



Hospice of the South Shore Provides Compassionate Care for the Terminally Ill and Their Families

By providing medical care and comfort measures that allow patients freedom from pain, Hospice of the South Shore helps families and patients to focus on the quality of the life that a patient has left. Hospice of the South Shore services approach the end of life with dignity and loving care.

Hospice of the South Shore brings care to patients at the end of life in the comfort of their own homes or at assisted-living or long-term care facilities. Their multidisciplinary hospice care team offers everything from nursing and rehabilitation services for their patients to respite care and bereavement programs for patients' families.



A hospice nurse from Hospice of the South Shore provides comfort and care to her patient.

the aisle. They've also worked with schools to help a family member graduate early so a parent could attend. In some cases, they have even worked with the military service to provide leave for a family member to come home.

Hospice Services

Hospice care helps ease the transition for terminally ill patients and supports their families through a difficult time. Patients are most often referred for hospice services by their physician's office. "We care for over 500 patients every year," said Karkos. "We're

"Hospice is really about hope," said Brenda Karkos, Hospice Director. "It's about helping people reframe their hopes for their loved ones. We help them reframe their goals so that they are realistic and then figure out how we can help them meet those goals so that they focus on the things that are really important to them for the next six months or so."

For instance, Hospice of the South Shore has helped family members move up important events so that loved ones can attend. They helped a daughter plan an early wedding so that her father could walk her down

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THRIFT STORE IN WEYMOUTH GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

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THERAPY DOGS BRING CHEER, COMPANIONSHIP AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE IN NEED

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MANET COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN QUINCY, WEYMOUTH AND HULL SERVE THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

Manet Community Health Center believes that everyone, including the medically underserved, has the right to high quality and compassionate health care...

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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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there to support our patients and their families whether the patient lives at home or resides in a facility for long-term care or assisted living. Our services are comprehensive in terms of providing home care with the home health aid; nursing care; social work support; chaplain and spiritual support, as well as providing medications, supplies and medical equipment to keep the patient at home and comfortable."

When a family member or loved one serves as the primary caregiver for a patient at home, the hospice team provides support and care through scheduled visits. With expertise, respect and compassion, the team evaluates and addresses the needs of the patient and family during these visits. Hospice nurses are available twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week for emergency consultations and visits. If hospitalization becomes necessary, the hospice team continues to support both the patient and family during the hospital stay.

"We're there to teach the family and support the family to keep the patient at home — whether it's nurses, or aides or social workers, we come in and out at different times to help them. We do a lot of education, teaching and support," said Brenda Karkos.

The Hospice of the South Shore team includes nurses, rehabilitation therapists, social workers, aides, chaplains, volunteers and more to provide both nursing care and rehabilitation services for patients and support groups and bereavement programs for families. The wide range of hospice services include, but are not limited to, assessment of patient and family needs; evaluation of the home environment; chaplain services; dietary and nutritional support; homemaking and personal care services; IV therapy; pain and symptom control; rehabilitation services; respite care; skilled nursing services; social work and counseling services; as well as support groups and volunteer support.

Hospice Bereavement Programs

Hospice of the South Shore understands that the death of a loved one affects the entire family. Therefore, family-centered bereavement support is available for patients' families from the time of admission through thirteen months beyond a patient's death. Bereavement support is provided by the bereavement coordinator as well as nurses, social workers, chaplains, and specially trained bereavement volunteers.

Following a death in the family, bereavement support includes phone outreach; mailings to bereaved family members; support groups and programs which are ongoing as well as time-limited; and an annual service of remembrance.

Hospice of the South Shore recently ran a holiday support group for family members facing their first holiday without their loved ones. Support groups and special programs are open to members of the community as well as to our hospice families.

For more information, please call Aubry Hills, Bereavement Coordinator at 781-624-7046.

Quality Care for 36 Years

Hospice of the South Shore was the first Medicare-certified hospice program in southeastern Massachusetts and has been providing high-quality home health services for terminally ill patients and their families since 1980. They offer a family-centered approach to hospice care which considers the whole person and addresses physical, spiritual and emotional needs.

Hospice of the South Shore is part of the South Shore Hospital's Home Health Care division which provides a full spectrum of home health care solutions to South Shore communities, including visiting nurses, hospice and private duty nursing. South Shore Hospital's home health care services have been ranked among the nation's top 25 percent of home health providers by Outcome

Concept Systems, a leading post-acute health care information company.

Employees of the Home Health Care division, including Hospice of the South Shore, South Shore Visiting Nurse Association and Home & Health Resources, participate in the annual walk to raise funds for the Hospice of the South Shore. They named their 2015 crew "Team Pickles."

"'Pickles' is our term for great customer service! We actually give pickles to recognize the intuitive yet extraordinary customer service of our colleagues," said Tina Dwyer, Director of Care Coordination for the Home Care Division of South Shore Hospital.



The South Shore Hospital Home Health Care's "Team Pickles" at the 2015 annual walk of Hospice of the South Shore

Volunteer Hospice Services

At Hospice of the South Shore, hospice volunteers are important members of the hospice team. Hospice volunteers frequently work directly with patients and families and many become trusted friends and true companions to the patients and their families. Volunteers donate their time and efforts in a variety of ways, such as talking and reading to patients; writing letters for patients; preparing meals; providing transportation; running errands; or giving primary caregivers a little time off.

All volunteers are carefully screened, trained, and supervised. For more information about volunteering with Hospice of the South Shore, call 781-843-0947.

Therapy Dogs Bring Cheer, Companionship and Encouragement to Those in Need

Bentley, a Golden Retriever, had the perfect temperament to be a therapy dog. He was calm, intuitive, and loving. That's what inspired Jeanne Brouillette to become a certified dog therapy team with Bentley in 1998, and eventually found Dog B.O.N.E.S. Therapy Dogs of Massachusetts in June 2002 to bring more therapy teams to the Commonwealth.

The primary purpose of Dog B.O.N.E.S. (Dogs Building Opportunities for Nurturing and Emotional Support) is to provide therapeutic contact with the elderly, the disabled, or the young with registered and insured therapy dog teams. Therapy dog teams make a difference in human lives a variety of ways — they bring cheer to hospital and house-bound patients; companionship to seniors in nursing facilities and rehab centers; and encouragement to children in schools and libraries to promote literacy and to provide stress relief during exam times.

"We've been making visits in the state for fifteen years. Our goal is to bring as many therapy dogs into as many facilities where people can't have dogs or don't have dogs anymore. We will make visits anywhere we can provide a service," said Brouillette, President and Founder of Dog B.O.N.E.S.

All socially supportive animal-assisted visits are free of charge to any appropriate facility within Massachusetts and fulfilled by volunteer therapy dog teams. Dogs certified by Dog B.O.N.E.S. are family pets which are well-trained, affectionate, and obedient. Their handlers are volunteers who provide their time and resources.

Before establishing Dog B.O.N.E.S., Brouillette first began taking Bentley on visits to Boston Medical Center. Therapy dogs were not well-known visitors to hospitals or other facilities at the time. Brouillette recalled a visit when the pair were greeted by a crowd of hospital staff in white-coats as soon as they got off the elevator. The doctors

and nurses were excited to bring Bentley to see an elderly patient who was recovering from surgery after falling while walking her Golden Retriever.

"They were so excited that Bentley was coming and that he was a Golden Retriever. They wanted us to go right to her room. So all of us and Bentley went to her room. She was just so excited to have a Golden Retriever and the staff was so thrilled they could bring her a dog. So, they allowed Bentley to get up on her bed. He lay down right beside her and put his head on her chest. She patted him, and she was in love," said Brouillette. "She was one of our patients that we would visit weekly while she was there. And she was able to go home and take care of her own dog. She was so pleased and the medical staff was so ecstatic that it benefited everyone. It was nice for me to see that the medical staff really understood and appreciated how valuable a gift it was that they gave her."

Although Bentley passed in 2012, Brouillette now has a Cocker Spaniel named Beau and a new Golden Retriever named Remy who is still a spunky eighteen-month old and needs some time to settle down before being calm enough to become a certified therapy dog.

Dog B.O.N.E.S. Programs

Therapy dog teams can be found in a variety of places other than nursing homes, rehab centers and hospitals. Therapy dogs also visit schools and libraries to help promote literacy and provide relief during exam periods.

Their non-judgmental presence and unconditional love help children relax while they are learning to read or studying for finals. Other places that benefit from the unconditional love of a therapy dog are family shelters, support groups, hospice care and community disaster centers such as Red Cross shelters.

Many of the people in the therapy dog teams work in social services as speech



Therapy dogs bring smiles at a children's museum.

therapists, physical therapists, ministers, teachers and counselors. When their dogs accompany them to work they often interact with children, teenagers and other adults who are their clients and co-workers. In addition to her work as President of Dog B.O.N.E.S., Brouillette works full-time as an early intervention specialist for children ages birth to three. She often brings her therapy dogs to work with her to hang out with the kids.

Dog B.O.N.E.S. has over 500 active members who make visits. Membership is open to anyone who shares in the purpose of the non-profit agency and is willing to volunteer his or her time and resources. Dog B.O.N.E.S. offers five major services including:

- **Visits:** the primary element of the organization is therapeutic contact provided by registered and insured therapy dog teams.
- **Outreach:** They locate and register facilities that would like to receive visits by their therapy dog teams. They match their teams with facilities requesting visits and support both teams and facilities by setting up initial contacts and then providing ongoing assistance as needed.
- **Workshops:** Dog B.O.N.E.S. offers an Introduction to Becoming a Therapy Dog Workshop several times a year.

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Thrift Store in Weymouth Gives Back to the Community

Thirty years ago Cheryl Morris of Quincy had a dream to someday start a business that would give to those in need. While playing with her dog Hope, a Sheltie and certified therapy dog, the idea for Hope's Closet Boutique was born. The non-profit thrift shop on Broad Street in Weymouth resells gently-used women's clothing and accessories to raise money for local causes. All the clothing and accessories are donated and sell for under \$10.00. Morris gives the profits from her boutique to charities. In July of 2015, the used clothing store celebrated its one-year anniversary.

"We're a small little shop so we made it like a boutique, mostly for women. We have some great clothing, hand bags and jewelry — everything a woman would need — we have it here. Our prices are incredible — most of the untagged items run between \$5.99 to \$8.99. All our profits, after heat and rent, goes to charity," said Morris, President and Founder of Hope's Closet Boutique.

Morris donates the majority of the store's monthly proceeds to two charities: Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore in Weymouth and Mercy Ships. She also donates a smaller portion of the profits to a local charity each month and lists them on her website. Past monthly donations have included Father Bill's Place, Quincy Animal Shelter, Promises in Purple for Pancreatic Cancer, and the Weymouth Food Pantry, among others.

Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore is dedicated to helping homeless families on the South Shore of Boston by providing food, clothing, furniture, shelter education, and advocacy. They address a range of needs and help to find safe and affordable housing; build stronger families; and secure education and employment opportunities.

Mercy Ships is a global charity that operates a fleet of floating hospital ships in developing nations. Mercy Ships brings hope and healing to the poor by mobilizing people and



Hope's Closet Boutique in Weymouth sells gently used clothing and accessories for charity.

resources worldwide. Hospital ships are the most efficient way to deliver state-of-the-art medical treatment to regions where clean water, electricity, medical facilities and personnel is limited or nonexistent.

Nothing Goes to Waste

Morris makes an effort to use every piece of clothing that comes through her doors. She organizes the donations into three categories — for resale, for reuse and for recycle. The clothes in excellent shape get displayed in the front of the store for resale. The prices are incredibly low — blouses sell for \$5.99 and slacks for \$8.99. Morris sold a pair of Tahari jeans with a price tag of \$178 to a young woman for only \$8.99. The customer came back into the store in disbelief to inform Morris that she sold her a \$100 pair of jeans for under \$10. Morris was pleased and told the young lady to come back and find another pair.

The clothes that are stained but still in good shape are sent to Africa. The Treasurer on the Board of Directors of the boutique has a mother in Kenya who repurposes the clothing to make a fair living from them.

The last category is reserved for clothing that is in such disrepair that it cannot be sold or repurposed. Morris takes those items to a company called

Recycle That which makes the clothing into rags or insulation.

Hope Comes in Many Forms

Morris's Sheltie is the inspiration for Hope's Closet Boutique. But that's not the only way Hope brings hope and healing to others — she is a certified therapy dog and a graduate of Dog B.O.N.E.S. Therapy Dogs of Massachusetts.

"We have regularly visited clients at Marina Bay Skilled Nursing Center. It is such a joy to see the faces of the clients light up when they see Hope," said Morris, but she admitted that the pair have not been able to make as many visits together since opening the boutique just over a year ago.

New Initiatives

Morris, whose background is in the food business, is always thinking of new ways to give back to her community.

The next item on her plate is to open up the boutique to classes, afternoon teas and workshops. Classes will focus on self-esteem and afternoon teas will open up opportunities for women to talk about their hopes and dreams.

One of Morris' volunteers will lead a workshop in making mittens out of repurposed wool clothing. For a donation of \$10, women can have a night out learning to sew and having fun.

For more information visit the website at www.hopesclosetboutique.com; call 781-331-HOPE (4673); or email Cheryl@HopesClosetBoutique.com

OUR TEAM

John Comer



John Comer, Funeral Director at our Weymouth locations, has a passion for being a funeral director and is committed to providing each family with the utmost care and compassion at a time when it is needed the most. John works tirelessly for the families that he serves and is constantly trying to improve himself as a funeral director.

"I always had a passion for it," said John. "I love it. It's a way of serving families during a difficult time of their lives and to help them in a time of need. My goal is to always be a better funeral director." John enjoys the connections he makes with the families he serves and is gratified when a family he has worked with before requests to work with him again. Bonding with a family during a difficult time is a privilege.

John began working at Keohane Funeral Home in Quincy in 2011. For the past two years, John has worked at the Weymouth location. John enjoys working at Keohane Funeral Home because Keohane values the importance of celebrating the life and honoring the wishes of the loved ones and their families.

"John's father is very active in U.S. Veteran causes. John always goes above and beyond when serving the family of a veteran and to carry on the commitment instilled in him from his dad. We are very lucky to be able to work alongside John," said Co-president Dennis Keohane.

Although John knew he wanted to be involved in working with bereaved families since he was a young child, he actually began his professional life in hotel management. After graduating

from Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, John first worked in hotel management for a number of years before following his heart to become a funeral director.

John went back to school at the Funeral Institute of the Northeast to start his training as a funeral director. During that time, he became an apprentice at a funeral home in Waltham and stayed there for fifteen years after becoming licensed.



"I love it. It's a way of serving families during a difficult time of their lives and to help them in a time of need."

With three different Keohane Funeral Home sites in Weymouth, John stays busy working with various families at all three locations. But John is always available to help where he is needed. "We help each other out, we're a team. We have five buildings, there are times we go from building to building," said John. "Everyone pitches in and we all help out where needed."

On a day-to-day basis, John often directs a funeral in the morning and spends the afternoon setting up for visiting hours or meeting with another family in need. "Every day is different," said John. "It's a busy firm."

"John always comes to work with a smile on his face. He has non-stop energy and needs to stay busy. He is the first to help out his fellow team members with anything they may need. John would do anything for the families we serve. He is very genuine and caring. People sense that he is authentic the second they meet him," said Dennis.

John was born and raised in Quincy. His wife, Peg, is a Dorchester native. They now live in Holbrook and have two children, a twenty-year old daughter, Meaghan, who is a sophomore in college and an eighteen-year-old son, Brendan, a senior in high school. Over the years, Brendan has played hockey, soccer and other sports. John and Peg have been in the stands cheering him on, but now that Brendan is a senior, the sports are starting to wind down.

When he's not working, John loves spending time with his family. They enjoy traveling together and cheering for any Boston sports team. "My wife and my kids are everything to me and we have a great family connection," said John.

John is also a member of several civic groups, including the Randolph Lodge of Elks, the Holbrook Knights of Columbus, and the Sons of the American Legion in Hyde Park. John got involved with the Knights of Columbus through his father-in-law. He and Peg enjoy attending social gatherings with other friends at the Randolph Elks.

Day in and day out, John is always striving to be a better funeral director to help the families that he serves. "I love what I do," said John. "There are always challenges in trying to find the right balance. At the end of day, if a family comes up and says, 'Thank you, you've done a good job,' I know that I've made a difference at an important time in their lives."



Manet Community Health Center in Quincy, Weymouth and Hull the Serve Community at Large

Manet Community Health Center believes that everyone, including the medically underserved, has the right to high quality and compassionate health care that is easily accessible and close to home. Manet not only makes a difference in the lives of their many patients in Quincy, Hull, Taunton and surrounding communities; they also contribute to the well-being of the entire community on the South Shore.

Manet not only provides a full range of primary care services under one roof — including pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, and geriatrics — the community health center also offers supportive social services, as well as health, wellness, and educational

Upcoming Free Wellness Programs

As part of the Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative (QWWI), Manet offers health and wellness programs at no cost to participants and are available to adults age 18 and older who live and work in Quincy and Weymouth. Programs are scheduled on an ongoing basis at various times and locations within South Shore communities.

Programs include balance classes and Tai Chi for those 65 and older; tobacco cessation groups for those over 18; healthy eating for seniors and their families; health classes for hypertension patients and diabetes patients; and diabetes prevention programs. Locations for these programs are in a variety of neighborhood centers such as South Shore YMCA in Quincy; Whipple Center in Weymouth; Tufts Library and Fogg Library in Weymouth; South Shore Hospital in Weymouth; and Manet Community Health Center in Quincy.

To find out more, visit their website at www.quincyweymouth.wellness.org or call Janice Sullivan, Program Manager at 617-690-6397.



Joe Reardon, Manet Community Health Center Board President and Keohane Funeral Home Vice President (right), with Manet patients Stephen Gore and Robin Flint at the annual Dinner & Auction event.

programs. The North Quincy location houses the VA Boston Healthcare System's Quincy Outpatient Clinic as well as an on-site Vision Center and an on-site Pharmacy.

"We are dedicated to providing quality, accessible health care for all, regardless of walk of life, income, health coverage status, background or disease states. Our doors are open to serve any member of the community in need of healthcare and supportive services," said Cynthia H. Sierra, Chief Executive Officer.

Programs and Services Reach the Underserved

Through collaboration with other community-based organizations in the area, such as Meals on Wheels, Manet provides comprehensive health care solutions and education to the community at large. Many programs are open to all residents regardless of whether or not participants are registered patients at the health center. In order to reach underserved populations, Manet's community outreach efforts include Certified Navigators — counselors who offer free health benefits counseling and enrollment assistance; HIV/STI Prevention and Screening; as well as Opioid Overdose Prevention teams who participate in a variety of community events and trainings.

Manet also serves as the coordinating partner for the Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative (QWWI), a program funded through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund grant to help prevent and control chronic diseases in local communities. Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative partners offer a variety of interventions and health education programs free of charge that address such important health concerns as diabetes, hypertension, fall prevention for seniors, tobacco cessation and substance abuse.

Providing Healthcare for All for the Past 36 Years

In the true sense of coming together for the benefit of all, Manet Community Health Center is a non-profit health and social service provider founded by the community, for the community. In 1979, members of the Quincy community came together to find solutions to the South Shore's unmet health care needs, regardless of health insurance coverage or the ability to pay for services. The result was Manet Community Health Center, Inc., a not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) dedicated to providing preventive, primary and non-emergent urgent care to all. Manet has five medical practice sites and a diverse staff who are committed to ensuring that all patients have access to all levels of the health care system. In 2014, Manet served 14,500 patients.

Manet was first accredited by the Joint Commission in 1999, and was most recently re-accredited in June 2015. Manet's locations are also recognized as a Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home, by the National Committee of Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Manet continues to be guided by the community. In fact, as a federally qualified health care center, the majority of Manet's Board of Directors are patients at the center. "We're designated by the federal government

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Manet Community Health Center in Quincy, Weymouth and Hull Serve the Community at Large

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to be a community based health center, and part of what that means is that we're governed by a consumer or a patient majority board of directors," said Sierra. "Fifty-one percent per federal statute need to be patients of the health center. You're ensuring that the voice of the patient is leading the way for this health center. That's what makes us unique — that the patients really lead the way."

Volunteers Help Make it Possible

Manet offers a variety of volunteer opportunities for community members of all ages. Areas of need are:

- **General Clerical Assistance:**

Volunteers are welcome in the Marketing, Patient Accounts, Billing and other administrative departments to assist with a number of basic clerical tasks, including alphabetizing and filing, faxing, copying, data entry, etc.

Therapy Dogs Bring Cheer, Companionship and Encouragement to Those in Need

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Upon completion, handlers and their dogs with good basic obedience skills and appropriate temperaments may become registered and insured therapy dog teams.

- **Evaluation:** Dog B.O.N.E.S. also provides testing and evaluation for dogs already working but not yet registered.

- **Support:** Therapy dog teams and facility members receive ongoing support.

Therapy Dog Training and Certification

Dog B.O.N.E.S. has certified over 1,300 therapy dog teams over the past fifteen years. Interested parties must take the Introduction to Becoming a Therapy Dog Workshop which is offered monthly at several locations, including

Growth at Manet Community Health Center in Hull

In 1989, Manet assumed management of the Hull Medical Center, and the health care site has undergone numerous renovations since that time. Most recently, the Hull site received a \$500,000 expansion in 2013 through the federal Affordable Care Act which was part of a \$5.5 million award to Manet for expansion of its North Quincy and Hull sites. The expansion provided three new exam rooms, for a total of 12, to accommodate new patients and services.

North Quincy and Hull were both targeted for expansion because of healthcare needs in the area, as populations in Quincy and Hull have high rates of chronic disease.

In 2015 Manet Community Health Center received the #1 Readers Choice Award for physician offices in Hull.

In response to community need, Manet recruited several new providers to see patients in Hull at 180 G. Washington Boulevard. These include Nikita Fitzcharles, MD, Internal Medicine; An Phan, MD, Family Medicine; Jennifer Denton, MD, Pediatrics; and most recently, Gregory Smith, MD, Internal Medicine, who started practicing at Manet in January of this year.

Dr. Smith is excited to begin his tenure at Manet and is currently accepting new patients. Dr. Smith is bi-lingual and speaks both English and Italian. He attended medical school at the Universita Di Roma Facolta di Medicina in Italy. He practiced his internship and residency at St. Michael's Medical Center in Newark, NJ.

- **Special Events:** Manet hosts numerous events and participates in health fairs and other community events throughout the year. Volunteers may assist with logistics and preparation. Volunteers are especially needed to assist with Manet's Dinner & Auction in May and Health Center Week events in August.

- **Special Projects:** Volunteers may be needed to assist with special projects, such as our Reach Out & Read program and more.

Interested candidates may call
Sandra McGunigle at 617-690-3583
or 617-690-6323.

Pawtopia in Arlington and Weymouth Health Center in Weymouth. There are additional sites that are used on occasion including Franciscan Hospital for Children in Brighton and a new location in Danvers for the North Shore.

"We evaluate the handler and the dog. We certify a team, not just a dog," said Brouillette. "The dog may not act the same with other handlers."

The evaluation and orientation workshop meets once a week for three weeks. During that time, the volunteer instructors, who are members of Dog B.O.N.E.S., evaluate the skills of the team and instruct the handlers in best practices that the agency has developed over the years. Some teams do not pass the first time through the course, but can come back after they have practiced the required skills.

"People think we will train their dog to be a therapy dog, but that's not the case. We expect them to come with a well-trained, obedient dog," said Brouillette.

In order for therapy dog teams to participate in the Reading Partners Program, teams must receive additional training at the reading orientation given at the Dog B.O.N.E.S. annual meeting. Reading Partners travel to public schools and libraries to provide canine partners for children learning to read. Brouillette said that Dog B.O.N.E.S. receives many requests for the Reading Partner Program during Literacy Week and Reading Awareness days. Library and school visits can be a special event or a regular weekly or monthly visit.

Whether visiting patients in a hospital or reading with children at a local library, therapy dog teams spread love and companionship wherever they are needed. If you and your pet would like to become a certified therapy dog team, would like a team to visit your facility or want more information, check the DOG B.O.N.E.S. Therapy Dogs of Massachusetts website at <http://www.therapydog.info> or email dogbonestherapydogs@gmail.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

What Are Some Ways to Personalize a Funeral Service?

The most meaningful funeral services celebrate the unique life of an individual while honoring the values of the deceased's family. The more personalized the funeral service, the more touching and healing to friends and family who realize that the life of their loved one has been truly commemorated.

"There are many ways to personalize funeral and memorial services, and we make every effort to help our families incorporate those personal touches," said Co-President John Keohane.

Ways to Personalize a Funeral Service

When planning the funeral service, it can be helpful to make a list of the hobbies, places of interest and achievements of your loved one. Write down special memories you have of your loved one and include the qualities and personality traits that are most significant to you.

Here are some innovative ideas to honor your loved one's unique qualities, traits and interests and make the funeral service as personal and unique as your loved one:

- **Display Photographs:** Display framed pictures at the visitation and/or service; make a memory board using a collage of photographs; create photo keepsakes such as personalized funeral programs; bookmarks; and prayer cards.
- **Memory Table:** Display arts, crafts, medals, diplomas, awards, clothing or other personal artifacts that belonged to the deceased during the wake or service.
- **Poems and Memorial Verses:** Poetry, bible quotes and special verses are a moving way to pay tribute to a loved one.
- **Music:** Arrange for special musicians to play at the service such as a bagpipe payer, harpist, pianist, violinist, organist, or vocalist.
- **Ask Others to Participate:** Friends and family members can participate in the service by reading a favorite passage, a quote, or a poem. They can also share special memories of the loved one. Or ask them to write letters to the loved one which are then placed in the casket or cremated with the deceased.
- **Encourage Others to Share Memories:** Provide note cards at the visitation and/or service for people to write comments or share stories with your family.
- **Military Honors:** If your loved one served in the armed forces, we can help you arrange for military honors.
- **Unique Processional:** Plan a special route to the cemetery to drive by places that were special to your loved one; have the funeral procession led by a special

vehicle, such as a fire truck for a deceased firefighter; or let a loved one drive the hearse.

- **Symbolic Ceremony:** Release balloons, doves or butterflies at the cemetery or other special location as a celebration of your loved one's life and a symbol of the deceased's spirit.

- **Mementoes:** Provide parting gifts to those who come to



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the service to honor and remember your loved one, such as personalized plantable seed cards; seed packets of forget-me-nots; or your loved one's favorite recipe.

- **Reception:** After the funeral services, invite friends and family to a reception to share stories and special memories of your loved one. This could take place at the church, someone's home, at a hotel, restaurant, or country club.

Modern Technology

Today's technology offers many innovative and creative ways to incorporate personalized tributes into funeral services:

- **Video Tribute:** Create a DVD of photos and videos to play at the visitation or service. Use favorite musical medleys or traditional hymns significant to the deceased.
- **Virtual Attendance:** For family and friends who may not be able to attend the funeral, some funeral homes offer web casting in which the funeral service is broadcast over a closed link or website. If web casting is not available, technology such as Skype or FaceTime can be used on personal devices to include those who are far away or unable to attend.

A personalized funeral service brings closure and meaning to friends and family while celebrating a unique individual and honoring the values of the family left behind. For more ideas on how to personalize a funeral service, our staff will work with you to plan a personal and significant celebration of your loved one's life. **Call us at 617-773-3551 to discuss planning a personalized service.**