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Mengacci*

FUNERAL HOME



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**PHONE:** 704 228 7475

**EMAIL:** [info@partnerplusmedia.com](mailto:info@partnerplusmedia.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.partnerplusmedia.com](http://www.partnerplusmedia.com)



*Welcome To Buckmiller  
Thurston Mengacci Funeral Home*

We know there are other funeral homes serving our area, and would never do anything to disparage their services or undermine their success.

Yet, we need you to know that our funeral home is truly different. We take great pride in the care we provide the families we serve, and invite you to browse this brochure to learn this simple truth for yourself: the experienced staff of our funeral firm is committed to doing everything we can to meet, and exceed, your expectations.

We will help you in planning a funeral, making pre-need arrangements for yourself or a loved one. Our experienced staff can also assist with filing insurance claims, cemetery engraving and monuments, as well as those in need of bereavement support. Call us, day or night, at 203-729-4334 to speak with a member of our funeral home family.

Telephone: 1-203-729-4334  
 Fax: 203-729-4336  
 Website: [www.BuckmillerThurstonMengacci.com](http://www.BuckmillerThurstonMengacci.com)  
 Email: [WeCare@BuckmillerThurstonMengacci.com](mailto:WeCare@BuckmillerThurstonMengacci.com)

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## *Our Funeral Home Family*



### ***James A. Mengacci, Owner / Funeral Director***

James A. Mengacci, a licensed funeral director and embalmer for over 34 years, and the former owner of the Fitzgerald-Zembruski-Mengacci Funeral Homes, is a lifelong resident of Naugatuck and an active member of the local community. He is the son of Connie (Gallucci) Mengacci of Naugatuck and the late Adam T. Mengacci. Jim is the proud father of James A. Mengacci, Jr., and Michael R. Mengacci both of Naugatuck. For Jim, this transition back into town feels like coming home and he is honored to be serving the community he loves.



### ***Jeffrey R. Thurston, Owner / Funeral Director***

Jeffrey R. Thurston, a 28 year licensed funeral director and embalmer, son of the late Myrna (Long) Thurston and James F. Thurston, Jr., is a former longtime Naugatuck resident. He grew up working in the family oil and ice business, D. Thurston's and Sons on Rubber Avenue in Naugatuck. Since 2007, Jeff, along with his wife, Melissa, have owned and operated the Rowe Funeral Home in Litchfield, where they currently reside with their daughter, Morgan.



### ***Melissa A. Thurston, Owner / Office Manager / Monument Dealer***

Melissa A. Thurston is the daughter of Steve and Mona (Jewett) Menard of Plantsville. Her kindness and compassion have been vital to the success of Rowe Funeral Home, which she has owned and operated since 2007, alongside her husband, Jeff. In July of 2014, she transitioned to working in the Naugatuck office. She is honored to be serving the community where her husband grew up and grateful for the warm welcome from the town.

*Our Funeral Home Family*



*Nick Healy, Funeral Director / Embalmer*



*Robert "Bob" Massicotte*



*Robert "Bob" Allen*



*Robert "Bob" Magnamo*



*David Rossi*



*Antonio "Tony" Marques*



*Gary Knapik*



*John "Jack" Pruchnicki*



*James "Jim" McGrath*



*Ronald E. Nelson*



*Michael Plasky*



*Antonio "Tony" Teixeira, Jr.*



## *Our Heritage*

Buckmiller Brothers Funeral Home first opened its doors to our beloved community in 1934 by, funeral directors and brothers, Paul and Louis at 14 Park Place, Naugatuck. With their mother, Mary's, support in 1938 they built a brand new facility at the corner of Meadow Street and Park Place. They were very innovative for their time and focused on providing excellent service for the families of Naugatuck.

It wasn't until Louis, the father of Terry and Wayne, passed away unexpectedly in 1949 at 34 years young, that the personal home of Louis and Ethel Buckmiller on 82 Fairview Avenue was renovated into a funeral home and the downtown funeral home building was sold. The former funeral home building is still there today and occupied by a local insurance company.

Over the years many renovations were made and several additions continued the transformation into the beautiful place that we still call a home. We continue to make renovations to ensure that our home is comfortable, serene and up to date.

In 1962 & 1972, Terry and Wayne Buckmiller, respectively, joined their uncle Paul in the family business.

In 1984, they expanded into Prospect, and were fortunate to operate there for 30 years, until the property was sold to a commercial developer and turned into a CVS Pharmacy.

After almost 80 years of the Buckmiller family serving the greater Naugatuck community and its surrounding cities and towns, they proudly entrusted the future of the funeral home to the Thurston and Mengacci families in July of 2014. It is their opinion that a better match to serve this community could not have been found. The Thurston and Mengacci families transcend generations in our community and we will continue to provide exceptional service to the families we are privileged to serve.



## *Why Plan A Funeral?*

Most of us are not prepared to plan and carry out a funeral ceremony for someone we love. And so much of the information available on this critically important subject fails to focus on what is most important: having a personalized, meaningful funeral that helps families and friends begin the healing process of mourning after the death of someone we love.

We are here to help you and can play a critical role in planning and carrying out a meaningful funeral or memorial service. Our licensed funeral directors are intimately familiar with the funeral planning process, key decisions a grieving family must make, and the necessary legal documentation that is required during this difficult time. We can handle all of the details and help you create a unique service that meets your needs and values.

Funeral ceremonies can make a significant difference in how families channel their grief towards health and healing. During the funeral, the community comes together and responds to the reality that someone has died, and also to the reality that those remaining will need support, compassion, love, hope, and understanding. The funeral encourages you to think about the person who has died and to explore the meaning of their life and the ways in which they touched the lives of others.

The remembering, reflecting and choices that take place in the planning and conducting of the funeral service are often an important part of the process of grief and mourning. And ultimately, this process of contemplation and discovery creates a memorable and moving funeral experience for all who attend.



## *Pre-Planning*

### ***The Advantages of Planning Ahead***

The idea behind planning ahead is simple. One day, a great deal of vital information about you or a loved one will be needed by your family and anyone whose responsibility it is to assist them. Those who plan ahead can be assured that, not only will their personal wishes be fulfilled, but other unnecessary difficulties will be avoided.

Both you and your loved ones can benefit when funeral arrangements are made well ahead of need. It can be beneficial to include your immediate family in these plans, ensuring those left behind are aware of your wishes and able to plan a meaningful funeral that will help them begin their mourning. By discussing plans in advance, you can take time to make decisions about cremation or burial, the type of ceremony and other elements of the funeral.

You may want to discuss your thoughts and decisions not only with your family but also with a trusted funeral service professional. This planning guide can be used to capture your wishes and biographical information in advance. Upon completion, simply store it in a safe place with your other important documents.

Most of us plan ahead in life. We plan for our wedding, our children's education, family vacations, and other significant expected life events. We also plan for the unexpected events of life by purchasing home, auto and medical insurance.

Understanding the benefits of pre-planning has prompted many to take the step to plan their own arrangements.





## *Why Pre-Plan?*

### ***Peace of Mind***

Pre-planning takes the burden of making important decisions off your loved ones during a difficult time. This gives them more time to build a foundation for healing and support for one another.

### ***Expressing Your Wishes***

Pre-planning your funeral will make certain that your choices are respected and carried out, without leaving your family to ask themselves "Did I do the right thing" or "What were my loved ones wishes?".

### ***Financial Assurance***

Choosing a funding option completes your advanced funeral plan by removing a large financial responsibility from your family. We offer a variety of payment options that will meet your needs.

There are many different ways to begin the "planning ahead" conversation. You know your family and how your loved ones might best respond to the topic. For some families, it might be a casual conversation over dinner or another family gathering. For other families, a formal meeting might be best.

Regardless of your approach, the conversation is much easier to have when death is not imminent. Discussing the subject with loved ones earlier in life when they are younger, and most likely healthier, makes the topic easier to talk about and keeps the focus on the celebration of life rather than an impending loss.

## *How Would A Pre-Need Help?*

Pre-Planning is a loving gift you can make for your family and survivors that provides complete peace of mind to everyone involved.

### ***Why should you make Pre-Arrangements for your funeral?***

- You can plan together as a family, rather than alone (after the death)
- You help spare your loved ones from having to make difficult decisions
- It ensures your wishes are well-documented and carried out
- It ensures all your personal documents are organized and easy for your survivors to locate
- It helps control costs and reduces emotional overspending
- You can personalize your plan to reflect your unique personality

### ***Here are some tips that may help you start the advance planning conversation with your loved ones:***

Set a time to have the conversation. Schedule a time to meet with your loved ones, whether you want to share your plans with them or ask them to make their plans to share with you.

Tell your parent or loved one that you want to ensure their final arrangements are done according to their wishes, and you need their help to make that happen.

### ***To open the discussion to learn more details about your loved one's wishes, ease into the conversation with questions such as:***

- “Have you ever thought about where you would like to be buried?”
- “What type of funeral would you like to have?”

Attending the funeral of a friend, family member or colleague or watching a movie or television show with funeral scenes may naturally prompt the discussion with your own loved ones. Talk about what you liked or didn't like about the services you saw or attended.





## *Pre-Payments Options:*

### *Insurances & Funeral Trust Accounts*

**Life Insurance** can be purchased, if an employer does not provide it. One benefit of Life Insurance is that you can purchase as much coverage as you would like, so you can cover expenses such as paying off a home, car, or other debts, in addition to funeral expenses. Before you purchase Life Insurance, you should know, in writing, how the coverage will mature, exactly how much you will pay over the length of the contract and what will happen if you cannot, or do not, pay the premiums.

**Funeral Insurance** can be purchased at Buckmiller Thurston Mengacci Funeral Home. Funeral Insurance can be purchased in an amount to pay the costs of the services, merchandise, cemetery costs selected or required and other outside funeral expenses. If the prices are guaranteed, the survivors will not be charged more than the contracted amount. Before you purchase Funeral Insurance, you should know, in writing, exactly how much you will pay over the length of the contract and what will happen if you cannot, or do not, pay the premiums.

**Funeral Trust Accounts** can be established at Buckmiller Thurston Mengacci Funeral Home. Trusts can be established in an amount to cover the costs of the services, merchandise, cemetery costs selected or required and other outside funeral expenses. If the prices are guaranteed, the survivors will not be charged more than the contracted amount. Payments into a trust can be set up to fit any budget and are held by a FDIC backed escrow agent. Trusts are the most common option.

***Before you establish a Funeral Trust Account, you should know:***

- If the prices are guaranteed
- The terms of cancellation
- If the funds increase in value who will receive any remaining funds after the contract is fulfilled
- What happens if the death occurs before the trust is paid in full
- In the State of Connecticut Funeral Trust Accounts and Funeral Insurance Policies are owned by the person they are established for, not the funeral home, so they are transferable to any funeral home that provides services.

*Did you know, if you or your loved one needs long term care or state assistance such as Title 19, in Connecticut, Funeral Insurance and Funeral Trust Accounts are encouraged and are approved expenses during the "spend down" process?*



## *Funeral Arrangements*

Whether you're planning for yourself or for a loved one, the funeral service is one of the most important elements of a person's final arrangements.

There's no one, right way to plan a funeral service - we truly believe that each funeral should be a reflection of the individual and memorable. And by providing you with the opportunity for personalization the funeral service can truly reflect the uniqueness of the life it honors.

When planning your own funeral service in advance, think about the way you want to be remembered. Perhaps you'd like a traditional funeral aligned with certain religious, patriotic or ethnic customs. Or, a celebration focusing on great memories made with family and friends may be your preference. Maybe it's a combination of both. You can have one service, or several, to honor your life.

***Regardless of whether you or your loved one have opted for burial or for cremation, the funeral or memorial service fills an important role. It can:***

- Honor, recognize and celebrate the life of the deceased
- Allow friends and family to say their last good-byes
- Provide closure after the loss of a loved one
- Allow friends to console the family of the loved one

***Those we love don't go away,  
they walk beside us every day.  
Unseen, unheard, but always near.  
Still loved, still missed and very dear.  
~ Author Unknown***

# *Funeral Services*

## ***Burial or Cremation Plans***

When considering final arrangements for yourself or a loved one, one of the first decisions you might make is whether you prefer a burial or a cremation. This decision will often influence other important considerations, such as elements of the funeral service and the type of cemetery.

## ***Memorial Service or Memorial Mass***

At a Memorial or Tribute Service, a casket or urn is usually not present. Otherwise similar to a funeral or visitation, a Memorial Service gives family and friends a time to come together in your memory and celebrate your life. Memorial services or Memorial Masses can be held immediately or even weeks, or months later.

## ***Mass of Christian Burial or Funeral Service***

A formal or informal ceremony or ritual prior to burial with the casket or urn present. A Funeral Service or Mass of Christian Burial often provides a sense of closure to family and friends, while honoring their faith or beliefs. Although your faith or culture may dictate some of the elements, you may want to personalize other aspects of the service. The formal service may take place at a place of worship or the funeral home.

## ***Visitation, Wake, Calling Hours or Viewing***

Held the night before or immediately prior to the Funeral Service or Mass, the Visitation - also called a "Wake" a "Viewing" or "Calling Hours"- provides a way for friends and acquaintances to pay their respects and offer condolences to your family. You can decide if you would like an open or closed casket, or if the cremation takes place prior, will an urn or photo be present.

## ***Graveside Service***

As its name implies, a Graveside Service may be held at the grave site, just prior to burial of a casket or urn. It usually consists of final remarks, prayers and/or memories. The service may occur after or in place of a Funeral Service.

Regardless of the service or services you choose to include in your Funeral Plan, you can personalize them in almost any way imaginable. For example, just consider the following questions:

- Where should the funeral be held? At your place of worship? At the funeral home?
- Who should officiate the service?
- Will your service adhere to the traditions of your faith or culture?
- Do you want a eulogy, and who should deliver it?
- Would you like an open or closed casket?
- What music should be played?
- What readings would you like to have?
- Is there a special poem you'd like shared with the guests?
- Are there any special photographs or other memorabilia you would like displayed?
- Would you like a Military Funeral or Services?

# *Answers To Questions About Cremation*

## ***About cremation***

Cremation is an alternative to earth burial or mausoleum entombment. Cremation does not limit funeral services in any way. Should you choose cremation, you will still have the same options for memorialization that any other family has. Cremation can take place before or after a funeral service or calling hours.

## ***What is cremation?***

Cremation is a process of reducing the deceased to bone fragments by applying intense heat for a period of two to three hours. The cremated remains, which are commonly referred to as “ashes” or “cremains” are removed from the cremation chamber. They are then processed into finer fragments and placed in a temporary container. The ashes weigh typically between three and six pounds. An urn may be selected for the final disposition of the cremated remains.

## ***Do we need to buy a casket?***

No, however most crematories require that at a minimum, a rigid combustible container, known as an “Alternative Container” be used during the cremation. Many options of caskets and Alternative Containers are available to you.

## ***Can we place personal mementos in the casket prior to cremation?***

Yes, personal items may be placed in the casket; however, all items left in the casket or alternative container will become part of the cremated remains. Your funeral director can advise you on which items may remain in during the cremation process. We do recommend that sentimental items such as jewelry, be held onto until after the cremation process and then placed in the urn, so they remain intact.

## ***Do we need to have a funeral if we select cremation?***

No, but cremation does not limit the type of Funeral Service that may be chosen. The same options that apply to earth burial are available with cremation. Some of these choices include: casket type, location of the service and visitation, music selection, open casket and the display of personal mementos. Some families elect to have a complete service at the funeral home or place of worship prior to or after the cremation.



### ***Decisions about cremation:***

- Would you like to have a viewing before the cremation?
- Would you like to use our chapel for a short service prior to or after the cremation?
- What type of urn would you prefer (metal, wood, marble, ceramic, etc.)?
- What type of final resting place would you prefer for your loved one (choice of burial, above ground niches or scattering of cremated remains)?

### ***Decisions to be made regarding burial of an urn:***

- What type of memorial do you prefer (bronze or granite marker set flush with the ground or an upright memorial)?
- Would you like to protect your loved one's urn with an urn vault?
- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the resting place.
- What types of urns does the cemetery allow?

### ***Decisions to be made regarding above ground niches:***

- Would you like the niche to be inside a building or outside?
- What type of material would you like the niche to be constructed from? Granite or bronze are choices for outdoor niches and marble or glass are choices for indoor niches.
- Many niches have size restrictions for urns. This is important to know before purchasing your niche.

### ***Decisions to be made regarding scattering:***

- Would you like to be present for the scattering?
- Would you like a memorial to be placed in the area, if allowed?

### ***A few facts about cremation:***

- Cremation cannot occur until there is a signed Death Certificate by a doctor and approval has been received from the State Medical Examiner's office.
- In Connecticut there is a mandatory 48 hour waiting period before cremation can take place.
- If you choose cremation for your loved one, you can still have a service and viewing prior to cremation.
- You have numerous options for the final resting place or places.
- You can place the cremated remains in a special urn to display at home.
- You can bury an urn in a cemetery, providing a permanent resting place where family and friends can visit.
- You can place a portion of cremated remains in an urn and a portion in a columbarium niche, providing a permanent location where you can pay your respects.
- You can scatter the cremated remains.
- Many people prefer to have the urn at home with them. There are many different options when keeping all or a portion of the cremated remains, such as keepsake urns, special jewelry that can hold cremated remains, and even Glass Art that suspends the cremated remains in a piece of glass art.

In this section, we've answered the most common questions we are asked about cremation. If you have other questions or would like further information, please contact us at any time.



## *Burial Considerations*

### ***Cemetery Property***

In addition to funeral services and the choice of burial or cremation, cemetery property, or “interment rights,” is another consideration when you’re making final arrangements, either for yourself in advance, or for a loved one.

### ***Burial***

Most people are familiar with the concept of burial, or “interment,” but may not be aware of the variety of options that are often available. Many cemeteries offer one or more of the following:

- **Ground Burial:** burial of the casket below ground. A “vault” or “outer burial container” is required at many cemeteries.
- **Mausoleum, or Community Mausoleum:** a large building that provides above ground entombments.

- **Private Family Mausoleum:** a small structure that provides above-ground entombment of, on average, two to twelve decedents.
- **Companion Crypt:** permits two interments or entombments side-by-side.
- **Private Family Estate:** a small section of a cemetery, usually bordered by gates, shrubbery, or other dividers, that allows for ground burial of several members of the same family.

### ***If considering casket burial:***

- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the plot.
- What type of memorial do you prefer (a marker set flush with the ground or an upright memorial)?
- Would you like to protect your loved one’s casket with an outer burial container or is it required by the cemetery?



# *What Is Grief?*

***“To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die.”-Thomas Campbell***

The death of a loved one is life’s most painful event. People’s reactions to death remain one of society’s least understood and most off-limits topics for discussion. Oftentimes, griever are left totally alone in dealing with their pain, loneliness, and isolation.

Grief is a natural emotion that follows death. It hurts. Sadness, denial, guilt, physical discomfort, and sleeplessness are some of the symptoms of grief. It is like an open wound which must heal. At times, it seems as if this healing will never happen. While some of life’s spontaneity begins to return, it never seems to get back to the way it was. It is still incomplete. We know, however, that these feelings of being incomplete can and will disappear.

Healing is a process of allowing ourselves to feel, experience, and accept the pain. In other words, we give ourselves permission to heal. Allowing ourselves to accept these feelings is the beginning of that process.

## ***Allow yourself to mourn***

Someone you love has died. You are now faced with the difficult, but important, need to mourn. Mourning is the open expression of your thoughts and feelings regarding the death and the person who has died. It is an essential part of healing. You are beginning a journey that is often frightening, painful, overwhelming and sometimes lonely. This brochure provides practical suggestions to help you move toward healing in your personal grief experience.

## ***The grieving process***

When we experience a major loss, grief is the normal and natural way our mind and body reacts. Everyone grieves differently, yet at the same time there are common patterns people tend to share.

For example, someone experiencing grief usually moves through a series of emotional stages, such as shock, numbness, guilt, anger and denial. And physical responses are typical also. They can include: sleeplessness, inability to eat or concentrate, lack of energy, and lack of interest in activities previously enjoyed.

Time always plays an important role in the grieving process. As the days, weeks and months go by, the person who is experiencing loss moves through emotional and physical reactions that normally lead toward acceptance, healing and getting on with life as fully as possible.

Sometimes a person can become overwhelmed or bogged down in the grieving process. Serious losses are never easy to deal with, but someone who is having trouble beginning to actively re-engage in life after a few months should consider getting professional help. For example, if continual depression or physical symptoms such as loss of appetite, inability to sleep, or chronic lack of energy persists, it may be time to see a professional.



### ***Realize your grief is unique***

Your grief is unique. No one will grieve in exactly the same way. Your experience will be influenced by a variety of factors: the relationship you had with the person who died, the circumstances surrounding the death, your emotional support system and your cultural and religious background.

As a result of these factors, you will grieve in your own special way. Don't try to compare your experience with that of other people or to adopt assumptions about just how long your grief should last. Consider taking a "one-day-at-a-time" approach that allows you to grieve at your own pace.

### ***Talk about your grief***

Express your grief openly. By sharing your grief outside yourself, healing occurs. Ignoring your grief won't make it go away; talking about it often makes you feel better. Allow yourself to speak from your heart, not just your head. Doing so doesn't mean you are losing control, or going "crazy". It is a normal part of your grief journey. Find caring friends and relatives who will listen without judging. Seek out those persons who will "Walk with, not in front of" or "behind" you in your journey through grief. Avoid people who are critical or who try to steal your grief from you. They may tell you, "keep your chin up" or "carry on" or "be happy." While these comments may be well intended, you do not have to accept them. You have a right to express your grief; no one has the right to take it away.

### ***Expect to feel a multitude of emotions***

Experiencing a loss affects your head, heart and spirit. So you may experience a variety of emotions as part of your grief work. Confusion, disorganization, fear, guilt, relief or explosive emotions are just a few of the emotions you may feel. Sometimes these emotions will follow each other within a short period of time. Or they may occur simultaneously.

As strange as some of these emotions may seem, they are normal and healthy. Allow yourself to learn from these feelings. And don't be surprised if out of nowhere you suddenly experience surges of grief, even at the most unexpected times. These grief attacks can be frightening and leave you feeling overwhelmed. They are, however, a natural response to the death of someone loved. Find someone who understands your feelings and will allow you to talk about them.

### ***Allow for numbness***

Feeling dazed or numb when someone loved dies is often part of your early grief experience. This numbness serves a valuable purpose: it gives your emotions time to catch up with what your mind has told you. This feeling helps create insulation from the reality of the death until you are more able to tolerate what you don't want to believe.

### ***Embrace your spirituality***

If faith is part of your life, express it in ways that seem appropriate to you. Allow yourself to be around people who understand and support your religious beliefs. If you are angry with God because of the death of someone you loved, recognize this feeling as a normal part of your grief work. Find someone to talk with who won't be critical of whatever thoughts and feelings you need to explore.

You may hear someone say, "With faith, you don't need to grieve." Don't believe it. Having your personal faith does not insulate you from needing to talk and explore your thoughts and feelings. To deny your grief is to invite problems that build up inside you. Express your faith, but express your grief as well.

***Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.-Dr. Seuss***

### ***Allow a search for meaning***

You may find yourself asking, “Why did he/she die?” “Why this way?” “Why now?” The search for meaning is another normal part of the healing process. Some questions have answers. Some do not. Actually, the healing occurs in the opportunity to pose the questions, not necessarily in answering them. Find a supportive friend who will listen responsively as you search for meaning.

### ***Treasure your memories***

Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after someone loved dies. Treasure them. Share them with your family and friends. Recognize that your memories may make you laugh or cry. In either case, they are a lasting part of the relationship that you had with a very special person in your life.

### ***Move toward your grief and heal***

The capacity to love requires the necessity to grieve when someone you love dies. You can't heal unless you openly express your grief. Denying your grief will only make it become more confusing and overwhelming. Embrace your grief and heal.

Reconciling your grief will not happen quickly. Remember, grief is a process, not an event. Be patient and tolerant with yourself. Never forget that the death of someone loved changes your life forever. It's not that you won't be happy again. It's simply that you will never be exactly the same as you were before the death.

### ***Accepting a loss***

For each of us - rich or poor, young or old - there are times in our lives when we must face and deal with personal losses and the pain and sorrow they bring. Examples that come easily to mind are the death of a parent, spouse, child, or other close family member or friend.

### ***Many other events and transitions also bring with them sadness and a need to grieve:***

- Being told you have a serious, possibly terminal illness.
- Having to give up interests and activities that have been a major part of your life.
- Seeing serious decline in mental or physical health of someone you love.
- Retiring from a work career or voluntary activity that has helped shape who you are and what you stand for.
- Losing a significant part of your independence and mobility; even giving up driving a car can be a significant loss for many people.
- Moving out of your home.
- Saying goodbye to a favorite pet.

Losses such as these are simply part of living. Like their counterparts among the joyful occasions in our lifetime - the birth of a child or grandchild, a celebration of marriage, an enduring friendship - they are part of what it means to share in the human experience. And the emotions they create in us are part of living as well.

***“The experience of grief is powerful. So, too, is your ability to help yourself heal. In doing the work of grieving, you are moving toward a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in your life.”***

- Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, Center for  
Loss and Life Transition



## *Helping A Friend Cope With Loss*

Above all, just listening and showing your concern, along with your presence will be of great help.

### ***Before the funeral***

1. Offer to notify his/her family and friends about funeral arrangements
2. House-sit to prevent burglaries during the funeral and visitations
3. Help answering the phone and greeting visitors
4. Keep a record of everyone who calls, visits or has been contacted
5. Help coordinate the food and drink supply
6. Offer to pick up friends and family at the airport and arrange housing
7. Offer to provide transportation for out-of-town visitors
8. Help him/her keep the house cleaned and the dishes washed

### ***After the funeral***

1. Prepare or provide dinner on a day that is mutually acceptable every week for two to three months
2. Offer to help with yard chores such as watering or pruning
3. Feed and exercise the pets, if any
4. Write notes offering encouragement and support
5. Offer to drive or accompany him/her to the cemetery regularly
6. Offer to house sit so he/she can get away or visit family out of town
7. Make a weekly run to the grocery store, laundry, or cleaners
8. Help with the "Thank You" notes and/or other correspondence
9. Anticipate difficult periods such as birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and the day of death
10. Always mention the deceased by name and encourage reminiscing

# *Expressions Of Sympathy*

## ***Listen with your heart***

Helping begins with your ability to be an active listener. Your physical presence and desire to listen without judging are critical helping tools. Don't worry so much about what you will say. Just concentrate on listening to the words that are being shared with you.

## ***Be compassionate***

Give your friend permission to express his or her feelings without fear of criticism. Learn from your friend; don't instruct or set expectations about how he or she should respond. Never say, "I know just how you feel." You don't.

Think about your helper role as someone who "walks with," not "behind" or "in front of" the one who is mourning.

## ***Avoid clichés***

Words, particularly clichés, can be extremely painful for a grieving friend. Clichés are trite comments often intended to diminish the loss by providing simple solutions to difficult realities. Comments like, "You are holding up so well," "Time heals all wounds," "Think of all you still have to be thankful for" or "Just be happy that he/she is out of his/her pain" are not constructive. Instead, they hurt and can make a friend's journey through grief more difficult.

## ***Offer practical help***

Preparing food, washing clothes, cleaning the house or answering the telephone are just a few of the practical ways of showing you care.

## ***Understand the uniqueness of grief***

Keep in mind that your friend's grief is unique. No one person will respond to the death of someone loved in exactly the same way. While it may be possible to talk about similar phases shared by grieving people, everyone is different and shaped by experiences in their own unique lives.

## ***Make contact***

Your presence at the funeral is important. As a ritual, the funeral provides an opportunity for you to express your love and concern at this time of need. As you pay tribute to a life that is now passed, you have a chance to support grieving friends and family. At the funeral, a touch of your hand, a look in your eye or even a hug often communicates more than any words could ever say.

## ***Share a favorite memory of the person who died***

Relate the special qualities that you valued in him or her. These words will often be a loving gift to your grieving friend, words that will be reread and remembered for years. Use the name of the person who has died either in your personal note or when you talk to your friend. Hearing that name can be comforting, and it confirms that you have not forgotten this important person who was so much a part of your friend's life.

# *Frequently Asked Questions*

## ***Why is having a funeral ceremony important?***

Throughout human history, and around the globe, people have gathered together to acknowledge the death of a member of the community. No matter who the deceased was, a funeral ceremony is the one (and sometimes the only) opportunity for everyone to come together to acknowledge their death, recognize the community's shared loss and share the burden of grief.

## ***What is the average cost of a funeral service?***

Since the 1960s, the National Funeral Directors Association has calculated the median cost of a funeral with viewing and burial by totaling the costs of the following items: basic services fee, transfer of an individual to funeral home, embalming and other preparation (casketing, cosmetology, dressing and grooming), a metal casket, use of facilities and staff for viewing and a funeral ceremony, use of a hearse, use of a service car/van, and a basic memorial printed package (e.g., memorial cards, register book, etc.).

The national median cost of a funeral with viewing and burial for calendar year 2016 was \$7,360. If a vault is included, something that is typically required by a cemetery, the median cost is \$8,508. **The cost does not take into account cemetery, monument or marker costs or miscellaneous cash-advance charges, such as flowers or an obituary.**

The national median cost of a funeral with viewing and then cremation in 2017 was \$6,260.

NFDA calculated the median cost of an adult funeral with cremation by totaling the costs of the following items: basic services fee, transfer of an individual to funeral home, embalming and other preparation, use of facilities and staff for viewing and a funeral ceremony, use of a service car/van, basic memorial printed package, cremation fee, cremation casket and urn. **The cost does not take into account cemetery, monument or marker costs or miscellaneous cash-advance charges, such as flowers or an obituary.**

## ***How does the cost for a funeral ceremony compare to the cost of a memorial service or celebration-of-life?***

Attempting to compare the costs of the three is rather like trying to compare oranges, mangoes and apples. Perhaps it's easier to see funerals, memorial services and celebrations-of-life as three points on a spectrum—a range, if you like—of ceremonial formats. At one end is the funeral; at the other, the celebration-of-life, and in the middle, the memorial service. The funeral is most commonly the most expensive of the three; which is especially easy to see when you consider the cost of the casket is a significant expense. The cost of any of the three is totally dependent on the choices you make during the arrangement conference.

## ***Is it necessary to have flowers at the ceremony?***

Flowers create a background of warmth and beauty which adds to the dignity and consolation of the funeral service. “Necessary” may not be the right word; but there's no doubt flowers at a funeral or other end-of-life ceremony serve many valuable purposes including a means of a visual expression of sympathy, love and respect or a means of lending support.





### ***Who should be invited to a funeral?***

It's a lot like asking 'who should be invited to a wedding?' A person's role at a funeral is two-fold: one, they are there to demonstrate support for the bereaved family. Two, funeral guests are there to tend to their own sorrow; to begin to come to terms, in the safety of a shared collective experience, with the death of someone they held dear. While it's not common to send out invitations to a funeral (generally, the service details are published in the newspaper or online, and those who wish to attend, do); it does make a certain amount of sense to reach out to certain individuals by phone, email, or social media to ensure they are aware of the service date/time (and express your desire for their presence).

When preparing the guest list for a funeral service, you should both listen to your heart and use common sense. You know the people that mattered most to your loved one, as well as those who mattered least. Whatever you do, don't invite more people than the venue can comfortably handle.

### ***What does the phrase "in lieu of flowers" mean?***

You may have read this phrase in an obituary: "In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to...". Derived from the French phrase, "en lieu", strictly speaking "in lieu" means "in place"; so it can be said to be a directive sentence: "In place of flowers, contributions may be made to...". If you prefer to send flowers that is always acceptable, however, you may want to consider that the family chose in lieu of flowers because the charity or cause is close to the family's heart.

### ***If one is requested, am I obligated to make a memorial donation?***

Certainly not; it's important to never feel obligated to do anything in response to the death of a community or family member. Your actions (whether sending flowers, preparing a meal and taking it to the family home, or making a donation) should always come from the heart.

### ***What's involved in preparing the deceased for viewing at a visitation or funeral?***

The preparation of the deceased can involve a number of different tasks performed by a trained and licensed embalmer, who is a restorative artist. Without going into too much detail; the deceased is temporarily preserved by embalming. The deceased is washed, dressed and otherwise groomed; then placed in the chosen casket for viewing. Should you wish to know more about the process, please contact us.

### ***If it makes people uncomfortable, why is it necessary to view the deceased in the casket?***

Human beings are interesting creatures: sometimes we need to see in order to truly believe. It's a way of confirming the fact that, indeed, this individual is dead; but it's also an opportunity to say your "good-byes". You may find it a cathartic time where you can quietly share a long-held secret, let go of any anger or resentment, and otherwise come to terms with their death.

### ***How long is a funeral service?***

Simply put, "it depends on the service". Just as no two movies or novels are the same length or cover the same emotional ground; no two end-of-life ceremonies are the same. Funeral services can range from 30-60 minutes on average.

### ***How can I best prepare my children to attend a funeral?***

When asked this question, we like to tell people it's best done with honesty and awareness. Let them know basically what they can expect. Advise them there will be people there who will be sad and may cry openly; tell them there will be time for some people to stand up and talk about how much they loved the person (but they won't be required to do so). Let them ask all the questions they need to ask, reassure them you'll be right next to them throughout the experience. Never force them to go to a funeral, and always give them the opportunity to change their mind about attending. We find that after the initial few minutes most children, go right back to their childlike selves; playing in the other rooms of the funeral home or coloring.

### ***What is a non-denominational Celebrant?***

The Celebrant Foundation and Institute define Celebrants as "trained professionals who believe in the power and effectiveness of ceremony and ritual to serve basic needs of society and the individual. The Celebrant's mission is to help the family create a ceremony that reflects their beliefs, philosophy of life, and personality." A Celebrant is especially valuable when a family has no religious affiliations or ties to a clergy person or minister who can officiate the funeral service. Involving a Celebrant in the funeral planning process has been found to enhance the funeral experience for all.

### ***Must I wear black to the funeral ceremony?***

Black used to be the only color to wear to a funeral; but not anymore. Today things are less formal than they once were, and it's not totally uncommon for families to ask prospective guests to altogether avoid wearing black clothing. Should you have additional questions about funeral attire or etiquette, please contact us.

### ***What else would you like to know?***

If you have a question that we did not answer, please feel free to call us at your convenience at 1-203-729-4334.



# *What To Do First - A Checklist*

## ***Notify these people as soon as possible:***

- The funeral home, so we can arrange to take your loved one into our care (usually this can be done within 1 hour although it may take longer to obtain a release from the hospital or nursing home) and set an appointment with you to make further arrangements
- Relatives, executor/executrix and friends
- Employers (the employer of the deceased and relatives who will need time off)
- Insurance agents (life, health and accident)
- Religious, fraternal, civic and veterans organizations and unions, if applicable
- Lawyer and accountant
- Banks

## ***Secure the vital statistics of deceased***

- Full legal name - other names must be identified by "also known as" (AKA)
- Social Security Number
- Full legal name of the next of kin, and their home address and telephone number
- Name of business or employer's name
- Occupation and type of industry
- Military Discharge Paperwork (DD214)
- Date and place of birth
- Legal Address
- Father's name
- Mother's first & maiden name

If you would like, please feel free to use the form on pg 25 to fill in the answers to the questions that are needed.

## ***Pay for:***

- Funeral arrangements, including clergy, florist and transportation
- Cemetery and memorialization services
- Current and urgent bills (i.e. mortgage, rent, taxes, telephone, etc.)

## ***Meet with the funeral home to decide:***

- Whether your loved one is to be buried, cremated or entombed
- We will ask you if you have purchased a cemetery plot and if you have not done this, together we can visit the cemetery
- Service details - would you like a visitation period, when and where will a formal service be, and will there be a reception?
- Whether a member of the clergy will be engaged for the service
- Casket selection
- Outer burial container selection (if desired, or required by the cemetery)
- Clothing that the deceased will be buried or cremated in
- Pallbearers, music, pictures, flowers, scripture or other readings
- If you would like a charity to receive donations in lieu of flowers
- Memorialization - selecting a guest book, memorial cards, etc.

# *To My Loved Ones*

I wanted to spare you as much anxiety, doubt and confusion as possible at the time of my death, so in this booklet I have suggested some arrangements in advance.

This booklet includes vital statistics, funeral service guidelines and cemetery requests, which are all important to the funeral director while assisting you to plan the details of my service.

I've also included some personal material for eulogies, obituaries and other remembrances.

Please accept these arrangements in the spirit in which they are given; with love, hoping to give you comfort and helping you to remember the times we shared.

Signature..... Date: .....

Witness..... Date: .....

***Don't put this form in your safety deposit box as these can remain sealed until after the funeral.***

## *First Person To Be Notified Upon My Death:*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: .....

Relationship:.....

Notes:
--------

## *Vital Statistics About Me:*

Full Legal Name:.....

Legal Address:.....

City:.....

State:..... Zip Code:.....

Social Security Number:.....

Date of Birth:.....

Place of Birth:.....

Gender:.....

Highest Level of Education:.....

Ethnicity:.....

Occupation:.....

Employer:.....

Business/Industry:.....

Military Service:..... Branch of Service:..... Conflict/War.....

Marital Status:.....

Name of Spouse:.....

Spouse's Maiden Name:.....

Father's Name:.....

Mother's First and Maiden Name:.....

# *My Preferences For The Service:*

I prefer  Earth Burial  Cremation  Entombment  Other

Interment in ..... Cemetery in (Town, State).....

I have  An existing family plot  An Individual plot Section Lot #:.....  No plot

I prefer  an Upright Headstone  Flush Marker  Bronze Marker  No Marker  Engraving

I prefer a  Wooden Casket  Metal Casket  Cloth Covered Casket

I desire a  Public or a  Private Service

I desire a  Traditional Church Service  Funeral Home Service

Memorial Service (without casket or cremains present)  Graveside Service Only

I prefer Calling Hours to be  Public or  Private Number of Hours:.....

I desire  No Calling Hours.  With open casket  with closed casket

The Name and Address of my Church is:.....

I would like these readings and/or hymns: .....

Preferred Reception Location: .....

I prefer the following newspaper(s) for the Obituary: .....

I prefer  Flowers or  Donations in Lieu of Flowers to: .....

I am a Military Veteran  No  Yes I prefer Military Honors  No  Yes

# *Information For An Obituary - A Guideline:*

Spouse, Widow or Widower of: .....

Married for (number of years):.....

Children, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....  
.....  
.....

Grandchildren, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....  
.....

Siblings, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....  
.....

Schools/Colleges attended:.....

Clubs and Lodges: .....

Military Service:.....

Special Interests, Hobbies and Pets, etc: .....

Notes:



# *Juniper* restaurant

*It is one of the most personal and meaningful decisions anyone can make how to memorialize a loved one. It is our goal to support you through every step of your arrangements and to pay tribute to the special memory of your loved one. We invite you to visit our facilities and talk with us about your plans.*

*We are very sorry for your loss, and send our heartfelt condolences. If we could be of any assistance to you during this difficult time, please contact us.*

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(203) 598-0422

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*Margot's Flowers & Gifts LLC*



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# *A Silent Tear*

JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND YOU WILL SEE  
ALL THE MEMORIES THAT YOU HAVE OF ME  
JUST SIT AND RELAX AND YOU WILL FIND  
I'M REALLY STILL THERE INSIDE YOUR MIND

DON'T CRY FOR ME NOW I'M GONE  
FOR I AM IN THE LAND OF SONG  
THERE IS NO PAIN, THERE IS NO FEAR  
SO DRY AWAY THE SILENT TEAR

DON'T THINK OF ME IN THE DARK AND COLD  
FOR HERE I AM, NO LONGER OLD  
I'M IN THAT PLACE THAT'S FILLED WITH LOVE  
KNOWN TO YOU ALL, AS "UP ABOVE"

- AUTHOR UNKNOWN



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Office: 203.720.0069



# Important Notes

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## Realty Group of New England

*For an initial consultation, please contact Wilson Lamas.*

180 Church Street, Naugatuck, CT 06770  
 Office: (203) 729-4344 | Cell: 203-592-8504 | Email: WL2020@aol.com



# *Important Notes*

A series of horizontal dotted lines providing a template for writing notes.

# Realty Group of New England

*The experience you need  
with the agents you can trust*

*Our thoughts are with you  
in your time of loss.*

We understand losing a loved one leaves you with grief, confusion and financial responsibilities. Our experienced, compassionate team of professionals are here to assist you and your family with your real estate needs.

As the Broker/Owner of Realty Group of New England, I am well versed in the handling of Estate sales, offering consulting services and providing you with an opinion of any necessary repairs to your home in order to enhance its market value.

For an initial consultation, please contact me.

Sincerely, Wilson Lamas

180 Church Street, Naugatuck, CT 06770

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Whether you choose to call or stop in, Terri's Flower Shop associates are always available to discuss your unique custom order designed especially with you and your loved one in mind. You may choose to browse some of our favorite selections on our website found within the sympathy pages tab. Online direct ordering also available only at [terrisflowershop.com](http://terrisflowershop.com).

174 Church Street  
Naugatuck, CT 06770

(203) 729-2249

[terrisflowershop.com](http://terrisflowershop.com)



## Russell Stutsky ATTORNEY AT LAW

LAST WILL AND  
TESTAMENT OF

It is important to have counsel on your side to help you navigate through the Probate Court process. We understand that probate issues can be complicated and emotional, which is why Attorney Russell Stutsky provides assistance with great regard and attention to your needs. Attorney Russell Stutsky will always handle your probate matters with haste, sensitivity and compassion.

Russell Stutsky, Attorney at Law can assist you with the following:

- All probate matters including administration of estates
- Drafting and Execution of Wills and other related documents
- Power of Attorney
- Healthcare Designations
- Living Wills
- Trusts and Living Trusts
- Reverse Mortgages
- Elder Care Issues: Medicaid/Title 19 Planning, etc.



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