Dust to Dust: Minnesotan?s Dying Wish to Be Composted Possible with Cross-Country Partnership

July 10, 2023

Saint Paul, Minnesota - July 10, 2023 -
Natural Organic Reduction, often called human composting, is not currently legal in Minnesota but with the help of local funeral service provider Interra Green Burial by Mueller Memorial and their partner in Washington state, Steve Wheeler is getting his dying wish.

After 20 years as a social studies teacher Steve Wheeler?s existing medical condition made it impossible for him to continue in the job he loved. Shortly after taking his medical leave, he received a devastating terminal diagnosis of metastatic cancer. Eventually this got him thinking about his own final disposition.

Steve said; ?At some point I just started thinking. There?s gotta be something different than dropping this big box in the ground, in a vault, with a body that has all these chemicals and stuff in it. There had to be something better.?

After listening to a panel show in his car and hearing the term ?human composting,? Steve started looking into natural organic reduction (NOR). He quickly discovered NOR is not legal in Minnesota, so he started researching green burial as an alternative and had a hard time finding a funeral home even willing to provide

a truly green burial.

It wasn?t until he called Interra Green Burial by Mueller Memorial and mentioned what he really wanted was human composting that he finally found a funeral service willing and able to work within the laws in Minnesota to arrange for NOR in one of the six states where it is legal. ?And all of a sudden this door that I thought had been shut, had opened back up", said Steve Wheeler.

Interra had sent one of their staff, Taelor Johnson, to Colorado in March 2023 for the first ever Body Composting Conference. At the conference she was able to meet several NOR providers and created a partnership with Return Home, a funeral home in Washington state which only provides NOR, or terramation as they call it. So when Steve called Interra, the means to provide NOR were already in place.

Steve has prearranged and prepaid for his transportation to Washington and his disposition there. His family has decided that the cubic yard of compost produced will be added to a restoration preserve in Washington state. In the meantime, he hosted a living wake ofn July 8th.

In the 2023-2024 session of the Minnesota Legislature, companion bills were introduced in both the State House and Senate seeking to legalize natural organic reduction. With a busy legislative session in 2023 this issue got pushed to 2024, when it will hopefully be approved.

To find out more about Interra Green Burial, a signature service of family owned funeral home Mueller Memorial, please visit interraburial.com. Interra.com web site is a comprehensive source of information regarding green burial, environmentally friendly cremation and human composting.

Mueller Memorial is a renowned full service funeral provider in the Twin Cities. They are also the author of Grief Compass, a guide to navigating the first year after death.Grief Compass is our proprietary program that provides just a bit of help when families need it. All family members are enrolled for free and recieve weekly emails specific to their journey with a link for further help. In addition a toll free 24 hour counseling line is provided at no cost to the family providing the most comprehensive suite of after death care offered by any funeral home.

Contact Taelor Johnson at 651-774-9797 or Taelor@Muellermemorial.com to learn more about the service offerings of Interra Green Burial a signature service of Mueller Memoria in St. Paul, Minnesota.
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Interra Green Burial by Mueller Memorial

Interra Green Burial is a signature service of Mueller Memorial. Interra provides all forms of environmentally friendly burial, cremation and human composting.

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