



Plant.Grow.Share.

Returns Full Swing to Feed Those in Need



Quincy Girl Scouts help plant the garden at the Interfaith Food Pantry this year.

While we were unable to hold the in-person gardening workshops last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all aspects of the Plant.Grow.Share. program returned in 2021, including a free seedling giveaway, free gardening workshops, and many pounds of fresh produce donated to our local food pantries from our partners and community gardeners throughout the growing season.

Plant.Grow.Share. is a fresh food initiative for our local food pantries, co-sponsored by Keohane Funeral Home, Interfaith Social Services, the Weymouth Food Pantry, and the Milton Community Food Pantry, encouraging backyard growers to donate produce to local food pantry clients.

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MANY FUNERAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS

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Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Quincy, MA

McDonald Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Weymouth, MA

Pyne Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Hingham, MA

MANY FUNERAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS



A uniformed representative from the veterans service presents a U.S. flag to the loved one of a veteran.

The men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces deserve the greatest honor, respect, and care at the time of their death. There are many benefits available for eligible service members, veterans, and their families. A burial with military honors is a special way to honor a veteran and provides a powerful ceremony for their loved ones.

Keohane is proud to assist families of eligible veterans in applying for the following applicable benefits:

Military Funeral Honors

By law, every eligible veteran is entitled to receive military funeral honors at the family's request. The Department of Defense program, "Honoring Those Who Served," calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral

honors on behalf of the veteran's family. Military units are required to provide, at a minimum, a two-person uniformed detail to present the core elements of a military honors ceremony. This includes the playing of "Taps" and the folding and presentation of the U.S. flag. A uniformed representative from the veterans service will present the flag. More information on flag presentation protocol can be found in this downloadable brochure: www.militaryonesource.mil/products/military-funeral-honors-flag-presentation-protocol-brochure-520/

Burial Allowance

A VA Burial Allowance is a flat rate monetary benefit that is paid at the maximum amount authorized by law for an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs. Regulations for this benefit were simplified in 2014 to pay eligible survivors automatically upon notification of the

veteran's death, without the need to submit a claim.

The VA will pay a \$300 burial and funeral expense allowance for veterans who, at time of death, were entitled to receive pension or compensation, or would have been entitled to compensation but for receipt of military retirement pay.

The VA will pay a \$150 plot allowance when the veteran is not buried in a cemetery that is under U.S. Government jurisdiction if the veteran is discharged from active duty because of disability incurred or aggravated in line of duty, if the veteran was in receipt of compensation or pension, or would have been in receipt of compensation, but for receipt of military retired pay, or if the veteran died while hospitalized by the VA.

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Many Funeral Services and Benefits are Available to Veterans

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The VA may pay a burial allowance up to \$1,500 if the veteran's death is service connected. The VA may also pay the cost of transferring the deceased of a service-disabled veteran to a local national cemetery. In such cases, the person who bore the veteran's burial expenses may claim reimbursement from the VA.

Additional costs of transportation of the deceased may be reimbursed. There is no time limit for filing reimbursement claims of service-connected deaths. In other deaths, claims must be filed within two years after permanent burial or cremation.

Burial in National Cemeteries and State Veterans Cemeteries

One of the benefits available to eligible veterans is a gravesite in any of the 135 national cemeteries with available space. This benefit also includes internment, or the opening and closing of the grave, and the perpetual care and maintenance of the cemetery grounds. Cremated remains are treated in the same manner and honors as casketed remains. For a map and listing of national and state cemeteries visit www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp.

Spouses and dependents of eligible veterans may be buried in a national cemetery with the veteran. The spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the veteran's headstone, at no cost. Eligible



spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the veteran.

Gravesites in national cemeteries cannot be reserved. Funeral directors or others making burial arrangements must apply at the time of death. Reservations made under previous programs are honored. The National Cemetery System normally does not conduct burials on weekends.

Headstones, Markers, and Medallions

Upon request, the Department of Veterans Affairs provides a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran

in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death. Different styles of markers are available and must be permitted by the cemetery where it will be placed.

Presidential Memorial Certificate

To honor the memory of a deceased, honorably discharged veteran, a Presidential Memorial Certificate is provided to the next of kin or loved one. The certificate is a gold-embossed paper certificate bearing the signature of the current president and expressing the country's recognition of his or her service in the armed forces.

For more detailed information and resources, please visit "Veterans" on our website or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs online.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CEREMONY IN QUINCY IS BACK!



Pictured are John Keohane, Co-president of Keohane Funeral Home, and Christine Cugini, Quincy Coordinator for Wreaths Across America. Keohane donated \$1500 on behalf of all the veterans who passed during the past year.

After battling a global pandemic and a severe nor'easter that dropped over a foot of snow in Quincy in 2020, Wreaths Across America is planning an in-person ceremony and wreath laying for December 18, 2021. The ceremony will commence at 12 pm at Mount Wollaston Cemetery at 20 Sea Street in Quincy, followed by the laying of wreaths at all 3,200 veterans' graves. Each name will be read out loud in honor of the service and sacrifices made for our freedoms. The theme for 2021 is **"Live up to their Legacy."**

"We didn't have the ceremony [last year], but we did place wreaths. One memorable thing was seeing our volunteers coming out in more than a foot of snow to place the wreaths for our veterans," said Quincy Coordinator, Christine Cugini. "They brought shovels to move the snow to find veterans' graves and place the wreaths. The wreaths placed on top of the white snow was an absolutely beautiful picture."

Keohane Funeral Home is proud to donate \$1,500 to Wreaths Across America in 2021 on behalf of all the veteran families served this past year.

Wreaths Across America is an annual event held nationwide to remember the fallen, honor those that serve, and teach the next

generation about the value of freedom. In a coordinated effort, volunteers lay remembrance wreaths across graves at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 2,500 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, such as Mount Wollaston Cemetery in Quincy. It is a free event and open to everyone.

According to Wreaths Across America, 1.7 million veteran wreaths were placed on headstones at 2,557 locations nationwide in 2020, with over 500 truckloads of wreaths delivered across the country by hundreds of volunteer professional truck drivers. More than one million volunteers participated, with more than a third being children.

How You Can Help

SPONSOR A WREATH: Honor veterans in your local community by sponsoring a wreath that will be placed on a veteran's grave. The goal this year is to place a remembrance wreath on EVERY veteran's grave in the City of Quincy. To sponsor a wreath, please visit www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org, click on "Specific Cemetery," then enter either Mount Wollaston Cemetery (MAMWCQ) or Pine Hills Cemetery (MAPHQM) as your location to support.

"We are not where we have been in years past, but November is usually the month when we see the bump in single-donor sponsorships," said Cugini regarding wreath sponsorships. "We hope to reach our goal as we have the past three years."

An individual sponsorship for a wreath is only \$15. The most popular donation is five wreaths for \$75.00.

VOLUNTEER: Volunteer to place wreaths on a veteran's grave at Mount Wollaston Cemetery or Pine Hills Cemetery. Involve your friends and family to honor our military men and women and their families.

"If you haven't participated in the event before, please join us. I can assure you that the feeling you get after placing a wreath, saying the veterans name, and thanking them for their service is like nothing else. Please join us on Saturday, December 18 at noon for the ceremony and wreath laying to follow at Mount Wollaston Cemetery, 20 Sea Street, Quincy, MA," said Cugini.



For more information, you can follow Wreaths Across America on Facebook, on Twitter @WreathsAcross or on their website.

Plant.Grow.Share. Returns Full Swing to Feed Those in Need

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"Plant.Grow.Share. is a wonderful partnership that provides fresh fruits and vegetables to families in need and does so in a practical and environmentally sound way," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane Funeral Home.

Due to the pandemic, the need for fresh food has only grown. "We are seeing hundreds more clients each month compared to pre-pandemic. Clients are always delighted to receive fresh foods. Many traditional food pantries are only able to distribute shelf-stable nonperishables. We're fortunate to have both freezers and refrigeration, as well as a staff that's committed to providing fresh, nutritious foods," said Jennifer Sammons, Communications Manager at Interfaith Social Services.

FREE Seedling Giveaway

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 vegetable plants to backyard gardeners and food pantry patrons. The plants were available free of charge at Interfaith Social Services and the Weymouth Food Pantry Pop-up locations.

"Interfaith's seedling giveaway was much larger than expected! Keohane donated several hundred tomato, cucumber, and zucchini plants. We also received plants left over from Blue Cross Blue Shield's company garden, Quincy Police Department's rooftop garden, as well as some from local gardeners," said Sammons. "We held the giveaway on a Tuesday evening in the lobby of our building. Since we had so many plants, we allowed people to come in and 'shop' for their plants. Most people left with a box full of assorted vegetable seedlings."

Any plants left over after the giveaway at Interfaith were distributed in the following days to food pantry clients and Interfaith volunteers. They also provided plants to William Foster Elementary School in Hingham for their school garden.

Plant.Grow.Share. FREE Gardening Workshops

In June, our free herb container garden workshops were held outdoors at St. Mary's Church in Quincy and Tufts Library in Weymouth. Organic plant seedlings from Holly Hill farm were donated by Keohane Funeral Home.

"Farmer Jon Belber from Holly Hill Farm in Cohasset did a great job as always. Both events were outside this year. The live streaming helped us reach more people, but there were surely much fewer people attending the workshops. We are optimistic about next year," said Reardon.

How Our Gardens Grew

Each year, Interfaith Social Services and Keohane Funeral Home plant gardens to produce fresh food for pantry patrons. Interfaith had a garden on the side of their building, which was maintained by the Quincy Girl Scouts. **"The Girl Scout families took turns watering, maintaining, and harvesting in the garden. They brought the resulting produce to the food pantry for distribution. The rainy July led to some luscious, leafy plants! They harvested lots of greens, beans, peppers, and herbs,"** said Sammons.



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 and food items are always welcome. We also want supporters to know that we have incredible spending power with their monetary donations. With just \$5, we are able to purchase the equivalent of 25 meals. We're able to stretch your donated dollars much further than you would be able to at the local grocery store," said Sammons.

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 am to 3:30 pm Monday, Thursday and Friday, and from 9 am until 7 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

DONATIONS OF FRESH PRODUCE for the Weymouth Food Pantry are accepted at all three Pop-Up Pantry locations or at their warehouse:

TUESDAYS — 10 to 11 am at The First Church at 17 Church Street, Weymouth

THURSDAYS — 10 to 11 am at Crossroads Worship Center at 241 Broad Street, Weymouth

SATURDAYS — 10 to 11 am at Old South Union Church at 25 Columbian Street, S. Weymouth

TUESDAY TO FRIDAY — 10 am to 1 pm at 40B Reservoir Park Drive, Rockland

MONETARY DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Interfaith Social Services
interfaithsocialservices.org/donate

Weymouth Food Pantry
weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page

Milton Community Food Pantry
Checks can be made payable to: Milton Community Food Pantry, 158 Blue Hills Parkway, Milton, MA 02186

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

SHOP LOCAL — IT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Downtown Hingham is filled with independent stores and local shops for your holiday shopping.

Supply chain and staffing issues continue to disrupt our purchasing patterns, so buying local may be the best way to get what you need for the holidays while supporting small businesses at the same time. Even before COVID-19, many small businesses were working on slim margins with low financial resilience. This year, shopping locally is more important than ever to support small businesses, which support local services.

Did you know that \$73 of every \$100 dollars spent at a locally-owned business remains in the local economy—compared to \$43 of every \$100 spent at a non-locally owned business or chain store? And sales taxes help fund our communities and provide vital community services such as public safety, road repairs, and trash collection.

"When you Shop Small, you're not just supporting neighborhood favorites—you're investing in a community," states the Shop Small website, sponsored by American Express. "Shop Small all season long."

Need more reasons to spend your cash close to home? Local businesses often sell regional products, which in turn supports local artists, artisans, and crafters, creating more local jobs for teens and other community members. Shopping small is more environmentally friendly because local businesses in the town or village center provide centralized shopping that is much friendlier to a community's carbon footprint than out of town shopping malls, which generally means less sprawl, carbon emissions, congestion, habitat loss, and pollution.

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Local Events This Season

Your local chamber of commerce is a great resource for finding out about local businesses and events. They will keep you in the know about holiday shopping, markets and fairs, community events, and festive celebrations this holiday season.

SHOP LOCALLY IN QUINCY: The Quincy Chamber of Commerce brought back the Kilroy Square Holiday Market again this year, after having to cancel the event last season due to the pandemic. In case you missed the chance to peruse the market the last weekend in November and the first weekend in December, you may be happy to know you can still shop online for the perfect gifts from the many amazing local artisans, specialty shops, and crafters that participated in the market. For links to the vendors' websites visit www.quincysquaremarket.com.

SHOP LOCALLY IN HINGHAM: The South Shore Chamber of Commerce lists over 800 local businesses where you're sure to find exactly what you're looking for during the holidays. You can also follow the Chamber on Facebook for even more up to date information.

Downtown Hingham has several independent stores and shops. Find out more at discoverhingham.com. Downtown Hingham will be celebrating Holly Jolly Hingham on Saturdays up through December 18. Don't miss the horse-drawn hayrides from 11 am to 2 pm at the clock tower outside of La Petite Maison.

SHOP LOCALLY IN WEYMOUTH: The Weymouth Chamber of Commerce, an affiliate of The South Shore chamber of commerce, provides a list of local businesses to help you find what you need this holiday season. You can also find them on Facebook for the most up-to-date events.

The Weymouth Chamber will be sponsoring a city-wide celebration of Weymouth's 400th Anniversary in 2022. The year-long celebration to commemorate the second oldest town in Massachusetts will kick-off with a special New Year's Eve party on December 31, 2021.

OUR TEAM

Joseph Reardon



Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning, has worked in the funeral industry for many years and has been with Keohane since 2008. Joe works with families and individuals interested in advance funeral planning, either for themselves or for a loved one.

"Advance planning is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your family," said Joe. "It will provide you with the satisfaction of knowing that your affairs are in order. Your family will have the peace of mind that comes with knowing they can focus on creating a meaningful ceremony and not on administrative tasks or financial decisions."

Advance planning became even more important during the pandemic. "Of the families we cared for during the pandemic, those with advance planning in place were better able to make the most of the experience. Because our directors had a roadmap to go by, families could concentrate on the experience rather than the business details," said Joe. "This was a huge benefit to families because they had more time to plan the ceremonies and weren't worried about what they thought they could, or couldn't do, in light of COVID. There was a great deal of fear and misinformation circulating at the time. This had a profound effect on the families who did not plan. Some have even shared their regrets with us."

Now that the COVID restrictions have been lifted, Joe finds that many families, particularly immigrant families, still ask for live streaming. "With the COVID restrictions lifted, we thought we would see a big spike in the numbers of people seeking to complete their advance planning. Oddly, we did not see that much of a surge. Another interesting find was that despite the availability of video conferencing, most people still want to meet in person. Frankly, having had several telehealth appointments myself, I too find in-person meetings much better," said Joe.

Joe credits the resourcefulness of the Keohane team for ensuring that families were still able to share their loved ones' personal and meaningful tributes with others during the pandemic. "Our team was still providing full ceremonies throughout the pandemic. We were limited only by the gathering restrictions, yet by live streaming ceremonies, we were able to invite people to participate in the ceremonies without violating the restrictions. It was amazing."

Joe strongly believes that funeral preplanning offers many benefits for families, allowing them, with the help of their funeral director, to focus on designing a personalized funeral service at the time of need rather than spending their time tending to the many other stressful tasks that must be done when a death has occurred.



Joe Reardon is Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane.

When someone inquires about preplanning, Joe works with them to determine how the program best suits their needs. He walks them through the entire process and gathers critical information needed when a death occurs. Every situation is unique, and Joe takes the time to determine what will benefit both the individual and their family.

Having been a funeral director for many years, the transition to working with families on advance planning full-time was a smooth one. "I always cared for families doing advance planning, but I did so while also balancing a full funeral schedule. The transition made my schedule more manageable, but it also required that I

step back from directing funerals, and directing funerals is something I also love, so that was the only difficult part," said Joe.

Joe developed his interest in funeral service from his father who felt that funeral directors were in a unique position to make a significant impact in people's lives. Because his father was never able to pursue a career in funeral service, Joe feels fortunate to have been able to establish a career as a funeral director, particularly now as part of the Keohane team.

"Joe always remembers back to the time his dad passed away and how stressful that time frame was as a young man. He never forgot those feelings and has dedicated his career to helping others plan in advance for their own services," said Co-president John Keohane. "He understands that this is one of the greatest gifts you can present to your family. The pandemic has taught us so much and continues to reinforce the notion that planning in advance takes pressure off the entire family at a very trying time."

Joe credits his family and his Jesuit education for his commitment to being of service to the community, which he believes is another facet of the role of a funeral director. Joe remains active serving on the boards of Manet Community Health Center, Milton Cemetery, and the Norfolk County Advisory Board, where he is chair. "My parents were always involved in the community and passed down that commitment to my brothers and me," said Joe. "I just recently accepted the chair of the more than yearlong St. Agatha Parish Centennial Celebration. I am really looking forward to this!"

Joe and his wife, Jeannine, have two children, Maggie and Jack. Jeannine operates her own business management and accounting practice. His daughter, Maggie, is a senior at The Catholic University of America, and after graduation she hopes to do a year of service with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

"Joe Reardon is a compassionate funeral service professional with deep roots to the South Shore and currently resides in Milton, MA. He is honest, trustworthy, and most importantly, a wonderful family man. Joe is active on many community boards and gives freely of his time to help others," said John.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

Should Adult Children Be Included in Parents' End-Of-Life Planning?



Having the family conversation about end-of-life decisions brings peace of mind to both parents and their adult children.

While it may be difficult to discuss end-of-life issues, it is to everyone's advantage—children and parents alike—to calmly discuss plans and preferences for end-of-life care before an emergency hits and emotions run high. In fact, avoiding end-of-life discussions can make the whole experience more difficult and painful in the long run.

Advance Funeral Planning

During the pandemic, we've learned that having funeral plans in place made it much easier for loved ones left behind to focus on creating a meaningful tribute, rather than concentrating on the nuts and bolts and financial aspects.

"In our American individualistic culture, we tend to look at things from the perspective of 'What I want.' While this is valid with many end-of-life choices, the funeral and final disposition do absolutely nothing for the person who has died. Funerals are for the living," said Joe Reardon, VP of Community Development and Advance Planning. "That's why I always suggest that a person bring someone else with them to make advance planning arrangements. This way, they can discuss how the choices will affect their family and friends."

Most adult children do not like to consider the inevitability of a parent's death and can often find excuses for not discussing the possibility of serious illness, physical or mental impairment, or death of their mom or dad. But most children want to honor their parents' wishes and having the discussion ahead of time allows them to know what their parents want when it comes to their own care as they age and for their funeral and burial at the time of their death.

Unfortunately, many people do not realize that they are choosing arrangements that they would never choose for another family member. Many of us have heard "Just bury me in the backyard," or "Just cremate me—I don't care."

The problem is that the families will then find themselves in a tug-of-war between what the deceased said they wanted—or more often, didn't want—and what the family needs.

"This is why it is important to have someone like an adult child present for advance planning. The planner may think their life is meaningless but the person with them won't, and it is that person who will be affected by the choices made," said Joe.

Resources to Help Guide Discussions About End-of-Life

There are many materials available online to help families take on these uncomfortable questions and concerns about death and dying.

The Conversation Project created a number of guides that assist people in the process of understanding and communicating their end-of-life care wishes, including Conversation Starter Kits. Another helpful tool is the Five Wishes fillable form. Created in association with the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging, Five Wishes helps individuals and families document and discuss their preferences for end-of-life care. This document also functions as a valid advance directive in 37 states, once signed and witnessed.

While it's never easy or fun to talk about end-of-life planning, these family conversations are important. Once the plans are in place for end-of-life, you and your family can concentrate on living with the peace of mind that your parents' wishes will be understood and respected when the time comes.

For more information on planning for a funeral or to request a copy of our free funeral planning guide, please contact Joe Reardon at 1-800-Keohane (800-536-4263).