



# Drake Cremation & Funeral Services Ltd.

## Drake encourages local youth: The YELL award!

Do you know someone aged 6 to 16 in our community who should receive a little recognition and encouragement? Nominate them for a YELL award!

Drake Cremation & Funeral Services has teamed up with the Kamloops Blazers to present the YELL award at every Blazers regular season home game.

### YELL stands for:

- YOUTH:** Someone aged 6 to 16.
- EXCELLENCE:** Someone striving to be great or to do good things.
- LEADERSHIP:** Someone who is leading others in a positive way.
- LOYALTY:** Someone who demonstrates support and commitment to family, friends, school mates, etc.

### YELL award winners receive:

- Two tickets to a Kamloops Blazers home game
- An autographed puck in a display case
- Their picture, featured on the JUMBOTRON, and a cheer from the crowd!

### Nominating someone is EASY!

- Go to Blazerhockey.com and click on the 'fan' tab...or...
- Pick up a nomination form at Drake Cremation & Funeral Services.

### Your encouragement could make all the difference!

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# Drake's Guide To The Last Good-Bye.

## How to Hold a Celebration of Life

©Drake Smith January 24, 2020

- I'm organizing this myself. What are some tips I should know?
- Should Murray's ashes be there?
- Will this bring CLOSURE for me, my family & friends?
- *And MORE!*



Drake Smith, MSW  
Funeral Director/Owner

*If you're planning a  
"Celebration of Life" this  
booklet could help YOU.*

Drake Smith has worked with seniors most of his life, including seniors' housing, recreation, counselling, and fitness for seniors. He holds a Masters degree in Gerontological Social Work and is a fully licensed funeral director and embalmer.

His column, "ASK DRAKE" appears every Friday on the obituary page of Kamloops This Week and monthly in the Senior Connector.

You'll see Drake, his wife Avril and beagle Maggie on their daily walk near their home in Kamloops or around town in Clearwater.



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A Division of North Thompson Funeral Services, Ltd.

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**MURRAY SAID HE DIDN'T WANT A SERVICE, BUT I WANT SOME KIND OF SEND OFF FOR HIM...**

**WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

**By the way...  
WHO IS MURRAY?**



You'll read about Murray and his wife Alice throughout this booklet. I think it's nicer to use names than to refer to "deceased people" all the time... And...they're mythical people!

Over the years hundreds of people have told me they want NOTHING, NO SERVICE when they die.

But when I asked them: "What if your family just wants to have a little party for you, in the back yard perhaps?" almost all of them said "YES, that would be fine."

Have a talk with your 'Murray' today. If you need some help starting it, come and see me.

**What if I want to see Murray one last time, before cremation...to say good-bye?**

Most people dislike the traditional 'viewing'. The sombre music, the satin casket, and usually "he doesn't even look like Murray!"

So, we came up with the Drake Wake. If you wish to say goodbye before cremation, ask us about it. It's a very natural, comforting moment.

**NO expensive casket  
NO sombre music  
NO rush  
And NO BLACK SUITS!**



A lot of people are scattering ashes these days. Remember, once they're gone, they're gone! Children, grandchildren and great grandchildren may lose a wonderful opportunity to connect with the memory of Grandma if she is scattered in the river or on the mountain top.

I'd encourage you to consider a place where family can visit, such as a cemetery. I know that they are "out of style" these days, but styles change (as do priorities and values). And, it doesn't have to be expensive. For example, for just over \$100 you can put the ashes in the Garden at Hillside Cemetery in Kamloops. Also, we have a Wall of Memory at Drake's. Come by and we'll explain it to you.

**THE CELEBRATION'S OVER!**

**NOW, WHAT DO I DO WITH MURRAY'S URN?**



**What will I want when MY time comes?**

In the days/weeks following the celebration, why not sit down with your family to discuss how they felt about Murray's Celebration of Life? What worked? What didn't?

YOUR day is coming. When that time comes, wouldn't it be great if your family knew what was important to you? It might really help them to plan a meaningful, memorable CELEBRATION OF YOUR LIFE!

**WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE THE GATHERING “SPECIAL”?**

When you and your family/friends look back on the gathering, perhaps years from now, what will “stand out” in your memory?

- Maybe it was when you all planted the little tree (look how big it’s grown!)
- Maybe it was when you tried to build and fly a kite, just like the one Grandpa used to make?
- Maybe when you all went back to the hospice house to thank them for their care?
- That last idea, going to hospice, might lead you to think about something that helps many people with their grief process: help others by volunteering your time and skill. Hopefully, when the time is right for you, you will consider this idea.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

For some people this is essential; for others it’s disturbing. Some people prefer instead to have a display of Murray’s cherished treasures: his Swiss army knife, the baseball glove he wore as a child, perhaps his wedding photo.

If you have an urn, what kind will it be? I’ll never forget Alice’s urn. She loved Elvis. So, the family placed her ashes into a cookie tin and pasted photos of Elvis all over it! I’ll bet she’d have been thrilled! And everyone at the gathering thought it was great too!

**SHOULD MURRAY’S URN BE AT THE GATHERING?**

**...EVEN IF HE’S IN HIS ELVIS URN?**

**Why am I DOING this “Celebration” anyway?**

That’s a very good question. Is it to honour your loved one? To feel better? Is it because family or friends or the funeral director are pressuring you to DO SOMETHING? Is it for CLOSURE\*?

Take your time to figure out what you and your family really want.

**\*P.S. Clients over the years have told me that closure can be an elusive target.**

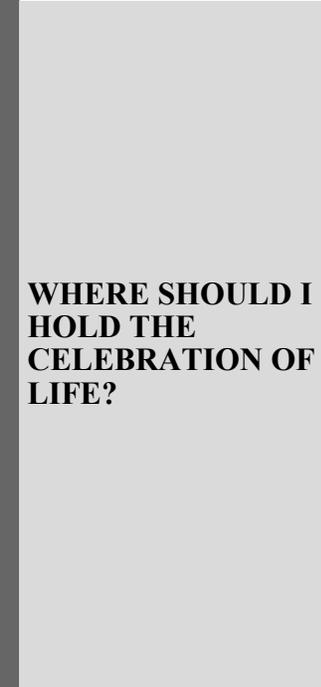
Here are a few things to consider:

- Are you comfortable having an unknown number of people in your home at this time. Will you feel like being a host/hostess?
- If you put a notice in the newspaper, will the bad guys get your address?
- What will you remember? Recently, a widow told me that the family is going to a lake nearby...where her husband built their cabin long ago. Great memories there!
- How about holding the “celebration” in several places & stages? Maybe in the corner of the library where Alice used to go to read; then on the green at the third hole where she sank that infamous putt; followed by a visit to the local A&W where she met her buddies every morning. Hmmmm....Inexpensive & memorable!

**I’m getting stressed out with all the thinking and planning. What to do?**

That’s another good question. If it starts to feel overwhelming you can certainly call us. We’ve taken care of hundreds of funerals, memorial services and “Celebrations” over the years. We can help you.

**WHERE SHOULD I HOLD THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE?**



**I'M THINKING OF  
MAKING A VIDEO  
TRIBUTE TO  
MURRAY...  
WHAT COULD  
POSSIBLY GO  
WRONG?**

Audio-video tributes often go wrong, causing stress. Why is that?

1. Many power point tributes are simply too long, showing every single photo ever taken of Murray. We have limited attention spans!
2. Your equipment or software doesn't get along with the projector or sound system.
3. Everything runs smoothly during the 'test run', but then crashes at Murray's service. There's a reason for this, and I'll explain it in person. I call it the "200 eyeballs theory!"

1. I'd suggest you keep the video tribute short & simple (5 to 6 minutes).
2. People like stories, rather than disconnected photos. Group the photos according to the theme of Murray's story.
3. Choose two or three short songs, ones that Murray liked and that everyone will enjoy or find moving.

Instead of a Power Point tribute ...

1. Consider some old fashioned creativity. For example, each grandchild might pick a photo of Grandma Alice from a hat and tell a story about it & her. UNFORGETTABLE!
2. Maybe set up a photo collage and spend time talking about Murray!

**WHAT ARE SOME  
GREAT IDEAS TO  
PAY TRIBUTE TO  
MURRAY?**

**WHAT GOES ON AT  
A "CELEBRATION  
OF LIFE"?**

Some are highly structured -- a celebrant, a step-by-step program, Murray's favourite ZZ Top songs playing in the background, etc. Others are as informal as you could imagine -- a few family/friends gathered together to raise a glass to Murray at his favourite watering hole, for example.

Don't forget to have an escape route (maybe a password with a trusted friend) so you can easily get away if it all becomes too much.

One last note: Don't forget why you're there. Murray has died! It's time to remember Murray! Long, exhausting debates over the weather or last night's game should probably be held at another place & time.



That's an idea...

I don't want to talk you out of making service folders for your gathering...we're a business after all... but a lot of people are making their own these days, and saving a lot of money.

If you have the time and someone in your family has some computer skills, service folder templates can be downloaded for little cost. Use these templates to design your folder and send your finished work to the printer.

Or, we'll take care of it for you, but we have to charge for our time.

**WHAT ABOUT  
SERVICE  
FOLDERS?**