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Nancy Bush and Sue Kruskopf, MyWonderfulLife.com: Company Helps You Plan Your Own Funeral

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As Nancy Bush was helping her husband, John, through his 10-month battle with cancer, there was one topic that was off-limits. "I tried on multiple occasions to talk about what he would want for a funeral, when the time came, and he did not want to have that conversation, understandably so," Bush recalled. "He was focused on getting better."

When John passed away in 2006. Bush and her friend, Sue Kruskopf, put together a "phenomenal celebration of his life," Bush said. "It wasn't like a funeral -- it was an uplifting, wonderful occasion, personalized through videos, photos, music and props. We set up a table that said '1/1000th of John's stuff,' with all the goofy things he's collected. There was a lot of humor interwoven into the service, and people appreciated that, because they knew that's what he was all about."

But Bush still wasn't sure if she was honoring John's wishes. "I was constantly second-guessing if it was the right thing, if it's what he would have wanted," she said.

Fewer people may be leaving their funerals to chance and instead want something like [boomer icon Nora Ephron's pre-planned service](#). Before she died, Ephron picked the people she wanted to speak at her funeral, determined how long they should speak for and had her favorite recipes distributed. Based on research Kruskopf conducted after John's funeral, "70 percent of baby boomers don't want a traditional funeral -- they want something more personal and far more celebratory," she said. "We knew if we could make funeral planning a good user experience, that was a tool our generation could use. We baby boomers have everything we want at our fingertips, so it's going to be the same thing with death."

Bush and Kruskopf's website, [MyWonderfulLife.com](#), allows people to create their own funeral profile, then choose up to six people who receive a link to access the profile upon their death. The site also provides planning tips, such as how to throw green funerals or themed funerals or funerals that use just one color.

HuffPost Small Business asked Bush and Kruskopf why it's so important to allow their clients to go out in style.

Would it be fair to say that you're merging your advertising sensibilities with funeral planning?

Kruskopf: If you've been to one too many bad funerals and said, "man, I don't want to go out like that or "that doesn't personify at all who that person was," this is a way to take control of your legacy. It's not MyDeathWish, it's MyWonderfulLife. This isn't how you want to die, this is how you want your life to be remembered, and perhaps how to do that in a whole different way than our parents may have done for their funerals.

What are some of the wildest things you've seen people plan for their funerals?

Bush: People can be as detailed or as simplistic as they want. It might be as simple as "make sure I'm cremated and not buried," but they can also get very detailed, with music and writings, who they want to give eulogies. They can write their own obituary or letters to loved ones.

Kruskopf: This is a really private experience, so we don't have access to our members' books. We've found people are exploring creative ways to exit, but we don't get access to what their wishes are.

But do you get feedback from family members after the funeral?

Bush: We get so much gratification in hearing people say that [our site] has fostered conversations among family members they never would have had. Just to open the conversation is such a gift to so many families.

So you're breaking down the taboo of talking about a funeral before the actual death?

Bush: No question. I think we are slowly breaking through that, and people are more open to talking about it, but we still believe we are on the frontiers of this.

Kruskopf: We think the same amount of care and personalization -- in a much shorter period of time, of course -- will come into this business as it has to the wedding planning business, because baby boomers are such control freaks. We'd like to be to the funeral industry what The Knot is to the wedding industry.

Nancy, is it hard personally for you knowing that you started this business because of John's death?

Bush: I don't look at it that way. I see it as such a positive thing. Starting this business is the silver lining. So many other people can be helped through my experience. And I think it's something he might have done.

Entrepreneur Spotlight

Name: Nancy Bush and Sue Kruskopf

Company: MyWonderfulLife.com

Age: Nancy, 51; Sue, 55

Location: Minneapolis

Founded: 2009

Employees: N/A

2012 Projected Revenue: Pre-revenue, though traffic doubled last year and they're in discussions with businesses for revenue-generating partnerships

Website: <https://www.mywonderfullife.com/>
