

# Pathways

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## refreshing in the fall

by Andrea Ruggieri



Ever feel a sudden plummet in your gut when the fall leaves begin to turn colors and float through the air? The levity of summer... a feeling of freedom and happiness, it's warmth encourages happy gatherings, floating on innertubes, dock fishing and a plethora of breathe-easy activities. As the days grow colder and the outdoor flora prepares itself for winter, things begin to look stark. For some of us, seeing summer slip away brings a feeling of loss. As we step into the season of autumn let's be reminded of all its lovely goodness.

### Reasons to Folly over Fall

**APPLES.** All kinds and all colors. Whoever hasn't gone apple-picking on a sunny autumn day, should! The crunch of fresh-fallen leaves, the cidery smell, and of course there's something about reaping one's

own produce that is simply and superbly intoxicating. As you peer through tree branches searching for the roundest, most perfect apple and the sun shines through and hits your face, you think you've died and went to heaven. And the ultimate Appletopia... the translation of apples into the foods and drinks we all know and love! Cider, dumplings, fritters, struesel, crisp... PIE! Need I say more?!

**PUMPKINS.** Never second fiddle to apples. Come fall, this squash lovingly invades our everyday lives disguised as coffee, beer, candles, cookies, cakes, pie and the all-important and glorious pumpkin roll! And by all means, find a kid, small or big, and go to your nearest pumpkin patch! Kids will teach you how to properly enjoy the patch and find THE pumpkin for Halloween. For any age, lighting up the perfectly (or imperfectly) carved Jack-o-lantern is a simple joy. These simple pleasures may just surprise you, and even more delightful... roasted pumpkin seeds!

**CORN MAZE.** Some may be unenthusiastic to this form of entertainment. The corn maze can frustrate and maybe even exasperate, but it is probably one of the best concoctions for exercising the brain, and the euphoria is a high you can't beat when you find your way out! So exercise that brain, bring a friend or two, and find your way into some fall fun!

**COLOR.** Orange, Red, Green and Yellow. Simple. Color breeds happiness! Like an artist's palette, looking at the landscape in peak autumn can be breath-taking.

Admittedly, autumn is a time to shed leaves and get ready for hibernation, but as is also true in life, we need to look further ahead for re-growth as we take time to rest and heal. The hamster can only run circles on his wheel for so long! Try not to be hostile toward fall as it equips itself for winter, it bestows many gifts as well. Jump in a pile of raked leaves, take a deep inhale, and open your eyes to the beauty and glory of fall!



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## the butterfly connection

For 21 years now, we have hosted our Annual Butterfly Release. This year was no different, and between both our noon and 3 o'clock releases, we had crowds collectively reach over 650 people. We don't take the presence of so many lightly. It's a beautiful, symbolic event that is cathartic for so many who have lost someone important in their life. When the wishes are sent to the sky on the wings of a butterfly to loved ones, it is truly heartwarming and a beautiful sight. Many were smiling as well as shedding tears, and there is a moment... of feeling "connected" with their loved one spiritually. For some, it opens the gate to moving on to a new pathway in their grief.

Not only is there a feeling of connectedness with our loved ones who have passed, but you realize somewhere along the way that we are all connected; by our common losses, by what and who we cherish and hold dear, of the grief journey we all embark on at some point in our lives. The feeling of community is palatable and comforting. Our gratification grows with each new family that feels that connection. It is powerful; and motivates us at Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes to continue the tradition of this "Butterfly Connection." The experience may be as unique as each individual who releases a monarch into the sky. Whatever is taken from it, our wish is that every person benefits in some way, big or small.

Our butterfly release is an open invitation to all and is typically planned for the 3rd Sunday in August every year. Please join us!



*coming up!*

**FALL SEMINAR**

NOV 20 ▶

**Surviving Grief**  
During the Holidays

*Get on the list!*

Want to be notified of upcoming seminars, the butterfly release or other events, email your interest here:

**[aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com](mailto:aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com)**

or call **585.720.6000**



# celebrant service another option

*"Mom's funeral service was perfect. It truly painted a picture of the person she was."*

*"She was spiritual, but on the same note, a free spirit who wasn't associated with any particular church."*



We don't belong to a church, what do we do? We hear this every now and then, and are reminded how important it is to share information on celebrant services. Times are changing, as are belief systems, and though our culture never stops evolving, one thing has remained, the need for people to honor their loved ones in death. Mom just passed away. You're in the throes of planning a funeral and a particular anxiety fills you. I am not religious and Mom was not associated with a church, how do we pay tribute to her life properly?

You are not alone. This scenario is not uncommon these days with a growing number of people not distinguishing themselves with any religion. Regardless, many people feel stuck and unsure when faced with preparing a suitable funeral that celebrates their loved one. Today many funeral homes offer a Celebrant Service.

## What is a Celebrant Service? What is a Celebrant?

A Celebrant Service does not need to be held at a church. It can be held right at the funeral home. The family plays a large part in designing the service, always with guidance of a Certified Celebrant. Ultimately, you hold the reigns on this very important celebration with help from an experienced life tribute specialist! The service can be as personalized as you like, showing your loved one's individuality. This can be done many different ways, music, readings, flowers and the display of personal items. Maybe Mom was an accomplished musician where her instrument and music can be on display, or Dad was a Harley Davidson enthusiast, bring in the Harley!



Michael Perotto



David Perotto



William Padulo



Joeseph Capuano



Joseph Bianchi



Meghan  
Hagenbach  
Schmitt

In simplest terms, the difference between a Funeral Director and a Celebrant is, "logistical planner & hospitality agent" vs. a "life tribute specialist." A Funeral Director is trained to take care of all the details in funeral arrangements and in making sure that the family and guests are comfortable. A Celebrant is trained to pilot the development of the life tribute service as well as officiate. At Walker Brothers Funeral Home, we felt so strongly that both of these skills sets were so important in serving our families, that all of our Funeral Directors are Celebrant Certified through the InSight Institute.

If you have more questions about a Celebrant Service, we are ready to answer your questions. Please, give us a call, 585-352-1500.



# our deserving veterans

by Andrea Ruggieri

*Per Dictionary.com:*

**“SACRIFICE:** to surrender or give up, or permit injury or disadvantage to, for the sake of something else.”

“Sacrifice,” as we know, can be a relative term. The average Joe could say they gave up their morning donut and call it a sacrifice. An athlete or scholar gives up much of their time to excel at their passion. And we ALL know parents often sacrifice for their brood... but a veteran possesses perhaps the most unique and unfathomable sacrifices.

Us non-military folk may recognize the sacrifice of men and women who have served our country to protect freedoms and all that we hold dear, and though we may be truly grateful for this sacrifice, what is given up by veterans is abstract without having the military experience. Time away from those they love, safety, a “regular” life, mental and physical health, and sometimes the ultimate sacrifice is their own lives. Only those who have served, genuinely know. If anyone questions why a military veteran deserves special benefits upon their return to civilian life, take a moment to imagine and empathize how meaningful their sacrifices are. Their sacrifices are the greatest gift. Phil, Michael and David Perotto, owners of Bartolomeo & Perotto and Walker Brothers Funeral Homes robustly support our veterans in ways they hope will continue to honor them.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has just awarded a Victor, NY based company to begin construction for a new National Cemetery in Pembroke, NY. This is exciting news, as now the closest National cemetery in place is in Bath, NY, which is almost an hour and a half away from Rochester vs. Pembroke which is under an hour. The plan for this cemetery in Pembroke will be to honor more than 96,000 veterans and their casket and cremation burial needs. Though the development of this cemetery will come in phases, it initially is intended to be ready for its first burials mid to late 2020.

As the opening of the new Western New York National Cemetery begins to emerge over the horizon, Phil, Michael and David Perotto looked to re-refresh some of



our own funeral care veteran initiatives. In addition to daily dedication to always honor fallen veterans through meaningful services, this spring be on the lookout for more information via a “Veterans Burial & Funeral Benefits” seminar. We want all our vets out there to know what can be available to them, their spouse and family members at end-of-life. Things like: an American flag, a headstone or marker, and free burial in any national cemetery are available for all eligible veterans. We are also offering a funeral discount here at Bartolomeo Perotto for those who may have interest. Details will be shared at the benefits seminar this spring, or feel free to call us at the phone number below at any time. **If you would like to be added to the invitation list for this seminar, please email:** [aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com](mailto:aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com) or call 585.720.6000.

In addition, we’re planning to revive our holiday stocking-stuffer program this year! Due to cost and other factors, it was unfortunate we were forced to put our Stockings for Soldiers drive on hold. We’ve re-evaluated this initiative and are ready to move full steam ahead with “Let’s Do it for the Vets” Stockings for Veterans program. It brings us great satisfaction to overcome barriers to bring back these important initiatives! **If you or your organization wishes to participate and fill stockings with needed items for military veterans, please email:** [aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com](mailto:aruggieri@walkerbrothersfh.com) or call 585.720.6000.



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