

Backyard Gardeners Grow Fresh Food to Feed the Hungry through the Harvest Helpers Initiative and Keohane Seedling Program

Harvest Helpers is an initiative that grew out of the desire to not only feed those in need but to help keep them healthy as well. There is nothing healthier and more nutritious than fresh produce, but it is one of the most expensive items on the shopping list.

The Harvest Helpers program, a collaborative program between Keohane, Interfaith Social Services and the Weymouth Food Pantry, asks backyard gardeners to plant



John Keohane dropping off a few of the vegetables from Keohane's garden last summer to Interfaith's director Rick Doane.

an extra row of produce in their garden and donate the bounty to Interfaith Social Services' Pantry Shelf at 105 Adams Street in Quincy or the Weymouth Food Pantry at 1189 Commercial Street in East Weymouth.

"Harvest Helpers has been an awesome program. It's loved by both the Keohane staff and the community," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane.

"People in the community

who don't have enough to eat are touched that their neighbors care enough to grow food for them."

Keohane Seedling Program

Participating in Harvest Helpers is simple and rewarding and Keohane makes it even easier by donating seedlings to backyard gardeners in the community each spring.

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HINGHAM'S 4TH OF JULY PARADE HONORS VETERANS

Hingham's 4th of July celebration is a cherished tradition and a homecoming of sorts for those who once lived in Hingham to come from near and far to participate in the festivities.

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RELAY FOR LIFE BRINGS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER FOR A CAUSE

Relay For Life is a movement to celebrate cancer survivors, remember loved ones and raise funds and awareness in the battle against cancer...

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KEOHANE HELPS DECORATE GRAVES TO HONOR VETERANS ON MEMORIAL DAY

With the help of many volunteers, including a team from Keohane, Operation Flags for Vets will be placing 57,000 flags at each of the graves at the Massachusetts National Veterans Cemetery in Bourne for Memorial Day.

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Keohane
FUNERAL HOME
Quincy, MA

McDonald Keohane
FUNERAL HOME
Weymouth MA

Pyne Keohane
FUNERAL HOME
Hingham MA

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If gardeners do not have the opportunity to pick up seedlings during the week of Memorial Day, donations of any extra produce throughout the growing season will be gratefully accepted at either Keohane or directly to either of the community food pantries.

Even reluctant gardeners can participate by using the seedlings. "You don't have to be a skilled gardener," said Rick Doane, Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services. "Some water, some dirt and you're good to go."

"I can't tell you how joyful families are to get seedlings which they can plant themselves – both our clients and our donors," said Cas Casados, Director of the Weymouth Food Pantry. "Thanks to the generosity of Keohane Funeral Homes, we're delighted to be able to give our neighbors in need fresh, local produce."

For the past four years, Keohane has planted a garden at their Quincy and Weymouth locations to donate the harvested produce. Reardon credited Facilities Manager Scott Whittemore with maintaining the Keohane gardens. Last year, crops included tomatoes, green peppers, beans, cucumbers, zucchini, and herbs for healthy, nutritious, and home-grown produce to nourish those most in need.

Interfaith Social Services has a garden for their clients as well and is looking for volunteers to help plant and maintain the garden this summer to raise vegetables for their food pantry. The Weymouth Food Pantry maintains a slice of the immense community gardens at the Glastonbury Abby in Hingham where they put the seedlings from Keohane to use in a big way. They are also looking for more volunteers to help tend their garden at the Abby this summer.

Interfaith Social Services Wants Best Food Possible for Those in Need

Interfaith Social Services is a multi-service center founded in 1947 and dedicated to improving life for South Shore families and individuals in need. The center offers a variety of programs and services including rent and utilities assistance, a thrift shop and various other emergency assistant programs.

Interfaith Social Services also operates the largest food pantry on the South Shore. The Pantry Shelf serves more than 18,000 residents in ten communities each year and distributes 800,000 pounds of food yearly.

"The reason that the Harvest Helpers initiative is so important to us is because families that are living paycheck to paycheck on a budget can't afford fresh vegetables which are one of the most expensive things. When they come to us for assistance, we want to give them the best food that we can, so we try to have as much fresh produce as possible," said Interfaith Executive Director Doane. "We know that the community can help out with that, so we encourage people to grow vegetables in their back yard and donate the produce to us so we can give it to food pantry clients."

Doane and Reardon became acquainted through the Quincy Lions Club. Five or six years ago they started a conversation about how to collaborate to help the community. They discussed starting a community garden and donating seedlings and the Harvest Helpers program was born.

"Just because people are asking for a hand up, doesn't mean we should treat it as a hand out," said Doane. "So, we're just trying to give them the best possible food that we can."

While food pantries often initiate can drives, Doane wants donors to think of it as a food drive. "If you are feeding your child and you have a choice between a fresh potato and a canned potato, you're going to go for the fresh potato. That's what we would all choose, but for many years our clients didn't

have that option — it wasn't on the menu when they needed emergency assistance."

To volunteer at the Pantry Shelf, contact Paula Daniels, Volunteer Coordinator and Development Associate at 617-773-6203 ext. 28 or pdaniels@InterfaithSocialServices.org

To learn more about Interfaith Social Services, go to <http://www.interfaithsocialservices.org/>



Weymouth Food Pantry Offers Families Fresh Food Year Round

The Weymouth Food Pantry got involved in the Harvest Helpers program when Casados was hired as the director. Casados had previously volunteered at the Pantry Shelf at Interfaith and was familiar with the program. Doane encouraged Casados to apply for the director's position in Weymouth and then suggested the Weymouth Food Pantry join the program when Casados took the helm.

When it's not the growing season, the Weymouth Food Pantry gets fresh produce through their partnership with the Greater Boston Food Bank. They

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How You Can Help Harvest Helpers

Here are some ways you can participate in the Harvest Helpers Program:

- Pick up seedlings from Keohane, Interfaith Social Services or the Weymouth Food Pantry during the week of Memorial Day.
- Plant an extra row of vegetables in your backyard garden for the Interfaith Social Services' Food Pantry or Weymouth Food Pantry.
- Volunteer to help tend the Keohane Harvest Helpers garden, Interfaith Social Services Food Pantry garden or the Weymouth Food Pantry's garden at Glastonbury Abby.
- Donate any excess vegetables in your garden to Interfaith Social Services' Food Pantry from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm Monday through Friday

and until 7 pm on Tuesdays or the Weymouth Food Pantry from 9 am to 11:30 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 4 pm to 6 pm on the last Thursday of every month.

- Buy extra produce at the grocery store and donate it directly to the food pantries to be distributed to those in need.
- Make a donation to support the Harvest Helpers Food Program online.
- **To volunteer or get more information contact Rick Doane at 617-773-6203 or rdoane@interfaithsocialservices.org; Joe Reardon at 617-773-3551 or joe@keohane.com; or Cas Casados at 781-331-7682 or cas@weymouthfoodpantry.org.**

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also order fresh produce from local restaurant suppliers and local grocery stores and encourage donors to pick up extra produce when grocery shopping.

Beginning this summer, the Weymouth Food Pantry will be partnering with the Weymouth Farmers Market in order for families to use their food stamps to buy fresh produce. The food pantry will match the amount each family uses in food stamps in order to double the total amount going toward the purchase of fresh produce at the farmer's market.

"The fresh food programs at the food pantry are not only looking to

fill people's bellies, but to do so in a way that is really knitting together our community and is nutritious both in terms of relationships and people's diets that they really need to stay healthy," said Casados.

The Weymouth Food Pantry usually offers seven to nine fresh produce items along with staples such as beans, rice and cereal. The pantry also offers recipes to inspire their clients to try new produce that they might not know how to prepare to encourage families to choose the fresh food.

"The fresh produce is tremendously popular, especially with seniors," said Casados. "They grew up with fresh produce which was the staple at that time. The seniors practically swoon because they are so excited to get something grown in someone's back yard."

To volunteer at the Weymouth Food Pantry, visit their website's "Pitch In" page.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Operation Flags for Vets

Saturday, May 23 • 10 am

Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne

Volunteers are needed to place flags on 57,000 grave markers to honor our veterans for Memorial Day. Please bring a long-shanked screwdriver to aid in making starter holes for the flags.

Flag Collection

Sunday, May 31 • 10 am

Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne

Volunteers are needed to collect flags from 57,000 grave markers.

Fresh Bite 5k Run/Walk

Saturday, June 20

8:30-11:30am

Exercise for a cause — ending hunger in Weymouth! The whole family's welcome to join the Weymouth Food Pantry for a professionally-timed 5k that you can run or walk, an energizing Zumba warm-up, great music, face-painting, and a shorter stroller and dog-friendly walking trail. Head to www.freshbite5k.org to register and get all the details.

The Selectmen's Cup Golf Tournament

Monday, June 22 • 1 pm

South Shore Country Club

Support Hingham's 4th of July parade! Golf, bowling, and BBQ available for participants, sponsors and friends of the parade. There are many opportunities to support the parade even if you are a non-golfer. Shotgun start at 1 pm; Bowling and BBQ from 4-6 pm. For more information, contact Jim Murphy at jmurphy1sp@gmail.com

Golf & BBQ for \$125

Bowling & BBQ for \$85

BBQ only for \$35

Sponsorship opportunities available as well

Hingham's 4th of July Parade Honors Veterans

Hingham's 4th of July celebration is a cherished tradition and a homecoming of sorts for those who once lived in Hingham to come from near and far to participate in the festivities. It begins with a spirited road race and grand parade down historic Main Street which is decorated in red, white and blue.

To coincide with the 70th year anniversary of the end of World War II, the theme of the 4th of July Parade for 2015 is "Salute to Our Veterans" in recognition of the tremendous sacrifice of so many servicemen and women throughout America's history.



Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty ride on a float in the Hingham 4th of July parade.

The Veteran's Council of Hingham met with the Parade Committee in the fall to make a pitch for the theme to honor veterans in light of the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII. The Parade Committee saw the merits of the proposal but wanted to include all Veterans, not just those from WWII and not just those from Hingham.

"It sounded great to us, so we enlisted the Veteran's office in trying to get as many veterans as we can — not just from Hingham but from surrounding communities to really

have a large veterans presence throughout the parade," said Jim Murphy, Chair of the Parade Committee. "We're really hoping for a large group of veterans that we can put into the parade and really show the spectators what it's all about."

The Parade Committee also reached out to Linden Pond, a retirement community in Hingham of 2,000 residents, in hopes that many of the Veterans in that community will participate in the parade.

The "Salute to Veterans" theme carries well throughout the 4th of July celebrations including the 2015 button, the parade featuring veterans from WWII to the Global War on Terror, and the Hingham Citizen of the Year, Scott McMillan, who is also a Veteran.

Lisa Potts, Veterans' Benefits Administrator, hopes to have different vehicles, such as a WWII jeep or a motorcycle from Vietnam, matched with veterans from various eras to march in formation in sections

throughout the parade. The Hingham 2015 Veteran of the Year, Guy Stadig, who served in WWII, will have a place of honor in the Parade.

The parade starts at 10:00 am at the Hingham High School on Pleasant Street. It travels east on Pleasant Street; turns left onto Middle Street and then heads north on Main Street to Hingham Square. The parade turns right onto North Street and finishes at Station Street at approximately 11:15 am. The parade will be held rain or shine.

2015 Button Portrays Iconic WWII Image

The 2015 4th of July Parade Committee received hundreds of capable designs from Hingham fifth graders. After much deliberation, the Committee ended up with a tie breaking vote to finally choose the winning design drawn by Robin Penza from Saint Paul's School. Penza's button design includes a drawing of the Iwo Jima Memorial, a quintessential symbol of WWII and an appropriate theme to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII.



"The button just really connected with what we were hoping for. It is the iconic image from WWII," said Murphy.

Parade Buttons will be available at various stores in Hingham, St. Paul's School, and the Town Clerk's office. The Hingham-Hull Rotary will once again assist in supplying the buttons to local stores and selling the buttons at the 4th of July parade. Any donation is accepted for the button, which is one of many ways funds are raised to pay for the parade which costs approximately \$35,000 to produce. All of the funds are raised through business and private donations, and Keohane is proud to be a corporate sponsor of the Hingham 4th of July parade.

To Participate

The Parade Committee along with the Hingham Veterans Services invites veterans from Hingham and surrounding towns to participate in the parade. It is estimated that there are approximately 1,500 veterans in Hingham with less than a dozen WWII veterans.

Any veteran that would like to participate in the Hingham 4th of July parade, please contact Lisa Potts at pottsl@hingham-ma.gov or Jim Murphy at jmurphyfsp@gmail.com.

OUR TEAM

Megan Dunn



MEGAN DUNN, OF PEMBROKE, has been at Keohane Funeral Home for six years and a Funeral Director for the past two years. Dunn started at Keohane during her internship at Mt. Ida College in Newton and then continued after graduation with her apprenticeship. Once she completed her national and state board exams, Megan began her position as a funeral director. She exemplifies what makes an excellent funeral director — Megan is kind, compassionate and always willing to do whatever it takes to care for the families served at Keohane. She is always willing to help her fellow team members and truly understands the concept of service above self.

"Working with Megan is an honor. It's a pleasure to watch someone begin straight out of school and then grow into a talented professional through her own hard work and dedication," said Co-President John Keohane. **"She is both passionate about her family as well as her role as a funeral director. One can see that she chose the career that fits her personality, talents, and passions."**

Megan knew from an early age that she wanted to be of service as a funeral director. Megan's great-grandmother died when she was eight years old and following her grandmother's funeral she was intrigued about the business. After realizing that this was her life's calling, she asked questions about it to a friend of the family who was in the business, and he would occasionally take her to work with him.

"I knew I wanted to be a funeral director since I was eight years old. A lot of my friends and even my first grade teacher said, 'You're crazy!'" said Megan. She still keeps in contact with

many of those childhood friends who remember her unusual career choice and who are now proud of her for following her dream.

Megan grew up in Quincy and attended Quincy High School. Three years ago, Megan married her high school sweetheart, James Jr., who has been by her side since they were fifteen years old. Last May, Megan and her husband welcomed a baby boy, James III.



Megan Dunn has grown in her role at Keohane Funeral Home from Intern to Funeral Director.

"Megan has worked extremely hard to balance her home life and her work life. A funeral director has to be able to manage the stress, irregular schedules, and commitment to the families we serve. Megan does all of this on such a professional level that we wanted to thank her for her for being a role model to the entire team," said John.

Megan has a wide variety of responsibilities at Keohane, but her main responsibility is caring for the families they serve. As funeral director,

she meets with the families to discuss how they want to celebrate their loved one's life; contacts the cemetery or crematorium; orders flowers; submits the newspaper notice; arranges for the funeral service and then runs the service.

"At Keohane, we try to personalize all of our services for the loved one that we're serving," said Megan. "So every service is not a cookie-cutter service in any way. We personalize and add differences for all of our families so it's fitting for the families that we're serving."

Megan works as a team member and is always willing to pitch in where needed such as answering phones or processing paper work.

"Megan is the type of person to whom you immediately feel comfortable with — she is caring and considerate to the families suffering a loss," said Chairman Ed Keohane. "She has the ability to assist families with compassion, being always available to serve and attend to the needs of the family members. It's a pleasure to work with her and I appreciate her attention to detail and her twinkle in her eye!"

Megan helps her community in a myriad of other ways, including volunteering to put flags on Veteran's graves at the National Cemetery in Bourne for Memorial Day and working with the Maria Droste Services, a non-profit social service organization in Quincy run by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. Megan enjoys being a part of the Maria Droste fashion show each year, a major fundraiser for the agency.

Megan finds her work as a funeral director the most rewarding when she is able to help families in need. "At the end of the day, the most rewarding thing is when a family comes up to you and gives you a hug and says, 'I don't know how I would be able to do this without you. You have become a member of our family in the way that you've cared for us,'" said Megan.

"That's what I work for — knowing that I'm helping people at one of the most difficult times and knowing that I've made a difference."



Relay For Life Brings Communities Together for a Cause

Relay For Life is a movement to celebrate cancer survivors, remember loved ones and raise funds and awareness in the battle against cancer — a disease that effects almost everyone's lives in some way. Teams of participants, including friends, families, schools, businesses, and organizations, raise money for the American Cancer Society and then gather at a local track to take turns walking laps throughout the night. Teams set up campsites around the track and have the opportunity to participate in entertainment, activities, and special ceremonies throughout the night.

Relay For Life is a nationwide movement that involves local communities in the fight against cancer. Many Massachusetts towns have participated over the 30 year history, including Weymouth and Quincy on the South Shore. Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Relay For Life is the largest non-profit fundraiser in the world. Last year, both the Weymouth and Quincy events each raised over \$100,000.

The Town of Weymouth has held an annual Relay For Life event for the past decade — nine of which have been all-night events. However, this year, Weymouth is trying a daytime event in an effort to encourage even more participation from the community.

"We wanted to change things up this year and see what works best," said Rebecca Ybarra, the Weymouth Relay For Life Community Manager for the New England Division of the American Cancer Society. **"We hope the change will invite more people to come and will be more inviting to the whole community."**



Cancer survivors take the first lap around the track.

The theme this year in Weymouth is **"Carnival for a Cure"** and will be held on **Saturday, June 13 from noon until midnight at the Weymouth High School** at 1 Wildcat Way in Weymouth.

In Quincy, the community will gather for the fourth year to raise funds for the American Cancer Society and celebrate cancer survivors and their caregivers.

"The Quincy community really comes together for Relay For Life. Participants are extremely passionate and they truly make it a celebration all the way through," said Amanda Giangregorio the Quincy Relay For Life Community Manager for the New England Division of the American Cancer Society.

The theme this year in Quincy is **"Blast from the past, for a future without cancer!"** to celebrate every decade in honor of Relay For Life's 30th Birthday. It will be held on **Friday, June 26 starting at 6 pm at Pageant Field** in Merrymount Park in Quincy.

Celebrate, Remember, Fight Back

Each Relay For Life event includes three components — celebrate, remember and fight back. Cancer survivors and caregivers are the guests of honor and each Relay For Life event kicks off with a special recognition of them in the Opening Ceremonies. During **the Survivors Lap**, all present cancer survivors take the first lap around the track to celebrate their victory over cancer while cheering participants surround the track.

Cancer survivors take the first lap around the track.

Whether an overnight event or not, each Relay For Life experience includes a night time component. **"Cancer never sleeps, so we don't,"** said Ybarra.



The **inspirational luminaria ceremony**, which is held after dark, is a time for the community to honor and remember those who have lost the battle to cancer. The ceremony often includes a guest speaker or music. Participants break glow sticks and light paper luminaria bags in honor or memory of a loved one or caregiver followed by a silent lap around the track.

"It's everyone's favorite part of the event," said Ybarra. **"It's just so powerful."**

Each luminaria represents a person affected by cancer — family members, friends and co-workers — and is personalized with a name, photo, message

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Relay For Life Brings Communities Together for a Cause

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or drawing. Luminaria can also be dedicated in support of a Relay participant.

The traditional white luminaria bag with a candle in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one who has had cancer, or in support of a caregiver or participant can be purchased for \$10. The contribution helps save lives, give hope, and empower people through the American Cancer Society. To dedicate a luminaria, go to Luminaria.

*Start a team,
Join a team,
Be a donor!*

The Fight Back Ceremony is a powerful event to inspire Relay participants to take action and make a commitment in what they are willing to do for themselves, their loved ones, and their community to fight cancer year-round and to commit to saving lives, whether it's through staying well; being active; raising awareness or fundraising for cancer research.

Between each of those powerful ceremonies, Relay For Life provides fun activities and events through the entire event.

Start a team, Join a team, Be a donor!

Every year, the Relay For Life movement raises more than \$400 million. The American Cancer Society utilizes those donations by investing in groundbreaking research in every type of cancer and providing free information and services to cancer patients and their caregivers.

Learn more about Relay For Life at www.cancer.org/relay or relayforlife.org or by calling **1.800.227.2345** anytime. To sign up or support a team or participant, go to: <http://relay.acsevents.org/site/PageServer/?pagename=relay>

KEOHANE HELPS DECORATE GRAVES TO HONOR VETERANS ON MEMORIAL DAY

With the help of many volunteers, including a team from Keohane, Operation Flags for Vets will be placing 57,000 flags at each of the graves at the Massachusetts National Veterans Cemetery in Bourne for Memorial Day.

For the past three years, several members of the Keohane team have volunteered for this task, including Funeral Director Megan Dunn and Katie Ollman along with her three sons. A Keohane contingent will be placing flags again this year.

"I have had the honor of caring for the families of many veterans buried at the Massachusetts National Cemetery," said Dunn. "Placing flags on their graves for Memorial Day is a beautiful way to honor them for the sacrifices they made for our nation."

The volunteer project was initiated in 2011 by Paul Monti, the father of fallen soldier Jared Monti, who died in Afghanistan in June 2006 and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery for trying to save the life of a wounded comrade.

Megan Dunn places flags on the graves of Veterans at the Massachusetts National Veterans Cemetery for Memorial Day

Before the initiative began five years ago, flags were not permitted to be placed on the graves at the national cemetery in Bourne. Monti noticed that there were no flags on the graves when he went to visit his son's grave on Veterans Day. Cemetery policy prohibited them because the gravestones are flush with the ground and objects surrounding them made it difficult to trim the grass. Monti became a strong advocate to change the cemetery policy to allow grave decorations to honor Veterans. His efforts started a movement to place flags on Veterans graves on Veteran's Day and Memorial Day in national and private cemeteries throughout America.

If You Want to Help

The effort this year will begin on Saturday, May 23 at 10 a.m. at the Massachusetts National Cemetery, off Route 28, in Bourne. Volunteers are asked to bring a long-shanked screwdriver to aid in making starter holes for the flags.

Hundreds of volunteers, including Keohane team members, will first gather at the flagpole located at the end of Avenue of Flags for a brief ceremony and then scatter to place the flags on each of the graves in the cemetery. It is an honor that will take place in hundreds of cemeteries across the nation for Memorial Day.

Collection of the flags will take place at 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 31 at the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne.

For more information, visit Facebook pages Memorial Day Flag Ceremony and Operation Flags for Vets.



Pictured from left to right is Megan Dunn, Katie Ollman and Katie's son, Connor at the Massachusetts National Veterans Cemetery in Bourne.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

What Kinds of Burial Benefits are Available for Veterans?

Several burial and memorial benefits are available for eligible service members, Veterans, and family members, including a gravesite in a national or state Veterans cemetery; a Government headstone or marker; a burial flag; and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Some Veterans may also be eligible for burial allowances.

In order to make sure families receive all the benefits available to them, Keohane recommends speaking to their Veteran's agent or a Veteran's agency such as the American Legion to learn what their service member or Veteran is eligible to receive.

"Our Veterans deserve what they've earned," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane. "We encourage families to make sure that they are in touch with their Veteran's service agent or Veterans organizations to be sure that they're getting the benefits that they deserve. Unfortunately, many families are not aware of the benefits to which they're entitled."

Every Veteran who was honorably discharged is entitled to burial at a national or state Veterans cemetery. There are 131 national cemeteries, including the Massachusetts National Veterans Cemetery in Bourne. Veterans are also entitled to a military presence with honors rendered at their service with a flag presented to family after honors are rendered. The military honors depend on the rank of individual, but at a minimum there will be two individuals from the branch of service from which the Veteran served to play taps and fold and present the flag to surviving family members.

Keohane works with families to help them receive the benefits that they deserve. We will process the application for military honors and the application for a burial flag. And to honor every Veteran that we serve, our flag is placed at half-mast at the funeral home.

Burial Benefits for eligible Veterans

Veterans must have been honorably discharged to receive benefits. Other eligibility requirements may apply for various benefits so please check with your Veteran's agent or the U. S. Department of Veteran's Affairs at <http://www.va.gov/>

- **Burial allowance** — Some Veterans, including Veterans with a service disability or Veterans who died in a VA hospital, are eligible to a burial allowances which are flat rate monetary benefits that are paid for burial and funeral costs. Check here for full eligibility requirements.

- **Burial in national or state Veterans cemetery** — Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of the VA's 131 national cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave and perpetual care. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

- **Burial Flag** — a United States flag is provided, at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased Veteran who served honorably in the U. S. Armed Forces. Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin, as a keepsake, after its use during the funeral service. For those cemeteries with an Avenue of Flags, families may donate the burial flags of their loved ones to be flown on patriotic holidays.



- **Headstones, markers and medallions** — The Department of Veterans Affairs furnishes 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, at no charge to the families. For Veterans whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone and who died on or after Nov. 1, 1990, the VA may also furnish a headstone or marker to supplement the graves or a medallion to be affixed to a privately purchased headstone. Flat markers in granite, marble, and bronze and upright headstones in granite and marble are available.
- **Presidential Memorial Certificate** — A Presidential Memorial Certificate is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current President, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased Veterans.
- **Burial benefits for family members** — spouses and dependents may be buried in a national cemetery with the Veteran and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.
- **Other benefits for survivors** — The Veterans Benefits Administration offers a variety of benefits and services to spouses, children, and parents of Service members and Veterans who are deceased or totally and permanently disabled by a service-connected disability.

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