Ritual Title: Gone Fishin' (Ritual to disburse dad's ashes)

Ritual Category

- [x] Separation
- [ ] Transition
- [ ] Reincorporation

Ritual Intention

- [ ] Connection
- [ ] Control
- [x] Consolidation
- [ ] Change

Ritual Focus

- [x] Deceased
- [ ] Bereaved
- [ ] Community

Natural Elements

- [ ] Earth
- [ ] Air
- [ ] Fire
- [x] Water

Creative Elements

- [ ] Art & Images
- [ ] Movement
- [ ] Music & Sounds
- [ ] Words/Silence
- [ ] Technology
- [ ] Senses Engaged

Brief Description:

Timeframe: 3 hours

Participants: immediate family

Objects Needed:

Biodegradable urn bought on line, and flowers for the kids.

Preparation:

Made arrangements with my uncle and organized everybody's schedule.

Safety Concerns:

Ritual Outline:

Dad loved to fish. When we asked him what funeral plans he would want, he always said he wanted to be "food for the fishes." My uncle (dad's brother) still lives on the farm where they grew up and there is pond on the property so we figured that was the perfect place to put his ashes.

I went on-line and bought an urn that is biodegradable and floats for a period of time before it sinks. It was a little pricey but nothing compared to the cost of a traditional urn. (Before the service I had to transfer the ashes from the plastic bag the crematory gave us into the biodegradable container which felt kind of weird.) I also bought flowers for all the grandkids.

It may sound kind of strange but I also bought some beer and we all toasted him (Dad never went fishing without a six-pack of beer,) while my uncle took the urn and rowed out to the middle of the pond and put the urn in the water.

I asked everybody to say a few words if they wanted to, and most did. My sister read a poem that she wrote. The grandkids threw the flowers into the water. We all waited and told stories and laughed, and hugged until the urn slowly went under water. It was very peaceful. Afterwards we had a meal at my uncle's house.

Evaluation & Mementos

The weather was perfect. Not exactly a traditional service but it seemed the right way to remember him. My uncle told us that when he dies he wants to have the same thing done with his ashes.
The one thing I would do differently is bring sunscreen.

I also gave everybody one of dad's fishing lures as a keepsake.

NOTE: If you are willing to share, please tell me about the ritual you created. If it was helpful for you, maybe it will be helpful for someone else. (Of course I will make sure your personal information remains confidential.) thomdennis@hotmail.com