

How to Prepare for Crossing the Bar

Though it's not a pleasant subject to consider, planning for our final days is a task too often left unattended. This can cause additional consternation and stress for your family in a time of great sorrow. Being prepared can alleviate that stress, and it's not difficult to do. The phases of preparedness are planning; recognizing the signs of failing health, getting health care, and obtaining hospice care; reporting a spouse's death; setting up services and burial; and how to carry on after the loss of a spouse.

Planning

1. A Will, Power of Attorney, and Medical Power of Attorney – Having a will can greatly simplify the disposition of your estate. The powers of attorney dictate who can act for you and in what capacity. A will also directs how you want to be buried and the type of service you desire. Ensure family members know where these documents are located.
2. Create a file folder with sources of health care and hospice care, memorial service providers, and funeral arrangement providers. The '66 Class website, usna66.org, has several health care provider options and resources. Memorial and funeral service providers are usually locally known. Often, they are associated with a church.
3. Include in the file folder directions on who, besides family, to contact in the event of your death with website info and IDs and passwords for the websites as appropriate. Some contacts are:
 - a. Social Security Administration
 - b. Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) for career veterans receiving retirement pay.
 - c. Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) (ID Card and Tricare for Life)
 - d. Credit Card companies and banks to change titles on jointly owned accounts and to close individual accounts.
 - e. ID and Passwords for email accounts and social media accounts
 - f. Addresses of the three major credit bureaus – Experian, Transunion, and Equifax
 - g. State Department of Motor Vehicles for car registrations and driver's licenses
 - h. Investment Firms for IRAs
 - i. Accountant and tax preparer

- j. Law Firm that created the wills and documents
- k. Property titles
- l. Contact information for either a local or national veterans cemetery and military honors unit.
- m. Local funeral home and church addresses: funeral home will provide death certificate – plan for multiple copies.
- n. The USNA 66 Website, usna66.org, under the Band of Sisters/Sail on Solo tab – “5 wishes” and “The Surviving Spouse Guide.”

Failing Health, Health Care, and Hospice Care

The Class website, usna66.org, has a Health and Wellness tab that can direct you to a point of contact (POC) within the Class who has experience working with veterans and other health care and hospice care service providers. Visit the Class website often to keep abreast of updates to health care information.

Reporting the Death of a Classmate or Spouse

Any Classmate who learns of the death of another Classmate or Classmate’s spouse, should, as soon as possible, notify the Class Secretary, Mike Baird by email, pmbaird@verizon.net or phone, 410-279-1664.

For the death of a Classmate’s spouse, the primary concern is privacy, i.e., whether the Classmate wishes to have the death disclosed. The same resources are available to a Classmate as they would be to a Classmate’s Widow.

If you have learned of the Classmate’s death by direct contact with the Classmate’s widow or family, please try to find out plans for services, burial, and a preferred charity to which the Class can make a memorial donation. Should the widow or family not readily know this information, just notify Mike Baird and he will follow up.

The primary points of contact for assisting Classmate Widows or Classmate Widowers and families are:

Mike Baird, Class Secretary, pmbaird@verizon.net; phone – 410-279-1664

Don Jackson, USNA Memorial Service Coordinator - djackson.ng@gmail.com; phone - (443) 994-1896

Linda McCook – Sail On Solo (SOS) lead - limccook@gmail.com; phone - (703) 409-6613

The Class website, www.usna66.org, has a tab under “Band of Sisters” - //Sail on Solo, that explains the organization’s mission to support Classmate widows.

Notifying the Class of a Classmate's Death

The process to notify the Class of a Classmate's death and to assist the widow and family is provided below.

Step 1 – When notified of a Classmate's death, the Class Secretary will notify the Classmate's Company Rep, asking him to notify his company Classmates and contact the Widow and family to learn of expected services, burial/internment arrangements, a preferred charity, and if a Last Call for *Shipmate* is desired.

Step 2 - If the Classmate's Widow is still living, ask if she wishes to remain in contact with the Class for events or if she desires no contact. If she wants to remain in contact with the Class, the Company Rep should then provide her contact information to Mike Baird and Linda McCook.

Step 3 – Should a Widow desire the Classmate to have a Memorial Service in the Chapel or be interred in the USNA Columbarium, or both, she should contact Don Jackson. Don can guide her or the family through the process of obtaining an urn, a Columbarium niche and setting up a date for a service, internment, and reception, if desired. If the Classmate already has a niche, Don can facilitate her and the family in scheduling a service, interment, and reception. Also, should a widowed Classmate have the same needs, Don can assist as with a Widow.

Step 4 – For the USNA Columbarium, when the service, internment, and reception date and time are known, the Class Secretary will send an email to the DC Area Classmates and the Classmate's Company Rep. The email will specify the date and time of the service. If a reception is planned, the email will also provide a point of contact and a deadline date for those planning to attend it so an accurate count can be obtained. About two weeks before the scheduled service, the Class Secretary will send a reminder email to all concerned.

Should the Classmate desire to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery, prior planning and permission will need to be obtained. POCs for Arlington and Ft. Myers should be in your planning folder and can be obtained from the Class website. For local veteran cemeteries and military honors units, you will need to contact them as described earlier in planning.

Carrying on After the Loss of a Spouse

The loss of a spouse is one of the most traumatic events in life. It is important to maintain balance. Family, grief counselors, friends, church support groups, and Classmates can help. After the services and internment are completed, it is important to focus on each day and avoid making major changes such as selling a home.

Support for Classmates can come, in part, from the list of others who have lost a spouse. Their names and contact information are provided on the next page. For widows or surviving spouses, the SOS group under Linda McCook can be a vital resource.

USNA66 Deceased Wives of Living Classmates a/o 10 Jul 2023

LN	FN	MI	EMAIL	WIFE	Deceased Wife Name
Amerine	David	B.	damerine@aol.com		Cindy
Baird	L. J. Michael		pmbaird@verizon.net	Leah	Pat - 01/09/2016
Beesley	James	B.	jimbeesley1966@gmail.com	Veronica	Jana - 9/12/2015
Brown	Barry	N.	barry1701@yahoo.com		Linda - 06/09/2011
Bryant	Franklin	S.	FBryant66@bellsouth.net		Karen - 08/06/2017
Caldwell	Dwight	B.	dwight.caldwell@1966.usna.com		Linda - Unknown
Carlson	Edward	J.	edjcarlson@gmail.com		Heather - Unknown
Dennis	Patrick	J.	patrickdennis932@yahoo.com		Jeannie - 07/30/2022
Dodge	Marvin	M.	mmcrdodge@teleguam.net		Cecille - 2006
Doyle	Thomas	V.	tdoyle66@tampabay.rr.com		Kathy - 10/24/2022
Gaffney	William	T.			Irene - Unknown
Gibbons	Francis	W.	frank.gibbons@earthlink.net		Carlene - 01/31/2013
Gill	Robert	P.	flosprey1@gmail.com		Cathleen - 04/20/2018
Goryanec, III	George	T.	gtgiii@centurylink.net	Angela	Debra - 08/07/2010
Haslett	Donald	B.	dbhaslett438@comcast.net		Jette - 09/06/2022
Hough	James	A.	jim.hough@1966.usna.com		Marky - 02/07/2021
Hura, Jr.	Myron		myron_hura@rand.org		Ellen - 10/10/2021
Jackson	Dennis	D.	djackson.ng@gmail.com		Maureen - 05/20/2022
Jackson	John	D.	jdj.milford@verizon.net		Sylvia - 08/10/2016
Johnstone, Jr.	Robert	C.	rcj266@att.net		Barbara - 04/24/2016
King, Jr.	Roland	E.	reking@att.net		Trish - 03/30/2018
Kinsey	Joseph	W.	jkinsey107@aol.com	Mary	Lisa - 1999
Law	Douglas	E.	douglas_law2@aol.com		Myrl - 09/13/2014
Marfiak	Thomas	F.	marfiaktpr@rcn.com	Chris	Pat - 04/08/2010
Martineau, Jr.	Paul	W.			Rita - 01/06/2023
May	Douglas	E.	dmaych1@gmail.com		Jennifer - Unknown
Nesbit	Thomas	B.	tbnesbit@nc.rr.com		Suellen - 03/05/2019
Olsen	Curtis Wayne		cwo9120@gmail.com		Kathleen - 01/13/2022
Robertson	Kenneth	C.	therobertsons@comcast.net		Blanche - 11/28/2021
Rorick, Jr.	Jay	T.	TomRorick@aol.com		Marilyn - 03/18/2021
Sexton	Noah	P.	sextonnav@yahoo.com	Jean Richardso	Mary Jane - 11/19/2015
Simonpietri, Jr.	Andre	C.	andresimonpietri@aol.com	Dominiqu	Veronica - 12/15/1999
Spikes	Clayton	H.	clay.spikes@icloud.com	Barbara Kiernan	Nunna - 11/17/2021
Strickland	Henry	W.	hhstrickland@msn.com		Harriet - 05/26/2016
Titcomb	Robert	E.	rbtitco@aol.com		Betsy - May 1993, Margaret - 2013
Tracey	Michael	T.	mttracey@earthlink.net	Diane	Christine - 2011
Vance	Robert	D.	bob.vance@verizon.net		Lydia - 07/29/2019
Williford	James	V.	jvwinc@aol.com		Doris (Cissie) - 02/05/2023
Winter	John	P.	jackwinter@gmail.com		Unknown - 01/06/2019
Wright	Peter	W.	p.wright@comcast.net		Unknown