



Waunakee Rotary Club

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Many families find it's easier to plan early for their elders' funerals than to wait until they absolutely have to.

During a talk surprisingly filled with laughter, that was one of the messages that Harvey Winn, funeral director, left with the Waunakee Rotarians during their Jan. 31 meeting.

Harvey and Ginger Winn have operated Winn Funeral Home in Waunakee for the past 35 years. Harvey outlined the services they provide and the process involved after a loved one's death.

The first stage involves transferring the body if the deceased dies at a residence so that the coronor can make a death pronouncement; otherwise, at a nursing home or hospice care, a death pronouncement can be made on site.

The Winns then talk to the family about the type of services offered – funeral, memorial or a cremation with no service. Sometimes families opt out of services if the deceased has only recently moved to the community to stay in a nursing home, but Harvey believes some sort of service is better.

The Winns arrange all the details of the service – the clergy, the ceremony, visitation, the flowers and the reception. They contact the clergy prior to meeting with families to find out possible times for services. This is convenient for families because the Winns know all the various parties who come into play.

The Winns can also work with veterans organizations for military ceremonies.

Most of us don't think about writing our own obituaries beforehand, but many people do so, Harvey said. The Winns follow up with newspapers to get these published and they

know the deadlines and the procedures to follow.

Also, the funeral home provides information for the death certificate, which remains on file with the county's register of deeds.

They also assist families with social security and follow up on the part of veterans with certain entitlements.

Winn Funeral Home has caskets and urns available. Vaults are required at all Wisconsin cemeteries to ensure that nothing is disturbed during the upkeep. The Winns also arrange for the cemetery.

The Winns pay all of the bills and then wait to be reimbursed from families. This can take some time as estates are sorted out, and Harvey said funeral homes may be one of the few businesses that you can actually go to and wait to pay.

Some people are concerned about the expense of funerals. But nursing homes can set up trusts at banks that set money aside for them. These funds are not assets and can be used only for funeral expenses. They cannot be touched for other uses. Harvey estimated that about 140 families in Waunakee have these trusts set up. He suggests elderly people talk to one of their children about planning for future arrangements.

Instructions can also be drafted for funerals, but Harvey warns not to get too detailed. One woman who died at 107 created a set of instructions for her funeral when she was 80. But 27 years later, the people she requested to lead the services and serve as pallbearers were already deceased, as well, Harvey said.

Other news:

•Phil Willems said Kevin Kearney needs a Rotarian to step up and fill the role of Waunafest chairman.

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Calendar of Events: Super Raffle

•The Jaycees will no longer sell Super Raffle tickets and are folding as a community organization. Two Rotarians are needed to help head up the Super Raffle. There is a meeting at 4 p.m. Jan 31 at Ray Kuehl's office.

•Plans for paths and bridges around the pond by the Village Center were available for Rotarians to see.

Guests: Jim Chancellor, guest of Tom Reis; Genna Eaton, guest of Ellen Schaaf.

Birthdays: Feb. 3, Jim Starling.

Anniversaries: Feb. 1, Jim and Terri Brussell.

Prayers: Jan. 31, Pat Durden; Feb. 7, Msgr. Kramer; Feb. 14, Susan Vergeront; Feb. 21, Leonard Allen.

Programs: Jan. 31, Bob Kase, Wisconsin School Music Association.

Greeters: Jan. 31, Jim Leonard, Joyce Maly; Feb. 7, Tracy Mann, Gordon Meicher; Feb. 14, Jim Meyer, Danny Miller; Feb. 21, Shelley Moffatt, Richard Murphy.

Make up meetings online

It's easy to make up a meeting on the Internet. The site is www.rotaryeclubone.org. Print out the form and give it to Phil Willems, the club secretary.