

Luce, Luze & Reck

FUNERAL HOMES

Serving the South Dakota Communities of Gettysburg, Faulkton, Eagle Butte, Highmore, Miller

Mandy Luikens-Spilde & Tiffany Pape Hofer
Owners/Funeral Directors
tiffany@luceluzereck.com



"Providing Comfort To Families"

www.familyfuneralhome.net



Chapters

turning the pages through grief



**WELL,
IT'S YOUR
FUNERAL...**
or is it?

By
Eileen
Madsen

...

Eileen Madsen
is an award winning
columnist, editor,
and publisher of
Chapters Newsletter

They say funerals are for the living. Well, yes and no. While it's true only those of us left behind will experience it, whether a traditional funeral, grave side service, celebration of life, drinks at the bar, or a backyard barbecue, the event is supposed to honor the loved one who has passed.

But what if those who remain can't, or maybe even won't, do all they could to achieve the deceased's wishes?

A friend of mine's father had repeatedly claimed his funeral was pre-paid. After it was clear that his dad didn't have many weeks to live, my friend Dave called the funeral home to check on the "pre-paid arrangements." Surprise—there were no such arrangements in place. What's more, the father only had about \$5,000 left in his bank account. Shortly after this discovery, my friend's dad, Richard, had died. Now what?

A very devout church-goer, Richard had written and articulated his ideas of how he wanted his funeral to be arranged, who the pall bearers would be, the songs to be performed, the casket to match his late wife's. However, his children were blind-sided by their dad's misinformation and obvious confusion about the pre-payment. Plus, they did not have the means to follow through with all of his wishes.

With the help and guidance of friends, countless phone calls and emails, and not without a few squabbles thrown in, Richard's family was able to arrange cremation, put together a lovely photo and video display for the visitation, and a small but beautiful funeral. Richard's daughter and a good friend gave humorous and heartfelt stories about the deceased which everyone enjoyed, and afterwards, a nice lunch for the congregation took place. The family was happy with the streamlined situation, and experienced the funeral in a way that actually spoke to them about their dad, more than the traditional

continued...

**FEBRUARY
2025**



Planning is bringing the future into the present
so that you can do something about it now
—Alan Lakein



...continued from front

pomp and circumstance would have. But due to family schedules and preferences, there was no grave side service, and his urn was buried at a later date that was not attended by the entire family.

In fact, because Richard was cremated a couple weeks or so prior to the funeral, Dave kept the urn of ashes in the trunk of his car, driving his dad around town, to the grocery store, talking to him each time he loaded something into the trunk.

“Well, we just went to Walmart, dad! Hope you enjoyed the drive, but I didn’t get you anything,” Dave would say, knowing his dad would enjoy the laugh.

So, overall everything went pretty well, right? Therein lies the issue. Dave is haunted by guilt. He knew what his dad had in mind for his funeral—a full-fledged to-do with all the bells and whistles. Meaning—the body-viewing, the hearse, the vehicle parade to the cemetery, the lowering of the casket in the ground while the priest got in a few more prayers. And the fact that family could not coordinate a grave side gathering due a variety of factors— exhaustion, schedules and distance, maybe even some selfishness—weighs on him to this day.

Deep down, Dave knows that the service was very nice, and everyone who attended thought the same. The family did the best they could at the time, with the resources they had, and certainly their father was not loved any less just because the funeral wasn’t exactly what they knew their dad would have ultimately wanted.

What’s the takeaway from this? First and foremost, double check what a parent or other loved one says about their finances or pre-planning arrangements if possible, in advance. Look for, or ask for, documentation. Help set aside funds for a funeral, even if your loved one is on government assistance, there are rules on allowable expenses. Check with your state and/or county.

Talk to your parent or loved one about their wishes, and what is feasible. Talk to your siblings and eventual survivors about how they see honoring the deceased, and what they think best tells their story.

Also, regardless of the amount of money available, turn to your local funeral director for assistance. He or she always has options, and can be a wealth of information. That is why they are there. No need to go it alone like Dave did. Reaching out to them can answer a lot of questions and avoid unnecessary stress.

When all is said and done, if you find yourself in this situation, allow yourself and others some forgiveness and grace... because ultimately, it’s everyone’s funeral. Including, apparently, Walmart’s.

The Lessons of Grief

“Grief can be, and is gut wrenching. **Keep those you lose in your heart.** Hang on to the memories.”
—Roy M.

“**Even a scent** can take you into a funk because it has a subconscious link to the lost loved one. When I recognized that happening to me I was able to embrace the scent as a happy memory.”
—Dave R.

BREAK TIME

Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice. Take 5 and enjoy these tidbits of this & that.

• **Raspberries are a member of the rose family**, as are cherries, apricots, plums, pears, apples, quinces, peaches, strawberries, and blackberries. Unlike roses though, these types of fruits typically have flowers with five equal petals arranged around a central core.

• Nearly **250 million roses** are grown in preparation for Valentine’s Day each year. Americans send 145 million Valentine’s Day cards each year.



• **Violets and primroses** are February’s flowers.

• February is National **Tater Tot Month**.

• February is one of the most **frequently misspelled** words in the English language.



“So it’s not enough that I pollinate the roses? Now I’m supposed to stop and smell them too?!”

