

# TRANSITIONS

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## our deserving veterans

by Andrea Ruggieri

*Per Dictionary.com:*

**"SACRIFICE:** to surrender or give up, or permit injury or disadvantage to, for the sake of something else."

"Sacrifice," as we know, can be a relative term. The average Joe could say they gave up their morning donut and call it a sacrifice. An athlete or scholar gives up much of their time to excel at their passion. And we ALL know parents often sacrifice for their brood... but a veteran possesses perhaps the most unique and unfathomable sacrifices.

Us non-military folk may recognize the sacrifice of men and women who have served our country to protect freedoms and all that we hold dear, and though we may be truly grateful for this sacrifice, what is given up by veterans is abstract without having the military experience. Time away from those they love, safety, a "regular" life, mental and physical health, and sometimes the ultimate sacrifice is their own life. Only those who have served, genuinely know. If anyone questions why a military veteran deserves special benefits upon their return to civilian life, take a moment to imagine and empathize how meaningful their sacrifices are. Their sacrifices are the greatest gift. Phil, Michael and David Perotto, owners of Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes, robustly support our veterans in ways they hope will continue to honor them.

Back in December of 2020 Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home was honored to help with the first burial at the New York Western National Cemetery in Pembroke, NY. Before these burial grounds were open for veterans, the closest national cemetery was in Bath, NY, which is almost an hour and a half away from Rochester. Pembroke, NY is under an hour from Rochester, providing more reasonable access for family graveside visits. The plan for this cemetery in Pembroke is to honor more than 96,000 veterans with their traditional and cremation burial needs. For more information on WNY National Cemetery, visit: [www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/WesternNewYork.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/WesternNewYork.asp)

For those that like to plan ahead, Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes can also help you pre-qualify and coordinate for a burial at a National Cemetery. Call one of our funeral homes listed in the footer for help.

### **SEMINAR Get the Veterans Benefits You Deserve. September 18, 10am - 12pm**

In addition to daily dedication to always honor fallen veterans through meaningful services we are offering a free seminar to learn what your veteran burial benefits are. Join us September 18 and learn! We want all our vets out there to know what is available to them, their spouse and family members at end-of-life. Things like: an American flag, a headstone or marker, and free burial in any national cemetery are available for all eligible veterans. Our friends from WNY National Cemetery will be sharing details with you about the cemetery. So bring all your questions to this seminar in September, or feel free to call us at 585-720-6000 any time.

**RSVP by 9/12**

**To attend this seminar, please email:**

[andrea@bartolomeo.com](mailto:andrea@bartolomeo.com) | 585.720.6000

Seating is limited.

  
**Bartolomeo & Perotto**  
FUNERAL HOME, INC.  
*A Life Remembered, Lives On.*  
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Greece, NY  
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Spencerport, NY  
Churchville, NY  
(585)352-1500



# spread your wings and fly

JOIN US in REMEMBRANCE of your DEPARTED LOVED ONES at the  
**ANNUAL BUTTERFLY RELEASE & PICNIC**  
Sunday, August 18, 2024 | 12PM or 3PM



As you look to the sky, the butterfly catches flight and brings a renewed sense of hope. The butterfly is a universal representation of evolution within a difficult, if not tumultuous transition which is not unlike the journey we all take when losing someone we love. Though the journey may cause great pain, there is always hope of transforming to something stronger and more beautiful in your own life. The wonderful thing about gathering with family and others who have experienced loss is discovering that you are not alone, and can reap in the love and support from those who surround you. Imagine that moment, as you think of your loved one and release a butterfly to the sky... it truly is a cathartic moment!

Other than the recent hiatus in holding this event due to the pandemic, Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes have hosted the annual Butterfly Release since 1998 in support of the aftercare for all who have had a loss in their lives. This year we welcome back this event. It will take place on Sunday, August 18 at the YMCA Camp Northpoint, 249 N Greece Rd, Hilton. There are two releases, one at 12pm and one at 3pm, with a free picnic after each for you to enjoy with family and friends. Give us a call if you have questions or to RSVP. Please join us if your heart calls you to attend this moving event.



**rsvp** by **AUG 12:** email [andrea@bartolomeo.com](mailto:andrea@bartolomeo.com)  
or call 585-720-6000

# 13 habits for longevity



Living longer... don't we all wish for it? More time to check off items on our bucket list, accomplish goals, enjoy those we love, and see those closest to us grow and flourish?

Many of us stretch ourselves too thin, and simply don't give enough care to our body and our mind. The time we have been given on earth is a gift. It's been found that genetics play a more minor part in living longer than formerly thought. So, what do we do to increase our lifespan, and is it even possible?

## **Be ACTIVE**

Our bodies were not meant to be motionless. Why do you think we have legs and arms?! Use them regularly and you may find your body is leaner and your muscles are stronger, and that includes your heart muscle. 15 minutes of exercise a day can bring benefit.

## **Don't Overeat!**

Heard this before? It's true! A decrease in your caloric intake can extend your life by lowering your likelihood of disease.

## **Eat Healthy Plants**

Didn't your mom always say to eat your fruits and veggies? Moms are smart, we should listen. Reviews of a plant-rich diet show a tie to the reduction in many health issues...and they make you feel good!

## **NUTS**

Squirrels do it! Eating more nuts infuses your body with valuable plant compounds, vitamins and minerals, not to mention they are loaded with protein, fiber and antioxidants! They have been found to curb the probability of high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, inflammation, and even some forms of cancer, among other benefits.

## **Coffee or Tea, Please**

Both are connected with lowering the risk of chronic disease, believe it or not. Green tea has been known to reduce the danger of cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Coffee has been linked with reductions in type 2 diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's diseases.

## **What's Turmeric?**

Try it! Turmeric is a spice that has a potent bioactive compound called curcumin. It also has antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties that are known to maintain brain, heart, and lung function. It's been consumed in India for thousands of years with no major detrimental effects.

## **Must Have Sleep**

Sleep is crucial. Not having enough or having too much, can equally be a detriment. Get your eight hours in! Lack of sleep can lead to weight gain, heart disease, inflammation, and diabetes. Too much sleep can be a sign of depression or other undiagnosed health conditions.

## **Smoke - NOT!**

Again, we've all heard, read or seen studies that show smoking causes diseases that can cut our lives short. Keep in mind, if you are a smoker, quitting TODAY can still add years to your life!

## **Alcohol in Moderation**

Overdrinking is linked to liver, heart and pancreatic disease. If you have to choose... Choose wine! It has oodles of polyphenol antioxidants considered to be beneficial to your health. But don't forget, everything in moderation, or abstain completely depending on your individual circumstances.

## **Conscientious**

Remember those teachers that were always telling us to be more conscientious? They were correct. Being more self-disciplined, organized, and goal-oriented will help you live longer!

## **Escape Chronic Stress and Anxiety**

Just saying the words "stress" and "anxiety" have a negative connotation. The prospect of getting heart disease, stroke or lung cancer are doubled in women who have chronic stress. Premature death in men is tripled if continually overstressed.

## **And Finally... Just BE HAPPY**

Even the Dalai Lama says "Happiness is the greatest form of health." There have actually been studies of happiness, people and longevity, and guess what?... Happy people WIN!

Since we are all unique individuals, take in all recommendations carefully and always consult your doctor if you have concerns. But always... take great care of yourself!



# grief... at a distance

by Andrea Ruggieri

The grief journey in and of itself as we know, can be grueling. Now add to it, your loved ones live hundreds, if not thousands of miles away. I read many stories of loss at a distance in preparation for this article and the common thread I read over and over again was the guilt in moving away from the family circle. Some of them, were immigrants from overseas who struggled with the conflict of wanting to “be there” during a long illness, or even for the imminent funeral, but unable to do so. Some are across a continent or overseas for education or work. It becomes an unimaginable choice for many reasons. Financial constraints usually tops the list, but there are a number of other reasons, like immediate familial responsibilities making it exasperatingly difficult. Maybe you have small children and no support system, or a spouse who is ill, or you are ill, or other critical responsibilities are present that create a real challenge. Let’s face it, any reason begins to sound like an excuse and you fear you will be judged, but the reality is, sometimes... you just aren’t able to do the things you want to do most in life.

I remember the struggle was palatable when my mother was gravely ill in Syracuse, NY. My one brother lived in Chicago and the other with his young family with 3 children under the age of 5 in Florida. I, at the time was in my third trimester of pregnancy, continually running back and forth from Rochester to Syracuse with concern and warning from my obstetrician. It’s unfortunate, life doesn’t just stop, even when someone you love is dying. We all did our very best to be there to help dad and comfort and spend time with mom in her last days. When it came to the point where it was evident that she would soon pass, though still not knowing how things would progress, it became an even more upsetting situation. Hearing the stress in my brothers’ voices trying to decide “when” was a good time to fly home was heartbreaking. They had both traveled home multiple times each over the last 5 months of her illness and were financially strained. It seemed like an impossible impasse. I’m thankful all of my family was able to be there to celebrate mom’s life. Not everyone is as fortunate.

So what do we do?... with the guilt, the disappointment, or the loneliness of familial isolation when your family core is many miles away and being there during sickness or a loss is not an option? First, just because there is distance does not mean that you can’t show your love. Do something that is within your means, but MEANING-FULL. Create a Facebook group page for all invited to share and memorialize. If you are able, arrange and finance a special luncheon for family that is there, send a letter to be read at the funeral, put together a video tribute that can be shown, and all can be coupled with a personal message from you. Given some thought, there are a multitude of ways to step forward and show that you care.

There is also the emptiness you might intimately feel by not being there for the formal goodbye. For some it makes sense to hold a memorial service in your own locality to fill that need. For others, they simply don’t feel comfortable having a service for someone they love, but who may be unknown to your current circle of family/friends. In this case, you may need to explore different routes. Sometimes it may be as simple as holding your own personal ritual. Buy a beautiful candle that is special for only your lost loved one. The simple lighting of a candle and remembering can bring comforting moments of solace. Plant a tree or garden in memory with personal stepping stones or markers, or a bench to sit and connect spiritually with those who’ve passed. Tend to it with the same depth of care you feel for your loved one. Create a memory book or recipe book dedicated to your loved one. Release paper lanterns every year into the night sky. Above all else, don’t feel that you are not allowed to grieve because you couldn’t be there. Be vigilant in taking care of yourself, and find those who will support, understand and listen to you in your times of need.

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