

Pet's Rest Pet Cemetery & Crematory Company Backgrounder

Company Overview

Headquartered in Colma, CA Pet's Rest Cemetery & Crematory serves pet lovers from all over the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1947 by Earl and Julia Taylor, this one acre sanctuary (the most unique cemetery in Colma – which famously boasts more deceased residents than living) acts as a testament of enduring love for the beloved animals of their caring humans.

To date, over 14,000 pets have been laid to rest in this peaceful setting of lawn, shrubs and trees. They include dogs, cats, monkeys, cheetahs, and goldfish to name a few. Regardless of pedigree, all were loved and are greatly missed, as evidenced by the variety, and affecting nature, of the headstones, mausoleums, markers and plaques that dot the landscape.

In addition, Pet's Rest has performed over 90,000 cremations of pets of all breeds and sizes (including horses and a sea lion named Zonker). As the only pet crematorium that allows open access to their facilities, Pet's Rest also features witnessed cremation service for owners who desire to be with their pet until the very end.

The facilities underwent a major remodel in 2005. Along with the main reception area and office, Pet's Rest built a new chapel and crematory building – now with three state of the art crematories, that are the most sophisticated in the Bay Area. Given the state of the art facilities, and the high standards maintained in its practices, along with providing services for individuals, Pet's Rest has also developed long-term relationships with veterinary practices (including UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine).

In addition, Pet's Rest is the only animal crematory in the Bay Area and surrounding outlying areas that has the proper equipment and process in place to cremate horses. Because of the scarcity of these types of facilities, Pet's Rest receives requests from all over California for performing equine cremations.

Vision and Mission

Pet's Rest was started when Earl (then a Cypress Lawn assistant manager) was touched by numerous requests from owners to have their pets interred in family lots at Cypress Lawn. Given the regulations and the concerns of these individuals about wanting their pet properly memorialized, Earl and Julia decided to purchase the land on Hillside Boulevard in 1946. They, along with Bill Belli and Irene Frahm, subsequently converted the property into a monument of devotion for animals, which was then handed over for safekeeping to the next generation – Irene (Earl and Julia's daughter) and her husband, Phillip C'de Baca, who took over operations in 1972.

This legacy and sense of compassion can be found in every aspect of Pet's Rest operations today. Even after Irene passed away in 2002, Phil continues to run Pet's Rest in the family tradition in which it was started. His ongoing goal is to ensure that pet owners always have a sanctuary where they can provide a fitting, final tribute for a lifetime of devotion. Not surprisingly, when asked by clients, "Am I crazy for feeling this way?," as someone who understands loss, Phil will gently respond "if so, stay near, there is safety in numbers."

To that end, the grieving will find that Pet's Rest staff are the kindest, most understanding people to help them through their hour of difficulty, and who will never hurry or maneuver them into purchasing something that they don't need or want. This unique cemetery is an example of people going above and beyond the call of duty. People bring their pets here, because they want to, not because they have to.

Also because of this vision and the respect shown, as well as the caring and compassion that go with it, many friendships have developed, and even a marriage resulted, from the closeness Pet's Rest clients share through this common loss. People interact differently at this cemetery: While rarely seeing

interaction at human cemeteries, at Pet's Rest even strangers will make a concerted effort to share pictures and stories of their late pets with others. In fact, due to this devotion, Pet's Rest boasts more flowers and visitors than the surrounding 17 human cemeteries together.

Services Provided

In keeping with the ability to help ease the suffering and loss felt from the death of a dear animal companion, Pet's Rest offers a variety of services to accommodate the needs of every client, including, but not limited to: pick-up, individual lawn burials and witnessed internments/cremations, as well as access to a dedicated online memorial for the owner's pet.

The services at Pet's Rest ensure that owners do not suffer additional heartache from "inelegant" means of handling their pet's remains, even if theirs is a large pet, such as a full-sized horse. Unlike other pet cemeteries and crematories, at Pet's Rest owners are allowed to be with their pet until the very end. Whether large or small, witnessing the cremation/internment or not, the pet is always treated with respect.

Individual cremation includes pick-up and a natural wood urn for the remains, which can be picked up, or, in most cases, returned to the vet. If requested, Pet's Rest can also scatter the remains, place them in their St. Francis plot or return them by First Class registered mail.

For individual lawn burials Pet's Rest can pick up the pet, build a box or casket to the pet's size and prepare the grave. Owners can view their pet in the chapel, and bring a blanket, toy or a favorite item to include in the box. A temporary marker will be placed on the grave until the permanent marker or monument arrives. Graves can also be made extra deep, to accommodate another pet of the same size or smaller.

Pet's Rest also provides resources for bereavement support – group support, telephone support, reading materials, as well as resources for children. In addition, along with specialty and customizable urns and markers to memorialize how much the owner misses their pet, a portion of the web and mobile sites is dedicated to "Beloved Pets," and contains poems of great comfort and a place where owners can create a memorial with a picture and their own words.