

A good guide for caregivers

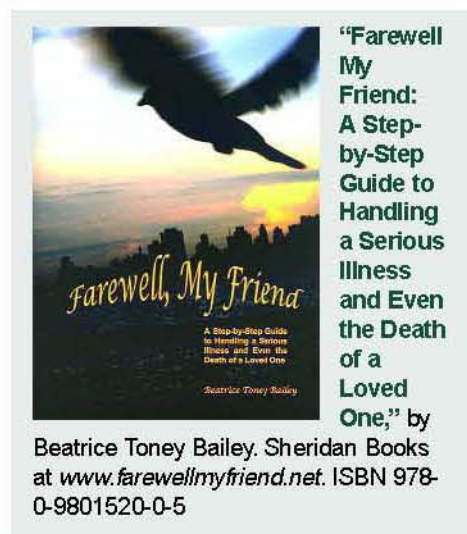
Sometimes the person preplanning a funeral is not the person whose funeral it will be, it's a friend or relative who is the caregiver or helper for somebody who is very ill. What can be done to help a person in this role? "Farewell My Friend" is a highly practical book that starts its advice very early in the process—at the onset of illness, not at death.

The author, Beatrice Toney Bailey, wrote this book after the death of her husband from cancer. As in so many books inspired by a personal bereavement, there

are reminiscences about the deceased and loving accounts of his illness, death and interment. However, Bailey must be the quintessential make-lemonade-out-of-life's-lemons person. She kept track of all the practical questions that bedeviled her during her husband's decline and passing, and put the answers into this volume.

This book has checklists for setting up sickrooms, organizational tips for keeping track of medical care and photocopy-ready templates for contact lists. It also discusses benefits and legal matters, including suggested legal action items and a work-

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sheet for developing the obituary. As part of all the business questions there is a short section on preneed funeral planning with suggestions on what needs to be thought about and discussed while the sick person is still able to give input.

More vitally, "Farewell" goes into the emotional resources a caregiver should line up, with titles such as "Keeping Your Sanity" and "Naysayers." The largest section of the book focuses on death and after-death actions. There are discussions of celebrations of life and funerals, a form for creating a phone tree for notification and checklists for memorial and financial logistics.

This book would be a lifeline for a person who has been thrust into the role of caregiver. That is not the time to reinvent the wheel, and Bailey has already done the job.

With its useful and practical coverage of all the salient issues, this book would be a great addition to the bookstore of any facility that does preneed business.

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The need to consider funeral decisions is only glancingly implied. Even deciding what to do with your pet as the end draws near (set up emergency caregivers and then line up a permanent home) is given more prominence.

However, the information here is certainly important, and this book gathers all the crucial issues into one place. Any customer prudent enough to buy preneed will certainly want the information this volume provides. □