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## Death Wish List



**"No cheesy organ music." "Serve good wine."**

**"Bury me with my fishing gear."**

**A new resting place on line for your funeral instructions.**

August 2008 | by [Camille LeFevre](#)

Hey, it's your party. So if, upon your death, you wish to have your ashes shot out of a cannon or scattered with those of your deceased pets, want your memorial service at the corner bar or on a mountaintop, then let your loved ones know.

Too uncomfortable to discuss the d-word?

Then log onto [mywonderfullife.com](#). Create an account and plan your funeral, from location to music, readings to headstone inscription, food and beverage afterward to care of your pets. Designate your "angels" (who'll carry out your wishes), and you're done. It's free. It's private. (Your angels will be notified right away—and can opt out—but they'll only have access to your site after you die. It's password protected and secure). And you'll have relieved your loved ones of the decisions so they can celebrate and grieve.

"I had been to one too many typically bad funerals and thought, 'Oh my god, this isn't the way I want to go out,'" says Sue Kruskopf, CEO of the Minneapolis advertising agency Kruskopf Coontz, who created and launched the site on May 15 with her friend, Nancy Bush, an account executive with Clear Channel Radio. Bush had also been to a **"string of bad funerals that didn't reflect the person at all. They were so generic,"** she says.

The tipping point came when Bush's husband, John, a nonsmoker, died of lung cancer at 52. "He was sick for 10 months, and during that time he was so focused on being positive and getting better that he never

wanted to have the conversation about his funeral,” Bush recalls. “I was left with a few pieces of info I’d known for years, but understanding what he really wanted would have been helpful during that stressful period.” In the end, Kruskopf says, “we put on such a great funeral for John, some people said it was better than a lot of weddings.”

Bush and Kruskopf worked on the self-funded site for about a year before launching. Design work was done by Kruskopf’s firm. “We’re not worried about funding the site,” Kruskopf says, “because we already have people from 29 countries using it and more than 1,300 members.” Adds Bush, “And we haven’t even kicked it off nationally yet,” something they planned to do in July. They’re looking into advertising and sponsorships to sustain the site as user numbers climb.

In a survey they did in conjunction with the site’s launch, they found that 70 percent of respondents “*think* they’ve expressed their wishes to loved ones,” Bush says, but only 12 percent had written them down. They also found that 71 percent of baby boomers don’t want a traditional funeral. “Clearly the need for mywonderfullife.com is out there,” Kruskopf says.

“The baby boomers have had such an impact on our culture,” she adds. “We’re documenting everything our kids do. We customize everything. Death is the final frontier we haven’t yet had an impact on. **It’s a fact that boomers are going to change death, and the funeral industry’s one of the last to catch on.**”

Camille LeFevre, based in St. Paul, writes about architecture and design for a variety of publications.

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