



Rest

In the A. H. Peters Funeral Home of Grosse Pointe Woods

*PURSUIT of EXCELLENCE*

The Star Wars Funeral

As dedicated funeral service professionals, the licensed funeral directors of the A. H. Peters Funeral Home in Grosse Pointe Woods are always striving to stay current with trends and personalization when serving families. The funeral service industry has experienced a steady increase in services in which a memorial is selected in lieu of traditional funeral services. The past service trends of the last century often included a day of visiting with family and friends, a funeral ceremony to follow the waking hours, and traveling as a group or meeting at a cemetery for entombment or burial of casketed human remains. The labeled “traditional funeral” should be a label we remove from our repertoire. In assisting families in planning meaningful services, we must go above and beyond what the norm of yesterday was. Our licensed staff strives to create the ideal vision of a family’s tribute to a loved one. Some basic, some beautiful, but all services are created with personalization and reflection of love for those we have lost.

In October of 2018, we were asked to arrange for the funeral service of Darlene Fisher. Her son, Joe, indicated during the initial conversation (First Call) that his mother wished to be cremated and have a memorial service. I mentioned to Joe that even though his mother was to be cremated, we could have the family say goodbye at the funeral home. We would bathe her, dress her, and make her look more comfortable since they had last seen her at the hospital. He agreed and we set up a day and time for his family to say goodbye.

During the preparation process (no embalming), we discovered that she was wearing a Star Wars Millennium Falcon necklace. This was our “ah ha” moment! I thought it would be nice to put Mrs. Fishers’ name on our TV in the room where the family would gather to say goodbye, with the background of the opening sequence of Star Wars. Mr. Fisher couldn’t thank us enough as his mother was a huge Star Wars fan. After the family had spent time with Mrs. Fisher, I sat with them that same day to begin discussing the funeral arrangements. Sitting with her son talking, I had asked if he had a vision of how the memorial was to be created. He had never planned a funeral service before. He sat quietly thinking and I had again brought up the deceased’s love of Star Wars movies. When I brought that idea to the forefront the expression on the son’s face quickly transitioned from despair to a smile. We decided to have a Memorial Service that was completely unique for the deceased: a Star Wars themed funeral.

Having strong ties with many community members, we reached out to members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. They had some young members who were familiar with the score from the Star Wars movies. They gathered on the day of the memorial and worked with our staff



Trust

organist. The opening to the ceremony started with the family carrying the cremated remains into the formal chapel while the opening theme song from Star Wars played. Upon the two large-screen televisions was the name of the deceased with the Millennium Falcon- a signature Star Wars Spacecraft. We utilized the large screens again with a customized order of service that was coordinated with different pictures being displayed on our TVs with different speakers. The service was all choreographed so that the orchestra was playing songs from Star Wars as family members and friends read their unique portion of the service to all of the attendees.

Our personalized memorial folders included a handwritten letter from the deceased. Everyone in attendance was given a personalized pink rubber bracelet and the staff wore pink ties as the deceased died from breast cancer. We placed numerous pink bracelets on the bagpiper's main horn. We arranged for a nationally acclaimed opera singer to conclude the service with a solo as friends and family recessed by the urn one last time. It still shakes me up when you go do a few things simply for a family and change a griever's journey forever. After that memorial service, I sat quietly in a pew and reflected. I wish I had the opportunity to do that more often.