McDonald Keohane
WEYMOUTH
781.335.0045

Keohane
QUINCY
617.773.3551

Pyne Keohane
HINGHAM
781.749.0310

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Keohane
FUNERAL & CREMATION

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Making The South Shore A Better Place



Community Spotlight: Baking Up Hope This Holiday Season

A Q&A with Melissa Kaye, founder of the Joshua Kaye Foundation.

This year, Keohane Funeral and Cremation is partnering with Joshua Kaye Foundation to create Holiday Baking Bags. The program gives families facing food insecurity everything they need to bake for the holidays.

Melissa Kaye founded Joshua Kaye Foundation in memory of her son, Josh. She sat down with us to discuss how the program began, why it matters more than ever this year, and how you can help.

Q: For readers who are new to Joshua Kaye Foundation, what is its mission?

A: The entire foundation exists to spread love and kindness in memory of Joshua. We work to end hunger, promote animal welfare, and provide opportunities for children in need, while empowering youth to create positive change in their communities. All of those are directly tied to Josh.

Q: What was Josh like?

A: He was a little rascal. He was always pulling ridiculous pranks, but he did it with a twinkle in his eye and a dimple that got him out of trouble. He also cared so deeply from a really young age.

When he was four or five, we got a mailer about hunger during the holidays. He looked at it and said, “Mommy, what do you mean people don’t have enough food?” He was appalled that not everyone had what he considered fair.

When he was six, more than 100 dolphins were stranded on the Cape. He insisted that I call the International Fund for Animal Welfare, a global non-profit organization dedicated to rescuing and protecting wild and domestic animals, to ask how he could help. He then organized a fundraiser, made posters, asked his principal if he could talk to every class, and raised more than $1,000.

Q: How did the foundation begin?

A: Josh was just about to turn nine when he passed away. He went to a school with mixed-age classrooms, so he had friends from 6 to 15. None of those kids should have lost their friend. We knew right away we would start a foundation to keep his friends involved and to give others the chance to do the work we think he might have done. Today his best friends make up our junior board, and many of their siblings are ambassadors. Josh would have been a senior in college this year. We’re 100% volunteer, me included, and we had more than 450 volunteers last year.

Q: How did Holiday Baking Bags start, and why baking?

A: Josh loved baked goods and loved making them for other people. I still have a little note he wrote me that says: “Mommy, I love you so much. I love it when you bake me treats.



Volunteers at a Holiday Baking Bag packing event.

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We launched the program in 2020, a few months into the pandemic. I asked my friend Pam Denholm, who runs the Weymouth Food Pantry, what families needed most. Judy Berry from our advisory board had the brilliant idea to do something around baking because it resonated with Josh. That first year, about a dozen volunteers packed 200 bags on my front lawn, in masks. The next year we did 800, and for the last few years we've packed more than 1,600 bags.

Q: What goes into a bag?

A: Each bag holds about 17 pounds of ingredients. We include pantry staples families need whether they bake or not: flour, sugar, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Then we add the fun things that aren't affordable when you're stretched thin, like vanilla, chocolate chips and cinnamon.

When we're serving a specific community, we include culturally important ingredients, such as milks for tres leches cake or cardamom for Indian families. We want people to get what they can use.

Q: Who receives the bags?

A: We work with the Weymouth Food Pantry, South Shore Food Bank, Interfaith Social Services, Randolph Food Pantry, and the Marge Crispin Center in Braintree, among others. We also partner with the veteran services coordinator for the South Shore, because many veterans don't go to food pantries. We serve group foster homes and partner with schools that have high numbers of food-insecure students.

Q: Last year you made 1,650 bags. Why is this year's goal 4,000?

A: Because food insecurity has jumped. Today, 40% of households in Massachusetts are food insecure. That's more than we saw during the pandemic. There's always more demand than we can meet. We're already committed to at least 1,500 bags, and with community support, we'll get there.

Q: How did the partnership with Keohane begin?

A: Last year our Weymouth Festival of Trees committee asked Keohane to sponsor the festival, and they decorated a tree with gifts underneath. They knocked it out of the park. The festival funds Holiday Baking Bags for Weymouth, so when I met with Brigette and Dennis about this year's festival, they offered to collect ingredients and put up posters too.

Q: Some readers might not expect a funeral home to be part of a holiday giving program. Why does it work?

A: The team at Keohane is the difference. They serve our community in its darkest moments, and they do it beautifully. But they don't stop there. Many families who have lost a loved one want to do something positive, and I know we were in that position. Keohane understands that, as an organization and as individuals, they're true members of the community. Their culture of community is not for show. It's real.

Q: Is there a moment from the program that has stayed with you?

A: Last year, a woman found our address online and sent me a thank-you card because she was able to bake with her granddaughter.

But the biggest one came from Pam. One food pantry client told her they usually say no to holiday gatherings, but this year they could bake something to bring. That is why I will never stop doing this. Food insecurity brings social isolation. These bags let families keep their traditions, bring a plate of cookies to a neighbor or a party, and feel like they belong.

Q: How can people help?

A: We like to make it easy for people to support in whatever way works for them. Every dollar goes directly to our programs.

- Drop off ingredients at Keohane. Donations are accepted from the third week of October through the week before Christmas.
- Donate funds. Funding is the program's biggest need. A $35 gift supports one family, and sponsorships are also available.
- Rally your group. Sports teams, offices, service clubs, churches, and classes can run a fundraiser or collect ingredients and pack bags together.
- Volunteer. The foundation hosts packing events each year, and volunteers as young as four are welcome with a parent. Reach out to the foundation to get involved.

Learn more or donate at joshuakayefoundation.org.



Andy and Melissa Kaye



Celebrating Excellence in Funeral Service

Left to right: Nicole Plaisted, Francesca Raymond, John Keohane, John Congdon, Corinne Leary, Prudence O'Connor, Dennis Keohane, Frank Maggiore, and Margaux Bettencourt

Keohane Funeral & Cremation is proud to celebrate three four team members recognized by the Massachusetts Funeral Directors Association (MFDA) at its 2026 Funeral Service Appreciation Night in Framingham.

Funeral directors John W. Congdon and Corinne Leary were each honored for reaching 10 years of licensure. Francesca Raymond was installed to the MFDA Board of Directors. Prudence "Pru" O'Connor received the MFDA President's Award, recognizing her dedication, leadership potential, compassion, and commitment to serving others.

Congratulations to John, Corinne, Francesca and Pru on these well-deserved honors! We're grateful for their contributions to Keohane and the families we serve.



Corinne Leary celebrating 10 years of licensure



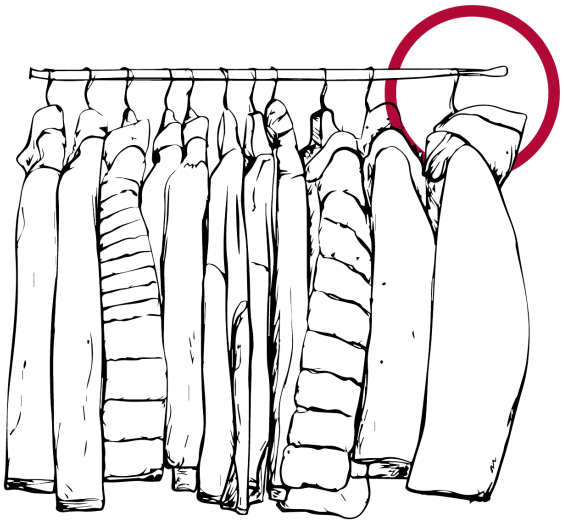
John Congdon celebrating 10 years of licensure



Prudence "Pru" O'Connor with the President's Award

Coat Drive

2026 ANNUAL



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Dependable Cleaners

Helping Keep Our South Shore Neighbors Warm This Winter

As temperatures drop, Keohane Funeral & Cremation and Dependable Cleaners are teaming up once again to help keep South Shore families warm. Their annual coat drive runs through the end of November, collecting new and gently used coats for adults and children. Interfaith Social Services will distribute the donations to neighbors in need. Since the partnership began in 2012, nearly 10,000 coats have been collected. This year, the partners hope to double that number and help even more local families stay warm.

A Partnership Built on Community

For Keohane, the coat drive is a natural extension of its commitment to the community.

“Keohane is a gathering place for the community during difficult times,” said John Keohane, Co-President of Keohane Funeral & Cremation. “People know us and know where we are, which makes us a natural place to drop off donations. And Dependable is named that for a reason. They’re always there to lend a hand, and the coat drive wouldn’t be possible without them.”

Dependable Cleaners has participated since the drive began, professionally cleaning every donated coat so it’s fresh and ready to wear. CEO Christa Hagearty said delivering the coats to Interfaith Social Services is one of the most rewarding parts of the effort.

“Both our companies love being an active part of the communities we’re in,” said Hagearty. “They’re an impressive organization that makes a meaningful difference, and the need continues to grow every year, especially with the cost of food and gas so high.”

“It’s about looking out for each other,” Keohane added. “The coat drive is a great way to lend a helping hand to those who may need a little extra help.”

How to Help

As you tackle your fall cleaning, consider donating coats that are no longer needed but still have plenty of life left. Every donation helps a neighbor stay warm, and this year, organizers hope to make an even bigger impact.

Coats for adults and children are welcome, and donors will receive a coupon for 25% off coat and jacket cleaning at Dependable Cleaners.

Where to Donate

Keohane Funeral & Cremation

- 785 Hancock Street, Quincy
- 21 Emerald Street, Hingham
- 809 Main Street, South Weymouth

Dependable Cleaners

- 391 Washington Street, Braintree
- 66 South Main Street, Cohasset
- 1141 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester
- 1376 Washington Street, Hanover
- 298 Main Street, Hingham
- 170C Shipyard Drive, Hingham
- 581 Adams Street, Quincy
- 320 Quincy Avenue, Quincy
- 365 Gannett Road, Scituate

KEOHANE IN THE COMMUNITY

To best serve our communities, we need to actively support them.

We are proud to sponsor these local organizations, among others:

Thoughtfully Reimagined: Creating Comfort at Keohane

For generations, our work at Keohane Funeral & Cremation has centered on caring for families. As what families need and expect continues to shift, we believe the places where they come together to remember and celebrate their loved ones should shift as well. That's why we're updating our funeral homes with a fresh, welcoming style that combines considered design with the comfort and care our South Shore neighbors have always counted on.

We set out to create a setting that feels less like a conventional funeral home and more like a private retreat: warm and inviting, with rooms that feel special while still honoring the meaningful moments families share there.

To make this happen, we partnered with Jessica K. Smith, Principal Interior Designer at Studio 59 East, Inc., whose work can be seen at well-loved South Shore spots such as Alba on 53 and Leo's Braintree. Working side by side, we aimed for interiors that feel current and comfortable while staying true to the important role these rooms play.

"Our goal with the Keohane location redesigns was to create an environment that feels more reflective of how people live today: residential, comfortable, clean, and modern," said Smith. "Visiting a funeral home can understandably be an emotional and stressful experience, so we wanted the interiors to immediately create a sense of ease and comfort."

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Nothing was left untouched. The renovations replaced every surface, from carpeting and wallpaper to furniture, artwork, and light fixtures. Contemporary chandeliers serve as eye-catching focal points, while well-chosen lighting and comfortable seating give each room a warm, welcoming feel. New artwork inspired by our seaside towns creates a personal link to the South Shore, the place we're proud to call home.

Smith and her team treated the project much like the design of a boutique hotel, pairing a polished look with familiar, comforting details. The outcome is a modern space that is both memorable and relaxed, where families can come together, reconnect, and share their stories.







North Weymouth Location







Hingham Location

The transformation is underway across our locations. Our North Weymouth renovation wrapped up in 2023, and our Hingham location followed at the end of 2025. Work at East Weymouth is set to begin in November 2026, and South Weymouth will follow in 2027. Each renovation is designed around its own building, but every one reflects the same dedication to quality, comfort, and care in the details.

At its core, this work goes beyond how our buildings look. We want each family who comes through our doors to feel welcomed and supported. In Smith's words, the aim is for people to feel "cared for, comfortable, and a little more at ease during a difficult time."

Our spaces may look different, but what we stand for hasn't changed: offering compassionate care and helping South Shore families honor the people they love most.

★★★★★

"Kathy Kane was absolutely amazing. She was quick to respond and answered all my questions. Everyone at Keohane was wonderful, and the Aftercare program is excellent. I can't thank you enough."

- Kathleen M.

★★★★★

"Keohane Funeral Home has been more than understanding and helpful. I worked with Nicole, and she was wonderful. I didn't even know about the Aftercare program, but having this kind of support after a loved one passes is a blessing. I can't thank you enough."

- Rudy M.

Remembering Arthur L. Clifford



Arthur “Artie” L. Clifford, Jr. of Quincy, Mass. Vietnam combat veteran of the 101st Airborne Division.

Born on October 11, 1946, Artie was the son of the late Arthur L. Clifford and Eileen (McCabe) of Dorchester and Quincy, predeceased by his beautiful and kind wife Cindy (Massey) in 2004. Dear brother of Nancy Clifford Widmann of San Diego, CA formerly of New York and Jane Christine Clifford also of San Diego, CA. Uncle of Sabina Widmann Henderson (Brian) of San Diego and granduncle to her daughters, Luna and Stella. Cherished brother-in-law of Gail Costeles and her husband Bob Krim of Weymouth, and uncle to Melissa Cochrane of Braintree and several grandnieces and grandnephews. Artie is also survived by his beloved best friend and mentee, the Honorable Governor of Massachusetts Maura T. Healey.

A standout athlete who graduated from Archbishop Williams High School and attended Cushing Academy, Artie was drafted as a pitcher and signed by the Detroit Tigers organization in 1968. Artie answered the United States’ call to serve in Vietnam with pride and honor, spending one year in combat shortly after beginning his baseball career. After honorably completing his military service, which included long-range reconnaissance in the Southeast Asian jungles, Artie returned to playing professional baseball until an injury shortened his career. Artie spent several years playing in the Boston Park League, where he pitched with several Boston legends.

For over thirty years, Artie was an integral part of the Harvard Athletics Department where he mentored generations of Harvard students. Like his adored mother, Eileen, Artie was notable for his quiet strength, his wry sense of humor, and his kindness – especially to the athlete who didn’t make the team, to women athletes struggling for equal opportunity, and to those blue-collar students who were finding their way at Harvard. Artie rooted for the underdog in his life and at Harvard, and underneath his inscrutable façade was a heart of gold.



Artie’s funeral featured a showcase of athletic memorabilia commemorating his time mentoring students as part of the Harvard Athletics Department.



Artie’s friend, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healy, and Artie’s niece, Sabina Widmann Henderson, celebrating Artie’s life at his funeral.



Pre-Planning at Keohane

Pre-planning allows you to make important decisions in a relaxed atmosphere, enabling you to control each aspect of funeral planning long before the actual need. Most importantly, it is a way you can make a very difficult time for your family a little bit easier.

Thinking about one's funeral leaves most people feeling a little uneasy, but more adults are finding that preparing for the inevitable is a wise decision that offers great emotional and financial security. The process includes meeting with one of our funeral directors, discussing your needs and desires, providing background and biographical information, listing your family, selecting merchandise, and discussing payment options. In cases where someone has taken the time to plan ahead with Keohane, the family often mentions how that decision made the funeral process so much easier on them.

SECURE ONLINE PRE-PLANNING FORM

www.keohane.com