



# Signature Sunsets

## Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life

Summer has arrived and, along with it, a programming interlude. During this time of year when people are taking excursions and enjoying retreats from their usual lifestyles, initiatives promoting end-of-life education tend to be somewhat curtailed.

In the absence of specific presentations or discussion sessions, this hiatus affords an opportunity to build and strengthen connections in a more informal context, learning about personal earmarks of individuals with whom we interact throughout the year, and newcomers, as well!

Everyone has a unique life story that is still unfolding. Just as biographies capture our attention, so do conversations for sharing of details about personal narratives.

You are invited to an online getting-to-know-you social event, sponsored by *Signature Sunsets* and hosted by Mary Ellen. Interactions will be casual, prompted by questions from the conversation card collection, “Have the Talk of a Lifetime.” The questions relate to various aspects of one’s life, such as childhood memories, family traditions, and personal values.

While this is a framework for fostering relationships, it's also a channel for enlightenment of family members (because there is probably a lot about you and your past that they don't know!). So invite them to come along with you for an experience apart from our usual focus on death education. You can assure them that they'll be in a safe zone where they may discover some intriguing revelations about you. But come, whether or not a familial companion will join you.

August is designated, "Family Fun Month," so let's get in the groove in July and use this diversional opportunity to enjoy and appreciate one another! A second gathering for this purpose will likely be scheduled for August, as well.

This is intended to be a face-to-face, participatory experience, rather than exclusively observational. Unless there are unusual circumstances, please have your cameras turned on and be ready for active engagement, listening attentively and responding to whatever questions you choose to answer.

Feel free to adopt an informal stance and loosen up by munching on food or drinking a glass of wine or whatever.



## Getting-To-Know-You Chat

Wednesday, July 16,

7:00-8:30 pm, EDT

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87372698296>

Meeting ID: 873 7269 8296

## OTHER ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES



**Monday, July 7,**

**11:00 am-12:00 pm** EDT

In this sacred circle, your memories, photographs, & mementos tell stories of love that live on. Join our gentle community where grief is honored & hearts find a connection. Together, we remember.

### **Comfort & Connection: A Circle of Support and Remembrance**

**Register** (free): <https://letsreimagine.org/76768/comfort-connection-a-circle-of-support-and-remembrance-2>

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**Wednesday, July 23, 1:30-2:30 pm** EDT

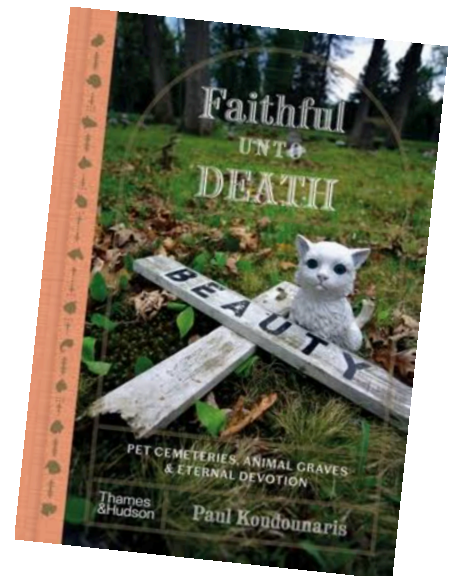
### **Faithful Until Death - Pet cemeteries and animal memorial**

In 1881 a dog named Cherry was laid to rest on the outskirts of Hyde Park in London. This seemingly innocuous act spurred a revolution. Other pet owners would soon follow suit, adding graves alongside Cherry's, and the world's first urban pet cemetery was born. Dead pets had previously been consigned to garbage heaps, rending plants, or tossed in rivers, but no more, not after the pet owners of London stood fast in the face of often mocking public sentiment that an animal that had lived and been loved as a family deserves at the end a death with love and dignity. Their example would spread and is now found around the world in a fascinating and touching array of different traditions.



Dr. Paul Koudounaris will discuss his new book on animal burials and memorials, *Faithful Unto Death*, sharing his insights into the history of animal burials, along with stories.

An author and photographer, with a PhD in Art History from UCLA. his previous books include a Barnes and Noble book of the year in 2020. His new book combines his interest in funeral and animal history, and is the product of an exhaustive, ten-year study of pet cemeteries and animal burial sites around the world.



**Register** (\$10.77 US dollars):  
<https://arnosvale.org.uk/faithful-until-death-pet-cemeteries-and-animal-memorial/>

All ticket holders will receive a discount code for Paul's book, *Faithful Unto Death*.

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**Wednesday, July 23, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT**



The Jewish Association for Death Education invites you to attend a monthly Death Schmooze, where we talk about all things death. This is a space for anyone, no matter whether you have been volunteering in your community for years or are totally new to Jewish end of life practices, to feel welcome. Share your grief stories, your struggles, your moments of beauty or spirituality, and be a part of the JADE community.

**Register (free):**  
<https://lu.ma/1lyz1and>



# FUN Holidays That Inspire FUNerary Applications

## Ideas for Commemorative Services

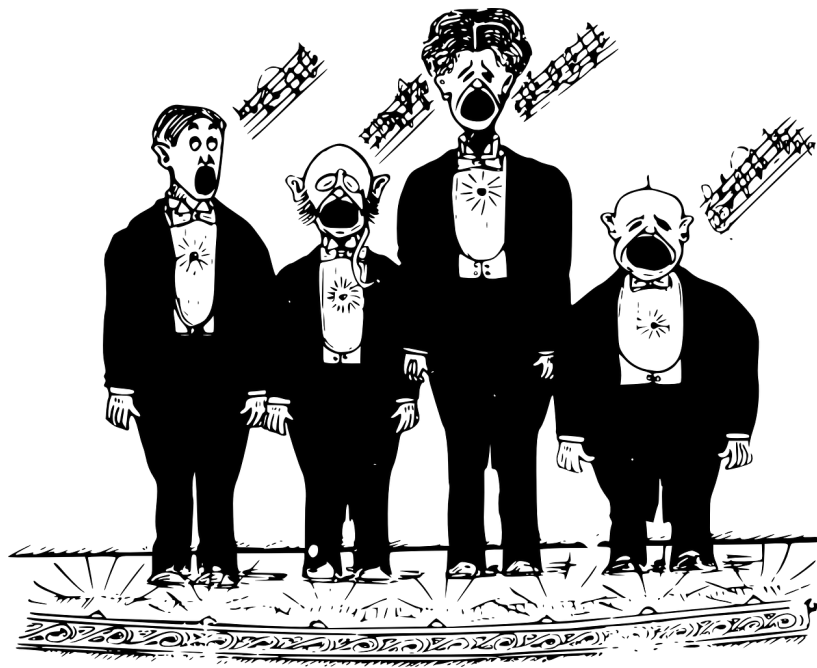
~ July 13: Barbershop Music Appreciation Day ~

**Make an affair memorable by featuring the type of music enjoyed by the decedent as a listener or as a singer.**

### The Four Hearsemen:

In 1934, members of the Blackburn-Shaw Quartet, sponsored by a funeral home in Amarillo, TX, were paid a dollar each for singing at funerals or on the firm's Sunday radio program. Tenor Wendell Heiny joined the quartet in 1935 and was soon working full-time in the funeral business.

Because the name Blackburn-Shaw didn't mean anything outside of Amarillo, the four men began thinking about a name change. They incorporated a funeral director routine in their act and became the Four Hearsemen, walking on stage carrying an imaginary casket.



In 1953 the Hearsemen were second in international competition. They won the Southwestern District Championship in 1954 and the following year became international champions.

[https://www.barbershopwiki.com/wiki/Four\\_Hearsemen](https://www.barbershopwiki.com/wiki/Four_Hearsemen)



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## Barbershop chorus at my grandfather's funeral:

“My grandfather was an international barbershop quartet champion back in the 1950s, so we asked a local barbershop quartet to sing at his funeral. When word got out that it was my grandfather's funeral, more and more guys wanted to come sing. This song was the opening of the service.”

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1264583143706178>

[https://www.google.com/search?q=barbershop+singers+at+a+funeral&oeq=barbershop+singers+at+a+funeral&gs\\_lcrp=EgZjaHJybWUyBggAEFUYOTIHCAEQIRigATIHCAIQIRi](https://www.google.com/search?q=barbershop+singers+at+a+funeral&oeq=barbershop+singers+at+a+funeral&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJybWUyBggAEFUYOTIHCAEQIRigATIHCAIQIRi)



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## ~ July 14: Barn Day ~

Barns that have been popular venues for weddings would be relevant sites for memorial services of farmers and others with similar orientations during life. But they also offer creative opportunities to render any commemorative gathering memorable, apart from standard funerary environments.



<https://styleandmoods.com/blog/country-weddings-ideas/>

Lola Rose: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/646618458969164877/>

# Food for Thought: What Do You Think?

~ July 24: National Drive-Thru Day ~

This unusual approach to visitations that was minimally introduced several years ago became modus operandi at multiple funeral homes during the pandemic. Now that Covid is no longer a reason to make radical adaptations, do you think it should be sustained as an option for visitors?

<https://www.us-funerals.com/drive-thru-funeral-viewing/>



Paradise Funeral Home,  
Saginaw, Michigan

—Associated Press

**(Click on each video)**

CBS Mornings—





~ Third Week of July: Capture the Sunset Week ~

Wherever you are, wherever you roam,  
be on the lookout for nature's glowing evidence  
that endings can be beautiful.



<https://www.celestis.com/blog/20-unique-memorial-service-ideas/>



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