

The Betty Newsletter

Issue #13



Greetings From Your New Editor

May I begin by saying this: oh my gosh. What did I get myself into? And on that note, may I introduce myself. My name is Valerie, and I am the new editor of The Betty. I am a Family Studies option, coming from Deaf Studies to Family and Consumer Sciences, with an option in Consumer Affairs. I came a long way to get to where I am, and needless to say, I am happiest here, as a Family Studies option. When Professor Matthews first suggested that I run for this position (at midnight, may I add), I was apprehensive to take it. I thought she was crazy. Now that I am publishing my first issue and writing my first articles, I am a little more at ease. Our former editor, Amy, has created a newsletter that is legendary in Sequoia Hall and at CSUN, and I hope that I can produce a Betty half as wonderful. Enjoy The Betty and I *desperately* want to hear from you. I need your help to keep this as good as the product that Amy created. Please submit your articles (and any suggestions) to me, your proud and scared editor, at valerie.yu.17@csun.edu



-Valerie Yu

Each year in
the U.S. we
bury:

- 827,060 gallons of embalming fluid, which includes formaldehyde
- 180,544,000 pounds of steel, in caskets
- 5,400,000 pounds of copper and bronze, in caskets
- 30 million board feet of hardwoods, including tropical woods, in caskets
- 3,272,000,000 pounds of reinforced concrete in vaults
- 28,000,000 pounds of steel in vaults

Statistics compiled by Mary Woodsen, vice president of the Pre-Posthumous Society of Ithaca, New York, and a freelance science writer and staff science writer at Cornell University.

Going Green: An Earth Friendly Final Resting Place

I have just made a major decision in my life. After the passing of my grandmother this summer (I have never lost anyone close to me) I have decided I want a Green burial. The cost of my grandmother's funeral was shocking and the funeral directors were gum chomping and not incredibly sensitive individuals. This discovery leads me to writing this article. I want to tell you a) about Green funerals, that are earth friendly and priced right, and b) encourage those individuals who are Family Studies options (or any option if this topic interests you) to consider working with families who have just lost someone they love.

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The cost of the average funeral can range from \$6,000-25,000, uses formaldehyde in embalming, non-degradable steel caskets and concrete vaults placed shoulder to shoulder in burial plots in cemeteries. I want to tell you about Green burials. Burial in a green or natural cemetery can cost half as much; embalming, metal caskets and concrete burial vaults are strictly prohibited. Instead, biodegradable caskets, usually made of wood or cardboard, or burial shrouds of natural fibers are used. Green cemetery graves are marked only in natural ways, with the planting of a tree or shrub, or the placement of a flat indigenous stone. Burial locations are mapped with a GIS (geographic information system) so future generations can locate an ancestor's final resting place.



There are more than 200 green cemeteries in Great Britain, and the idea is finally beginning to catch on in the United States. According to Lisa Carlson, the executive director of the Funeral Consumer Alliance, Vermont, and the author of *Caring for the Dead*, which discusses funeral laws state by state neither embalming, expensive caskets or concrete

vaults are required by law in any state. However, most cemeteries require vaults and the above mentioned for profit and ease of grass mowing

I bet you are wondering were do I come into this picture? Good question! Being informed about environmental hazards when proceeding with a burial can help a family or individual make an informed choice on the route they want to take with their loved one. Being an informed bereavement counsellor or specialist can help the family through this troubled time. Majoring in Family and Consumer Sciences gives you a leg up in this business. Not only do you (and should you) have a great understanding of families but also of consumer needs. The bereavement counsellor I spoke with (mind you she had no credentials, just that she had a lot of death in her family) was insensitive and ill-informed about my needs.

Green burial and funerals are the future... the world is becoming more aware of the damage they are doing to this planet and realize they need to make changes. Another advocate for green burials states, "A natural burial really isn't a new idea. It's a thousand years old, and the very reason is, it [is] a very natural effective way to dispose of a loved one's remains." I think it would be wonderful to visit a loved one's gravesite located along a beautiful and tranquil trail or forest or other quiet place of extraordinary beauty.

- Erin Matthews, M.S.

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For more information

Funeral Consumers Alliance, Lisa Carlson, P.O. Box 10, Hinesburg, VT 05461; (800) 765-0107; www.funerals.org.

Final Passages, Jerri Lyons P.O. Box 1721, Sebastopol, CA 95473; (707) 824-0268; www.finalpassages.org.

Memorial Ecosystems, Inc., and Ramsey Creek 113 Retreat St., Westminster, SC 29693; (864) 647-7798; Website:

www.memorialecosystems.com

Glendale Memorial Nature Preserve: John and Bill Wilkerson, 297 Railroad Avenue, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433; (850) 859-2141; www.glendalenaturepreserve.org

The North American Woodland Burial Society, an information exchange:

<http://woodlandburial.htmlplanet.com>



WHERE THE HECK DID MY MONEY GO?

For those of us who are slowly ending up penniless through our college years, here are a few simple tips fatten your bank account:

1. **Limit eating out.** Take a lunch with you to work and school. I know it is difficult to spend your time going grocery shopping and getting up an extra fifteen minutes earlier each morning to make your lunch, but it all depends on how committed you are to saving some of your hard earned cash for the things you really need or want.
2. **Sell or toss the things you do not use.** We all have an item of clothing sitting in our closet that we never wear, get rid of it! Whether you sell it on eBay or give it to the local charity (which you can write off on your taxes), you obviously have no use for it, because you never use it. This also applies to gym memberships, cable channels and landlines that are never being used.
3. **Pay your bills on time.** I know this seems really basic, but a lot of people spend a lot of money each month on paying late fees. This is unnecessary spending...cut it out.
4. **See you later, Starbucks.** When you are strapped for cash the last thing you should be doing is going to Starbucks for a latte that will just end up adding to your behind. Buy a coffee maker and make it at home. The initial cost of the appliance may be a lot, but the long term cost will save you significantly. This also goes for buying magazines, sodas and a bag of chips when stopping to go to the bathroom at the gas station.
5. **Call your credit card company.** Every once in a while I call up my credit card company and ask them to lower my interest rate. Over time this can help you out tremendously.
6. **Make a list.** Before you step into your grocery store (or any store for that matter) have a list ready for the things you need. If you happen to see something you forgot to add to your list, pick it up, but avoid purchasing wants over needs!
7. **Avoid brand names and labels.** When you buy items that are brand names or labels, you are only paying for the prestige not the quality.
8. **Kick expensive habits.** Stop the smoking, drinking on a regular basis, fast food binges and frivolous spending sprees. These are just a few expensive habits that can be cut out while you are struggling.
9. **Do not spend what you do not have.** Wow, now there's a concept, if you do not have the money to spend on something, don't purchase the item! Don't use your credit card just to buy a new outfit.
10. **Take a stroll.** Right now is a great time to take a walk or get on your bicycle for some exercise and to lower your intake of gasoline. The price of fuel is going up on a daily basis, ease up on the driving. It might also lower your stress from the lack of crazy traffic and road rage!

-Shelly Bernstein-



Just because it's summer doesn't mean you can't sign up for SAFCS. Applications to join SAFCS are always available on Professor Matthews' website at www.csun.edu/~matthews/. It is only \$10 for a year long membership (\$5 if you're a part of another FCS student org). This membership allows you to participate in our events, which include our weekly meetings, spaghetti social, holiday parties, fundraisers, end of the year awards ceremony, and cookie feasts. SAFCS is the perfect opportunity to meet new people.



THE COMMON SENSE OF FENG SHUI



From old Chinese religions, a design style has emerged that is becoming essential to a complete design repertoire. Based on the Ying and Yang theory, Feng Shui blends reality of the time with faith in the heavens. This old philosophy may seem superstitious and antiquated but it is used in designing homes, gardens and workplaces around the world. Some of the aspects of Feng Shui may not seem logical, but it is all based on common sense. In its origin, the world contained mountains, lakes, trees and fields. This was how people

lived, surrounded by the earth and the sky. Today, we live in cities and a fast paced environment. Our peace and serenity, however, still comes from nature. Feng Shui believes in a system of Ch'i. Ch'i can be equated to energy and it travels, picking up both the good and the bad around us. Whenever we enter a world-class hotel, we will find a body of water at the entrance. This immediately gives us a feeling of calm. It is not coincidence that these ponds and fountains are placed in lobbies and entrances of hotels and spas. Feng Shui tells us that water must be placed by the entrance, and therefore it is also placed by our front doors. This allows us to wash away the bad Ch'i before we enter the home. You may think this is silly, but the feeling of calm appears when we see or hear the ocean, or any body of water. To make a house a home, why not leave the pressures of the world outside? It's not one hundred per cent, but it is one aspect of Feng

Shui that is incorporated into our lives by design.

There are many such examples of ways this old Chinese custom makes sense in today's world. Most major corporations have included this design in office structures and workplaces. It is a design that promotes clear minds, allowing workers to concentrate on the subject at hand without distractions. Why is it then that schools and universities have not included this important aspect into their design programs? It is a course that should be attended by interior design majors, graphic designers, landscape designers and architects. It is a science and a religion that mixes well with many curriculums. In the Feng Shui way of using rounded corners, and deleting straight lines that are sharp and cutting, I use this opportunity to make a plea for this much needed addition. I, for one, would be the first to enroll.

-Rosalyn Glantz

HOW MUCH CLEAVAGE IS TOO MUCH CLEAVAGE?

As we all continue in our college lives, we get closer to starting our professional lives. It is very frightening, isn't it? Pretty soon, ladies, we have to retire our mini skirts and tube tops, but we don't have to go straight to the boring pant suit. So where do we have to draw the line? Here are some basic guidelines to follow in addition to office dress codes:

Cleavage: Basically, at work, any amount is too much. Your twins are too close to your face and when you talk to your boss, your girls will be saying nothing professional. So if you want to be taken seriously, leave plunging V-necks for the Friday night at the club.



Legs: Legs are amazing symbols of sexiness. But at work, skirts should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. And if you want to cover your sexy legs in pants, please don't let them be skin tight or so low rise that we see your crack or the cut of your bikini line. Thanks.

Shoes: Shoes are powerful. Every woman knows that. But every shoe is not appropriate for work. Flip flops=never acceptable. Super high heels that are usually seen wrapped around a pole, also not okay. Shoes should be comfortable, powerful, and not exposing of your chipped toe nails, cracked heels or your inability to walk comfortably.

-Valerie Yu

SALMONELLA TOMATO SCARE

Since mid-April, at least 167 cases have reported infection and illness due to a rare strain of bacteria called Salmonella Saint Paul. Of these 167 cases confirmed by the Center for Disease Control, Dr. Griffin from the agency estimated that only one out of every thirty eight cases is ever reported. This means that the issue could be much larger than was thought. The bacterium has been linked to infected raw tomatoes of several types. The swift disappearance of tomatoes from grocery store shelves, restaurant menu items, and fast food chains has rendered up attention and anxiety.

"The FDA said that consumers should not eat raw red round tomatoes, as well as raw red Roma and plum tomatoes. The agency advised restaurants and grocery stores not to offer those types of tomatoes for sale", says Mike Hughlett, Tribune reporter.

Many fast food restaurants such as McDonald's, Burger King, Taco Bell, and Subway have removed tomatoes from their food items even though no salmonella bacterium has been detected. "With an abundance of caution, we want to make sure our food items containing tomatoes are absolutely safe," Bill Whitman, a McDonald's spokesman.

Tomatoes grown in the following states, territories and countries have not been associated with the current outbreak: Arkansas, California, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Belgium, Canada, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Israel, the Netherlands and Puerto Rico. Officials are still trying to figure out where and how the bacteria contamination originated. Florida has taken a large hit to its tomato fields and farmers, since half of this nation's fresh tomatoes are harvested there. Until officials from the FDA conclude their research on the issue, it is advised to only eat fresh tomatoes still on the vine, cherry tomatoes, or grape tomatoes.

-Dena Ciolfi



Contributors

VALERIE YU



Valerie is the new editor of The Betty and this is her first issue!

ERIN MATTHEWS, M.S.

Erin is a professor for FCS and the advisor of SAFCS.



ROSALYN GLANTZ



Rosalyn is an Interior Design option and this is her first article in the Betty!

SHELLY BERNSTEIN

Shelly is an FCS Education option. She graduated and is still writing for The Betty!



DENA CIOLFI



Dena is a Nutrition option and a senior. She is the president of SAFCS.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!



It is EXTREMELY important to us in SAFCS that we highlight each option, discussing current issues, trends or just fun things to know. Please, write for the Betty. Your major is important, LET'S HEAR ABOUT IT!!!!

Send an article to the editor, Valerie Yu, at valerie.yu.17@csun.edu and watch for it in the following issue!

Submit your article with your full name, major and option, and a picture of your pretty face.