



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Making the South Shore a Better Place

Farmer Jon Belber Cultivates a Love for the Land



Jon Belber is passionate about connecting people to the world around them, especially teaching them

about organic food and where their food comes from. As Community Outreach and Engagement Director at Holly Hill Farm, he connects children and teens to nature, hosts educational workshops, promotes sustainable and organic farming, and helps neighbors in need.

Each spring, Jon facilitates the free container garden workshops for Plant.Grow.Share.—a fresh food initiative for our local food pantries co-sponsored by Keohane Funeral Home, Interfaith Social Services, and the Weymouth Food Pantry.

“I’ve been happy and delighted to work with Joe Reardon and all the folks at Keohane. We’re happy to reach people where they are, whether they have a front porch to grow a planter or whether they have a little bit of a yard space or a community garden,” said Jon.

Jon is a certified educator in elementary and middle school, and he taught in the classroom for 12 years before moving to the outdoor classroom at Holly Hill Farm. Jon is married and lives in Scituate. He and his lovely wife have two daughters, one in high school and one in college. “They don’t always eat kale, but that’s okay, we’re working on it,” said Jon.

Having young children inspired Jon to volunteer at Holly Hill Farm in 2003. “They’re part of the reason that I’m farming and teaching.” In 2004, the Friends of Holly Hill Farm hired Jon to grow their educational programs, and he was the Educational Director at the farm for 18 years. Last year, he took over community outreach.

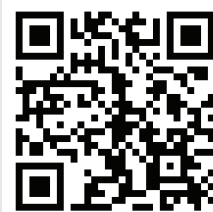
Besides workshops both at the farm and off-site, such as the Plant.Grow.Share. workshops, Jon also works with teens and young children. Jon reaches out to 40 different schools on the North Shore and Boston. He teaches them about organic farming, and they grow organic produce at the schools.

In the Farm To Food Pantry program, Jon works with teenagers to cultivate

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**LEARN ABOUT
FUNERAL PLANNING**

Watch the video interview
with Joe Reardon, Vice
President for Community
Development and
Advance Planning at
Keohane:



PLANT. GROW. SHARE.

*a fresh food initiative
for food pantries*



Gardening Workshops

**TUESDAY, MAY 23
at 6:30 PM**

Hingham Public Library,
66 Leavitt Street
Hingham

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 24
at 6:30 PM**

Tufts Library
46 Broad Street
Weymouth

**THURSDAY, MAY 25
at 12:30 PM**

Kennedy Senior Center
440 E. Squantum Street
Quincy



Please RSVP to
events@keohane.com or
1-800-KEOHANE with your
location of choice.

Plant.Grow.Share. to Offer FREE Gardening Workshops to Local Gardeners

To help curb increasing food insecurity, Keohane Funeral Home will kick off the 2023 Plant.Grow.Share. program with free gardening workshops on May 23, 24 and 25 in Hingham, Weymouth, and Quincy. Plant.Grow.Share.—a fresh food initiative for our local food pantries co-sponsored by Keohane Funeral Home, Interfaith Social Services, and the Weymouth Food Pantry—encourages local gardeners to donate produce to local food pantries. This community outreach program includes gardening workshops and opportunities for the community to help neighbors in need by donating fresh produce.

“With about 18 percent of Massachusetts residents considered food insecure, we are proud to be able to continue this community

tradition,” John Keohane, Co-President of Keohane Funeral Home said. “Plant.Grow.Share. is for everyone—from backyard gardeners wanting to increase yields to grocery store shoppers willing to share with the local food pantry. We appreciate everyone’s participation.”

Free Gardening Workshops

This year’s three free 60-minute workshops, led by local organic farmer Jon Belber of Holly Hill Farm, will focus on home gardening techniques. Each attendee will receive a vegetable seedling from Holly Hill Farm, donated by Keohane Funeral Home. Workshops will take place on the following dates and locations, listed to the left. **Please RSVP to events@keohane.com or 1-800-KEOHANE with your location of choice.**



Participants in the free gardening workshops will receive a free seedling and the knowledge to increase their garden yields.



“Those who attend the workshops will definitely benefit from the expertise of Farmer Jon Belber. We are grateful to have his extensive knowledge and teaching abilities to help our community grow more produce and share it with others in need,” said Rick Doane, Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services.

Join the Plant.Grow.Share. Movement

Doane noted that produce donations are very important to local food pantries, which have experienced increased requests for fresh produce. The Plant.Grow.Share. program encourages people to develop their gardening skills through free workshops, but options exist for those who don’t garden. Store-bought produce donations, monetary gifts, and volunteering for local food pantries all help reach food insecure households.

“Small donations of produce or money add up. If ten people make small donations, we have quite a bit to share! Every donation brings our community together to help feed those in need,” said Pam Denholm, Executive Director of Weymouth Food Pantry.



Learn more about donating fresh produce to local food pantries by visiting their websites:

INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES
interfaithsocialservices.org/donate-food

WEYMOUTH FOOD PANTRY
www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donate-food

Donated produce can be from your garden or the supermarket. Volunteers and monetary donations are also welcomed to assist with food insecurity throughout Quincy, Weymouth and surrounding communities. ■



For questions or to donate to the Plant.Grow.Share. program, please contact:

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

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

Pam Denholm, Executive Director of Weymouth Food Pantry,
 (781) 635-7783.



Options for Final Disposition Following Cremation

Cremation is a method of immediate disposition allowing families to choose from several options for final disposition, which simply means what is planned for a loved one's remains after death. They can choose permanent memorialization in the earth or in a columbarium niche. They can choose to scatter their loved one in a special place. They can retain keepsake options such as jewelry. They can even do all three and more!

"Unfortunately, many families do not think about final disposition and the person who has been cremated remains in their care for an extended period of time. In fact, one out of five homes has a person who has been cremated in the home often in a closet, drawer, garage, or basement. This is not because people don't care. It is actually the opposite. They care deeply but are unaware of their options for final disposition. At Keohane, we provide families with all of their options so that they can make the best choice for their needs," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning. "Presently, we are producing a video series entitled Conversations by Keohane. Upcoming episodes discuss cremation final disposition options. We are also hosting Dine and Discover events focused on cremation options."

SCATTERING ON LAND, SEA, OR AIR

Many cemeteries provide scattering gardens for scattering ashes. You can also choose to scatter ashes at a location that was special to your loved one. Similar to burial at sea, scattering at sea is a method of disposition for a loved one's cremains. Scattering cremated remains at sea must be at least three nautical miles from land and it is not permitted on beaches. Since the U.S. government does not consider cremains to be hazardous material, there is no legal obstruction to scattering ashes from an airplane or hot air balloon.



CREMATION DISPOSITION OPTIONS



TRADITIONAL BURIAL

Many families have cemetery space and don't realize they can use an existing grave to bury an urn. Burial is permanent and provides a comforting place to visit with other family members. Another cemetery option is placing the urn in a columbarium or niche.

CREMATION KEEPSAKES

Loved ones can retain partial amounts of the cremated remains in keepsake options such as jewelry. Keepsakes are a popular way to keep loved ones close. Other options for keepsakes include putting cremains into urns, glass art, tattoo ink, sculptures, and more!



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“My passion is there, my hands are in the dirt 365 days a year and sharing that with people and reaching them excited about food and plants, I think that’s to the good.”



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and then donate organic produce grown in an environmentally friendly way. “Everything we grow gets donated,” said Jon.

In the year-round program, they not only grow food during the growing season, but preserve food in the fall by making soup and pesto. In the winter, they utilize the greenhouse for growing. “We try to have a consistent weekly delivery to our food pantries,” said Jon. Last year they donated over 2,000 pounds of produce and hope to donate over 5,000 this year.

Holly Hill Farm

Certified Organic since 1998, Holly Hill Farm has been a working farm for over 20 years. It is now a nonprofit organic farm with an educational mission. The farmstand is open year-round on Saturdays from 10 am to 3 pm. The virtual farm stand is open on Thursday between 10 am and

midnight. You can pick up your order at the farm on Saturday during their store hours.

Holly Hill Farm turned twenty years old in 2022. They celebrated with a big Farm Fest for the public last September. It was so successful that they plan to do it again this fall.

Holly Hill Farm has been in the White family for five generations. Friends of Holly Hill Farm, a non-profit organization, leases the land and property from the White family. There is a plan in place to raise funds and purchase the farm in the next three to five years. The nonprofit group recently commissioned a feasibility study as the first step toward purchasing the farm.

Jon is still excited to be working at the farm, especially given the current climate crisis. “My passion is there, my hands are in the dirt 365 days a year and sharing that with people and reaching them and getting them excited about food and plants, I think that’s to the good.” ■



Jon Belber is Community Outreach and Engagement Director at Holly Hill Farm in Cohasset.



Cara Johnson found her calling as a Funeral Director after working in the restaurant industry for more than thirty years.

“I’m naturally a helper and nurturer. Funeral service satisfies these inclinations and makes this career a perfect fit for me,” said Cara.

CARA JOHNSON

Cara Johnson is a Funeral Director, Embalmer and Certified Funeral Celebrant. Cara found her calling as a Funeral Director after working in the restaurant industry more than thirty years. “I’m naturally a helper and nurturer. Funeral service satisfies these inclinations and makes this career a perfect fit for me,” said Cara. “Guiding people through their most difficult days and being able to provide a meaningful farewell for their loved one is an incredibly fulfilling profession.”

“Cara came into funeral service as a second career after spending many years in the hospitality industry as a waitress. She took it upon herself to make this new change in her life and sacrificed in order to attend mortuary school as well as completing a two-year apprenticeship. It was wonderful to see her smile as she received the news on the phone that she passed her exams and was officially a funeral director,” said John Keohane, Co-President.

Cara received training in funeral service and psychology and graduated Magna Cum Laude from Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science in 2018. She then apprenticed with Boyko Funeral Home in Fall River. Cara is a certified celebrant and crematory operator and arranger and also certified in Disaster Management training with DMORT.

“Our team has the ability to take training from various sources to improve their skills in order to serve families better each and every year. The celebrant training is a special program in that it helps families create a personal and meaningful tribute for their loved one,” said John.

Cara has three children and one granddaughter. She enjoys the ocean and motorcycle rides. Cara loves cooking gourmet meals, listening to live music, and going to amusement parks. ■

Why do I need a death certificate?

Death certificates are important because survivors need documentation to handle the deceased person's affairs and for their own records. You may need multiple copies of the death certificate to cash in life insurance policies, close bank accounts, change names, and cancel utilities. The death certificate is also an important public record. Keohane Funeral Home provides death certificates for the families we serve.

Within a few days of a loved one's passing, the death must be registered with the state. The funeral home enters the vital information on the state's website, along with the doctor's cause of death. It can take anywhere from one day to several weeks to get a death certificate, depending on the state, organization, and cause of death. The vital records office then issues copies of the death certificate. It is released to the town where the death occurred and registered with the state and the town.

Your funeral home will order certified death certificates from the town where the decedent died. Handling a person's estate and finances may require 10 to 20 death

certificates. Your funeral home can order additional copies. They can be also ordered through the state or county where the person died, or online through a third-party company such as [Vital Records Online](#). In Massachusetts, a death certificate is a public record that anyone can request from the town clerk.

The cost of a death certificate depends on your state. Expect to pay \$10 to \$15 for the first copy, and less for extras ordered at the same time as the original.

A death record signed by a local physician or coroner is needed to conclude a burial or cremation. This certification ensures that the disposition of remains is correct and that the person being buried or cremated is the one who died. In most cases, the coroner issues a Certificate of Disposition of Remains at the same time as the Death Certificate.

If you have additional questions about death certificates, please call 1-800-KEOHANE or read more about it on our [blog](#). ■



Death certificates are important documents necessary to handle the affairs of a deceased loved one.

WHY DO I NEED A DEATH CERTIFICATE AND HOW DO I GET ONE?

Read more on our Blog:

