

NEWS NOW

Local company offers final resting place under the sea

New England Burials at Sea offers residents to lay a loved one to rest under the sea.

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Captain Brad white talks to a group of seniors at the East Bridgewater Council on Aging about burials at sea. Monday Apr.27,2015.



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The Enterprise

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EAST BRIDGEWATER – Even in death, the allure of the sea can have a strong pull on those who grew up near the coast, and a local company now makes it possible for ocean lovers to make their final resting place under the waves.

On Monday, Capt. Brad White, the founder of New England Burials at Sea, was at the East

Bridgewater Council on Aging, speaking to a small audience about the options available to them when it comes time for them or a loved one to leave this world.

"Anybody can be buried at sea. You don't have to be in the military," said White, who added that the decedents that his company inters are split about evenly between in terms of men and women.

While burials at sea have been happening for hundreds of years, interest in the option has been growing in recent years.

"We will do in excess of 300 burials this year, and we are growing rapidly," White said.

The company, which was founded in Marshfield in 2006 after one of White's customers asked him if he could spread his uncle's ashes at sea, now boasts over 80 boats operating out of more than 45 ports from Maine to Miami and San Diego to San Francisco.

Among the different burial options that the company offers includes, ash scatterings, aerial ash scatterings and full-body burials at sea.

The most popular option is the ash scattering, where the boat takes the family three nautical miles out to sea per federal regulations, and spreads the ashes on an outgoing tide. After meeting the water, the ashes ultimately enter the Gulf Stream, and are taken to Europe and Africa before ultimately returning to the United States.

The three-mile requirement exists because cremated remains generally consist of 52-percent phosphates, which cause algae blooms.

White added that it isn't uncommon for relatives of the deceased to call inquiring about ash scatterings after holding on to their loved one's cremated remains for a few years and finding themselves at a loss with the proper way to honor them.

"The average is that folks keep mom or dad on the mantle for about a year," White said.

For full-body burials, the company offers its Atlantic and Pacific Burial Shroud, a biodegradable enclosure specifically designed for burials at sea.

The shroud is weighed down with over 150 pounds of cannonballs, which are produced in Whitman. Ships are required to travel to a depth of 600 feet, which is about 45 miles of the coast of Cape Cod, before interring the body.

"The only thing left is the cannonballs, and they make their own reef," said White, who touts the burial as an eco-friendly option.

Page 2 of 2 - In addition to the burial service, New England Burials at Sea also offer "nautical memory charts" and coordinate bracelets and dog tags, which mark the exact spot where a loved one was laid to rest or where the ashes were scattered so that relatives can remember the spot and return if they so choose.



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