



Bereavement Newsletter

June 2014

& Prairie Home Health

200 Fourth Circle • Dodge City, KS

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10 Ways to Honor Your Deceased Dad on Father's Day

Meaningful ways you can keep your father's memory alive during the holiday

By Chris Raymond

The annual Father's Day holiday can prove challenging for anyone mourning the loss of his or her dad, even many years after he died. This article offers 10 meaningful ways that you can honor your deceased father and keep his memory alive on Father's Day.

Put a "Shrimp on the Barbie"

If your dad enjoyed firing up the grill and cooking up burgers, brats, steaks, chicken, fish or anything else the family desired, then don an apron, grab some tongs and serve your family a feast in his honor. (And even if your father didn't care to cook, he probably had a favorite meal or restaurant that you could

also enjoy during the holiday.)

You might offer a few words about your favorite food- or meal-related memory before you and your family dive in to the meal you prepared.

The Write Stuff

Writing or journaling your thoughts and feelings is an effective way to reduce stress and often proves therapeutic. Whether you express yourself best sitting at your computer or using paper and pen, consider writing a private letter or even a poem describing how much your father means to you.

Pay Him a Visit

Honor your deceased father this Father's Day by visiting his gravesite, the spot where his ashes were scattered, or some other location significant to

your dad. While there, you should remove any debris, such as leaves or dead flowers, from his resting place and then leave a fresh floral bouquet to mark your visit and your love.

Enlarge Your Family Tree

If you have the space in your yard, consider planting a tree in memory of your dad. After buying the sapling from a nursery, dig the hole and then have your family gather 'round to say a few words or share their favorite memories about your father. After placing the tree in the hole, ask each family member to toss a handful of dirt in before you finish planting and watering the tree. You could also place a small engraved "In Memory of..." plaque at the base of this living

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Hospice of the Prairie invites you and your family to a

REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Tuesday, June 3 at 7:00 pm

First United Methodist Church

210 Soule, Dodge City

in the Parlor Room

(please use the east entrance)

A reception will follow the ceremony

Please RSVP by Friday, May 30

By calling 227-7209

or 1-800-466-7209

Playing a Violin With Three Strings

By Jack Riemer

On Nov. 18, 1995, Itzhak Perlman, the violinist, came on stage to give a concert at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center in New York City.

If you have ever been to a Perlman concert, you know that getting on stage is no small achievement for him. He was stricken with polio as a child, and so he has braces on both legs and walks with the aid of two crutches. To see him walk across the stage one step at a time, painfully and slowly, is an awesome sight.

He walks painfully, yet majestically, until he reaches his chair. Then he sits down, slowly, puts his crutches on the floor, undoes the clasps on his legs, tucks one foot back and extends the other foot forward. Then he bends down and picks up the violin, puts it under his chin, nods to the conductor and proceeds to play.

By now, the audience is used to this ritual. They sit quietly while he makes his way across the stage to his

chair. They remain reverently silent while he undoes the clasps on his legs. They wait until he is ready to play.

But this time, something went wrong. Just as he finished the first few bars, one of the strings on his violin broke. You could hear it snap - it went off like gunfire across the room. There was no mistaking what that sound meant. There was no mistaking what he had to do.

We figured that he would have to get up, put on the clasps again, pick up the crutches and limp his way off stage - to either find another violin or else find another string for this one. But he didn't. Instead, he waited a moment, closed his eyes and then signaled the conductor to begin again.

The orchestra began, and he played from where he had left off. And he played with such passion and such power and such purity as they had never heard before.

Of course, anyone knows that it is impossible to play a symphonic work

with just three strings. I know that, and you know that, but that night Itzhak Perlman refused to know that.

You could see him modulating, changing, re-composing the piece in his head. At one point, it sounded like he was de-tuning the strings to get new sounds from them that they had never made before.

When he finished, there was an awesome silence in the room. And then people rose and cheered. There was an extraordinary outburst of applause from every corner of the auditorium. We were all on our feet, screaming and cheering, doing everything we could to show how much we appreciated what he had done.

He smiled, wiped the sweat from this brow, raised his bow to quiet us, and then he said - not boastfully, but in a quiet, pensive, reverent tone - "You know, sometimes it is the artist's task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have left."

What a powerful line that is. It has stayed in my mind ever since I heard it. And who knows? Perhaps that is the definition of life - not just for artists but for all of us.

Here is a man who has prepared all his life to make music on a violin of four strings, who, all of a sudden, in the middle of a concert, finds himself with only three strings; so he makes music with three strings, and the music he made that night with just three strings was more beautiful, more sacred, more memorable, than any that he had ever made before, when he had four strings.

So, perhaps our task in this shaky, fast-changing, bewildering world in which we live is to make music, at first with all that we have, and then, when that is no longer possible, to make music with what we have left.

Coming Soon!
Hospice of the Prairie's

8th Annual Kids Day Camp

Saturday, June 7, 2014

9 am - 3 pm

Hospice of the Prairie office

Children, age 7-12 who have experienced the death of a loved one, are invited for a day of summertime fun, crafts and games! Kids will also learn about the journey of grief and take home meaningful craft projects. Lunch and snacks are provided.

Our Day Camp is offered at no cost and trained hospice staff and volunteers will be facilitating the camp. Pre-register your child by calling Nancy Renner at 227-7209 or 1-800-466-7209.



Remembering Dad

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reminder of your dad. (Incidentally, if you don't have the space to plant a tree, consider donating one to a local hospice, library or place of worship to beautify your community in your father's memory.)

Hit the Road

Did your dad enjoy watching his favorite baseball team at the ballpark? Was his love of fishing exceeded only by the size of "the one that got away"? Did he relish time spent at a cabin in the great outdoors or on a golf course? Whether near or far, if there was a particular place or activity he loved, then gather your family, pile into the car and hit the open road as a tribute to Dad.

"I Never Told You This, But..."

If there's one thing you wish you could/would have said to your dad before he died but never did, write it on an index card, tie it to a helium balloon and release it from a place special to your father. No, your dad won't actually get your message, but the symbolic nature of this gesture will likely prove more powerful and moving than you think.

Share Your "Kodak Moments"

Most families have an old shoebox filled with photographs sitting around that they've always meant to organize. (And even if you're a child of the Information Age, chances are your digital pictures are just as chaotic.) Father's Day offers a great opportunity to dig through those images with your family, share the stories behind the photos and create a special scrapbook or slideshow as a tribute to your father.

Heal by Helping

Make a donation to a cause meaningful to your dad in his memory, or to help find a cure for a disease, such as cancer or Alzheimer's. You might also consider volunteering a few hours of your time to benefit others.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Shoot a simple tribute video with your smart phone, or create a fully edited slideshow from your favorite photographs and set it to music. Once finished, share it with your family and friends, or post it online to let the world know how much you love your father.

Find a Paternal Proxy

If you traditionally took your dad out for a meal on Father's Day, gave him a gift or just hung out with him for an afternoon, consider brightening this holiday for another father by doing the same thing for him. If you don't know of somebody already, ask around at your place of worship, a nursing home or hospice, or even at your workplace. While your father can never be replaced, consider your actions a gesture of love in his memory that would make him proud of the child he raised.

Grieving on Father's Day

By Carol A Ranney

Fathers are often referred to as the hidden grievers. When a child dies, thoughts generally go to the mothers—the agony they most certainly are suffering, their loneliness, emptiness, now that someone who was once a part of them is gone. Women tend to grieve outwardly, talking to their friends, crying, seeking out supportive groups and friends to be with and with whom to share their burden of sorrow.

Men, on the other hand, have a much more inward grieving style. Men are usually more factual than emotional. They accept more readily that nothing they say or do will reverse the situation; their child is irrecoverably gone from this earth. They may weep at times, but that is not their primary mode of mourning. A man may throw himself into his job with fervor, perhaps to help alleviate the feeling that as the "family protector," he has failed to keep each member safe. He may begin or continue a project, or start a new activity, in memory of his loved one, to whom he dedicates his efforts.

Men are more concrete in their thinking, but that does not mean they grieve less. What it often does mean is that they get less emotional support; people see them return to work, keep busy at home, and assume "they're over it." Little do others realize that men agonize through their grief and mourning fully as much as women, and appreciate just as much the caring word, the hug, a recalled memory, a shared moment of silence.

Perhaps the best gift you could ever give a grieving father on Father's Day is the recognition of his loss, and affirming him as a father in mourning. A book especially for men in grief; a card recognizing that he is missing one of those who made him a father, yet he is still a father; a gift in memory of his child; or simply a hug, an arm around the shoulder, or a compassionate word will assure him that although he does not grieve outwardly much, those who truly care about him have not forgotten.



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& Prairie Home Health
has a Facebook page!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- June 3 Remembrance Service, 7:00 p.m.; First United Methodist Church Parlor Room
- June 7 Kids Camp, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Hospice of the Prairie
- June 9 Compassionate Friends Support Group, for families who have lost a child, 7 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie
- June 12 Thursday Night Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator
- June 18 Bereavement Luncheon, 12 noon, Inn Pancake House, 1610 W. Wyatt Earp, Dodge City; Nancy Renner, host
- June 26 Thursday Night Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator

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