

Buried in Details

By Reg P. Wydeven
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One of the best funeral scenes in movie history was in the original 'Ocean's Eleven' starring Frank Sinatra and the Rat Pack. While at the funeral, the looks on the Eleven's faces are priceless as they realize the casket they hid their loot in is being incinerated because the deceased wanted to be cremated.

Of course, Luke Skywalker lighting the funeral pyre of his redeemed father, Darth Vader, in 'Return of the Jedi' is also a classic. But the greatest funeral scene in any movie was for Spock in 'Star Trek II – The Wrath of Khan.'

The entire crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise stands at attention while Captain Kirk says in a shaky voice that of all the souls he encountered in the universe, the Vulcan Spock's was "the most human." As Scotty plays 'Amazing Grace' on the bagpipes, Spock's glossy black casket travels down a conveyor belt to a torpedo tube, where it is launched down to the surface of the orbiting planet below.

When I die, that's exactly how I want my funeral to be. I'm confident William Shatner will be available to speak, because he's too important to die. Thanks to a new law passed last year, I can make sure my funeral wishes are followed.

Under the new law, the state Department of Health and Family Services created an Authorization for Final Disposition Instructions form. A competent adult, who signs the form in front of either two witnesses or a notary, can use it to designate another adult as a representative who can make funeral arrangements (other than an unrelated funeral home employee, health care provider or social worker).

The form also allows the person to leave instructions to the representative regarding his or her wishes about funeral arrangements and the final disposition of remains. The form is very straight-forward and easy to use. It can be downloaded from the Department's website at www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov/.

So if you're like me and want your coffin to be shot out of a torpedo tube while William Shatner eulogizes you being accompanied by 'Amazing Grace' on the bagpipes, be sure to download and complete the new Authorization for Final Disposition Instructions form.