

# SIGNATURE SUNSETS

## Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life



### POINTS of INTEREST

#### Ageism Awareness Day October 9th

"Ageism refers to stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) toward others or ourselves based on age. It negatively impacts our health and well-being, our financial security, and the economy. It exists in many forms, influencing everything from personal interactions to public policy..."

This designated day poses "an opportunity to draw attention to the impact of ageism in our society and how we can reframe aging in our communities."

### UPCOMING ONLINE OPPORTUNITY

#### Death Cafe

**Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7:00-8:00 PM EST**  
(up to additional 15 min. as desired)

Hosted by Heather Massey from Falmouth, MA and conducted in accordance with established guidelines, per <https://deathcafe.com/>

Conversation will proceed spontaneously according to whatever is on the minds of participants, who engage as mortals rather than as end-of-life specialists.

Participation is active, not passive, so it is expected that all cameras will be turned on for face-to-face contact.

The Zoom room will open shortly before 7:00, when attendees will be admitted from the waiting room.

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86788777600>

Meeting ID: 867 8877 7600

What can an individual do to help reverse age biases?

- Encourage more people to take a public stand on ageism
- Encourage new communities & organizations to recognize Ageism Awareness Day
- Flood the internet and media with pro-age related content!

Tell others about the documentary



*Lives Well Lived:*

Filmmaker Sky Bergman celebrates the wit and wisdom of 40 adults who are 75 to 100 years old and living their lives to the fullest.

<https://tv.apple.com/us/season/season-1/umc.cmc.4u3cn7gsw8irj0b7f54b8it5k?>

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### **Create A Great Funeral Day** **October 30th**

“an opportunity to reduce stress on top of grief, minimize family conflict, save money and create a meaningful, memorable “good goodbye.”

<https://www.aaepa.com/2014/10/create-great-funeral-day-group-activity/>

## **OTHER HAPPENINGS**

### **Dying (to) Talk:**

#### **An End-of-Life Symposium**

**Friday, October 18th, 12:30-5:30pm**

Location: First Unitarian Church of Rochester  
(in-person only)

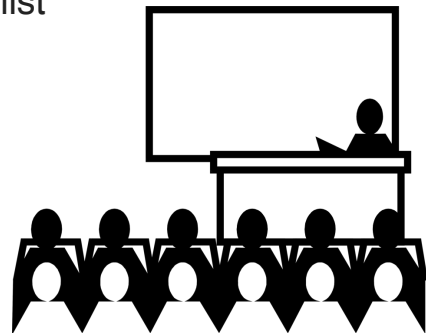
220 South Winton Road Rochester, NY 14610

Presented by Jennifer Sanfilippo,  
author and community educator

#### **Part One**

Options for attending one of the following sessions:

- Home funeral processes and emotional fulfillment: Lauren Sample, end-of-life doula and home funeral guide
- Rights, building community, and “coming out” when facing the dying journey: Scott Fearing, community educator and advocate
- Insights drawn from work with the dying, with a focus on physical, emotional, and spiritual support healing: Carmelo Ramos, integrative medicine specialist



#### **Part Two**

Voluntarily Stopping Eating and Drinking (VSED):  
Keynote speaker: Dr. Rob Horowitz, former chief of URMCC's Palliative Care Division and current consultant

A personal story of his mother's decision to halt the process of dementia in this manner

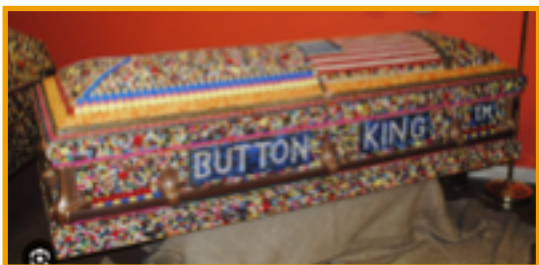
There will be breaks and light refreshments.

## Count Your Buttons Day October 21st

Dalton Stevens was known for covering objects with buttons, beginning with clothing and shoes, and eventually his guitar, a hearse, and two caskets. His hobby, initiated due to insomnia, propelled him to national notoriety as the "Button King." In 2008 he opened the Button King Museum in a metal airport hangar constructed by his children, next to his home in Bishopville, South Carolina.



Even his end-of-life preparation reflected his passion. Actually, two caskets were each covered in 600,000 buttons, one for his own burial and the other for display in the museum.

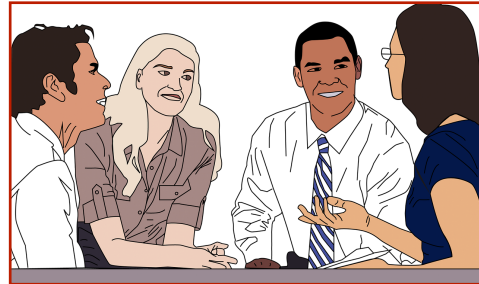


At the age of 86, in 2016 he was buried in his button suit and button-ensheathed casket.

<https://www.wistv.com/story/33771195/scs-button-king-dalton-stevens-passes->

## Part Three Death Cafe Salon

An opportunity to engage interactively through group-directed conversation about end-of-life issues, with facilitator/s rotating between small groups.



## For TICKETS

A fee-based event, with reservations via Eventbrite:

[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dying-to-talk-tickets-998721110727#:~:text=About%20this%20event&text=Welcome%20to%20Dying%20\(to\)%20Talk,First%20Unitarian%20Church%20of%20Rochester.](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dying-to-talk-tickets-998721110727#:~:text=About%20this%20event&text=Welcome%20to%20Dying%20(to)%20Talk,First%20Unitarian%20Church%20of%20Rochester.)

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## Isaiah House Octoberfest October 4th

A fundraiser event for this hospice home for terminally ill individuals (1005 East Ave., Rochester) included a catered meal, music, games, and a live auction.

Registration was in September, but it is never too late to donate or experience the fulfillment of volunteering services.

<https://theisaiahhouse.org/donate-2/>



# Season Finales



Leaves are changing colors, a harbinger of the denuding of trees and the onset of winter... the end of a life cycle, making way for the eventual beginning of new growth.

## Leaves

Excerpts from a poem by Lloyd Schwartz

**“Every October it becomes important, no, *necessary*  
to see the leaves turning, to be surrounded by leaves turning...**

**...one blazing farewell appearance, though the irony isn't lost on you  
that nature is most seductive when it's about to die,  
flaunting the dazzle of its incipient exit...**

**... nature is always renewing itself—the trees don't *die*,  
they just pretend, go out in style, and return in style: a new style.**

**... for a moment the whole world comes to.  
Wakes up. Proves it lives.**

**It lives—red, yellow, orange, brown, russet, ocher, vermillion, gold.”**

<https://poets.org/poem/leaves-0>





Nature dictates that, eventually, all living things must die and leave this earth. Some can only exit inconspicuously, while others have the potential to make a statement reflecting emblems of their existence. Like varied and vibrant leaves bursting with color when their life cycles end, human departures can be uniquely memorable.

## **Beauteous As A Fallen Leaf**



"Fare thee well" some day I'll say  
When my moments on earth have withered away.

Let me depart in a blaze of glory,  
Amid hallmark hues of my singular life story.

Forsake monotony and standardized drear,  
Let variegation bring a measure of cheer.

I want not like a barren branch to be,  
Weathered, yet unremarkable to see.

Rather, like a lovely leaf I shall fall,  
Pronounced by vivid color as I drift from it all.

May others my brilliance at the end behold,  
So remnants of my being will still unfold.

Though gone from roots and the family tree,  
I'll be embedded forever in memory.

<https://signaturesunsets.blogspot.com/>



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