

TRANSITIONS

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did you know funeral directors did that?

by Andrea Ruggieri



As someone who worked way outside the funeral care industry before working for Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes, it was eye-opening to learn just what kind of people become funeral directors and all that they do behind the scenes.

The truth is, being a funeral director is not a “job.” For sure, it’s a calling. People who decide on this profession undoubtedly have a strong sense of commitment, caring for others and are willing to sacrifice.

Funeral directors are a guiding light from the moment your loved one passes, to helping plan a meaningful remembrance, to offering advice after the services are over with estate questions or to help with your grief.

They’re innovative thinkers, coming up with unique ideas to celebrate your loved one. They’re writers of obituaries and life stories. They’re mediators who help navigate middle ground for families who may not agree. Funeral directors are incredible detail handlers who have to be good listeners to get it right. They are supreme event planners. Often they have only a few days to design a meaningful funeral service. They are coordinators of the support team.

This is why it is also vital that they are good at hiring talented and empathetic staff to help carry out these plans. The scheduling is quick and diligent; securing

a church time, a presider, or often the funeral director themselves are the Celebrant who plan and lead a service right at the funeral home. Scheduling motorcycle escorts for families who will have a procession of cars to a cemetery. For veterans, they ensure their benefits are granted for burial and coordinate with national cemeteries and the military for special burial honors.

Newspapers often have tight deadlines for obituaries which need to be worked with. Social Security death benefits are facilitated and life insurance claims may be initiated and followed up with for families. Funeral directors accommodate out-of-town deaths and overseas burials. Add video tributes and printed materials, along with special requests. The list may not short, but all of it gets done with the goal of alleviating stress for the families they serve.

And outside all of this, they often fill in other roles where needed; they clean, they shovel snow, salt and plow to make sure the parking lot and walkways are safe for all guests. The beautiful floral and tribute displays you see are expertly and creatively arranged by funeral directors.

Funeral directors who are passionately dedicated to the profession develop a keen sense for how things are planned to benefit the family the most. They understand what works and what won’t work for funeral planning. Through it all they remain sensitive to what you are going through. Rest assured that Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers have a core of seasoned funeral directors doing all they can to help you through your most difficult times.



Visit our websites to learn more about our funeral directors:

www.bartolomeo.com/staff/

| www.walkerbrothersfh.com/about/our-staff


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next steps...when your loved one dies

by Andrea Ruggieri

For the people we care about, no one is ever ready when they die. As upsetting as it is, the onerous task of handling the next steps doesn't go away.

What you do next depends on where and how your loved one died. Ideally it would be important first to call someone in your family or your extended support system to share your feelings of shock and initial emotions. This will not be easy, and having this added care will help you through.

When a Death Occurs at Home

When someone dies expectedly or unexpectedly anywhere other than a healthcare or hospice facility, a call to 911 emergency services is necessary. A coroner or medical professional will need to evaluate the possible cause and time of death and supply details for an official death certificate.

When a Death Occurs at a Hospital, Hospice Facility, or Nursing Home

If a death takes place at a hospital, hospice care or nursing home, the medical staff will guide you.

When a Death Occurs during Hospice Home Care

In this instance it is an "attended death" at home and a call to 911 is not required. An accredited hospice care worker or a licensed funeral director can declare time of death. The hospice worker or a family member may call a funeral home to arrange transportation. The funeral director works together with a healthcare provider to compose a death certificate.

What Happens if a Death Happens Away from Home?

The same parameters for the location of death will apply if you are away from home, but since funeral care will be needed you will want to think ahead before making that call.

*Before calling a funeral home –

Take a moment to consider: Will you be having any funeral services, and if so, where will those services be held? Where will your loved one's final resting place be?

If there is no question that your loved one's wishes and your wishes are to return to your hometown, then contact your preferred hometown funeral home. In this case, the downside to first contacting a local funeral home while away from home is that you will likely incur extra, unexpected costs.

Funeral directors anywhere are trained and experienced in organizing out-of-town deaths. Using a hometown facilitator as your primary funeral home will benefit you. They will be able to coordinate with another funeral home more efficiently and cost-effectively at your secondary location. They will also acquire all the needed documentation and will plan transport for your loved one to come back home.

Pre-planning your funeral in your hometown can help simplify this process, as your intentions will be set and you will know ahead which funeral home to call no matter where you are.

For retirees or others who may have developed roots at a secondary home, you may decide to have funeral services and disposition there. In this circumstance call a local funeral care organization for help.

Despite all the things that need to get done, it's okay to want to contact "your people" first. Those who have always been there for you are often needed while you are not feeling strong. The magnitude of the awareness that you've just lost your loved one can be paralyzing. Feeling a stable hand at your side can be what you need to move forward.

Source article: *The First Call to Make When Your Loved One Dies*, by Empathy's Grief Specialists

www.empathy.com/immediate-arrangements/the-first-call-to-make-when-a-loved-one-dies

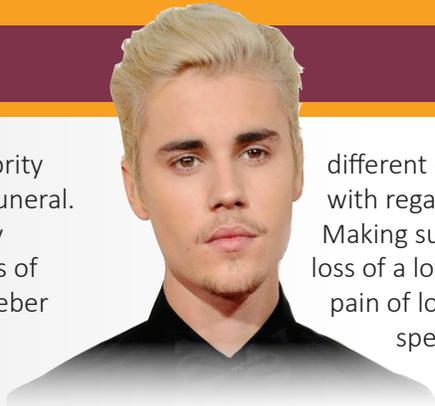


**Bartolomeo & Perotto
Funeral Home**



the growing popularity of pre-planning and pre-funding of funeral services

by Milton Moyer



At the tender age of just 22 years old, celebrity singer Justin Bieber had planned his own funeral. As recently reported by numerous celebrity commentators, friends and family members of the star, claim that an otherwise healthy Bieber meticulously pre-planned his funeral with plans for both public and private tributes and memorial services. And while the singer is reportedly torn between being buried in his native Canada or in Los Angeles's famous Forest Lawn Memorial Park, he is working on plans for a solar-powered headstone that will continuously stream videos of the star.

The singer's interest in funeral pre-planning was spurred by the respective sudden deaths of fellow celebrity singers David Bowie and Prince, both of whom, incidentally, pre-planned their own funeral services. Many other noted celebrities who recently died pre-planned their funeral arrangements as well. Muhammad Ali pre-planned a week-long funeral extravaganza that started with a private ceremony for friends and family at a Louisville funeral home and culminated with a parade through the city that ended at KFC Yum! Center, a stadium in Louisville, Kentucky where luminaries such as Bill Clinton, Billy Crystal and many others delivered the eulogies.

Pre-planning of funeral services, along with means for pre-paying for the services, has been growing in popularity in recent years, with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission noting that millions of Americans have entered into contracts to arrange their funerals in advance and prepay some, or all of the expected expenses involved. In fact, pre-planning and pre-funding of funeral services is increasingly perceived as an extension of will and estate planning.

Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes, Inc. have long offered pre-planning and pre-funding funeral service options. The primary advantages of preplanning your funeral service is that it allows you to select the funeral services that meets your needs and wishes, reducing the hardship on your family and/or friends, who might struggle with appropriate ways to celebrate your life. One of the advantages of funeral pre-funding includes the peace of mind in knowing that the money needed for your funeral has been set aside, and that this will not be a concern or burden to your loved ones upon your passing.

Consider that within 24 to 48 hours of death up to 75

different decisions need to be made with regard to funeral arrangements. Making such decisions while grieving the loss of a loved one is difficult and exacerbates the pain of loss. Determining an appropriate amount to spend on the services puts additional stress on the survivors.

The funeral directors at Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes, have years of expertise in helping people navigate the options involved with pre-planning and pre-paying for their funeral services. They can help you plan a service that meets your spiritual needs and provides comfort to your loved ones, and coordinate a pre-payment plan that meets your budget and relieves your survivors of potential financial burdens. Consider also that a pre-payment plan can help to protect you and your family from inflation.

As the state of New York has some of the strongest protections in the country with regard to pre-funding of funerals, the directors at our funeral homes are well versed in making sure your pre-payment and pre-planning funeral arrangements will be made in accordance with state law while fully meeting your funeral planning goals.

Our funeral directors will advise you of state regulations applicable to pre-payment of funeral arrangements, and guide you through the various options involved in satisfying these regulations. The legalese is complicated, and your funeral director will help you differentiate the variances between "guaranteed" and "non-guaranteed" pre-paid funerals; "revocable" and "irrevocable agreements;" the "pre-need itemization statement" and "pre-need agreement." They will brief you on your pre-payment and how it will first be invested, and then allocated for payment of funeral services when that time comes.

During the pre-planning session you will also be able to make advance decisions on burial or cremation, casket or urn selections, the type of service (religious, military, life celebration, non-traditional) potential pallbearers; and selection of music and/or readings for the service.

For more information regarding state regulations applicable to pre-payment and pre-planning of funeral arrangements, Google search online, the New York Department of Health's guidance: "Before Prepaying Your Funeral, Know Your Rights."

History sheds light on so many modern-day terms. Roman soldiers were known for their elaborate battle garb, including flowing cloaks. Though cumbersome, the Romans were also attentive to appearances. Regardless, these cloaks were referred to as palliums. Moving down the timeline to the medieval era, this term was abbreviated to simply pall. Christians at that time used the pall to shroud their loved ones at time of burial.

The pall is still used today in funerals. It is typically a heavy cloth and is draped over the casket. Pallbearers were named as such because they are “bearing the pall.” In some traditions the pallbearers only carried the tip of the pall or an attached cord and not the casket. The “casket bearers” then did the heavy lifting in carrying the casket. Today pallbearers customarily bear the casket with the pall draped over it.

The closest family members of the deceased may not act as pallbearers so that they are able to focus on the services and remembrances. Traditionally men have filled this role, but more and more women are taking part. Some families may have a hard time finding enough pallbearers but ask your funeral director for help. They can provide extra funeral assistants to help.

Most consider it an honor to carry the casket of a person that was impactful in their life. Taking on this task requires some stamina while carrying a casket, but with 5 to 7 other pallbearers it is not insurmountable. Not everyone is comfortable in this role and wish to honor in other ways. It is ok to respectfully decline and offer sympathy to the family.

Interesting Pallbearer Tradition:

An old Indian Buddhist tradition from ancient times held pallbearers to a limited diet to deem merit for the dead. They were required to abstain from eating meat and eat only vegetables, ruling out onions, garlic, chives and leeks with no alcohol consumption for 49 days subsequent to the passing. According to tradition, this was the allotted timeframe between death and rebirth. Many in the Buddhists religion have traditionally engaged a Spiritualist that corresponds with their dead at the invitation of the pallbearer to establish that the family established enough honor to ward off an unwanted rebirth.

Source: Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pallbearer>



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