor Joyce will be at Elder Affairs on January 12th and would like to spend some time with you. Please come and join us and bring your questions and your thoughts for her. She would love to hear from our older residents.

Please call 781-848-1963 to let us know that you are coming

**Deliver more than meals, deliver hope**

South Shore Elder Services( SSES) is looking for volunteers to deliver packaged meals to older adults within their service area. Mileage is reimbursed and you can create your own schedule.

For more information about this important Volunteer advocacy work please call SSES at 781-848-3910 or visit them online at:

[www.sselder.org/volunteer/](http://www.sselder.org/volunteer/)

Enrich your life by helping others

**Happy 2026**



**HEALTHY START TO 2026....**

**COME AND JOIN ONE OF OUR MANY AMAZING EXERCISE CLASSES.**

**WHETHER YOU WANT FAST PACED, SLOW PACED, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN WE HAVE IT... TAKE A LOOK AT OUR CALENDAR. WE HAVE SOMETHING EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK.**

**CARDIO,**

**CORE STRENGTHENING, BALANCE,**

**TAI CHI, WALKING, CHAIR YOGA**

**Key Tech**

**Understanding the iPad**

**January 16**

**Time: 1:30**

**Fee: \$3.00**

**Call 781 -848 -1963 to sign up**



## AARP Foundation.....Tax Aide program

Braintree Elder Affairs is working with the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide to provide in-person tax assistance free of charge with a special focus on taxpayers who are over 50 or have low-to-moderate income. Tax-Aide volunteers are trained and IRS-certified every year. We can help prepare both federal and Massachusetts state tax returns.

Beginning January 22, 2026, we will accept calls for appointments. Please call (781) 848-1963 to make your appointment. Tax-Aide volunteers will be available on Tuesdays from February 3rd, 2026 through April 7th 2026. Appointments are required; no walk-ins allowed. If you must cancel or reschedule your appointment, please do so at least 3 business days in advance so another taxpayer can be offered that time slot.

When you make your appointment, we will mail an intake booklet to you. Everyone **MUST** complete a new intake form even if you did one last year. This is an IRS requirement, and we cannot waive it. Our trained volunteers will help you if you have questions on how to fill out the intake forms.

We request that you arrive 15 minutes prior to your appointment. Please be aware that your appointment may take over 90 minutes and that you will need to remain on-site until your return is completed.

Please bring a photo ID and social security cards for everyone on the return. You will also need to bring a copy of last year's return, all 2025 tax documents (e.g. W2, 1099-R, interest and dividend forms, void check if you want direct deposit, other 1099s, etc.) If you are eligible for the Massachusetts Circuit Breaker, please bring a copy of all real estate taxes and water/sewer bills paid in 2025. Also bring a voided check from your bank account for direct deposit. Paper refund checks is no longer allowed. The intake booklet will contain an information sheet that lists all the required forms so please review that carefully so that we have all the documents necessary to prepare your return.

## Let us talk about death!

### *Save the Date*

For most people, death is the **LAST** thing they want to talk about. However, each of us **WILL** have a last day.....so no harm in talking about it.

Please join us for this important opportunity to discuss different topics to make end of life conversations and planning easier for you and your loved ones. The program will be facilitated by Cheryl Botieri, MS, an End-of-Life Educator, Family Support Specialist and End of Life Doula. We are fortunate to have Cheryl back. Last year Cheryl facilitated two sessions titled, "Let's talk about death over dinner" and the response was overwhelming. So let us talk about the inevitable once again.

**Braintree Elder Affairs will be hosting 3 sessions, on March 9th, April 27th and May 11th. From 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM.** There will be different and fascinating topics each day.

There will be no cost for attending this program. The program is funded through the Massachusetts Councils on Aging Strengthening End-of-Life Conversations Initiative.

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

# Hello January

5  
 9:30 Cardio and flexibility with Mary  
 9:30 Bocce Coffee Hour  
 10:30 Blood Pressure Clinic  
 10:30 –Walking  
 11:00-Men’s Coffee Hour  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Cornhole league

6  
 Shopping Shuttle-See page 3  
 10:00 **NO Low Vision Group**  
 10:00 Balance with Bob Cobbett  
 10:00 Rummikub  
 12:30 Cribbage  
 1-3 Game time

7  
 9:30 Cardio and Flex with Mary  
 10:00Canasta Hand and Foot  
 10:30 Classic Canasta  
 11:00 Asian Outreach ( cancelled)  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Bingo  
**Must purchase all Bingo Cards by 12:50.  
 Game is closed after 12:50**

12  
 9:30 Cardio and flexibility with Mary  
 9:30 Bocce Coffee Hour  
 10:30 –Walking  
 11:00-Men’s Coffee Hour  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Meet with Mayor Joyce  
 1:00 Cornhole due to holiday next week.

13  
 Shopping Shuttle-See page 3  
 10:00 Balance with Bob Cobbett  
 10:00 Rummikub  
 12:30 Cribbage  
 1-3:00 Game time

14  
 9:30 Cardio and Flex with Mary  
 11:00 Asian Outreach resumes after break  
 10:00 Canasta Hand and Foot  
 10:30 Classic Canasta  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Nancy Carr and Friends

**Martin Luther King Day  
 Closed**



20  
 Shopping Shuttle-See page 3  
 10:00 Balance with Bob Cobbett  
 10:00 Rummikub  
 12:30 Cribbage  
 1-3:00 Game Time

21  
 9:30 Cardio and Flex with Mary  
 10:00Canasta Hand and Foot  
 10:30 Classic Canasta  
 11:00 Asian Outreach  
 12:00 Pool Players  
**1:00 Bingo**  
**Must purchase all Bingo Cards by 12:50.  
 Game is closed after 12:50**

26  
 9:30 Cardio and flexibility with Mary  
 9:30 Bocce Coffee  
 10:00 Walking Group  
 11:00 Men’s Coffee Hour  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Craft with Nancy and Ginny

27  
 Ask a Lawyer-by appt. only  
 Shopping Shuttle-See Page 3  
 10:00 Balance with Bob Cobbett  
 10:00 Rummikub  
 12:30 Cribbage  
 1-3-Game Time  
 4:00 Alzheimer’s Support Group:  
 Speaker Michelle Sonia. CEO of  
 Seniors Helping Seniors

28  
 9:30 Cardio and Flex with Mary  
 11:00 Asian Outreach  
 10:00 Canasta Hand and Foot  
 10:30 Classic Canasta  
 12:00 Pool Players  
 1:00 Emotional Freedom Technique

# THURSDAY

# FRIDAY

<p><b>1</b> <b>Closed</b></p> 	<p><b>2</b>        8:30 Muscles &amp; Moves        9:15 Slow and Steady Class Room 5        9:15 Tai Chi        10:20 Chair Yoga        11:30 Coffee and Conversations        12:00 Pool Players        1:00 Fun Movie Friday</p>
<p><b>8</b>        10:00 Balance &amp; Conditioning for the Highly Motivated (With Bob)        10:00-Mahjong        10:00 Photography        11:30-Quilting        12:30 Pool for beginners        1:00 Knitting</p>	<p><b>9</b>        Special Shopping Trip– Family Dollar, Holbrook        8:30 Muscles &amp; Moves        9:15-Slow and Steady Class Room 5        9:15 Tai Chi        10:20 Chair Yoga        11:30-Coffee and Conversations        12:00 Pool Players        1:00 Therapy Gardens Game-two truths and a lie        No Movie</p>
<p><b>15</b>        10:00 Balance &amp; Conditioning for the Highly Motivated (With Bob)        10:00-Mahjong        11:30-Quilting        12:30 Pool for beginners        1:00 Knitting</p>	<p><b>16</b>        Ask the Lawyer, call by appt. only        8:30 Muscles &amp; Moves        9:15 Tai Chi        9:15 Slow and Steady Class Room 5        10:20 Chair Yoga        10:30 Book Club        11:30 Coffee and Conversations        12:00 Pool Players        1:30 IT/iPad Class with KevTech        No Movie        2:00 Board Meeting</p>
<p><b>22</b>        10:00 Balance &amp; Conditioning for the Highly Motivated (With Bob)        10:00-Mahjong        11:30-Quilting        12:30 Pool for beginners        1:00 Knitting</p>	<p><b>23</b>Spa Day by appt. only        8:30 Muscles &amp; Moves        9:15 Tai Chi        9:00 to 3:00 Spa Day (No slow and steady class)        Arthritic Massage by appt. only        10:20 Chair Yoga        11:30 Coffee and Conversations        12:00 Pool Players        1:00 Movie Viewers Choice and Pizza</p>
<p><b>29</b>        10:00 Balance &amp; Conditioning for the Highly Motivated (With Bob)        10:00-Mahjong        10:00 Photography        11:30-Quilting        12:30 Pool for beginners        1:00 Knitting</p>	<p><b>30</b>        8:30 Muscles &amp; Moves        9:15 Tai Chi        9:15 Slow and Steady Class Room 5        10:20 Chair Yoga        11:30 Coffee and Conversations        12:00 Pool Players        12:00 Lunch and Learn with North River Home Care        No movie</p>

# Enjoying the festival of trees and the food at the Chateau



## Shaping the Future of Learning in Braintree

Master Facilities Planning Process



Braintree is building a community-informed plan to determine *what needs to change* about our schools and learning environments to better meet the needs of students and educators—now and in the future.



**SCAN FOR SURVEY** to share what's working well, what concerns you, and what you **hope to see in our schools moving forward.**



To learn more, visit: [bpsfacilitiesplan.com](https://bpsfacilitiesplan.com)

This is the Braintree Public School Master Facilities Planning. The town would like to have everyone's input. There is a poster in the Elder Affairs hallway near the gift shop. Please take part in the survey. If you are unable to scan the QR code, printed copies are available at the front desk. As a Braintree resident, your opinion is important. Please make yourself heard.

# NANCY CARR AND FRIENDS



**January 14**

**Time: 1:00 PM**

**Where: 71 Cleveland Avenue**

**Fee: \$5.00 per person**

Nancy Carr has been involved in the music industry for many years. She will take you through a musical journey with her Cities of the world. We invite you to travel with us.

**Please call 781- 848 -1963 to sign up.**

## THERAPY GARDEN PRESENTS

**Two Truths and a Lie (aka Guess the Lie)**

**Date: January 9**

**Time: 1:00 PM**

**Call 781 848 1963 to sign up**

An interactive, laugh-and-learn game that tests your knowledge across surprising topics like health, history, current events, and the downright bizarre. Each round presents three statements — two are true, one's not — and it's your job to spot the lie. It's lighthearted, social, and sneakily educational, with plenty of moments that spark curiosity and conversation. Designed for older adults but fun for everyone, this program brings people together in a way that's simple, smart, and genuinely enjoyable.

## HIP HOP DANCE CHAIR EXERCISE

***Save the Date: February 13th at 1:00 PM***

We will be celebrating the Black History Month aboard the Hip Hop Soul Train Express. This exercise and dance class, is a complete, dance, warm up and hip hop class that begins and ends in the chairs. You travel through time on the "Soul Train" and chair dance to clean cut hip hop and R&B songs. There will be creative props such as smiley faces and maracas to help make the soul train journey come to life. Participants will leave feeling refreshed and more limber.

Instructor Rhondae Drafts is the Executive Director of MUSIC Dance.edu, is a Ph.D. abd researching hip hop's impact on contemporary music. She also instructed hip hop dance at MIT.

We are looking forward for you to join this unique program. Sign ups will begin on February.

# Mary from Outreach



## Holiday Program

We would like to thank everyone who donated gifts last month to provide some holiday cheer to our seniors. Your kindness and generosity is much appreciated.

## Hire-A-Teen

The Braintree Recreation Department has a Hire-A-Teen list. These are local high-school aged kids looking to earn a little extra money helping out with yardwork, shoveling snow, moving barrels, and walking dogs. This list is emailed out to individuals who call and request it, and those individuals then directly contact kids on the list that they think might be a good fit for a task they need help with. You can reach the Braintree Recreation Department at 781-794-8900.

## Ice Tips

We have ice tips for canes. An ice tip will give your cane traction in the snow and ice. The tip attaches to the bottom of your cane, and when you need it you flip it down over the rubber tip. Please call us at 781-848-1963 if you need one.

## Food Programs

Meals on Wheels - Call South Shore Elder Services at 781-848-3910.

Marge Crispin Food Pantry - Call Marge Crispin Center at 781-848-2124.

(SNAP) Food Stamp Applications - Call Braintree Elder Affairs Outreach Office at 781-848-1963.

## *Emotional Freedom Technique*

**January 28 at 1:00 PM**

**Where: 71 Cleveland Avenue**

**Presented by Jennifer Lynn, Founder of Nurtured Roots**

Jennifer blends holistic wellness with compassionate care for all generations

EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique), or tapping, is a simple method that helps reduce stress by combining acupressure points with mindful attention on thoughts and emotions. This session offers participants practical tools to regulate the nervous system, release emotional tension, and feel more grounded. Through guided tapping, breathwork, and supportive conversation, learn strategies to incorporate into everyday life to cultivate calm, clarity, and emotional resilience.

Benefits of EFT:

- Helps reduce stress, overwhelm, and anxious thoughts
- Calms the nervous system
- Supports emotional balance and resilience
- Simple techniques you can use any time
- Creates space to process and release difficult feelings
- No prior experience needed-

**To sign up please call 781- 848 1963**

***This program is funded by a grant from the Braintree Local Cultural Council,  
a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural council, a state agency***

# *From the Chairman*

*Braintree Elder Affairs Holiday highlights....*

The Festival of Trees was an absolutely perfect way to kick off the holiday season along with the delicious lunch at Chateau in Braintree. Trying our luck at Plainridge Casino was a fun way to close out our day trips until 2026. Looking forward to finishing December up with the Big Jazz Band and the Illusionist Lyn Dillies. The fun is continuous here at 71 Cleveland Ave. A great way to survive these colder months is by following and enjoying all our Boston sports teams. They have been fun to watch so far.

We are especially hopeful going into the playoff season with the New England Patriots !  
GO PATS!

*The Elder Affairs Board members and I wish you all a  
Happy and Healthy New Year!*

*~Hank*

## **THE BRAINTREE CATHOLIC COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY MEAL**



**FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH**  
**JANUARY 7, 2026 at ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH HALL,**  
**854 WASHINGTON STREET, BRAINTREE, MA**  
**DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 P.M. SHARP**  
**DOORS CLOSE WHEN WE REACH KITCHEN CAPACITY**  
**ALL ARE WELCOMED. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED!**

## **Bocce Winter Coffee Hour**

We won't let the weather keep us from socializing with one of our favorite groups. Until the days are a little longer and a lot warmer, let us meet for some fun coffee and conversation to beat the winter blues!

Time: Mondays @ 9:30-10:30  
Where: Dining room at 71 Cleveland Ave

# Thanks to everyone who make a difference



Elder Affairs thanks everyone who always extends their helping hand. Outside organizations, Town Departments, our dedicated volunteers and our Board Members. We could not have done it without you. Thank you for making a difference and help us flourish.



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## Aging Gracefully in your home...with North River Home Care

**Aging gracefully in your home...Lunch & Learn**

**January 30**

**12:00**

**Please call 781 -848 -1963 to sign up**

**Braintree Department of Elder Affairs**  
71 Cleveland Avenue  
Braintree, MA 02184

Place  
Stamp  
Here

**Braintree Department of Elder Affairs:** Information & referral, Outreach assistance, transportation, shopping, SHINE insurance help, healthcare clinics, support groups, informational seminars, recreation/activities, trips, tax counseling, medical equipment loans, resale & craft shops and many volunteer opportunities.

**Braintree Dept. of Elder Affairs ~ 2026 Board Members**  
**Henry (Hank) Joyce, Chairman of the Board**

**Wayne Gilbert, Vice Chairman**  
**Ann Moore, Secretary**  
**Cathy Munroe, Recording Secretary**

**Lucille Barton**  
**Tim Burke**

**Carol Kippenhan**  
**Connie Mattina**  
**June Newman**

**Happy New Year!**

