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**A Woman's Job No Woman Wants!**

**By RW Ward**

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Never talked about and seldom acknowledged is the fact that women have by default one of the worst jobs on the planet, namely final arrangement director. Of all the funerals, cremations and burials that take place in this country every year, nearly two thirds of these estimated 2.3 million deaths will be planned, arranged and ultimately paid for by women, by default because she is the surviving member of the marriage.

It is a basic fact of life that women currently outlive men. So when a funeral is about to take place it is usually a woman who must walk through this agonizing series of events, try to navigate the myriad of decisions, well over 120 in the first 24 hours, and keep her wits about her. All the while she is feeling the same anxiety, grief, anger, fear, emotional stress that all her other loved ones are experiencing.

What is surprising is that, despite the fact women will be making these decisions and history proves it, few women know much about this critical and often exceedingly expensive event. It is not unusual for a recent widow to have to write a check or authorize the spending of \$6,000 to \$10,000 in a matter of an hour or two. Without some knowledge of what the final arrangements process is this widow is at the mercy of whomever it is she called to help her make these arrangements.

Readers' Digest put it best in their 1989 Consumers Adviser when they described the final arrangements decision process this way, "Few consumers would ordinarily admit to spending \$5,000 or more on something that they knew little or nothing about. Yet everyday thousands of Americans do just that when a family member dies. On short notice, with their judgment often clouded by grief or guilt, they turn to the nearest funeral director to tell them what to do. While few people are comfortable about discussing funerals in advance, it is really a very poor idea to decide on arrangements under the pressure of time and emotional stress."

If a couple is typical, they will have spent a grand total of 20 minutes or so during the entire course of their marriage seriously discussing the subject if at all. As they used to say, "this is no way to run a

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railroad." Yet, this is what happens thousands of times every day in this country when someone passes away.

The good news is information and help is out there for women and men to learn something about the final arrangements process and it doesn't mean walking into your local funeral parlor and get a look at the new line of caskets for this year. It doesn't have to cost a dime to create a complete final arrangements plan and it can be done without all the emotional stress, but rather in a logical, cost effective yet dignified manner for all concerned.

If a husband and wife, particularly the wife, since statistics say she will more than likely be the one making the arrangements in the end, would take the time to find out some key answers, talk about the subject and write out some kind of preplanning ideas, a lot of emotional trauma can be spared.

There are some general topics that at least would give women a basic knowledge base, so that they

won't be completely naive when they are called upon to actually coordinate this event. What needs to be decided at least in broad strokes are the following: Know where key documents are located. These include wills, trusts, bank accounts, military records, deeds, mortgages, insurance, etc. Do you want to be cremated, buried, entombed, etc. What kind of funeral do you each want? How much should be spent. Where do you want to be buried or scattered if that is your choice. Where will the money come from for whatever you are deciding to do? Do you have a particular Funeral Home in mind? Should you purchase some things in advance, such as; cemetery property, funeral services, caskets, etc.

These are just the rudimentary parts, to begin the thinking, about the final arrangements' planning process. You could call or visit a funeral home or cemetery and often get booklets that lay out many of the things you need to jot down. An even easier way is to simply go on line and if you search for "final arrangements" or more specific parts of what you're thinking about like; cremation, cemetery lots for sale, etc. You will be amazed at all that's out there for you to get the information you need. The nice thing about some of these sites is you can actually use an online program that will allow you to create a plan and use their tutorials to learn what you should know about something that will happen someday.

and

are two such sites with a wealth of

information to give. You could do your own searches for information such as "cemetery lots for sale", "cremation arrangements" or simply "final arrangements". Just about every aspect of this subject you may need information about is out there on the internet for you to privately learn about before you would ever have to face the emotional and financial burdens of those final arrangements for someone you love.

Yes women have a job that they would prefer not to ever have and, for sure, would never apply for. Unfortunately, the facts are they will get the call and hopefully have learned something about the job before they do.

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The author writes and studies marketing and consumer trends in deathcare around the world. His industry experience includes some of the world's largest deathcare providers.

## **The Scent of a Woman**

**By Mike Yeager**

The scent of a woman can be one of her most appealing features. Hairstyle, clothes and makeup are all important, but the fragrance a woman wears provides a level of attractiveness that few other fashion features can touch. There's something about the scent of a woman that makes her stand out and get noticed by men, and what woman doesn't want that? Are you shy and quiet? Are you bold, outgoing and flirtatious? Well, the scent you decide to use will tell people a lot about your personality, before they even get a chance to talk to you.

The Scent of a Woman is enhanced by her personality.

Every woman wants to feel attractive, confident and appealing. One of the interesting features of perfume, and especially how its fragrance enhances the scent of a woman is this: different perfumes will react differently on each person. A fragrance is a blend of extracts, alcohol and water that is characterized by the ratio of its different ingredients. Who you are and what your personality is like will impact how each of these ingredients respond to your mood and character. Yes, the scent of a woman can be one of the most alluring and attractive features of your style.

Mike Yeager  
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