



Every team member is working diligently to ensure that Keohane Funeral Home continues to provide a high level of service to families and the community during this time.

## Our Team

### Supporting Our Community and Each Other During COVID-19

The entire Keohane team has worked diligently to care for families and protect the public health in the face of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Every team member has done amazing work caring for families during this time by providing safe and meaningful adaptations to the rituals that we rely on.

"The pandemic is an unprecedented situation which has caused additional stress and concerns for families facing a loss," said firm Co-President John E. Keohane. "Our team has responded compassionately, safely and efficiently to the needs of the communities we serve as we unite in the fight to contain this pandemic."

The entire Keohane team came together during this extraordinary crisis. "When faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Keohane Funeral Home team really proved that teamwork makes the dream work," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning. "The entire team recommitted themselves to caring for families and each other. The stress of the restrictions, the concerns of occupational transmission, the long hours caring for a record-breaking number of families

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In July, Massachusetts entered Phase 3 of re-opening after coronavirus shutdown measures in hopes of flattening the curve of the infection from COVID-19. We checked in with our local libraries and senior centers to find out what services are currently available to the public.

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND WEYMOUTH

##### A Look at Our Senior Center and Libraries

The Whipple Senior Center has numerous online resources and services available.

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#### WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND QUINCY

##### A Look at Our Senior Center and Libraries

The staff at The Kennedy Center are available for help and online classes are being offered.

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#### WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND HINGHAM

##### A Look at Our Senior Center and Libraries

The Hingham Senior Center is offering several online programs and virtual classes.

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**Keohane**  
FUNERAL HOME  
Quincy, MA

**McDonald Keohane**  
FUNERAL HOME  
Weymouth, MA

**Pyne Keohane**  
FUNERAL HOME  
Hingham, MA

## How You Can Help

For those who would like to help, the food pantries are happy to receive donations of both home-grown produce, fresh store-bought produce, and monetary donations.

Donations of fresh produce from your garden or supermarket for Interfaith Social Services can be dropped off at 105 Adams Street in Quincy from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, and until 7 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Donations of fresh produce for the Weymouth Food Pantry are accepted at all three Pop Up Pantry locations or at their warehouse:

- **TUESDAYS** 10:00 to 11:00 AM at The First Church at 17 Church Street, Weymouth
- **THURSDAYS** 10:00 to 11:00 AM at Crossroads Worship Center at 241 Broad Street, Weymouth
- **SATURDAYS** 10:00 to 11:00 AM at Old South Union Church at 25 Columbian Street, S. Weymouth
- **TUESDAY TO FRIDAY** 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at 40B Reservoir Park Drive, Rockland

Monetary donations can be made by visiting the following websites:

- **Interfaith Social Services**  
[interfaithsocialservices.org/donate](http://interfaithsocialservices.org/donate)
- **Weymouth Food Pantry**  
[www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page](http://www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page)
- **Milton Community Food Pantry**  
[miltonfoodpantry.org/donations](http://miltonfoodpantry.org/donations)

**For questions or to volunteer for the Plant.Grow.Share. program, please contact:**

Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane Funeral Homes, (617) 773-3551

Rick Doane, Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services, (617) 773-6203

Pam Denholm, Executive Director of the Weymouth Food Pantry, (781) 331-7682

Pat Brawley-Morise, Director of the Milton Community Food Pantry, (617) 696-0221

## Plant.Grow.Share. Continues to Feed Those in Need during COVID-19

Many aspects of our daily lives have changed during the coronavirus pandemic, but one thing that has not changed is the need for fresh food, especially for our neighbors in need. While we were unable to hold the in-person gardening workshops that we typically have to kick off the program, the program organizers developed a plan to include a video workshops, digital resources and a minimal-contact plant distribution.

"Today, more than ever, coming together as a community is very important. This year, the Plant.Grow.Share. program looks a little different, but our focus is the same — to help those in our community have access to fresh produce," shares John Keohane, Co-President of Keohane Funeral Home.

In light of the pandemic, the need for fresh food has only grown. "We have seen a dramatic increase in the number of new families coming to Interfaith for assistance. As moratoriums on evictions and unemployment stimulus benefits expire, we expect to see even more people turning to us and agencies like ours for help," said Jennifer Sammons, Communications Manager at Interfaith Social Services.

The Plant.Grow.Share. program is a collaborative effort between Keohane Funeral Home, Interfaith Social Services, the Weymouth Food Pantry and the Milton Community Food Pantry to encourage backyard growers to donate produce to local food pantry clients. We are grateful to add the Milton Community Food Pantry to our partnership this year.

### Free Plant Giveaway

In order to encourage gardeners to PLANT a row of veggie seedlings, GROW fresh food, and SHARE some of their harvest with local food pantries, Keohane donated

tomato plants to backyard gardeners and food pantry patrons. The tomato plants were available free of charge at Interfaith Social Services and the Weymouth Food Pantry.

"Both Interfaith and Weymouth Food Pantry held drive-up plant distributions, and together we distributed more than 250 vegetable seedlings and seed packets," confirmed Sammons.

### Plant.Grow.Share. Video Series

Because we aren't able to come together in person for our free tomato container garden workshops, we are excited to share helpful videos by Jon Belber of Holly Hill Farm in Cohasset. Jon shares his knowledge about tending to tomatoes and succession gardening. Jon is also a wonderful partner of the Plant.Grow.Share. program!

### How Our Gardens Grow

Each year, Interfaith Social Services and Keohane Funeral Home plant gardens to produce fresh food for pantry patrons. This year, Quincy Girl Scout Troop 68282 planted the alleyway garden at Interfaith as part of their Silver Service Project. The Troop will also be maintaining the garden as it grows.

"They've done a fantastic job cleaning up the space and filling it up with vegetable and herb plantings," said Sammons.

"Maddie, Jenna, Hannah, Joyce and Violet have a passion for gardening. Two years ago, they built a pollinator garden at their elementary school. Fast forward two years later, it was natural for the girls to decide on a gardening project for their Silver Award. The girls will grow vegetables, greens and herbs to be donated back to the food pantry. The girls will also work on a cookbook using fresh vegetables and the ingredients that can be found in the food pantry," said Quincy Girl Scouts Troop Leader Donna Yang.

The food pantry at Interfaith Social Services has started to see some vegetable donations from local gardens come in. "The Quincy Police Department plants a big garden on their roof for us each year and we also see steady donations from Milton Community Garden and several local church gardens. Harvest season is one of our favorite times of year at the food pantry. Our pantry clients really appreciate receiving fresh food," said Sammons.



RIGHT: Girl Scout Troop 68282, Madelyn Yang, Jenna Christian, Hannah Spratt, Joyce Zheng, and Violet Liu, working on their Silver Award at the Interfaith Food Pantry garden this year.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN — A LOOK AT OUR SENIOR CENTER AND LIBRARIES



*The Fogg Library in South Weymouth*

## The Whipple Senior Center in Weymouth

Located in the McCulloch Building at 182 Green Street in North Weymouth, the Whipple Senior building remains closed to the public. "We do not have a definite date for reopening, but we are anticipating opening by fall," wrote Samantha Beaton in an email.

But that doesn't mean that services are not available to seniors in the community. The center is offering several virtual programs, providing some transportation options, and continuing to make food deliveries in partnership with the Weymouth Food Pantry.

"We miss our seniors SO much! But we are always here if they need us. Their wellness and safety is our main priority. Also, we are very active on Facebook with live updates, which you can find under Weymouth Elder Services. And our July/August newsletter is out and available online and hard copy. We are hoping to set up almost a newsstand box so people can grab them outside the center. However, we have to figure out the logistics on how to do so safely," said Beaton in her email.

## Transportation

The senior center is slowly providing more rides as additional doctors' offices are opening up. Another exciting Transportation update is that the shopping trips have resumed, including an evening shopping trip. To find out more on how to reserve a ride with Transportation call Tim at 781-682-3824.

## Virtual Programs

The first virtual coffee hour was held on July 29 and additional virtual programs will be offered. For more information, please call (781) 682-6140.

On the local channel WCA 9, seniors can exercise with the senior center instructors:

- **Muscles in Motion with Dee Lyon:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday at 10:00 am & 6:00 pm
- **Heart & Stretch with Sue Thomas Balance:** Tuesday & Saturday at 10:00 am & 6:00 pm

## Food Deliveries

In conjunction with the Weymouth Food Pantry, the Senior Center is offering food deliveries open to anyone who cannot get to the food pantry pop ups during the week. Every week Weymouth residents can call and select which items they want from the list. Then each Friday, food bundles are delivered personally to one's front door ensuring distance and safety.

"As well, we were able to receive frozen meats and dairy from the USDA through South Shore Elder Services. The big picture is we are providing this service with the Food Pantry, but these services are allowing us to connect in a time when we cannot be together," wrote Beaton.

If you wish to receive food delivery, please call 781-682-6140 before 4:00 pm on Thursday.

## Additional Services

"We are here every day ready to help in any way! We may not be able to have you in the building, but we can help from a distance," wrote Beaton. "We also are still renting out medical equipment. We are open to donations of medical equipment (no commodes) and food donations for the Food Pantry. Outreach is available as Martina and Jenny are ready to chat and connect you with helpful resources. If you need help with anything SHINE related, we have a few options for you to talk to a representative."

## Weymouth Public Libraries

While the buildings of the Weymouth Public Libraries [<https://www.weymouth.ma.us/weymouth-public-libraries>] remain closed, book drops are open at Fogg, North, and Pratt libraries and curbside pick-up started in early July. Weymouth patrons can pick up materials that they've put on hold from the Fogg or Pratt Libraries Monday through Friday between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. Staff will call patrons when materials are ready for pickup.

To help out patrons, the libraries instituted fine forgiveness for overdue books. "There are no fines on Weymouth materials! Materials from other libraries in our network may still have overdue fines. If someone has a question about a specific item, they can give the owning library a call," wrote Stacey Wilson, Head of Reference and Adult Services in an email.

## Virtual Programs

The Adult Book Club is still holding their monthly meetings online via Zoom, but their other adult programs are taking a bit of a break as the libraries prepare to open the new Tufts library building.

Online Summer Reading was a success. "We are also teaming up with other South Shore Libraries to host online graphic novel and comic book groups for teens and middle schoolers!" wrote Wilson.

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN — A LOOK AT OUR SENIOR CENTER AND LIBRARIES



*The Kennedy Center in Quincy*

## The Kennedy Center

**T**he Kennedy Center, at 440 East Squantum Street in Quincy, remains closed to the public but the staff is available for help and online classes are being offered.

"We want the Seniors to know that although the Center is closed, the staff is here to answer calls every day and help them," Assistant Director Marie Ferent wrote in an email. "When the Governor gives the ok, we will work with City Officials and the Health Commissioner to come up with a plan for reopening."

## Senior Health and Wellness

Senior exercise classes, such as Chair Yoga and Strength and Balance, are being aired on QATV. The episodes of Chair Yoga classes were recorded at the Kennedy Center and taught by yoga instructor Marge Bello. These videos will be aired every Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30 pm, Thursdays at 2:00 pm, and Saturday at 9:00 am on Channel 8 for seniors to follow along to at home.

Also, the center's Zumba and Tai Chi classes are available via Zoom. Virtual Zumba classes are being held on Zoom on Monday and Wednesday mornings at 10:00 am. Anyone interested in joining the class, please contact Maryellen at [mereardon@aol.com](mailto:mereardon@aol.com) and she will help get you registered and set up. Remote learning computer classes and repair information is being offered as well.

For more information, visit the Quincy Council on Aging Facebook page or website. You can also refer to the August newsletter for updates and class information.

## Thomas Crane Public Library

While the Main Library, Adams Shore Branch, and Wollaston Branch are temporarily closed due to the coronavirus epidemic, you can visit TCPL @Home for online services and resources. The North Quincy Branch Library is currently closed for building renovations with improvements such as a new roof, ceilings, flooring and

carpeting, light fixtures and other electrical upgrades, and an interior renovation to provide full accessibility to the lower and upper levels.

Due to the broad nature of the improvements and shutdowns related to COVID-19, the branch is expected to re-open to the public in the fall of 2020. Check the North Quincy Renovations Flickr album to see photos of the progress.

While the library remains closed, contactless pickup is available through the TCPL To-go service. For your safety, pickup is by appointment only. This service is currently available only at the Main Library on 40 Washington Street on Monday to Thursday from 10 am to 8 pm and on Friday to Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. For more information, go to the library website.

"While our buildings have been closed, we have been hard at work figuring out ways to bring services to the City in a safe manner. I hope people will look at our TCPL @HOME webpage for links to the many free resources available from home (or anywhere outside the library). We also have a similar webpage just for kids and their families: TCPL @HOME FOR KIDS. Anyone who needs more help should reach out to us by email, chat, or phone. The easiest way to do that is with this page: <http://thomascranelibrary.org/chat>," Assistant Director Clayton Cheever wrote in an email.

## Fine Forgiveness

Starting July 1, the library removed overdue fines from adult books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and other physical items. Two years ago, the library eliminated fines on its children's and teen materials. Fine elimination is part of a nationwide trend to provide equitable access to public library collections and services. TCPL joins a growing number of other libraries on the South Shore and statewide that have done away with overdue fines.

"We will continue to send date due reminders as well as overdue notices. After the final overdue notice, borrowers will receive a bill for the cost of the material; this bill will be waived when the overdue item is returned to the library. Replacement charges for lost or damaged materials will remain in place, and borrowers may still accrue overdue fines on items owned by other libraries in the Old Colony Library Network in accordance with those libraries' policies," Cheever wrote in an email.

## Online Programs

TCPL has many popular online programs. "We had an amazing turnout for Irish History, 101, presented by Sean Murphy. More than 1,500 people viewed it live on Facebook and over 7,000 have viewed the recording on YouTube," wrote Cheever.

"We've also had several great cooking classes, and more are scheduled this month and next. We're looking forward to a four-part series on smartphone photography 101 that's starting next week. Next month we also have a four part music history series with Professor Del Case, which is a follow up to a popular series of guided listening programs we presented this spring, which are now viewable on QATV video on demand," wrote Cheever.

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## Quincy COVID Memories

The COVID-19 pandemic will mark a unique place in history. The City of Quincy, in collaboration with the Thomas Crane Public Library, the Quincy 400 and Quincy Access Television, has created the Quincy COVID Memories Project to offer individuals living and working in the City of Quincy to share their expressions of life during this extraordinary time. This community memory project invites people to share photos, stories, art, remembrances, poems as well as brief videos and audio files that represent what is most meaningful and relevant during this time. The website and digital archives will document, preserve and share these experiences. Visit [quincyculturalmemory.com](http://quincyculturalmemory.com) for more information or to upload your contribution. You can also mail your submission to the Thomas Crane Public Library attn. Local History, 40 Washington St., Quincy, MA 02169. All submissions will be preserved as a part of our community's historical record in the archives of the Thomas Crane Library for future generations.

## What's Happening Around Quincy

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The best place to learn more is the children's webpage, the teen page, the Facebook page for the Children's Room and teen page on Instagram.

### Help Desk

Help Desk hours have been increased, so patrons now have more chances to reach a librarian on the phone or the live online chat feature. A librarian is available to chat online at [thomascranelibrary.org](http://thomascranelibrary.org) or by phone at 617-376-1300 ext. 3 during the following times:

- Monday-Thursday from 10 am to 7 pm
- Friday from 10 am to 4 pm
- Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm

Or you can email [quref@ocln.org](mailto:quref@ocln.org) or leave a voicemail at the above number.

## What's Happening Around Weymouth

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### New Tufts Library

The Town of Weymouth secured over \$12 million in grant funds from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) for the construction of a New Tufts Library in July 2017. This project demolished the existing building, which was over 50 years old, and constructed a modern, 21st-century library on the same site. The new library is due to open in the fall. For more information, visit the New Tufts Library Building Project webpage.

"Our staff have been working hard to prepare for the opening of the New Tufts Library, which we're excited to say will be opening to the public in September. We hope to see you all there in the fall!" wrote Wilson.

Since the other branches will be closing sometime in August to move staff and collections into the new building, the libraries don't anticipate moving beyond curbside service until the opening of the Tufts Library in the fall.

To stay updated, visit the Weymouth Public Libraries on Facebook or the Weymouth Public Libraries News & Announcements webpage [<https://www.weymouth.ma.us/weymouth-public-libraries>]. You can also keep an eye on the online calendar for programs and events.

If you need to contact the Weymouth Public Libraries, you can reach them by email at [wecontact@ocln.org](mailto:wecontact@ocln.org).

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN — A LOOK AT OUR SENIOR CENTER AND LIBRARIES



Entrance to the Hingham Public Library

## Hingham Senior Center

**T**he Hingham Senior Center located at 224 Central Street in Hingham remains closed, but the staff have returned to the office on a reduced capacity schedule.

"We are not currently open to the public but look forward to opening the doors soon. We are offering several programs through Zoom and are exploring how to broaden the topics offered," Director of Elder Services Jennifer Young wrote in an email.

To that end, the Discovery: Path to Lifelong Learning Committee has been working hard to reinvent Life Long Learning programs and are hoping to launch virtual programs in September. The committee will be offering two sessions per month on the third Tuesday and third Thursday of the month at 2 to 3 pm.

Upcoming sessions include: Paul Taylor, Surprising Facts about Winston Churchill (September 15, 2020); Stephanie Kelsch, Creating Thanksgiving: Myths, Memories and Magazines (November 17, 2020); Fire Chief Steve Murphy, Toni Ruscio, Staging a Theatrical Production; Peter Achille, 1918 Influenza Epidemic; and Andy Gallagher, World's End.

More information will be posted in the monthly "Central Times" newsletter at [Ourseniorcenter.com](http://Ourseniorcenter.com), on Facebook, and on local media such as Hingham Anchor.

## Online Classes

The Hingham Senior Center offers a variety of virtual classes, including coffee hours, wellness classes and virtual office hours with the Director. To register for programs, please call the Senior Center at (781) 741-1458 and leave a detailed message with your name,

phone number, email address and which class you would like to attend.

**OPEN DOOR** with the DIRECTOR is a new program to join Jennifer Young, Director of Elder Services and the Senior Center, for open virtual office hours for seniors who want to learn about Elder Services, ask questions related to programming, share ideas, etc. Registration is required.

**COFFEE SHOP** is a get-together over the internet on Zoom where Hingham Seniors have a "no-agenda" discussion of whatever is on their minds. Host Scott Stevenson opens up the discussion room at 8:45 am to allow time for everyone to work out connection issues before the meeting starts at 9:00 am on Fridays.

**NEW! LADIES COFFEE** was requested by several participants of the center. Join the ladies for light conversation every Friday at 10:30 am. Bring a Zoom friend if you wish, and don't forget to bring your "cup of joe."

**ZOOM CLASSES** — a variety of Zoom fitness and wellness classes are offered, such as Strength Fitness; Pilates; Strength and Chair; Yin Yoga. The center also offers World Affairs Discussion; Memoir Writing and Ukulele. See the newsletter for days and times.

## Additional Resources

During this time of social distancing there are resources available even while the physical building is closed. If you are in need of food or shopping assistance, please call the Hingham Senior Center at (781) 741-1458 and leave a detailed message. The Hingham Food Pantry is available for anyone who needs help with food. Call the pantry at (781) 740-8180.

Meals on Wheels offers another home-delivered meal option. Please contact South Shore Elder Services directly at (781) 848-3910 for Meals on Wheels. "We continue to host the Meals on Wheels Program for South Shore Elder Services and provide meals to approximately 45 seniors per day," said Young in an email.

Hinghamlink volunteers are making and distributing masks to those in need. They are also assisting with essential shopping and transporting bagged and tied household trash to the transfer station. To contact Hinghamlink, call (781) 908-0590 and leave a detailed message or send an email to [hinghamlink@gmail.com](mailto:hinghamlink@gmail.com). "We have made several referrals to Hingham Link, both for seniors in need of help and for those interested in volunteering," wrote Young.

The Plymouth County Sheriff's Department offers a free Safety Assurance Program. Seniors can register to receive a daily automated wellness call. To enroll call (508) 830-6256.

The Hingham Health Department's licensed Social Worker, Cheryl West, is a great resource. She is available via telephone to residents to talk things through or just to listen. She can be reached at (781) 804-2370 or by email at [westc@hingham-ma.gov](mailto:westc@hingham-ma.gov)

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## Our Team

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and the emotional drain of walking with families of those who died alone could not break the spirit of the Keohane team. They worked together. They supported each other. And, although they did so within the prescribed gathering restrictions, they never stopped providing families with any and all ceremonies they wanted."

## Technology Brings Families Together

Technology has become the foundation upon which we have been able to build our strategy for caring for families during the pandemic. By livestreaming ceremonies, offering videoconferencing and electronic document signing we have been able to offer families safe opportunities for them to navigate the entire process and invite others to join with them even though they could not be present in person.

From the very start, our team shifted to meeting with families and each other via videoconference. It has been a tremendous way to connect safely and it is a practice we continue today. We also adapted the use of the condolence message feature of our website to help support families by encouraging relatives and friends to connect with them by leaving messages of support or loving memories. The single most impactful use of technology, however, has been the live streaming and recording of funeral ceremonies.

"When strategizing as a team at the start of the restrictions, we realized that by live streaming funerals we can overcome the gathering restriction by allowing people to participate remotely," said Joe. "This has been phenomenally successful. In fact, the families of Bridget Gallagher and Mary Symes were so pleased that they graciously offered us the opportunity to share their videos so others could see the benefits of live streaming. In fact, the Symes family was featured in a piece in the National Catholic Reporter."

"Our team has also developed several initiatives that we hope will provide our community with opportunities to connect

and share despite the threat of COVID-19," added firm Co-President Dennis W. Keohane. "Social isolation is a concern for all of us but most especially for those like the grieving and our seniors who need connection most. We hope that these initiatives will help people feel less isolated."

To that end, Keohane Funeral Home began the South Shore COVID-19 Neighbor Network, a Facebook group created to foster social connection, identify and respond to neighbors in need, and help ensure a safe community during the COVID-19 pandemic through information sharing.

"We started this Facebook group as a way to connect people during the pandemic. Our goal was to try to overcome the loneliness and isolation of the quarantine by creating a forum where people could share COVID-19 information, ways to stay busy while in quarantine and a vehicle through which people could ask for help if needed," explained Joe. "The nearly 1,000 members of the group have posted anything from recipes to yoga and from music to requests for help. It has been amazing."

As our practices have evolved and adapted to follow the guidelines of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for businesses as we ease social restrictions in a way to minimize the health impacts of COVID-19, we remain steadfastly resolute in our commitment to caring for those who have died and, equally important, to those who survive them.

*"We started this Facebook group as a way to connect people during the pandemic. Our goal was to try to overcome the loneliness and isolation of the quarantine by creating a forum where people could share COVID-19 information, ways to stay busy while in quarantine..." explained Joe.*

## What's Happening Around Hingham

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## The Hingham Public Library

For the safety of patrons and staff, The Hingham Public Library remains closed to the public. But the book drops are open for returns and contactless pickup of library materials on hold is available. For more information, check the library website here.

While the Library building is closed, digital materials are always available to access with your Hingham Library card any time of the day or night. If you don't have a library card, you can sign up for an eCard by visiting the Library's catalog and clicking

"Log In" in the upper right. An eCard will grant you access to digital materials in Overdrive/Libby, Hoopla, RB Digital magazines, Mango languages, and many of the reference databases.

The Hingham Public Library has a tech team available to help assist seniors with technology questions and connect them to digital library resources. The tech team can call or email and help walk them through the steps of using the technology they have at home, from video conferencing to checking out electronic books from the library. For more information please call (781) 741-1405.

## Virtual Programs

Patrons may also join the Library for many virtual programs, including Intro to Zoom; Read to a Dog; Coffee Break; HPL Book

Group; Teen Book Group and many more. The library is also offering virtual storytimes on YouTube Tuesday to Thursday each week. Patrons can sign-up to have the storytimes delivered directly to their inbox.

Classes are listed on the website and the full schedule can be found on the calendar. All of the virtual programs require advanced online registration. You can register on the calendar, and the library will email you the Zoom meeting link shortly before the meeting begins.

For more information, call the main library number (781) 741-1405 and press "5" to contact a department directly or check the library's Facebook page. For questions about your library account and general library or program information, email [hilib@ocln.org](mailto:hilib@ocln.org)



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

## *Why Is It Important to Pre-Plan a Funeral?*



### **Advance Planning During COVID-19**

Advance planning seems to have become even more important in light of the pandemic. The families we've served who had a death with the advance planning in place were relieved to find how much easier it was for them to navigate the restrictions of COVID-19. The funeral directors at Keohane merely modified the ceremonies they had planned to comply with the restrictions. In contrast, many people were unaware that we were able to offer complete ceremonies even with the restrictions and felt overwhelmed with all of the decisions they had to make at a time that would have been stressful under normal conditions.

"As the restrictions have lifted, we have seen an increase in the number of people inquiring about advance planning. In fact, four members of one family we cared for during the pandemic have already done their own advance planning after seeing how valuable it was when their mom died," said Reardon.

With the help of technology, advance planning can be done safely and securely, even with COVID-19 restrictions and necessary safety measures in place. Pre-planning can make the whole process easier because you have time to ask questions, consider options and make decisions based on your family's needs and values. The first step is to set up an appointment with your funeral director. The meeting can be done remotely by videoconference and typically takes about an hour. It gives you the opportunity to discuss your wishes in as much or as little detail as you like. And you don't have to make all the decisions all at once. You may find it becomes much easier to make certain decisions after meeting with your funeral director who can provide more information.

**A**long with the importance of funeral rituals, the COVID-19 crisis has proven the value of advance planning. The pandemic has made a time that is normally stressful for most people even more overwhelming, especially without a plan in place. The number one reason people plan in advance for a funeral is peace of mind. Pre-planning is a safe way to protect one's family from the emotional and financial burden of having to make funeral arrangements after someone has died.

"Our team found that the families of those who died during the pandemic with their advance planning in place had a much easier transition than those who did not. Because all of the decisions were made in advance, it was easy for us to adapt it to fit the restrictions and allow families to focus on the most important parts of any funeral—the personal and meaningful elements that bring solace and healing," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning.

**For more information on advance planning during COVID-19, please contact Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane Funeral Homes at (617) 773-3551.**