



# FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES COUNCIL OF SASKATCHEWAN NEWSLETTER

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## Meet Your Council

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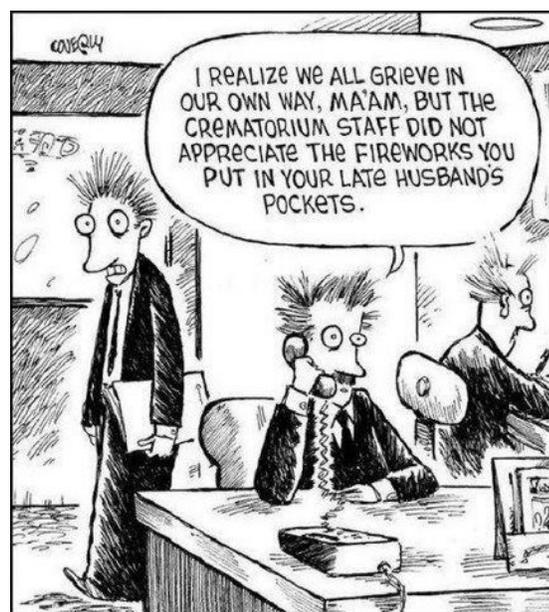
Nancy Kirk – Member Appointed

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Scott Moffat – Member Appointed

Robert Volk – Member Appointed

Denny Huyghebaert – Deputy Superintendent of Funeral and Cremation Services, SK Justice



*At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each one of us has cause to think deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us*  
- Unknown

Do you have something you want to share? Contact us at [administration@funeralinfo.ca](mailto:administration@funeralinfo.ca)

**FCSCS**  
3847C Albert Street  
Regina, SK S4S 3R4  
Phone: (306) 584-1575

**Save the Date!**  
2020 Spring Symposium  
May 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Delta Saskatoon Downtown

## ***Do I need to pull over for a funeral procession?***

When I encounter an oncoming funeral procession coming the opposite direction, do I need to stop on the right shoulder of the road until the procession is past? – Keith, Calgary

You don't legally have to pull over for cars on their mourning commute – but it's the kind thing to do, Calgary Police say.

"The safest and most respectful thing to do is to just slow down and pull over, and when it's safe to do so, to let them through," says Constable Jason Taylor of Calgary Police's traffic section. "They're in a grieving situation and they don't need to deal with people honking or saying things to them."

While some funeral homes ask family members to just meet at the cemetery, traditionally, family members drive to the cemetery in a line behind the hearse.

The lead car in the procession usually has a purple flashing light, but you're not required to slow down or pull over, like you do when there's an emergency vehicle with its siren on, Taylor says.

In Alberta, there's only one rule for driving around funeral processions – you can't cut in between the cars.

Section 88 of Alberta's Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation states that a driver can't "break through the ranks" of a funeral procession or parade.

"It does happen, but I think it's usually a matter of education," Taylor says. "People don't know the rules."

The rules vary for the rest of Canada, although no province specifically requires you to pull over.

"The other drivers, in most cases, aren't required to make special concessions other than courtesy and respect," says Jayson Gordon, a funeral director and the British Columbia representative for the Funeral Services Association of Canada (FSAC). "Prince Edward Island is the one that doesn't allow passing."

In PEI, you can't pass a procession and you're also required to slow down to half the posted speed limit when there's a procession on the road.

Drivers there traditionally pull over, but it's not required.



In Ontario, there are no special rules for how drivers should behave around funeral processions, other than following the rules of the road.

But pulling over isn't a bad idea – as long as you're not just suddenly stopping in the middle of the road.

"It's a sign of respect," said Kerry Schmidt, a sergeant with Ontario Provincial Police highway safety division, in an e-mail.

#### SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR PROCESSIONS?

As for the cars in the procession, the rules vary by province.

In Alberta, for example, the law says that a car in a procession can follow the hearse through an intersection without stopping.

But that's only if it's safe, if the car has its hazard lights on and if "the vehicle is travelling immediately behind the vehicle in front of it in the funeral procession so as to form a continuous line of traffic," according to section 88.

It's the same in Quebec, where the lead car can "go through a red light at a very low speed" as long as it's safe, according to Captain Paul Leduc, a spokesman for the Sûreté du Québec, the provincial police force.

"But they don't get the right of way," Leduc says. "If it's a busy intersection, we'll have police there to assist them."

In Ontario, funeral processions don't get any special exemptions to traffic laws.

"Purple flashing lights are "courtesy lights" in that they have no special privileges associated with their use other than the hope that other motorists will give them the right of way," said Courtney Anderson, spokeswoman for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in an e-mail.

While impatient drivers occasionally give funeral processions grief on the road, thankfully, it's relatively rare, the FSAC's Gordon says.

"Sometimes they may not know it's a procession, so you get the odd situation of somebody honking or trying to pass," Gordon says. "But for the most part, it's pretty respectful."

SOURCE: JASON TCHIR - SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL  
PUBLISHED JULY 1, 2019

#### **Food For Thought...**

In Canada, cremations are now much more common than burials. According to the Cremation Association of North America, Canada's cremation rate was 72.1% in 2018.

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# THIS P.E.I. CASKET-MAKER TAKES 'BUY LOCAL' MESSAGE TO THE GRAVE

Lots of people while away hours hunched over woodworking projects in their backyard sheds, creating shelves, toys, even furniture if they're really good — but you might be startled by what Andrew Campion is working on in his Lyndale, P.E.I., workshop.

There's one cloth-draped casket on a sawhorse, as well as an oak casket still under construction.

Campion started making burial boxes as a hobby 10 years ago after his friend, a local undertaker, told him one of the last casket-makers on the Island had retired.

"He asked me if I'd be interested in making them," Campion said. "So I bought some of the equipment that the fellow that was retiring had, and starting making them."

'Don't want to get my hands dirty anymore'

Campion's love of working with wood began with a spur-of-the-moment decision 25 years ago. He was working as a mechanic and had been transferred to Ottawa.

"I was on my way up, and my hands were nice and clean. And I said 'I don't want to get my hands dirty anymore.'"

He stopped by a place that was making cabinets and asked if there were any jobs. The man in charge asked him where he was from.

"And I said 'P.E.I.' and he said, 'you're hired.' That was my resume."

These days, Campion does seasonal maintenance at the Charlottetown Yacht Club and sells about a dozen caskets a year to local funeral homes.

Each one takes three full days to make and costs him about \$350 in materials, he said. He sells them for \$785.

'Not just a box'

"I make a little bit of profit on them — I'm not getting rich off it," Campion said. "It's more of a hobby than a money-maker. If I was selling 200 a year, then I would be making money."

'I like these, because they're Island-made,' says Campion, who's very proud of his oak caskets. (Pat Martel/CBC)



Campion is quick to point out that his caskets are quite fancy.

"It's not just a box. There's a lot to it, just all the detail in it."

He hand-cuts dozens of pieces of wood that are glued and then stapled together.

Campion only makes one standard casket style and size — two metres long by about half a metre wide (24 by 80 inches).

"That way, my productions costs are lower because I don't have to buy different materials for different stuff."

Once the casket is almost finished, Campion takes bags of shredded newspaper and spreads it out on the bottom of the inside, making a fluffy bed.

'It's not just a box,' says Andrew Campion, who's quick to point out that his caskets are quite fancy. 'There's a lot to it. Just all the detail in it.' (Pat Martel/CBC)

"It's just to build up the casket so the body isn't sitting right down at the very bottom, and if they have to adjust the body somehow, they can move newspaper around to make him sit higher or lower.

"The flyers and The Guardian and The Graphic — nothing's going to waste," Campion said.

Campion then covers the newspaper with cloth and tops it with a satin sheet.

'They're Island-made'

Campion gently fluffs up the ruffled pillow. He does all the stitching himself, he explains.

Campion takes shredded newspaper and spreads it inside the casket. 'If they have to adjust the body, they can move newspaper around to make him sit higher or lower.' (Pat Martel/CBC)

"I had to pick up a special sewing machine from the States to do all this here stitching," he said.

Campion is proud of his oak caskets because they're Island-made. And, he believes wooden caskets are best for the environment.

"The wood part decomposes better in the ground. More environmentally-friendly," he said.

'Who's going to be in this one?'

When Campion works on his caskets, he said he tries not to think about his handiwork eventually holding someone's remains — otherwise, he said, people in his line of work wouldn't be able to do the job.

Campion has been making caskets for more than a decade in his backyard workshop behind his home in Lyndale, P.E.I. (Pat Martel/CBC)

"They'd be upset every time they picked up the hammer or something, thinking 'Okay, who's going to be in this one?'"

"It's just a piece of furniture to me," he said.

While that may be true now, Campion said he knows his time will come.

Campion said he knows his time will come. "It doesn't bother me" he says. 'Death was never an issue with me. Our family was never brought up to feel bad about death.' (Pat Martel/CBC)

"It doesn't bother me" he said. "Death was never an issue with me. Our family was never brought up to feel bad about death."

After so many years of making caskets for others, Campion said he has an elaborate plan for his own someday — complete with beams of light shining out from beneath the lid.

"Like it's going up to Heaven, you see those lights."

Campion plans to one day make his own casket — complete with beams of light shining out from beneath the lid. 'Like it's going up to Heaven, you see those lights.' (Pat Martel/CBC)

He also muses about putting a speaker inside the casket that will play music or his own voice to mourners.

"If I can figure out a way of getting people lined up and say 'Hey, how are ya?' I'm a little stiff right now."

'Not ready to die yet'

Despite his plans, and with life never a certainty, Campion has yet to make his own casket.

Campion says his caskets are better for the environment than metal ones. 'The wood part decomposes better in the ground. More environmentally-friendly.' (Pat Martel/CBC)

"I'm not ready to die yet," he said. "I've got all kinds of time. My family all lived to 100 and plus, so I still have time."

But Campion believes that one day, he will rest in peace in one of his own finely-crafted creations.

"Everybody dies. It's something you can't avoid. Part of living is dying."

SOURCE: PAT MARTEL - CBC PEI  
PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 3, 2019