



Angel Gowns Donated to Grieving Families for Lives Lost Too Soon



Angel gowns, sewn from repurposed formal wear, are donated to hospital NICU centers and funeral homes for families in their time of need.

Pat Marsters of Pembroke, founder of Treasures of Our Hearts, understands the grief of losing a baby after the loss of her one-week old daughter, Danielle, forty-four years ago. Since 2017, Pat has been giving back to others through her charity, In Memory of Danielle Angel Gowns, which repurposes wedding gowns and other formal wear into infant and baby burial gowns and wraps.

The angel gowns are provided at no cost to grieving families who have lost infants. **"Babies need to be buried with dignity. Whatever family needs it, they're going to get it. I don't want anything in return. I will give them prayers,"** said Pat.

"Pat had lost her daughter when she was a baby after open heart surgery and since then Pat had been trying to find ways to give back in her memory and thus has created this organization which has provided gowns almost all over the United States," said Keohane Funeral Director Megan Dunn.

Megan found Angel Gowns in Memory of Danielle on Facebook and reached out to Pat to request gowns for Keohane Funeral Home. "We serve so many families experiencing infant loss and there was no current market for something like this that I know about. I know it would mean a lot to many families," said Megan. "Offering these gowns to a grieving family means a lot to me as a funeral director and a mother. Caring for a family that has lost a child is one of the hardest parts of our job."

Pat works with over 60 volunteer seamstresses from New Hampshire all the way to Florida who turn these treasured dresses into beautiful infant-sized angel gowns which are donated to hospitals and funeral homes across the country. Pat has delivered gowns to Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital in Tennessee and has sent gowns as far as California.

Pat was inspired to start Angel Gowns in Memory of Danielle after speaking to another mother from Dorchester who had lost her infant son a few months prior. "We connected and I had told her that I lost my daughter and it's been many years. You never forget, but it gets better," said Pat.

They researched angel gowns online and realized that the gowns had to be purchased for \$30.00 each. Pat did not feel right about someone making a profit on an infant's death, so they started their own charitable organization. Their partnership lasted several years but has since dissolved. Pat continues the mission to provide angel gowns to any family at no cost.

Continued on page 5



SHOPPING SMALL HAS A BIG IMPACT IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

When shopping throughout the holiday season, please keep these local businesses, restaurants, and festive events in mind.

Story on page 2

5 REASONS TO SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

With the coronavirus pandemic leading to the temporary shut down and phased re-opening of scores of local businesses, shopping locally has never been more important...

Story on page 3

PLANT.GROW.SHARE.

a fresh food initiative for our local food pantries

Even with the changes made to this year's program due to COVID-19, it's been an amazing Plant.Grow.Share. season!

Story on page 4

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY HONORS AMERICAN HEROES

December 19 is Wreaths Across America Day — a day set aside to honor American veterans.

Story on page 6



Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Quincy, MA

McDonald Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Weymouth, MA

Pyne Keohane

FUNERAL HOME
Hingham, MA

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SHOP LOCALLY IN HINGHAM

Discover Hingham

Downtown Hingham stretches from beautiful Main Street to picturesque Hingham Harbor and offers an eclectic assortment of restaurants, shops, museums and other treasures. Visit the [Discover Hingham website](#) to explore all Downtown Hingham has to offer, including these special events:

Third Thursday Strolls: Shop, dine and explore on the third Thursday of the month. Participating stores from Hingham Center through Downtown and to the harbor will stay open until 7:00 pm on November 19 and December 17. Free 30-minute tours of historical downtown Hingham offered on the hour at 4:00, 5:00, 6:00 and 7:00 pm.

Holly Jolly Hingham: A month long celebration of merriment and festivities to accompany your holiday shopping. Festive events kickoff Thanksgiving weekend and run up until Christmas eve. These events will take place on Saturdays and Thursdays throughout December. Upon the town's approval, it is planned to include horse drawn hayrides, an ice sculpture, Santa's mailbox, projecting *It's a Wonderful Life* on the tunnel cap, and a luminaria festival.

SHOP LOCALLY IN WEYMOUTH

Sally's Sweet Shoppe: is owned and operated by long time Weymouth residents Sally and Glenn Pelrine. The business started off as a part-time home-based business until moving into the store front on Washington Street in Weymouth in 2013. At Sally's Sweet Shoppe, they take great pride in the products they make and package. They use only the freshest and finest ingredients available.

Previte's Marketplace: has resumed regular business hours. For generations, **Previte's Marketplace** has been the neighborhood butcher shop offering quality meats, deli products, party platters, and grocery items, including local seasonal produce; Previte's own pasta sauces and marinades; Fratelli's bakery items; and Weymouth Lobster Pound seafood products. Stop by for delicious deli menu items, such as sandwiches, salads and hot subs.

George Washington Toma TV & Appliance, Inc: As an essential business, Team Toma is open for business and can help you buy, deliver or service any appliance or TV. You can visit the store in East Weymouth or take advantage of their [online store](#). They are working with a limited staff and reduced hours, so visit the [website](#) or call (781) 335-6435.

SHOP LOCALLY IN QUINCY

Quincy Square VIRTUAL Winter Market

Unfortunately, the Quincy Chamber's 2020 Winter Market outdoor event has been cancelled, but the Quincy Chamber is sharing many ways to support local artisans and shops online. For a list of vendors and frequently asked questions, visit the Quincy Chamber of Commerce [website](#). There is also a new [Facebook group](#) to support local vendors.

Market Pantry at Bonez Brothers

Champion Barbecue Man Todd Noon is hosting a *Farmers First!* market store featuring [Quincy Farmers Market](#) vendors including: Ackermann's Maple Syrup, Golden Rule Honey, Hippy Pilgrim Seasoned Salts, Lara's Cuisine Home Made Italian Specialties, and New England Fishmongers Finlander Fish Skin Doggy Treats. Pick up some of your favorite farmers market treats or get some dinner to go at [Bonez Brothers BBQ](#). They also have egift cards available [online](#) which make great stocking stuffers! Watch for their weekly and daily specials announced on their [Facebook Page](#).



Horse-drawn hayrides will be available in Downtown Hingham during the Holly Jolly Hingham celebrations.

5 REASONS TO SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

With the coronavirus pandemic leading to the temporary shut down and phased re-opening of scores of local businesses, shopping locally has never been more important to support local restaurants and stores. A survey from [Tech.co](https://www.tech.co) revealed that **80% of small business owners say COVID-19 has hurt their businesses.**

"Shopping local is more important than ever to sustain local businesses. Independent business owners don't usually have the cash reserves to weather months of limited revenues," said David Naumann, Retail Industry Analyst in [retailwire.com](https://www.retailwire.com).

Here are 5 Reasons to spend your cash closer to home:

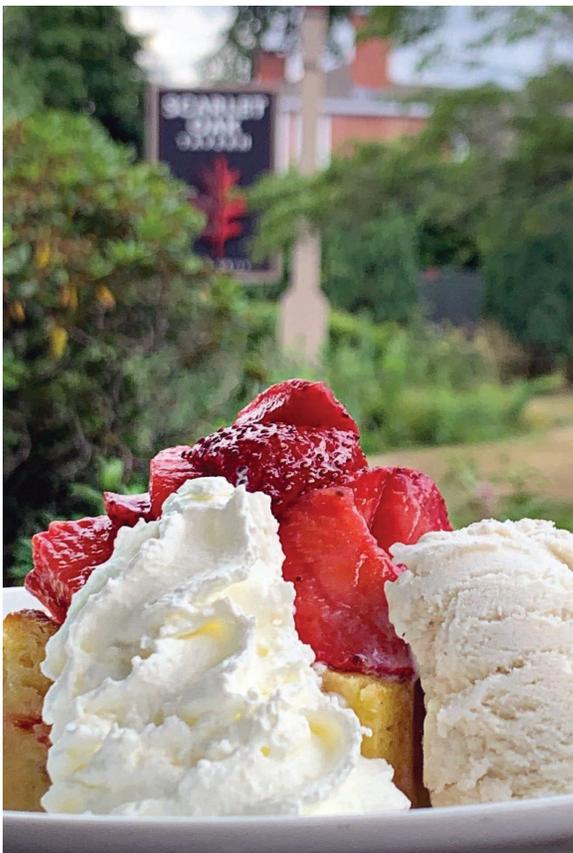
- 1. Support the Local Economy:** \$73 of every \$100 dollars spent at a locally owned business remains in the local economy, compared to \$43 of every \$100 spent at a non-locally owned business or chain store. And sales taxes help fund our communities and provide vital community services such as public safety, road repairs and trash collection.
- 2. Locally-Made Products:** Local businesses often sell regional products which helps preserve the community's character and creates more local jobs. It helps support local artists, artisans, and crafters in the community as well.

- 3. Support Local Charities:** Nonprofits receive greater support because local business owners donate more to local charities than non-local business owners.
- 4. Reduce Environmental Impact:** Small local businesses in the town or village center provide centralized shopping that is much friendlier to a community's carbon footprint than out of town shopping malls. This generally means contributing less to sprawl, carbon emissions, congestion, habitat loss, and pollution.
- 5. Feel Good About Your Purchases:** When you buy from a local business, they tend to provide better service, have knowledgeable sales staff, hire local people, provide jobs for local teenagers, and create community.



When shopping for holiday gifts this year, remember that **Saturday, November 28 is Small Business Saturday**, part of the "[Shop Small](https://www.shopsmall.com)" movement started by American Express to encourage holiday shoppers to shop local during the holiday season.

SUPPORTING SOME OF OUR FAVORITE LOCAL RESTAURANTS



According to [retailwire.com](https://www.retailwire.com), a survey of over 1,400 restaurant owners conducted in April by The James Beard Foundation found only one in five restaurant owners in cities that were shut down were certain that they will be able to sustain their businesses until normal operations resume. Once they re-opened, operating within social distancing guidelines and a slow return of customers significantly limited income for local restaurants.

With the coronavirus pandemic affecting revenue opportunities for our local restaurants, Keohane Funeral Home ran a summer giveaway on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) to support local restaurants and to bring some good cheer into the community.

For a seven-week period, we gave away \$50 gift cards to local restaurants and received a tremendous response. Winners were selected at random and the giveaway was not sponsored by or affiliated with Facebook. Restaurants included:

- [Alba](#) in Quincy
- [Stockholders](#) in Weymouth
- [Scarlet Oak Tavern](#) in Hingham
- [Mad Hatter](#) in Weymouth
- [Greenside Grille](#) in Hingham
- [Jakes](#) in Hull
- [Rozofa](#) in Quincy

Jen Alberino commented: "Keohane has always been the best. This is so kind to do. Very much appreciated during these difficult times for many families. Thank you."

Plant.Grow.Share.

a fresh food initiative for our local food pantries



The gardens at the Weymouth Youth & Family Services Teen Center

Even with the changes made to this year's program due to COVID-19, it's been an amazing Plant.Grow.Share. season! Through the wonderful work of our Plant.Grow.Share. partners, the many volunteers and the wonderful community support, we were able to **PLANT rows of veggie seedlings, GROW fresh food, and SHARE our harvests with local food pantries.**

The Plant.Grow.Share. initiative is a collaborative effort between Keohane Funeral Home, [Interfaith Social Services](#), the [Weymouth Food Pantry](#) and the [Milton Community Food Pantry](#) to encourage backyard growers to donate produce to local food pantry clients. This year, the Plant.Grow.Share. program shared an educational video series, a free tomato plant giveaway, and many opportunities for the community to come together to help our neighbors.

"Even with the changes made to this year's program, it was inspiring to see so many people get involved with Plant.Grow.Share. and help our local

food pantries," shares John Keohane, Co-President of Keohane Funeral Home, "It's been wonderful to see the many gardens being grown and tended to, from the Girl Scouts taking great care of the garden at Interfaith Social Services in Quincy to the amazing volunteers at the Old South Union Church in support of the Weymouth Food Pantry. We also want to thank the grocery store shoppers willing to share their produce purchases."

We would also like to extend a special thanks to Jon Belber of Holly Hill Farm. This year he shared his knowledge and expertise through a Plant.Grow.Share. video series. Visit the links below to watch!

[Growing and tending to tomato plants](#)

[Harvested garlic and how to reuse the same garden space to plant beans](#)

[How to turn food waste into good, healthy and natural fertilizer](#)

We also wrapped up the Plant.Grow.Share. video series with a [special thanks from Joe Reardon!](#)



The garden at Interfaith Social Services in Quincy being tended to by Girl Scout Troop 68282 and their Troop Leader, Donna Yang.



Jon Belber of Holly Hills Farm.

Angel Gowns Donated to Grieving Families for Lives Lost Too Soon

Continued from page 1

"Little did I know how this would take off. I would say we've made close to 1,000 dresses," said Pat. "I couldn't do this if it wasn't for my team. And I couldn't do this without people out in the public donating and being supportive."

Pandemic Problems

Every part of society has been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, including charitable organizations like Pat's. Prior to the pandemic, the seamstresses would gather to deconstruct the wedding gowns and prom dresses and refashion them into the angel gowns. Some would bring their portable sewing machines and teach others with less sewing experience. Now, each seamstress must work from home. They drop off angel gowns that have been sewn to Pat's storage unit and pick up donated wedding dresses and other gowns that have been taken apart to work on the gowns at home.

While a friend had recently offered the waiting room of her dog grooming business for a sewing circle, Pat declined. "I don't want anyone getting sick," she said.

Pat is involved with other charitable projects including knitting and crocheting baby hats and blankets for the NICU at hospitals, including Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Her charities also take donated baby dolls, wrap them in blankets and donate them to Alzheimer patients at nursing homes. Another project is to stuff backpacks with fleece blankets, stuffed animals and toiletries for children in foster care.

The Christmas Angels, which adopts families in need to help with Christmas gifts, is currently on hold due to coronavirus concerns. Last year they helped 52 families as well as St. Anne's Home for children in Methuen.

Pat's organization, Treasures of Our Hearts, organizes events, such as craft fairs. Those events raise money to fund the angel gowns as well as making donations to other charities. Since the start of the pandemic, many craft fairs and other events have been cancelled, cutting off the funding necessary for the angel gowns and other charitable works. "We're hurting right now because of COVID. If we didn't have these craft events, we wouldn't have the money to carry on these other things," said Pat.

"I want Pat to know how much we appreciate her and her organization. This idea comes from a place of compassion and empathy," said Megan. **"It is a charitable organization run by kind and selfless people who are working with fabrics donated from the most important events of a person's life. A wedding day represents unconditional love, family and hope and that is what any parent would want for their child.** There is so much kindness in this program and these gowns.

How You Can Help

To volunteer or donate a wedding gown, prom dress, mother-of-the-bride dress or other formal wear, email treasuresofourhearts2@gmail.com. Not only white wedding dresses, but colored and black gowns are needed as well. Drop-off locations include Fresh N Clean Dry Cleaning and Tailoring in Pembroke, JC Fast Tailors & Dry Cleaners in Hanson and Dependable Cleaners in Hanover.

Monetary donations are accepted as well. While donations go directly to charitable concerns, Treasures of Our Hearts is not currently a 501c3 non-profit organization. Contact Pat Marsters at treasuresofourhearts2@gmail.com to make a donation.



**PLANT.
GROW.
SHARE.**

THERE'S STILL TIME TO DONATE!

Produce donations are very important to local food pantries and monetary donations are very important as well. Food pantries have strong buying power and monetary donations go a long way to help those in need.

Monetary donations can be made by visiting the following websites:

Interfaith Social Services

www.interfaithsocialservices.org/donate

Weymouth Food Pantry

www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page

Milton Community Food Pantry

www.miltonfoodpantryma.org/donate

For questions or to volunteer for the Plant.Grow.Share. program or at any of the local food pantries, please contact:

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

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

Pam Denholm, Executive Director of the Weymouth Food Pantry, (781) 331-7682

Pat Brawley-Morise, Director of the Milton Community Food Pantry, (617) 696-0221

Wreaths Across America Day Honors American Heroes



Volunteers, Eric Fay and his son Ronald, John Keohane, Edward Keohane, and John's son Matthew Keohane, laid remembrance wreaths on veterans' graves during the 2018 Wreaths Across America Day.

December 19 is Wreaths Across America Day — a day set aside to honor American veterans. Local officials and volunteers will gather to lay a wreath at every one of the veterans' graves at Mount Wollaston Cemetery and Pine Hills Cemetery in Quincy. The ceremony will begin at 12:00 pm followed by the laying of the wreaths. It is a free event and open to everyone.."

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The annual event is held nation-wide to remember the fallen, honor those that serve, and teach the next generation about the value of freedom. This gathering of volunteers takes place in local and national cemeteries in all 50 states at more than 2,000 participating locations. Each year, a new theme is chosen to help volunteers and supporters focus their messaging and outreach in their own communities. The theme for 2020 is **"Be an American Worth Fighting For."**

The inspiration for this year's theme came from a keynote address made by Staff Sgt. Daniel Strong during the 2018 escort to Arlington welcome stop at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School (Monty Tech) located in Fitchburg, Mass. As an infantryman in the United States Marine Corps, he lost 18 Marines during his service. Each impacted SSgt. Strong in a unique way as he witnessed first-hand what true sacrifice was and experienced the ripple effect it has on all involved.

His message that December day to the JROTC students spoke to the daily importance of the mission to Remember, Honor

and Teach. "Be an American worth the sacrifice. In your daily operations, and in how you deal with one another and how you live your lives," said SSgt. Strong. "Those young men and women who are in Arlington National Cemetery and other cemeteries, they earned the right for you to be an American worth fighting for."

Keohane Funeral Home is proud to donate to Wreaths Across America in 2020 on behalf of all the veteran families served this past year.

In 2019, approximately 2.2 million veteran wreaths were placed on headstones at 2,158 participating locations around the country in honor of the service and sacrifices made for our freedoms, with each name said out loud. For more information please visit Wreaths Across America [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page or on [Twitter](#).

3 Ways to Get Involved

Sponsor a Wreath: Honor veterans in your local community by sponsoring a wreath that will be placed on a veteran's grave. The goal this year is to place a remembrance wreath on ALL of our veterans' graves in the City of Quincy. Please visit our Fundraising site to sponsor a wreath at [Mt. Wollaston Cemetery \(MAMWCQ\)](#) or [Pine Hills Cemetery \(MAPHQM\)](#)

Start a Sponsorship Group: Your civic, nonprofit, school or other group can help raise wreath sponsorships for Arlington or your local cemetery. A portion of the funds can be returned to help your group. Visit [here](#) for more information.

Volunteer: Volunteer to place wreaths on a veteran's grave at [Mt. Wollaston Cemetery](#) or [Pine Hills Cemetery](#). Involve your friends and family to honor our service men, women and families.

OUR TEAM

Susan Talkowski



Susan Talkowski, Marketing & Advance Planning Associate, works with families that are interested in pre-planning and provides overall assistance to the Pre-Planning division headed by Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning. She is in charge of entering, updating and maintaining the pre-planning accounts at both our Weymouth and Quincy locations since 2019.

"There is a sense of relief that individuals and families feel when they make pre-arrangements. It is an extremely emotional time when a loved one passes away and knowing you don't have to deal with those details can be a source of comfort," said Susan. "Sometimes it can be an uncomfortable conversation, but Joe does an amazing job."

While her responsibilities continue to include scheduling appointments, helping with pre-need seminars, processing payments and insurance transfers, the execution has had to change due to the current circumstances with the pandemic. "I really enjoy getting out of the office and meeting people in person, as I am able to hear some great stories, answer questions, and learn more about people; however, we have not been able to hold any seminars, which has been difficult," said Susan. "Looking on the bright side of this situation, I have greatly enjoyed working with Joe and I have learned so much from him during this pandemic. We have had to adjust how we operate, and we are hoping to hold some Virtual Seminars in the near future. Although it won't be the same, we are hopeful that we can get information out to people regarding the advantages of pre-arrangements."

"Susan is a great team member because she is collaborative, and she truly cares about the families we serve. Susan

sincerely believes in the importance of caring for families and the value of the funeral," said Joe. "She is funny, energetic, and a great asset to our team."

Susan and her husband live in Hanover and have three adult children, Angela, Kathleen, and Joseph. Her oldest daughter got married last November and Angela and her husband moved in with them before the wedding to save for a house. Their other children are at home as well, and they have had a very busy and noisy household since March.



Susan Talkowski has supported the Pre-Planning division through the pandemic with humor and compassion.

"During the pandemic, we have had six adults living in the house. My husband and son-in-law are working from home. My two daughters are both teachers, one being a preschool teacher and the other a high school special education teacher. My oldest was doing virtual teaching for a few months and my middle daughter was furloughed because she is a preschool teacher. They both returned back to in person teaching this fall. My son had to finish his freshman year at college at home due to the pandemic," said Susan. "I love having everyone home and prefer noise over quiet, so it is fine by me!"

Susan and her family have enjoyed spending quality time together and have tackled many puzzles during the

pandemic. "I have been able to get a lot more reading done, which is good because I am in two book clubs right now. We have also instituted family game night every Saturday night. Two of our favorite game nights were Team Bingo Relay Race and a Murder Mystery party. Many friends and family have requested to join our game nights when it's safe to gather again," she said.

Prior to the pandemic, Susan volunteered for the Special Needs Athletic Partnership (SNAP) for the Hanover Schools system. SNAP provides students with different abilities an opportunity to play recreational sports with peers. Unfortunately, SNAP has not been able to run any programs during the pandemic.

"We have supported a few community fundraisers for first responders and essential workers during this pandemic," said Susan. "My daughter planted a garden this year during quarantine that produced hundreds of cucumbers that my daughter then decided to pickle. She gave those jars of pickle away and asked for a \$5 donation. She donated all of the proceeds to various charities and human rights organizations. She was able to donate over \$100 to charity from these pickle sales."

Susan enjoys working at Keohane because it is a family owned business, and she has felt like a part of the family from the first day. She's proud to be part of a company that puts family first and goes above and beyond for the families they serve.

"I have been continuously impressed with how all of the Funeral Directors at Keohane have handled services during this pandemic. It has been such a strange and unpredictable time and there is no manual on how services should be handled during a pandemic. It is never an easy process when a loved one passes away, but adding a pandemic into the equation is heartbreaking, especially with all of the restrictions that have been put in place regarding gatherings and services," said Susan. "I am lucky to work for an organization that has gone above and beyond to provide families with the chance to give their loved ones a proper goodbye."



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

How Can I Honor the Memory of a Loved One This Holiday Season?



Whether you have recently lost someone, or it has been many years since your loved one has passed, remembering and honoring your loved one during the holiday season can help bring you some peace and comfort.

It's important to acknowledge your loved one as he or she will be on everyone's minds as well. It's helpful to speak openly about the person you've lost because it allows others the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings, too. Sharing memories or making a toast in their name honors their memory and opens up the possibility for others to talk about their feelings of loss as well.

Here are some suggestions that might help bring your loved one into the holidays in a gentle and meaningful way:

- **Make gifts from that person's clothing such as quilts, pillows or stuffed animals.** A stuffed bear made from grandpa's shirt gives a grandchild a way of holding onto the love.
- Create a consecrated space in your home with **photos, candles and other mementos.**
- **Give gifts in memory** of your loved one by making donations to causes important to him or her.

- **Light a candle in memory of your loved one.** You can say a blessing or prayer either before or after lighting the candle while invoking the name of your loved one. You and other participants can share memories or special moments they shared with your loved one during the holidays or any time of the year.
- Put a bowl and slips of paper by the person's photo for loved ones to **write down why they are grateful** to have had that person in their lives.
- Use the holidays as a time to give away some items that belonged to your loved one. **Wrap up the items and write a note** to the recipient about the significance of the item to your loved one. The sentimental value of the gift will be deeply appreciated.
- If you're out shopping and see a gift that you know your loved one would have enjoyed, **buy it and donate it to charity** or give it to someone else who would like it, too.
- Create a **memory tree** by making special ornaments. You can write notes about special memories of that person and tie them on the tree or even stuff them into a stocking.
- **Plant a tree** in their memory.
- **Read a poem or passage** in their honor at a holiday service; light a candle or say a prayer; or carry out a holiday tradition in their honor.

Everyone grieves in his or her own way, so choose the way that works best for you. While remembering and honoring your loved one, make sure to take care of yourself as best as you can. You can support yourself during the holidays by getting enough sleep; eating right; drinking moderately; exercising; helping others; and keeping your rooms well-lit to counteract the lack of sunshine during this time of year.

For information on advance planning during COVID-19, please contact Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane Funeral Homes at (617) 773-3551.