



Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery

Burial Planning Guide

Thank you for your interest in Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery. This document intends to serve as a “how-to” guide addressing most of the basic decisions surrounding the death of a loved one if you are planning a natural burial at Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery (PCCC). Our goal is to inform you of the wide array of options available to you. The best way to learn about all that goes into a burial at PCCC is to take a golf cart guided tour of the cemetery with a staff member. Please contact us if you are interested in scheduling a tour or have any specific questions. Our staff is here to help however we can.

Cost of Burial at PCCC

At PCCC, we offer burial services for human and cremated remains. The fee for each service is as follows: \$2,000 for body burial, and \$950 for cremated remains. The fee for body burial has not increased since our first burial in 2010. However, our operational cost (staff, land restoration & enhancements, educational workshops, etc.) has significantly increased over the years. If it were not for our patrons that make charitable donations in addition to the \$2000 burial fee, PCCC would be forced to raise the burial fee significantly. As a non-profit organization, PCCC considers it a part of its mission to make the choice of conservation burial available to as many as individuals and families as possible. Doing so provides the most benefit for our community, the environment and the transition to sustainable death care practices in our country.

All this is to say, we ask if you can afford to do so, PLEASE make a tax-deductible donation to help us maintain a burial fee that is affordable to the widest segment of our community. Any amount you pay over the \$2000 burial fee will be acknowledged as a charitable contribution to Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery.

Choosing Between a Funeral Home and a Home Funeral

Funeral Home:

The role of a funeral home for burials at PCCC is to provide assistance with the fundamental logistics associated with a death. Funeral homes will complete all the state mandated paperwork, provide any needed refrigeration, and transport the remains. PCCC does not endorse any particular funeral home. However, we can provide a list of funeral homes who have organized funerals here in the past and share feedback from our patrons who have worked with them.

The service fees funeral homes charge can vary significantly, so it is important to call several to compare quotes. Any funeral home can provide the services necessary for a natural burial. Most funeral homes have a territory they service, but are willing to travel outside of that area for an additional fee. You can use a funeral home in our area, or choose one local to you. We will work with any funeral home who agrees to follow our natural burial policies.

Home Funeral:

Some families find it meaningful to retain the possession of and care of their loved one's body after death and carry out all of the steps of the funeral process themselves, rather than it being done by a funeral home.

This is called a “home funeral.” Some of the tasks included in a home funeral include completing the necessary paper work, transportation, and cooling the remains. If you choose to perform a home funeral instead of hiring a funeral home, you are responsible for the logistics normally done by a funeral home. The Vital Statistics Office guidelines surrounding home funerals are on our website (prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org/faq-home-funeral/), and we are happy to discuss this option further with you.

In Alachua County there is a small citizens’ group called “Final Friends” whose mission is to assist those interested in caring for their own dead. You can find them online at www.finalfriends.org or reach them by phone at (352)-374-4478.

Basic factors to consider with home funerals:

- The choice of caring for your own dead requires early and careful planning.
- It is best to communicate ahead of time with any facilities (hospitals, nursing homes, medical examiner, Vital Statistics Office etc.) about your plans in order to ensure their cooperation.
- Some funeral homes may be willing to assist with a home funeral and provide services you would prefer they handle. If you will require the use of a funeral home at some point in your process, you should determine in advance which ones are willing to work with you.

Prepayment Options

PCCC cannot take payment before death, but there are a number of ways to guarantee that one’s burial preferences are followed. The main way is to complete PCCC’s Burial Preference form, have it witnessed, and make sure the person(s) responsible for care of the body has a copy.

This document is primarily a planning tool to articulate one’s burial preferences, but when PCCC receives a completed copy of the form we treat it as a general reservation or space taken in the cemetery. This form is available for download on our website (prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org/planning-for-the-future), in our office, or can be mailed/emailed upon request.

As a service to their clients, some funeral homes may include PCCC’s burial fee as part of a prepayment-package with their services. If such a prepayment-plan is arranged, a burial preference form **MUST** be completed and provided to PCCC in order to reserve a space.

Choosing a Burial Site

As a nonprofit and community cemetery PCCC cannot take any payments before a death has occurred. Specific gravesite selection at PCCC is only available to hospice patients, those planning a burial for a deceased loved one, and those with a spouse/partner or minor child buried in the cemetery. There is a space on the burial preference form to indicate the type of location one would prefer to be buried in [meadows (bright sun), or forest (mixed sun and shade)].

Choosing a Burial Container

At PCCC burial containers must be biodegradable, but can be constructed by you, family members, or another source. Funeral homes and online providers are convenient sources for biodegradable containers. Some examples of containers appropriate for burial at PCCC are:

- Shrouds made of cotton, linen, wool, or another natural fiber (i.e. bed sheets, blankets, quilts, etc.)
- Wicker or woven casket
- Natural wood casket (unfinished)
- Cardboard casket – (Could be a part of ceremony for all to decorate and memorialize)

Marker Information and PCCC Paperwork

For each burial PCCC provides a customizable, hand-stamped 2” brass disk to mark and memorialize the gravesite. To have the marker ready for the burial, PCCC requires the design at least two days prior to the scheduled burial date. Otherwise, the marker will be placed on the gravesite after the ceremony. Designing the marker is part of PCCC’s paperwork for burial.

All required paperwork must be completed and payment made in full before the burial occurs.

Involvement and Participation

PCCC’s philosophy is family and friends should be able to take any and every opportunity to participate in the burial process that is meaningful to them. The first opportunity to participate is to assist staff and community volunteers with digging the grave by hand. During the burial process attendees are invited to assist with bringing the body to the gravesite, lowering the body, and covering the grave. The PCCC staff will do as much or as little as you would like, but will always be present to provide help and guidance.

What to Expect At a Burial

- Burial attendees gather with PCCC staff at the cemetery entrance. Attendees should wear closed toed shoes appropriate for outdoor activity.
- The body is placed on our Amish burial cart for a procession from the parking area to the burial site. Family and friends often help pull or place a hand on the cart for the procession to the gravesite.
- Once at the burial site, the body is placed above the grave.
- Cemetery staff will begin the chosen ceremony or sharing with a short welcome and explanation of the burial process.
- When the ceremony has concluded, PCCC staff and volunteers will guide attendees through the lowering process.
- Guests will then have the opportunity to ceremonially return a handful or shovelful of earth into the grave.
- After everyone has had the opportunity to participate, PCCC staff and volunteers will initiate actively filling in the grave.
- The grave is then covered with pine straw, and family/friends can place the grave marker on the grave.

PCCC’s mission is to ensure that those who choose to be buried here have the ceremony of their choice, and that all are as comfortable as possible. For ceremonies staff will set up chairs and a table with water. When planning a burial, please indicate how many people are expected to attend the service and seating will be provided up to 15. Burial attendees should expect to walk to the gravesite, but golf carts are available for those with mobility needs. PCCC can share the names and contact information of spiritual leaders, officiants, and musicians for burial ceremonies upon request.