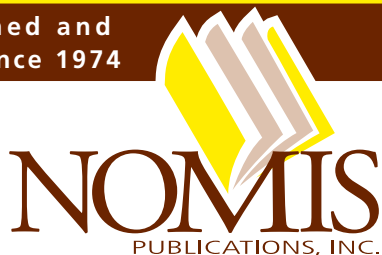


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FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY NEWS

JANUARY
2012

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PIMS Students Support Children's Grief Awareness Day



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Special Event Raises Nearly \$38,000 for The Wilbert Foundation



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SVG Reveals Concept Cars in Chicago



See Page B10

Chicago Jewish Funerals Holds Dedication Ceremony for New Skokie Chapel

SKOKIE, IL—On Thursday, September 1, 2011, hundreds of friends and family, along with leaders from the business and Jewish community, attended the dedication of **Chicago Jewish Funerals'** new chapel in Skokie, IL. The dedication ceremony, held in the South Chapel, opened with **David I. Jacobson**,

founder of Chicago Jewish Funerals, *Rabbi Moshe Wolf*, Chicago Police Department Chaplain, and *Msgr. Kenneth Velo*, Senior Executive for Catholic Collaboration at DePaul University, honoring *Dr. Nancy Jones*, Cook County Medical Examiner, for her long-time sensitivity to and support of Jewish funeral and burial traditions.

The ceremony continued with a presentation from **Mr. David Brezniak**; Chairman of the *Massachusetts State Board of Funeral Directors*; founder of **Brezniak-Rodman Funeral Directors**; founding member of *KAVOD*, an organization of independent funeral directors; and longtime friend of Mr. Jacobson and his brother **Michael Jacobson**. Mr. Brezniak shared remembrances of David's older brother, Michael, who died in August 2011, and honored Mr. Jacobson's commitment to the Jewish community: "What will occur in this chapel will be a wide range of emotions; there will be oceans of tears, and there will be enormous expressions of love. For all that takes place in this space, they have trusted you because you have listened to them and helped them in a very special way. And that's the way it should be."

CONTINUED ON PAGE A2



The Staff at Chicago Jewish Funerals

Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home: Serving Friends and Neighbors in Rural Pennsylvania

TIONESTA, PA—All across America, there are funeral homes that serve small towns; some, serve very small towns. Tionesta is a town of 650 people nestled amongst the Allegheny National Forest, Cook Forest State Park, and several large tracks of State Game Lands in Northwest Pennsylvania. It is within Forest County, the smallest, most rural county in PA. The county has no daily paper,

no radio station, and not a single traffic light or blinker. Police services are provided by the State Police, and there are only two funeral homes in the county. In this type of town, service to the community, literally, means service to friends and neighbors.

Norman J. and Patricia D. Wimer own and operate the **Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home** of Tionesta,

CONTINUED ON PAGE A16



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Endangered Runaway LAKENDRA SHAICE WILSON POWERS



Age Progressed to 19 Yrs

Date of Birth: 1/20/1992
Date Missing: 4/2/2008
Age Missing: 16 Yrs
Age Now: 19 Yrs
Sex: Female
Race: Black
Height: 5'7"
Weight: 140 lbs
Hair: Black
Eyes: Brown
Missing From: Florence, SC

Circumstances: Lakendra's photo is shown age-progressed to 19 years. She is believed to be in the local area. Lakendra has a scar on her right arm, her forehead, and her right knee.

Endangered Runaway BRITTANY WARDEN



Date of Birth: 10/2/1994
Date Missing: 11/27/2009
Age Missing: 14 Yrs
Age Now: 17 Yrs
Sex: Female
Race: White
Height: 5'4"
Weight: 102 lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Green
Missing From: New Braunfels, TX

Circumstances: Brittany was last seen on November 27, 2009. She may travel to San Antonio, Texas. Brittany may be in need of medical attention.

Endangered Missing MARIA PLANCARTE



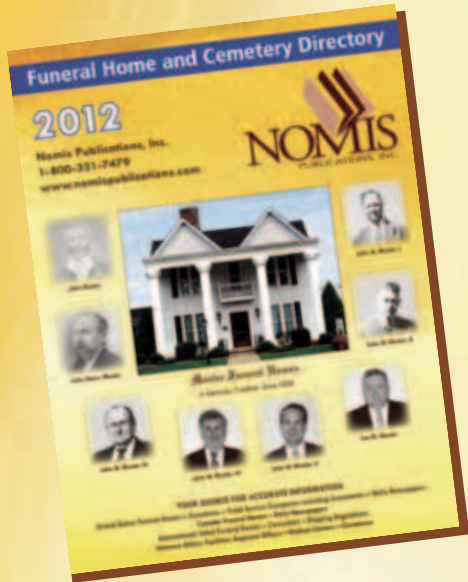
Age Progressed to 19 Yrs

Date of Birth: 7/9/1992
Date Missing: 5/22/2009
Age Missing: 16 Yrs
Age Now: 19 Yrs
Sex: Female
Race: Hispanic
Height: 5'5"
Weight: 180 lbs
Hair: Black
Eyes: Brown
Missing From: Winston-Salem, NC

Circumstances: Maria's photo is shown age-progressed to 19 years. She was last seen on May 22, 2009. Maria is believed to have traveled to Georgia.

Anyone with information should immediately contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 or (703)235-3900

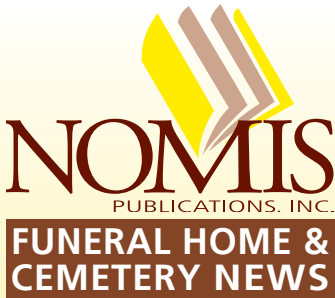
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The FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERY NEWS is now sent in two parts. Section A, which includes pages A1-A40 and Section B, which contains the Classified Advertising and consists of pages B1-B20. If you do not receive both sections please call 1-800-321-7479 or email info@nomispublications.com.

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Chicago Jewish Funerals Holds Dedication Ceremony for New Skokie Chapel

Continued from Front Page



David Jacobson

Mr. Jacobson thanked his family, friends and colleagues, saying "Chicago Jewish Funerals is not defined by a place. CJF is defined by our staff that cares about people. We have the same love, passion and respect for our profession, our traditions and our people as we did when we started 14 years ago," before unveiling the dedication plaque, which was donated by **Matthews International** and **Troost Monument Company**. The plaque, which will be mounted outside the chapel's front door, reads:

"Rejoice not over the ship that is setting out to sea, for you know not what destiny awaits it, what storms it may encounter, what dangers lurk before it. Rejoice rather over the ship that has reached port safely and brought back all its passengers home in peace." –Midrash

This place of comfort and compassion is dedicated to my family, my friends, my teachers, the professionals with whom I work and those whose families we are privileged to serve.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A19



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Lessons from 30 Funerals in 30 Days

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— You can learn a lot by attending 30 funerals in 30 days. **Gail Rubin**, author of *A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die*, found an amazing range of creative services for people who died during the month of October.

Rubin didn't personally know all these people, but met them through the local obituaries. Rubin documented their goodbye services on The Family Plot blog as the 30 Funerals in 30 Days Challenge.

Rubin witnessed a memorial luncheon in a bowling alley bar, a funeral for a Dallas Cowboys fan, a memorial service for a young TV news reporter, and a celebration of life for a hot air balloon pioneer. There was "My Big Fat Italian Funeral" home celebration of life, a service that featured a jazz quartet in a club, and a ceremony in a Japanese garden.

"Of the 30 events, almost half of these deaths were unexpected," said Rubin. "Since we never know when our number will be up, it's vital to have a conversation today about how you'd like your life celebrated."

Some statistics about the 30 events: Rubin attended memorial events for seventeen males and twelve females, plus a September 11 memorial event. The oldest person was a ninety year old, while the youngest was a twenty-five year old. Sixteen of the deaths could be considered expected due to illness and advanced age. Fourteen were unexpected due to a heart attack, stroke, accidents and medical mishap. There were fourteen funerals with the body present or burial of cremated remains. Of the twelve funerals with a body in a casket, seven were open, five were closed. After one funeral, the body was cremated. Of the sixteen memorial services, seven had cremated remains present, ten had none, either the body was buried elsewhere,

donated to science, or cremated but simply not there. Of the places the events were held, ten were at a funeral home, six were at a house of worship, five were in a cemetery, and eight were held in other settings, including at a home, at the Balloon Fiesta Park, the Japanese Garden at the Bio-Park, and the German American Club. Thirteen of the events were cre-



ative celebrations of life with little or no religious references, or some religious readings but not a religious service. The seventeen religious services covered included Catholic, Baptist, Evangelical, Methodist, Presbyterian, Jewish, and Latter-Day Saints (Mormon) and almost half of the 30 services featured a video photomontage or photo board related to the deceased, fourteen total.

"Even though intellectually we know we will die, it's always a surprise, whether the death was expected or unexpected," said Rubin. "The funeral or memorial service plays a key role in processing grief, especially when the death is unexpected."

The funeral and memorial services covered were picked out of

CONTINUED ON PAGE A10

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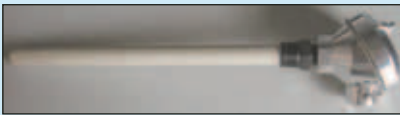
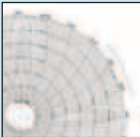
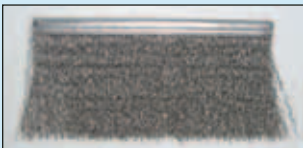
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The Gift of Aftercare

By Sherry L. Williams



Another year has come and gone and 2012 is looking all of you squarely in the face. As I sit staring at my calendar and begin filling in things that have already been scheduled for the coming year, I couldn't help but be a little nostalgic. I began to look back at what happened over the past year or two and realize that there have been a lot of changes in my life, my family and my business. I know you can do the same thing. As I began to think about my business, I realized just how much the funeral service has changed since I started working in this profession over twenty-seven years ago. As I reminisce, I am reminded on such a personal level that this business is based on building relationships. And when it all boils down to it, you as funeral directors help the families you serve capture and remember the importance of life and relationships with family and friends. In addition, I look at the relationships you build with your employees and in your communities. It is important in this profession more than any other to build a reputation built on relationships; relationships of trust, loyalty and respect.

So, how do you build relationships of trust, loyalty and respect? First, you have to treat people fairly, give them good service; service that you yourself would expect and demand as a consumer. You have to give them good products and fair pricing.

You have to build a staff that represents your standards and meets your expectations. You can only do this when you treat your employees with respect, provide clear goals and standards of care and set a good example for them in how you do business with not only the families you serve but with your vendors.

You have to be truthful and honest with your employ-

ees and those you serve. If you are not sure about something, you will build more respect if you just say that and tell whomever you are working with that you will get the answers required for them and for you. People respect that far more than if you try to bluff your way through.

Be community minded. Be involved in community programs and projects. Support local non-profit agencies. Be visible; get you and your staff to work at soup kitchens, present programs for the rotary, school system or senior centers.

Sponsor special events, like lock-ins after the prom, anti drinking and smoking campaigns, holiday programs or services of remembrance, special valentine's luncheons for widowed seniors and any other creative events you can think of.

Keep your funeral home updated, in good repair and nicely decorated.

Be open to new ideas for ceremonies of life, services of remembrance, or special celebrations and find a way to help families make those events happen as a part of the services you provide.

Don't be judgmental about what a family wants to do to honor their loved one's life, just because it is not something you would do or is not something that you have helped someone do in the past. As long as it is not hurting anyone and is not illegal and it is something that you can do, help the family create the service that they want, not the service you want.

Make sure that your employees know that they can depend on you to help them pick up the slack when things get busy. Be willing to dig in and do your part. Don't expect them to do things you wouldn't do yourself.

Make sure that your employees can trust what you say by standing behind what you say and by backing them up when they are right.

When an employee is wrong about something, do not correct them in front of others and if it can wait, wait until you are over the emotions of the event before you talk to them.

Be consistent in your actions, requirements, discipline

and expectations. Nothing is worse than to be "wishy-washy" and non-committal about rules, issues on conduct or how you want your business handled.

Be sensitive and caring. Don't be an order taker. When you are working with people, listen to them. When you listen you don't just hear the words, you hear the emotional message. Meet people where they are and respect their feelings.

As I think back about the past year and think about things that have touched me personally with the death of my dad, I am very vividly reminded that when all is said and done, it is not about the stuff. It is not about what you have, your education or how many cards you bring to the table, it is about how you treat people and the relationships you have. That is truly what matters in life.

As you enter into 2012, build relationships, it is truly all that counts.

Sherry L. Williams, RN, BA, GMS, GRS, is the president and founder of New Leaf Resources a division of Sherry Williams Enterprises, Inc. She was the co-founder of Accord Inc. and has been involved in grief and bereavement training and services for the past twenty-two years. She has an Associate Degree in Nursing from the University of Kentucky Extension Program and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Bellarmine College in Louisville, KY. Sherry is a nationally certified Grief Management Specialist and has advanced certification as a Bereavement Facilitator from the American Academy of Bereavement and is certified by the Grief Recovery Institute as a Grief Recovery Specialist. She has been a featured speaker for numerous organizations including the National Funeral Directors Association and the Association for Death Education. She can be reached by email at sherry@newleaf-resources.com. Visit New Leaf Resources and Sherry Williams Enterprises, Inc. at www.newleaf-resources.com

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Veterans & Family Memorial Providers Send Over 10,000 Stuffed Christmas Stockings to Troops Overseas

SANIBEL ISLAND, FL— "I am overwhelmed with pride and joy" said **Mark Davis**, CEO of **ValMark Memorial Group**. "Operation Christmas Stockings for Soldiers surpassed all of our expectations this year." Funeral home providers for ValMark's Veterans & Family Memorial Care (VFMC) division rallied communities from all across the nation to send a taste of home and

Soldiers and by far the largest. Our community really jumped on board this year. Thank you for helping us give something back to those who protect our freedom each and every day," says **Dan Calfee** of **Calfee Funeral Home** in Beckley, WV.

"I just wanted to let everyone know how successful



some Christmas cheer to over 10,000 troops serving in harm's way overseas. Here's what just a few of the nearly 1,000 VFMC providers had to say: "the final tally is in, 887 stockings sent out as of today. Last year, our first effort, netted about 250 stockings. Our community and staff absolutely love participating in this program," says **David Perotto** of **Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home** in Rochester, NY.

"I wanted to let you know we just mailed over 200 stockings to the troops. This is our third year participating in VFMC's Stocking for

our VFMC Stockings for Soldiers project has been going for our communities. This is our first year participating with this particular project but it has simply taken off. We have had probably 200 plus stockings go flying out our door," says **Timothy R. Livingston** of **Owens Livingston Mortuary** in Show Low, AZ.

"The 2011 Stocking for Soldiers collection is complete and we had 212 stockings that were sent overseas," says **Craig C. Pickelman** of **Wilson Miller Funeral Home** in Midland, MI.

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A Proactive Approach to Advance Funeral Planning

By Christopher Kuhnen

Make Your New Year Fantastic!

There's no sound reason why 2012 shouldn't be the best pre-need year your firm has ever had. The best, in reference to the number of people you can reach out to; inform and educate, and ultimately, bring into a positive and long-lasting relationship with your funeral home. All this and more can be accomplished through the resolute efforts of your pre-need program. Pre-need is the ultimate marketing and public relations tool every funeral home has in their arsenal to reach and serve more people and there are plenty of people yet to reach.

You've heard the figures; 78 million baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964. The oldest will turn 62 this year, the age at which they become eligible for social security benefits. However, the vast majority won't be taking their social security benefits anytime soon. The country's economic downturn of the past several years has seen to that. Study after study indicates the baby boomers plan to keep on working into their mid to late 70's. As they keep working, they keep earning. That means they can afford to pre-plan and pre-pay their final expenses in advance of need. With all this potential why then have so few of them actually taken the time to investigate funeral pre-planning?

Do you realize that less than forty percent of the fifty plus American populace has engaged in some preplanning for a funeral or burial, and just under a quarter of the individuals ages fifty or higher, twenty four percent have prepaid at least a portion of funeral or burial expenses for themselves or someone else. Think of all the advertising, marketing, direct mail, etc. that funeral homes across America have

proactively engaged in over the past 15 to 25 years. For all that time, money and energy spent less than one-quarter of survey respondents, twenty four percent have actually prepaid any part of funeral or burial expenses for themselves and/or someone else.

We clearly need to continue marketing, public relations and promotional efforts to reach out to the families and bring them into a lasting relationship with our time honored profession. No newspaper, radio or television ad can take the place of a live and communicative human being. No flashy media campaign can establish trust and/or build rapport with those being served. Only we can do that, one to one-one person at a time.

In 2012, funeral pre-planning professionals need to be more personally engaged in seeing and speaking with more people than ever before. The best way to do that is through a proactive pre-need program. A program that would allow consumers and us time to converse and get to know one another in a non-pressure, relaxed and informal environment. An environment where factual information can openly be shared; honest dialogue can occur; hard hitting questions straightforwardly answered; trust can be established and action can be taken.

It's not about building sales, it's about building relationships. It's the bedrock on which our profession was founded. Here are some things to commit to in 2012.

- Work more assertively on cultivating outside sales. Call in and walk in business is fine, don't get me wrong, but it will simply not be enough to get you where you want to go.
- Always be prospecting for leads. Anywhere and everywhere you go. There are always new opportunities to meet potential clients; at the grocery store, church, weekend gathering, ball-games, meetings, etc. The idea is simple. Every time you have the opportunity to meet someone new, you are prospecting. Have your one minute elevator speech always ready to share with others, when they ask "What do you do?"
- Seek referrals from those you meet. There are many new and creative ways to effectively obtain referrals. The bottom line to obtaining referrals from your prospects is that you must be direct and simply ask for them when the "right time" presents itself. Limit your request to no more than three sentences and then have your pen ready. If you ask for referrals you will get them. It's the ability to ask constantly and be diligent about it that takes discipline and skill.
- Get and keep a well-organized sales tracking system in place.

I suggest a web-based Sales Lead Relationship Management System, similar to the Outlook CRM System. More sales are "lost" because the Advance Funeral Planning Professional loses the sales lead they worked so hard to get. Keep track of each and every prospect and stay in touch often through letters, postcards, e-mail, and go by's or telephone calls.

- Get and use family testimonials. Nobody can tell your story better than a satisfied family. Encourage them to write down their thoughts, comments and feelings about the positive pre-planning experience they had with you and your firm. Share what they say with their prior express permission and with everyone you can. Place written testimonials on your website, funeral home bulletin board, paid advertising messages in the newspaper, magazine or on radio and/or television. Print off a sheet of testimonials and give to those you make presentations in front of. Let your prospects read what good things others are saying about you.

This New Year can and should be the year that you finally reach your pre-need department goals and objectives. I still pronounce that we have only just begun to really scratch the surface when it comes to funeral preplanning. There is still a great audience waiting to meet us and hear what we have to share. There is no time to waste. Get your sales and marketing plan together and hit the ground running this first quarter of the New Year. Above and beyond all, in 2012 stay safe, stay strong and stay in touch!

Christopher Kuhnen is Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Communications for The Outlook Group, Inc., Franklin, Ohio.

He has 25 years experience in the field of funeral directing, prearrangement planning and training. He also has considerable experience in public relations, marketing, consumer and business to business sales. He is a trusted advisor to those in the death care industry. As an insider into excellence Chris provides comprehensive consultation, education and positive support to funeral directors nationwide to help them coordinate and develop their business strategies.

Christopher is a Kentucky Licensed Funeral Director, Life Insurance Agent, Certified Preplanning Consultant (CPC), In-Sight Institute Certified Celebrant and Certified Marketing Specialist. He can be reached at (800) 331-6270 or ckuhnen@theoutlookgroup.com.

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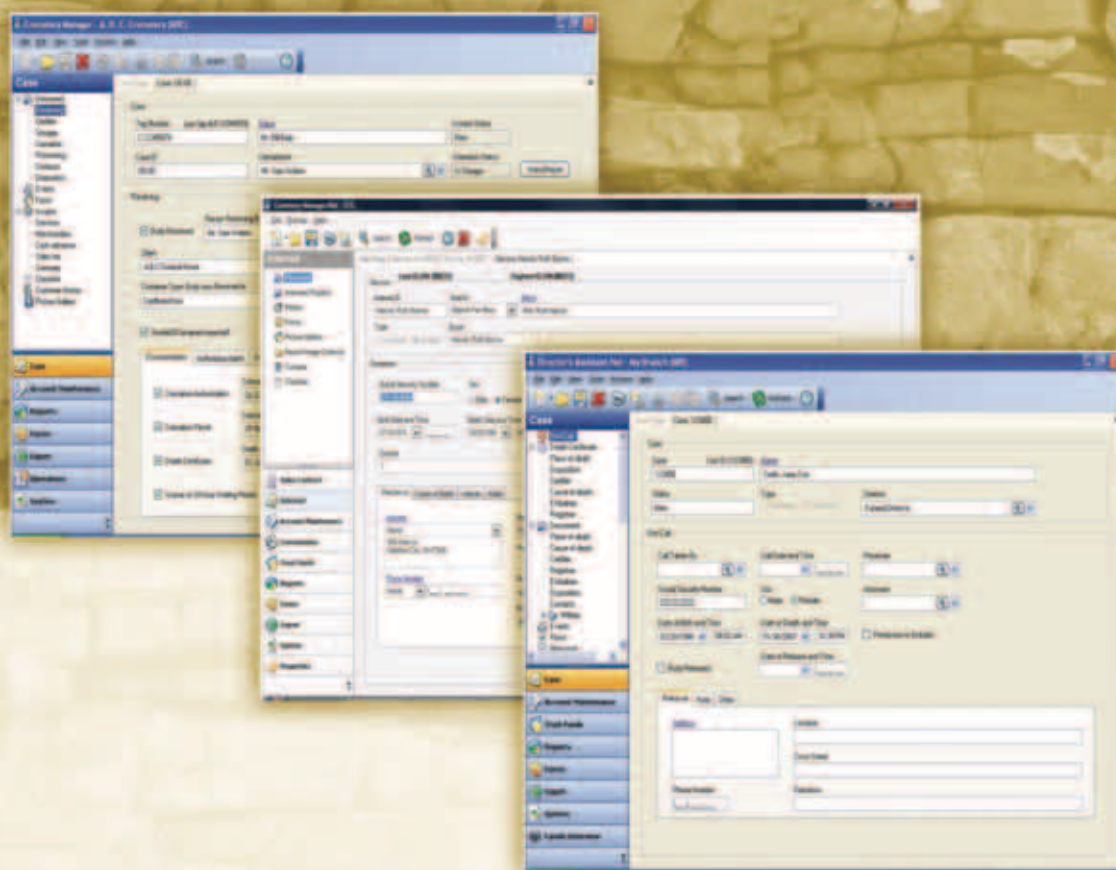
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American Funeral Director Announces its "Funeral Director of the Year"

WALL, NJ— The American Funeral Director magazine recently announced that **Kenneth R. Howe** won its 2011 Funeral Director of the Year award.



Kenneth R. Howe

Howe has been a funeral director for more than twenty five years and is chief executive officer of **Holman Howe Funeral Homes** in Missouri. Howe was a sure fit for this year's Funeral Director of the Year award because of his tenacity, his dedication to his family and profession, his involvement within his community and his desire to educate and inspire future funeral professionals.

"I am very honored to receive this prestigious award," Howe said. "While the ultimate compliment is the reward I receive when a family selects our services, it is a wonderful addition to be recognized by my peers in funeral service. Any award of this nature is a team recognition, and on behalf of our team I say, thank you."

"We are honored to present Howe with our Funeral Director of the Year award," said **Tanya Kenevich**, editor of **Kates-Boylston Publications**, the company that publishes American Funeral Director. "His passion for his profession and the families he serves is very impressive; Howe truly encompasses what this award is all about."

In addition to Howe winning the 2011 Funeral Director of the Year award, American Funeral Director announced three runners-up: **Thomas F. Fitzgerald**, owner of the **Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory** in Rockford, IL. Fitzgerald, a third-generation funeral director, runs his funeral home with his wife, **Maureen**, and his son **Patrick**. Fitzgerald's career as a funeral director has spanned five decades, and he has won many industry awards during his time as owner of Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory.

John W. Ford, owner of **Alderson Funeral Homes** in Westbury, CT. Ford, who has been in funeral service for forty one years, is very involved within his community and is a certified disaster coordinator for Connecticut, as well as a member of the Region 1 Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team.

J.P. Ducro IV, owner of **Ducro Funeral Services** in Ashtabula, OH. Ducro became a funeral director in

CONTINUED ON PAGE A10

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Changing Lives Through Laughter

By Nancy Weil

I received a call from a young woman who had miscarried her son. As we spoke about the burial options, she hesitated and then told me that she needed to tell me something. She then went on to let me know that she was a teenager and Hispanic. "Okay," I responded. She told me that she was relieved that I did not judge her as that had been the reaction she had received at other places she called. She told me that once they knew this, they became rude and disinterested. Immediately I said, "But your heart hurts too. You don't grieve your loss any less because you are so young."

I have since met this young lady. She has gone on to tell me that a hospital, a funeral director and a cemetery all sent her away because she did not have any money to pay for their services. She was directed to the Catholic hospital, as they would assist her. A labor and delivery nurse at that hospital developed a program specifically to help the families who experience a neonatal loss. Footprints, photos, tiny caskets are all part of what she provides, when possible. She also continues to stay in

touch with the families, providing support and information to them. It is through her that I came to know this young lady.

She experienced both the worse and the best of our industry following this unexpected loss. She and her family were forever changed by how they were treated. This is an industry already under scrutiny and attack from the media; some of it deserved most of it not. However, if you don't care about people, choose another career. Do us all a favor and stop harming people at their most emotionally vulnerable time. Am I angry at the treatment she received? You bet!

I was once told by a pre-need salesman that the reason a family bought a single crypt for two sets of cremated remains, instead of a companion niche, was because he was, "a hell of a good sales person." Really? Selling people an item that they don't need will cost them more and that is not designed for that purpose is a reason to brag? I cannot stomach this type of approach to our business. How many families will not be told all of their options so that they can make an informed decision? How many will be steered into a product that gives the sales person a higher commission, but is more than the family intended to spend?

Yes, I am angry and I hope that you are as well. I am sure if you are reading this, you are a caring, compassionate professional who sees your job as being one of service, not sales. It is the few who diminish our reputation with the general public. We should be honored to be the one that a family comes to at their most emotionally vulnerable time. We should be ready to go beyond their expectations and assist them in any way pos-

sible (remember my previous article by my sock folding co-worker?) Our approach to each family should be one of absolute attention and creating an atmosphere where there needs can be met.

It is inherent upon each of us to weed out those who would do better selling another product where the emotions are not so high. We must continue to raise the bar for caring. We no longer are the furniture makers who made the caskets and helped the families bury their dead. We are funeral professionals, and I am proud to be in this industry.

With certifications as a Laughter Leader, Funeral Celebrant, Grief Services Provider and Grief Management Specialist, Nancy Weil is uniquely qualified to bring new perspectives and new ways to help clients heal from the pain of grief as well as reduce stress for professionals in the industry.

As director of aftercare at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Buffalo, NY, Nancy has developed one of the most comprehensive aftercare programs of any cemetery in the country in order to support families following the death of a loved one. A professional public speaker, Nancy is available to speak to your staff, association or conference, bringing her passionate interest in the healing qualities and therapeutic benefits of laughter across the country. Her new book, *If Stress Doesn't Kill You, Your Family Might*, filled with tools that work to reduce stress, can be found through her website, www.TheLaughAcademy.com. You can contact Nancy at nancyw@mountcalvarycemetery.com or visit www.thelaughacademy.com.



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news and classified obituaries that announced the time and date of each event - they were all open to the public. Events were selected based on interesting elements in the obituaries, obtaining a good mix of religions and creative celebrations, keeping the male/female ratio even, and whatever event would fit into Ru-

bin's schedule on any given day.

Rubin is a certified celebrant who brings light to a dark subject and helps to get funeral planning conversations started. Rubin is the creator of The Newly-Dead Game which is based on elements of "The Newlywed Game" TV show, the game tests how well

couples know their partner's last wishes. Three or four couples can compete against each other. The game can be a tool in helping adults and children obtain information about their parents' last wishes. Rubin's award winning book, *A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die* (Light Tree Press), won

the 2011 Best of Show award from the New Mexico Book awards. The book also won in the family issues category and was a finalist in four other categories. For more information visit www.AGoodGoodbye.com. The book is also available in print and eBook formats at Amazon.com and Barnes&Noble.com.

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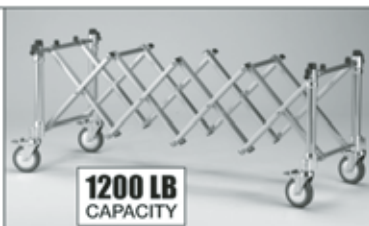
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"Funeral Director of the Year"

Continued from Page A8

1994, and over the years he has taken on full responsibility for Ducro Funeral Services, especially since the death of his father, **Pete** in May. Ducro is often seen at community events and has created a name for himself and his business. Ducro Funeral Services operates two funeral homes, a cemetery, separate human and pet crematories, a limousine service and a flower shop.

Batesville Casket Co., based in Batesville, IN sponsored the award, and it had words of praise for all the finalists and the winner. "Funeral service is filled with extraordinary people who have committed their lives to serving others and are making a real difference in their communities," said **Kim Dennis**, president of Batesville. "Rarely do they seek the spotlight, so it is our honor to recognize these individuals for their outstanding service," Dennis explained.

A series of articles on the runners-up was published in the November issue of American Funeral Director, and the winner was announced in the December issue. For more information, visit www.katesboylston.com.

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Legal Speak

By Atty. Harvey I. Lapin

Avoiding Cremation Litigation (Part 1)

Cremation litigation still is the most prevalent type of litigation involving the industry. Recently a Magistrate Judge of the United States District Court of the Eastern District of Wisconsin issued an interesting opinion in the case of Jackson v. McKay-Davis Funeral Home, Inc., et al, 2011 WL 5900782. The Jackson case involved the loss of cremated remains in transit and Jackson sued everyone involved in the transaction and the insurance companies. The opinion is of interest because the judge reviewed basically all of the types of claims that can be made in this type of case and made determinations as to which parties had liability. The opinion will be reviewed in detail in an upcoming article written by the author for the Cemetery and Funeral Business and Legal Guide published by CB Legal Publishing Corporation. See the subscription information below. The purpose of this column and the next one is to provide industry members with some protective measures and guidelines to avoid this type of litigation.

The first protective measure is to be familiar with all of the requirements for crematories in your state. Education is the primary tool to prevent a law violation and also for avoiding situations that could cause litigation.

The second protective measure is to continually monitor your operations. Employees that have not been properly trained cause most of the mistakes that lead to litigation. An owner should constantly inspect the premises, implement improvements, monitor employees and establish training procedures.

The third protective measure is to develop forms that protect your business. The best line of protection in the

cremation area is a good cremation authorization form. Develop operational forms that assure your employees do not make mistakes in the cremation process.

The fourth protective measure is to establish a definite complaint procedure to handle problems. See Rule 10 of the Ten Commandments of Cremation Documentation discussed below and in the next part of this column.

The fifth protective measure is to have the proper insurance coverage. This topic has been discussed in previous columns.

Several years ago the author developed a listing of ten rules for documenting cremation that were designed to assist members of the industry in avoiding problems. These rules are now referred to as the Ten Commandments of Cremation Documentation. You should make a copy of these rules and hang them in a suitable place as a reminder for you and your employees.

1. Thou shall have available for easy reference the state laws applicable to cremation

Every state has laws that specifically apply to cremation. Some states, like Illinois and North Carolina, have detailed comprehensive laws. Other states may only have limited laws primarily dealing with the disposition of cremated remains or the length of time a funeral director is required to hold unclaimed cremated remains prior to making disposition arrangements for them. You should be familiar with the state laws that apply to your crematory, cemetery and funeral home and have a copy of the relevant provisions readily available for reference.

2. Thou shall establish forms and fixed procedures for documenting a cremation service

Samples of cremation forms have been published or distributed by the various national and some state industry trade associations. A crematory operator should confirm that these forms are in compliance with state laws before using them. Do not borrow other industry member's forms without being sure the forms are in compliance with the laws of the state in which you operate. Every crematory should establish a definite procedure for documenting all steps of the cremation process and that procedure should be followed without variance in every case.

3. Thou shall always follow the established procedures

The failure to follow the established procedures is often the reason for losing litigation or being required to settle a case when the crematory would have been protected if the procedures were followed. Do not take shortcuts and train your personnel to do it the right way. The author was an expert witness in a lawsuit involving the disposition of the remains of a stillborn child. The funeral director defendant had not

obtained any documents from the hospital when picking up the body, did not file for a death certificate and did not obtain a cremation permit under state law. The funeral director responded to an inquiry as to the reason the procedures were not followed by stating there was no charge for the services and therefore no requirement to comply with proper procedures or state laws. Obviously, not charging was no defense.

The discussion of the Ten Commandments of Cremation Documentation will continue in the next part of this column.

Harvey I. Lapin, P.C., is a member of the Illinois Bar and Florida Bar. He is a member of the faculty at the John Marshall Law School in Chicago and is presently teaching the subject of Tax Exempt Organizations. He is also associated with Florida-based law firm Sachs, Sax & Caplan, leading the firm's Funeral, Cemetery and Cremation Practice Group.

He has written numerous articles on the subject of taxation, funeral and cemetery law.

The subject discussed in this article and future articles resulted from the questions from readers. If you have any questions about the topics covered in this column or in obtaining professional assistance, please contact the author c/o Harvey I. Lapin, P.C., PO Box 1327, Northbrook, IL 60065-1327. Phone (847)509-0501 or fax to (847)509-1027.

The author writes articles for CB Legal Publishing Corporation also publishes the Release Form Kit, which was prepared by the author and has been recently updated and revised by the author. This Kit contains Release and Hold Harmless forms for Funeral Homes, Cemeteries and Crematories to use in situations where it has resolved a complaint with a customer, and wants to be sure that there will be no further action by the customer or their relatives. The forms can be purchased on a custom basis with your business name and addressed preprinted at the top of each form. Call Cheryl Lapin and she will send you an order form that contains the current prices. See the number below.

The author also writes more extensive articles on subjects of interest to the industry in the newsletter Cemetery & Funeral Business and Legal Guide published by CB Legal Publishing Corporation. Ten issues on different topics are published on an annual basis.

Special Announcement: Future Issues of the Cemetery & Funeral Business and Legal Guide will only be available in an electronic PDF version beginning January 1, 2012. The Subscription price will be \$99.00 per year. CB special introductory rate of \$75.00 to readers of Funeral Home & Cemetery News is being extended until February 15, 2012. Readers that wish to subscribe at the special introductory rate should indicate they read this offer and send a check in the amount of \$75.00 payable to CB Legal Publishing Corporation along with the name of the subscribing individual and the email address to be used.

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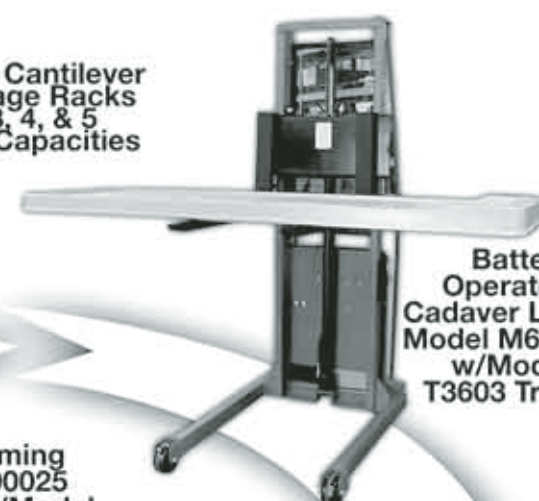


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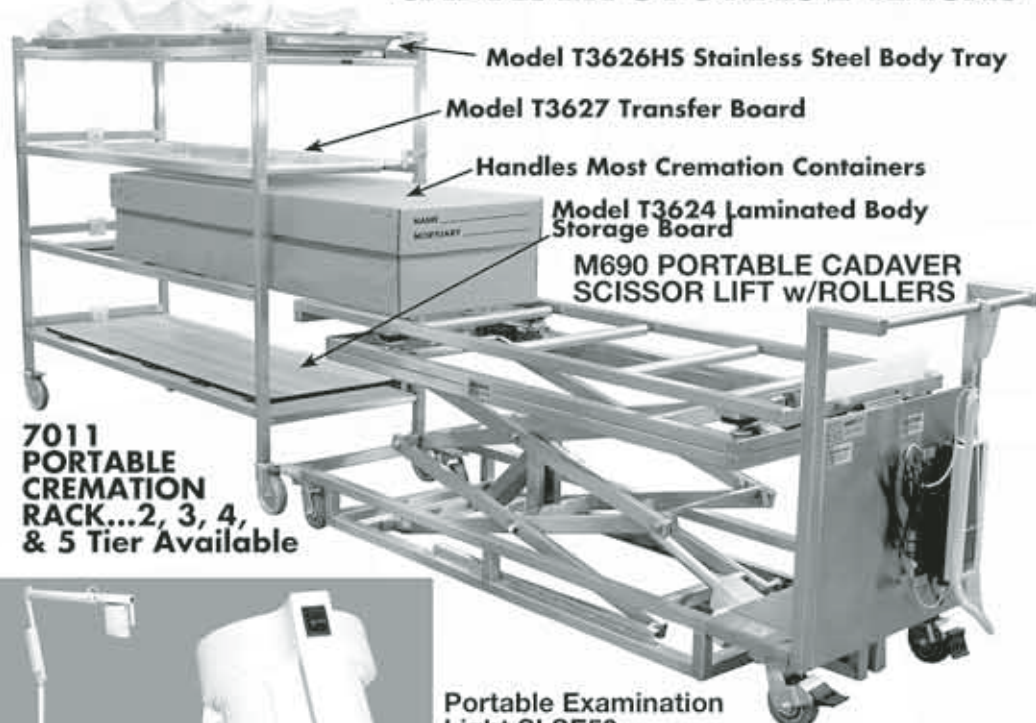
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Observations

By Steven Palmer

Fallen Ethics for Fallen Heroes

*Our cheer goes back to them, the valiant dead!
Laurels and roses on their graves to-day,
Lilies and laurels over them we lay,
And violets o'er each unforgotten head*

—Richard Hovey

They gave so much and in return asked so little.

When an active soldier is killed in a military operation, we cannot begin to repay that debt. All that is asked of us is that the fallen hero is recovered, identified and sent back home to his grieving family with the dignity that is due a warrior that sacrificed all that he or she can for us.

That has been the mission of the Department of Defense and its various branches for much of our country's history. This has also been the sacred duty of Dover Air Force Base Mortuary where the fallen are taken for final care and returned to their loved ones.

They have given their all and deserve our country's best. We have found out that we have not always held up our end of the deal.

First it was the neglectful care and unclean facilities at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, then the incompetent management of interments at Arlington National Cemetery and now the improper handling of the remains of the war dead at Dover Air Force Base Mortuary.

The Department of Defense describes Dover's duties and functions thusly: "The Port Mortuary falls under Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations (AFMAO), located at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations combined the missions of both Air Force Mortuary Affairs and Dover Port Mortuary at the Charles C. Carson Center. The Port Mortuary is responsible for the return of all Department of Defense (DOD) personnel and dependents from Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) and other overseas deaths. Additionally when requested, it maintains contingency response capabilities in the event of homeland mass fatalities. Mission: The Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations mission is to fulfill our Nation's sacred commitment of ensuring dignity, honor, and respect to our fallen and care, service, and support to their families."

Sgt. Daniel Angus was the victim of a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. The blast contorted his arm into an unusual position making his placement in a casket for viewing awkward

and possibly disturbing. The family had expressed their desire for a closed casket but the staff at Dover AFB Mortuary decided the only remedy was to saw off the arm and place it alongside the Marine's leg where it would be covered by the uniform.

There were instances of missing body parts in April 2009. Twenty six year old Capt. Mark R. "Pitball" McDowell had been providing air support to ground troops when he and Capt. Thomas J. Gramath were killed when their plane was shot down. The labeled plastic bag that contained the remains of an ankle bone embedded in tissue was found empty, slit on the side during the normal processing. Dover staff could not account for it. Stan McDowell, Capt. McDowell's father has tried to be accepting over the revelations, stated "There are some things as they shouldn't be, but I will never know".

Another case occurred in July 2009, when a small piece of tissue, which should have been in a labeled plastic bag, was also missing and could not be accounted for. It belonged to a soldier killed in Afghanistan. Fourteen sets of allegations were investigated. These allegations came from three whistleblowers.

These Dover AFB Mortuary employees, James Parson, embalming and a autopsy technician; Mary Ellen Spera, mortuary inspector; and William Zwicharowski, a senior mortuary inspector, contacted the office of Special Counsel with their reports of mishandling the soldiers remains. All three reported retaliation for their revelations of wrongdoing. Parsons said he was fired but soon rehired, and Spera and Zwicharowski received letters of reprimand. Zwicharowski also claimed being placed on administrative leave and his mental state questioned.

Those taking the fall for these lapses in their sacred duties were Colonel Robert Edmondson, commander of Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations at Dover, who at the time of the occurrences received a "career killing" letter of reprimand. Trevor Dean, Edmondson's top civilian deputy and Quinton "Randy" Keel, director of the mortuary were reassigned to jobs with families of soldiers killed and not in mortuary operations.

The final blow was the revelation that cremated body parts that could not be identified and cremated remains the family told the military they could dispose of were dumped in a Virginia landfill by a civilian contractor.

"The common practice was that any residual matter remaining after incineration was disposed of by the contractor in a landfill," Brig. Gen. Les Kodlick, the Air Force Chief of Public Affairs said in a statement.

"We could have done it better," was an understatement made by the general.

Dover had been a shining jewel in the honored treatment of remains from being offloaded with military escorts to the proper and careful identification and through embalming and return to the family. Then their curtain was pulled back

to reveal serious lapses in ethical care of fallen heroes.

In the Civil War, forty two percent of the dead were unidentified, during World War II that figure dropped to three percent. Currently close to a hundred percent of US remains of soldiers killed in a military operation are identified. The Dover facilities, recently rebuilt and expanded is state of the art in its mission.

Any member of the military who knew that body parts of our heroes were thrown in a landfill has shown us the highest form of hypocrisy.

Gari-Lynn Smith, whose husband was killed in Iraq in 2006, later learned that some of his remains were disposed of in a landfill.

"My only peace of mind in losing my husband was that he was taken to Dover and that he was handled with dignity, love and respect. That was completely shattered for me when I was told he was thrown in the trash," Mrs. Smith told the Washington Post.

Richard DeNoyer, Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars observed, "You only get one chance to return our fallen warriors to their families with all the dignity and respect they deserve from a grateful nation, and that mortuary affairs unit failed."

General Norman Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff, who took responsibility for these actions stated, "The ultimate requirement here is to fulfill our professional and moral obligation to ensure that our fallen are treated with the reverence and respect they deserve." It is tragic that they even had to be reminded.

*"The bugles ceased their wailing sound,
As the coffin was lowered into the ground;
A volley was fired, a blessing said,
One moment's pause and they left the dead.
I saw a poor and aged man-
His step was feeble; his cheek wan;
He knelt down on the newly raised mound,
His face was bowed on the cold damp ground;
He raised his head, his tears were done-
The father had prayed o'er his only son."*

—Letitia Elizabeth Landon, The Soldier's Funeral

Steven Palmer entered funeral service in 1971. He is an honors graduate of the New England Institute of Applied Arts & Sciences. He has been licensed on both coasts, he owns the Westcott Funeral Homes of Cottonwood and Camp Verde, AZ. Steve offers his observations on current funeral service issues. He may be reached by mail at PO Box 352, Cottonwood, AZ 86326, by phone at (928)634-9566, by fax at (928)634-5156, by e-mail at steve@westcottfuneralhome.com or through his website at www.westcottfuneralhome.com or on Facebook.

Bellefontaine Cemetery Welcomes Hummel

ST. LOUIS,MO— Bellefontaine Cemetery welcomes Eären L. Hummel, ASLA to the position of Director of Landscape Design. Hummel is a landscape designer specializing in historic and cultural landscapes. Hummel’s specialty is the documentation and analysis of historic landscapes leading to creative design solutions that respect and complement historic places. Hummel has moved here from Fort Collins, CO.

Hummel recently completed a Cultural Landscape report on North Field, Tinian Island; a national historic landmark with international significance for the role the island played in World War II as the airfield from the first atomic bombs were deployed to bomb Japan. Prior to joining Bellefontaine Cemetery, she was an associate for AECOM’s design and planning division, and also served as an Adjunct Professor at Colorado State University.

AECOM recently completed a twenty year master plan for Bellefontaine Cemetery with Herb Schaal as the lead designer. Hummel will assist in the implementation of the master plan.

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Gary Memorial Chapel hosted 2nd Annual Holiday Hope & Memories Program

COLUMBUS, OH—Most get caught up in the merriment of the fast-approaching holiday season. But when the holidays are looming, funeral professionals know families are facing difficult moments because of the death of a loved one.

To help **Gary Memorial Chapel** has offered a special program of hope and remembrance. The “*Holiday Hope & Memories Program*” featured a candlelight service that touched on the understanding of feelings of grief during the holiday season, while celebrating the life of a beloved family member or friend who had passed away within the past year or two years.

This year the theme centered around hope. Hope through music from a teenage violin player, Mikayla Diaz,



a local singer, Nichole Davis and a bell choir, Soli Deo Bell Choir. Hope was featured through art, featuring an 86 year old poet whose stage name is “The Rappin Granny.” They also shared hope through grief education presented by a local author, Ruth Ann Thompson. There was hope through laughter from a Christian comedian, Lamarr Scales and hope through an

encouraging word by local pastor, Elder Michael D. Reeves Sr. The event ended with hope through remembrance of a candlelight service where all the names were called and a touching mime titled “If You Could See Me Now” was performed.

One of the only funeral home sponsored events in Columbus this holiday

season to express the aftercare and continued support of families served as well as families in the surrounding community, the event was free and offered hearty catered refreshments to over 150 people. Attendees expressed gratitude because of the “hope” they felt from this 2nd annual event. Next year’s event will be held on Saturday, November 10, 2012.

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OSHA Compliance

By Gary Finch

An Open Letter to National, State, and Regional Associations of Funeral Homes and Cemeteries:

Helping Your Member Firms Improve Employee Safety and OSHA Compliance

OSHA allows a small sized workplace credit when the business in question has less than 251 employees. Even when it comes to super-conglomerates that hire thousands of people, they break it down into regions so that even they usually qualify for the small size exemption. In that sense, our entire industry is made up of small sized employers. But being small is a deterrent to collecting meaningful industrial findings that relate to finding the primary causes and types of accidents in the workplace. Simply put, their sampling base is not sufficient.

Some think blood borne pathogen and formaldehyde exposures are their primary concerns. They may be as far as training goes, but are they the leading cause of accidents? I doubt it. The CDC and the BLS do not show a single case of an embalmer or cemetery worker contacting HIV through an occupational exposure incident. And as far as Hepatitis B, there is a vaccination series which seems to indicate permanent immunity.

So we need to research beyond those surface concerns to find out our real safety problems. We can't really look at the BLS because in the funeral industry, our Standard Industrial Classification (SIC 7261) is retail service. Our next of kin are shoe shine parlors, beauty shops, and barber shops. No offense to the shine boys, but we aren't going to learn much from them.

The Compliance Plus program generates reports for tracking injuries. There are even special reports for needle sticks and other blood exposures. There are accident reports to be completed by the injured employees and by their supervisors. However; since these are small workplaces, few reports are generated. A small sample of internal reports cannot provide insight into accident trends.

This is where a national or state association could step in

and gather information that would be helpful to funeral homes and cemeteries. You can use the association's in-house publication and poll thousands of members on workplace accidents. You can then process and distribute the findings to your members. Then members might know with some certainty what the real problem areas are, and where they can best focus their time.

In the funeral industry, it's really hard to say whether needle stick injuries, back lifting injuries, slip, trip, and fall injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, or some other activity is causing the most problems. I think it is equally difficult to find these problems in the cemetery workplace.

My recommendation is for the association to develop a brief, not exhaustive questionnaire for their publication that goes out to members. It should not require hours of research to complete it. In most cases, the funeral home or cemetery manager will know enough off the top of his head to give a meaningful response. Then you can analyze the data as it comes back in. Do cemetery workers sprain their ankles more than others? Do they incur back injuries? Are more of their injuries related to the operation of heavy equipment? Let's find out.

It is only possible for members to get meaningful data when it is extracted from a large source of workers over a one, two, or three year period. Only then can you work with sufficient examples. And the people who are best able to do this are the national and state associations. I understand that this will take some time, perhaps several years. Please understand that you have the time, and that no one else has as much access as you.

Also, please understand that it is your members that need this data. I know you do a lot of valuable work. I think this data is every bit as important as the other work you do. This type of survey should be focused on a multi-year period. It should be repeated every ten years so that members can better track the real health and safety risks in their industry and in their workplace.

Please give my recommendations some thought. It would be great to work with you should you want my help.

Gary Finch is a licensed funeral director and embalmer in Texas. He founded Compliance Plus in 1992. Today, they represent over 700 funeral homes and cemeteries in 37 states. Compliance Plus also serves as an advisory consultant for the International Order of the Golden Rule. For more information on Compliance Plus visit www.kisscompliance.net. Contact Gary by phone at (800) 950-1101 or by e-mail at gfinch@kisscompliance.net.

New England Livery Services LLC Re-energized



GORHAM, ME— **New England Livery Services LLC**, the sister company to **BioSpecialists LLC** is resuming a full array of livery services to New England communities. New England Livery had taken a short one year break from service in order to focus upon the development of specialized BioRecovery Services that BioSpecialists now provides.

Now that BioSpecialists has secured a foothold in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, New England Livery services will once again serve funeral homes, state agencies, federal agencies and medical examiners from New England to metropolitan New York and New Jersey. New England Livery is fortunate to have retained the loyalty of most clients, and is pleased to be of service to them once again. The purchase of two new vehicles rounds out the complete fleet of vehicles. New England Livery Service is fully licensed and bonded for intrastate transport services. Learn more at www.bio-specialists.com or call (866) 331-7731.

Sourek Manor Funeral Home purchases New Hearse



CICERO,IL— Chuck Sourek (left) of Sourek Manor Funeral Home in Cicero, IL stands in front of the new Cadillac Hearse purchased from John Muster of Muster Coaches in Calhoun, KY. Sourek Funeral Homes has serviced the families of the Chicago area since 1968.

Caywood accepts New Hearse



ELMIRA,NY— James Caywood of Caywood's Funeral Home & Gardens, LLC in Elmira, NY accepting his new all wheel drive Lincoln MKT Hearse at the Federal Factory in Amelia, OH. The unit was sold by John Muster of Muster Coaches in Calhoun, KY. Caywood purchased a historic five bedroom home in 1997 to begin his dream of transforming the house into a functional funeral home. The overgrown woods are now a beautiful garden with a gazebo offering families a park like setting for a unique and personal service.

Funeral Divas and Roberta House-Forshee Create New Blog

ARENAC COUNTY,MI— Roberta House-Forshee has been accepted as a blogger for Funeral Divas social group. Roberta House-Forshee is the owner of C.L. Forshee & Sons Funeral Homes, Inc. in Twining and Au Gres, MI. Roberta became the owner in 2007 after the death of her husband and a fourth-generation operator of the firm, Tyler Forshee. Roberta's background is in teaching English and Journalism, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree at Madonna University, a Catholic university in Livonia, MI. Roberta never envisioned



she would be operating a funeral home; however, she feels the journey has not only been a healing experience, but a place where she can help other families,

suffering from loss. Funeral Divas social and support group was established to mentor, guide and celebrate all women in the funeral industry. To read Roberta's blog or to find out more about Funeral Divas please visit www.FuneralDivas.com. The Funeral Divas Corporation has over 500 members located in the U.S., Canada, Germany, England, Australia, South Africa and Bermuda.

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Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home: Serving Friends and Neighbors in Rural Pennsylvania

Continued from Front Page

PA. Funeral homes in this type of setting often struggle due to sheer numbers, but the Wimers have found success through: careful management; a commitment to meaningful and personal services; and handling every aspect of their business alone from first call, pick-up, preparation, cosmetics, paperwork and directing services, to washing fleet vehicles.

Mr. Wimer is the first generation of his family in funeral

concentrate more on what was their calling, a more rural funeral practice.

Through the years, the Wimers transformed the small, four-room “branch” into a fully equipped, completely handicapped accessible funeral home featuring: two spacious viewing rooms, a comfortable foyer, office, casket display room, children’s room, and a heated maintenance garage for their full fleet of service vehicles.

Being active in the community is natural in such a small town. Mr. Wimer is the Forest County Coroner, a member of the Masonic Lodge, and is a past Chairman of the Board and current Education Chairman for the *Western Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association*. The Wimers are highly involved in community and family-based organizations and are available for their neighbors, by phone and in person, twenty-four/seven, as they have built a house

CONTINUED ON PAGE A18



Tionesta Location 1986



Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home, Tionesta 1995



Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home, Tionesta 1997

service. As a boy, he worked on the grounds of the large funeral home that opened next to his house. Through junior high and high school, he began working inside the business and fell in love with funeral service. He graduated with honors from the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science. A year after completing his internship, he fulfilled his dream of owning a funeral home.

For fourteen years the Norm and Patty operated their Brownsville location. In 1986 they purchased the **Haslet Funeral Home** as a branch location in Tionesta. In 1997 the Wimers sold the Brownsville location so they could



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Funeral Service Foundation: Strategic Planning and Hard Work

BROOKFIELD,WI— “Get out there and pin him!” It was my son’s first junior high school wrestling match and he wasn’t sure what to do. Yet, with the instructions from his wrestling coach pounding in his ears, Thomas’ resolve was now fully awakened. Amazingly, halfway through the final period, he managed to pin his opponent to the mat with an awkward and unnamed amateur wrestling hold. At first, Thomas didn’t know the match was over and he was not sure if he should let go of his challenger. However, he quickly realized that he had won the match and Thomas’ look of steely determination was replaced by his winsome smile and his friendly personality. Thomas had been practicing for months. Now he understood how the training, the exercise, the instruction, and the practice all come together for a successful result.

Since 2002, the **Funeral Service Foundation** has worked hard to become the leading independent charitable organization representing all of funeral service. Funds have been generously contributed through the Hand in Hand campaign, pledges, sponsorships and golf tournaments. With sound financial planning and solid direction from the leadership, the foundation is now able to sponsor programs, research, grants and scholarships to ensure a bright future for those who work in the death care professions.

When I was first asked to join the board of trustees for the Funeral Service Foundation, I wondered what would ignite my passion for volunteer service and working on behalf of all of the foundation. I now see the myriad of good things that the foundation does. I have met inspiring people who have been the recipients of scholarships who the foundation has assisted to enter funeral service. I have examined the results of insightful studies and research for recruiting and retaining high-quality funeral service professionals; I have used the recently published *Screening and Hiring Expert Guide to Make the Right Hire*; I have participated in foundation efforts to care for victims from Katrina and Haiti; and I have seen the wonderful results of the financial assistance the foundation has rendered to weighty causes.

I anxiously look forward to the results of several research studies that have recently been funded, including the FAMIC study for a high impact positive funeral service media campaign, and the Formaldehyde-Free Embalming chemical research being done at several institutions of funeral service education.

It is particularly gratifying to watch the foundation truly



Shaun Myers

become the positive and unifying voice that represents the compassion, generosity, and care of this noble profession. The transformation is as beautiful as watching a butterfly emerge from a cocoon, or perhaps as exciting as watching your son win his first junior high school wrestling match.

Through strategic planning and hard work the board of trustees has charted a wonderful and exciting course of action for the future. I invite you to help with this noble cause by giving back to our profession by contributing to the Funeral Service Foundation.

Shaun Myers currently serves as the chair of the Funeral Service Foundation. He is also president of Myers Mortuaries and Evergreen Memorial Park in Ogden, UT, as well as a treasurer for the Funeral and Memorial Information Council (FAMIC).

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Norman J. Wimer Funeral Home: Serving Friends and Neighbors in Rural Pennsylvania

Continued from Page A16

on the lot beside the funeral home. They believe that details, personalization, and close personal and community ties are the most important aspects of their service. Thus, the Wimers have limited vacations to simple weekend getaways, when and if they can get away at all – and have personally serviced every family calling upon them in 25 years with the exception of one.

The couple work hard to ensure that each funeral service considers the needs of the individual family, and is as personalized as it can be. The memory of a beautiful funeral is an important piece of the grief healing process. This belief is what inspires Patty to create an individualized memorial book for each family. She and Norman assemble photos from

the deceased's childhood, graduation, wedding, and adult life, into works of art celebrating the best of the familial memories. They add obituary information and the burial location, before using the remaining pages as a registration book; a truly personal touch that is something the family can cherish and share for generations.

Fulfilling such an important role in a small town certainly has its own challenges and rewards: observing families healing around a memorial book, a personal thank-you and a handshake, or a tin of home-made cookies showing up at their door “makes this kind of rural funeral practice worth every commitment,” said Norm.

The Godfrey Funeral Homes purchase New Hearse



OCEAN CITY, NJ— John Baltz (left) of The Godfrey Funeral Homes of Ocean City and Palermo, NJ accepts delivery of their 2011 Federal Lincoln Hearse from John O'Donnell (right) of Parks Superior Sales.

The Godfrey family has roots in Cape May County, NJ dating back to 1690. The Godfrey's are successors to the **First Funeral Home** in Ocean City, which was established in 1896 by the Lake family. The Palermo location was established in 1973.

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Protecting Your Families and Business

By Jim Starks, CFuE, CCRÉ

Applying Risk Management Principles: Analyzing Risk in The Death Care Industry to Reduce the Risk of Loss

Often, when flying to funeral homes for consultations, the person next to me asks what I do for a living. I respond that I specialize in risk management for the death care industry. And, most commonly, the person replies: “What risks do funeral homes have? The people are dead!” But the idea that risk does not exist in the death care industry is a misconception. After more than a superficial consideration, the areas involving substantial risk in the death care industry are numerous and sometimes obvious.

Consider the word risk. According to the dictionary, it means “exposure to the chance of injury or loss.” Now consider the word management. According to the dictionary, it means “the act of managing, handling, direction, or control.” Combine risk and management and you get the act of managing, handling, directing, or controlling the exposure to the chance of injury or loss.

The death care industry has changed markedly with the passing of time. Effective risk management must change then, as well. When I began my career, for example, the cremation rate was low, almost nonexistent even. It now registers just under forty percent. Thus, risk management for the death care industry must address strategies to reduce risk of loss during the process of cremation when the human remains are possibly outside the funeral home's care. Also when I began, ambulances were a goodwill service you gave your community and your fee did not cover your cost. Most importantly, lawsuits were not yet prevalent. These factors, among others, have shaped the topics and strategies that are most relevant today in risk management for the death care industry.

To analyze risk, the cost versus the reward must be examined in each area of your business. For example, trip-and-fall accidents are one of the top areas of loss for businesses. Maintaining the outside of your firm and keeping the walkways free from natural obstacles such as branches, landscaping, and bark is easy and affordable compared to replacing an old and cracked parking lot that will cost thousands of dollars. These kinds of costs versus rewards examinations will help determine where to spend time and money when reviewing the outside condition of your firm.

Practices and policies should also exist for the following tasks: human remains should be identified at the place of death upon removal from the place of death. An identification tag should be attached to the human remains; your automobiles should be stored in a secure location during non-business hours. And you should check all of your employees' driving records. It is not unheard of to find out that an employee does not have a valid driver's license but does have multiple DWI convictions only after a MVR (motor vehicle records) request; keep your extra checks stocked in a locked and secured location with limited access. It only takes one person, employee or nonemployee, to take a check that could result in lost money; petty cash available on the honor system is a license to steal. Frequently reconcile the receipts turned in against the money remaining in petty cash. Require actual receipts to be submitted, not just a hand-written note from the employee and create and execute a process to review contracts before they are processed to ensure proper charges were placed on the contract.

Cremation is the greatest potential liability facing the death care industry, and without policies and procedures in place a firm could face major problems. The following procedures are recommended to reduce risk of loss: Obtain a positive identification in the container the authorizing agent selected; the authorizing agents, those signing the authorizations to cremate, should be all the individuals of the same lineage; If the authorization to cremate is the same form that has been used for years, it might be missing a necessary disclosure. Check to make sure the authorization is current with all necessary disclosures; how frequently you inspect the crematory that you are using is probably not as imperative as whether you know what to look for when inspecting. Crematory inspection forms are available from different trade associations, but if you are not trained to look for particulars you will overlook a major part of the inspection; know what your crematory is doing with residue and medical metal implants; cremated human

remains that are returned to the funeral home should be kept in a locked and secured area accompanied by a current and accurately maintained inventory form and when they receive the cremated human remains from the funeral home, retain a signed receipt from the authorizing agent along with a copy of their identification.

While other issues certainly exist regarding cremation, failing to implement similar guidelines could cost your firm exponentially. The guidelines must be created and performed to be effective. It is hugely important to enforce policies. For example, you surely have a harassment policy in place. But, more importantly, is it followed? The guidelines you establish must be carried out.

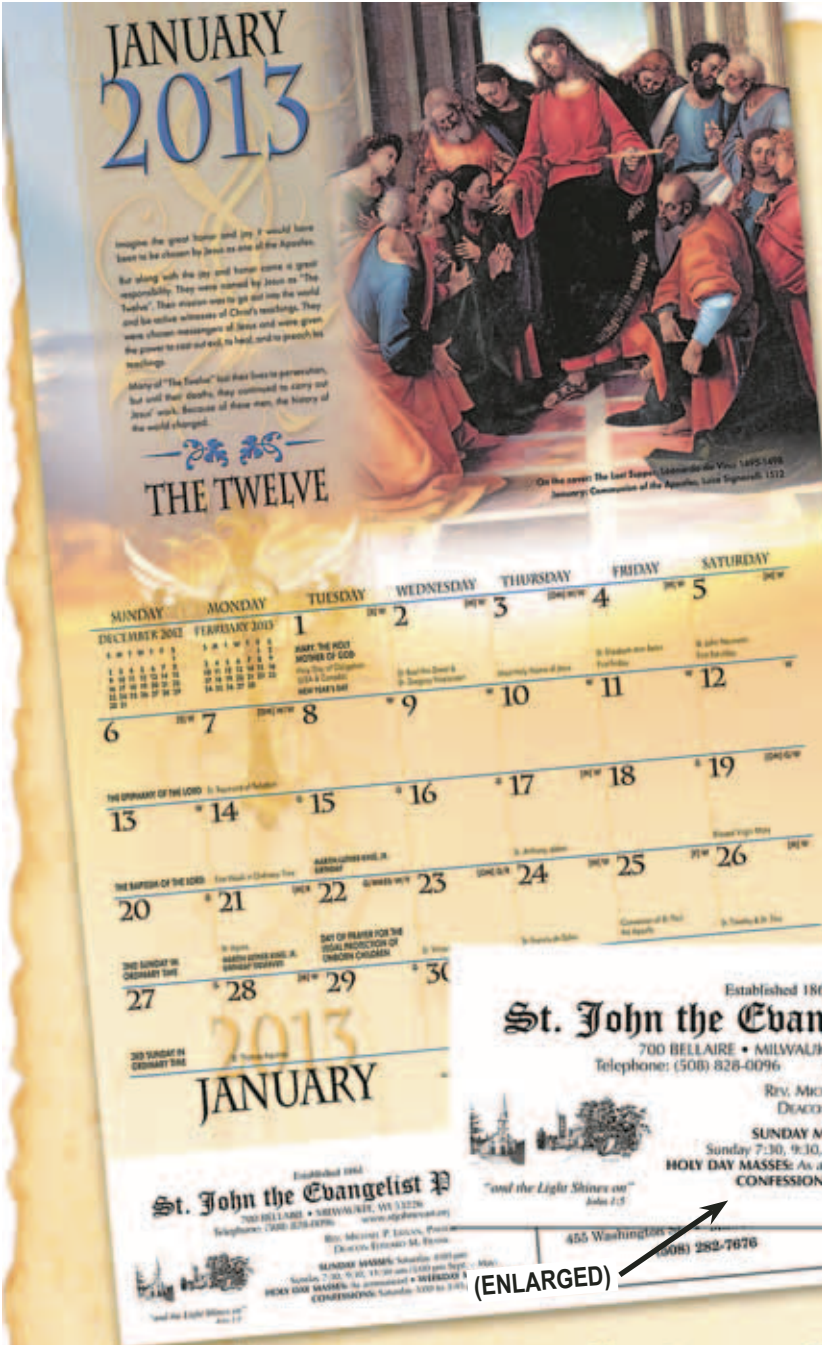
The computer and the internet are a major part of all business in today's world, and they have exploded into a new category of risk management. Your employees are probably on the internet during working hours. What sites are they visiting? They might be on Facebook, a job search website, or even a porn site. Regardless of the website they're visiting, if what they are doing is not working then they are costing you money. And depending on what they're looking at, it could cost you more in harassment charges.

Again, these are just a few of the areas that firms must be cognizant of. Each firm should determine the level of risk they are willing to assume. Many firm's policies and practices occur as a result of a problem, not as a precaution to avoid or prevent a problem. The idea of risk management is to reduce or eliminate the problem before it happens.

Jim Starks, CFuE, CCRÉ, is President of J. Starks Consulting in Lutz, FL, and a nationally-recognized trainer on funeral home and crematory risk management.

He used his experience in both funeral home and crematory operations and risk management, combined with his involvement with funeral homes of all sizes and geographies, to become an authority at controlling risk and loss in the death care industry, providing lectures and presentations to private firms, as well as regional, state and national associations. He also conducts private audits and risk assessments to independent funeral homes and crematories in the US and Canada, often identifying ways to save or generate thousands of dollars of profit.

Jim is a Michigan and Indiana Licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer and ICCFA- and CANA-certified crematory operator, as well as Dean of ICCFA University's College of Cremation Services. He is a graduate of the University of Wyoming, the Mid-America School of Mortuary Science, and the ICCFA University. For more information on risk management in the death care industry, visit jstarksconsulting.com. Contact Jim at (813) 765-9844 or jim@jstarksconsulting.com.



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Chicago Jewish Funerals Holds Dedication Ceremony for New Skokie Chapel

Continued from Page A2



Joseph C. Bartolacci, President of Matthews of Pittsburgh, and **Richy Adelman**, of Matthews New York were in attendance, as well as **Seven Swinbank** of Troost.

The dedication concluded with the entire staff of Chicago Jewish Funerals and the Jacobson family joining Skokie Mayor *George Van Dusen* to cut the ceremonial ribbon. Guests were invited to tour the new building with Chicago Jewish Funerals staff and enjoy the reception held in the North Chapel.

Alexander & Associates, architects of the new, 14,000 sq. ft, state-of-the-art funeral home utilized glass, concrete and Jerusalem stone in its striking contemporary design filled with crisp lines and beautiful, lofty spaces, flooded in natural light. The building includes: two chapels, equipped with monitors and sound systems to accommodate multimedia presentations, photo montages and musical tributes; a Mikva for Tahara, a Kohain building, private family rooms, private casket selection room, ample parking and WiFi. The general contractor was SyntechConstruction Group.

Founded in 1997, Chicago Jewish Funerals is the leading, independently-owned, full-service Jewish funeral home in the Chicagoland area. Chicago Jewish Funerals has built its reputation by providing compassionate, concierge-level service that respects the wishes of the families it serves and the strong traditions of the Jewish people. Today it serves the Chicagoland area with chapels in Buffalo Grove and Skokie and a resource center in Highland Park.

For more information, contact Chicago Jewish Funerals by phone at 888-509-5011, or online at chicagojewishfunerals.com. They are also available on Facebook and Twitter @cjfinfo.



Kohain Building Exterior



North Chapel



Kohain Building Interior



South Chapel



Lobby



Family Room

Matthews Cremation and Anderson-McQueen Funeral Homes Make Flameless Cremation a Reality

ST. PETERSBURG, FL— Orlando based, **Matthews Cremation** and **Anderson-McQueen Funeral Homes** of St. Petersburg, are pleased to announce the official launch of *Bio Cremation™* as an option for families in Florida.

Alkali Hydrolysis, being marketed through Matthews as Bio Cremation, is a proven technology, but only recently introduced into funeral service as an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional cremation. Alkali Hydrolysis uses

ninety five percent water and five percent potassium hydroxide (KOH). KOH is an alkali (not acid), inorganic compound that is used in numerous health and beauty cosmetics, soft soaps and cleaning supplies. With four times less the carbon impact and an eighth of the energy usage, Bio Cremation offers environmental advantages to traditional flame cremation. Upon completion of the cremation cycle, just as in a traditional flame cremation, the ashes are placed in an urn and given back to family.

“Today, we live in a world that encourages us to protect and preserve our natural resources and lower our carbon footprints by reducing greenhouse gases,” says **Steven P. Schaal**, Matthews Cremation’s president, North American region. “Bio Cremation from Matthews gives individuals and families another choice at the end of life’s journey, allowing them to honor a legacy created on earth with a final gesture to preserve it.” “We are pleased to offer Bio Cremation services on a commercial basis to our families,” stated **John McQueen**, president and owner of Anderson-McQueen Funeral Homes. “By providing families with all possible options and educating them on what is available, they can make better in-



The official Ribbon cutting during the Bio Cremation VIP night. Pictured (L to R) Sandy Sullivan, John McQueen, Joshua McQueen, Bill Dudley, Paul Rahill and Steve Schaal

formed decisions on what is most important to them when dealing with end of life issues.” Anderson-McQueen is a second generation, family owned funeral home and the only private, on premise crematory serving the St. Petersburg area. Best known for personalized funerals, Anderson-McQueen offers unique services that may include memorial videos, balloon or butterfly releases, live webcasts, a Harley Davidson motorcycle hearse, and the world’s first Bio-

Cremation provider. **Pet Passages**, cremation services for pets, is a growing area of service. Additional information about Anderson-McQueen Funeral and Cremation Centers can be found online at www.andersonmcqueen.com. Matthews Cremation is a total solution provider for cremation products and services with a passion for the environment. For more information about Bio Cremation technology from Matthews, visit www.Bio-CremationInfo.com.



Sandy Sullivan in front of the Bio Cremation chamber

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John Hudson - Marketing Director



Let's Chat

By Kristan Dean

Happy New Year! As we welcome in 2012, I am in awe thinking about how every January brings us the gift of a new beginning. How we embrace the possibilities of growth, happiness, love, and opportunity each time we make our New Year’s resolutions. Leading me to wonder, what are our top ten resolutions and how can we help ourselves and those we serve keep them?

First stop, Ask.com: type in “top ten new year’s resolutions” click search and I get pages of articles telling me all about the top ten resolutions we continually make that most of us need help to keep and that is not all; Ask.com brought me three more questions: How many of us make “New Year’s resolutions for our businesses?” “What are our top ten business resolutions?” “What can we do to help ourselves attain them?”

The challenge was how can I chat about 10 personal, 10 business resolutions, and all the ways that can help us keep them in one column? Like so many resolutions this is a goal that I can’t reach. What I can do is tell you about the 10 personal resolutions I found, hand pick a few hoping these help you make 2012 the year that you keep your resolutions, and make next month the column I chat with you about business goals. Thankfully, the one resolution I need to make, overcoming procrastination, isn’t on any of the top ten lists I found.

Turns out our top ten personal resolutions are the same as Time magazines and Time.com article, “Top 10 Commonly Broken New Year’s Resolutions.” Making the top 10 resolutions we need help with: “lose weight and get fit; quit smoking; learn something new; eat healthier and diet; get out of debt and save money; spend more time with family; travel to new places; be less stressed; volunteer and drink less.”

My personal picks were to get fit, learn, and volunteer. Easy, all I need to do is get to the gym, grab a book, and give some time right? Sure, but I bet like me you agree these things are easier said than done especially if you are trying to do them on your own. Making our first step to keeping our 2012 resolutions, do it with someone.

Following the lead of my best friend, Alice, my friend Lorick and I are encouraging each other to get to the gym and helping each other get fit. My Sister, Jaqui’s choice to go back to school has me learning something new each time I help her write a paper. Like tonight we are learning about Marfan syndrome and next we are exploring how the times we live in shape our lives from historical and psychological points of view.

Leaving me with one personal resolution, to make time to volunteer. Thankfully, I have you to inspire me. Knowing how so many of you go above and beyond to give back, I know I can reach out to you if I falter on this resolution. Now all I need to do is find someone who knows how to stop procrastinating.

Leading me to ask what are your resolutions for 2012? Who are you reaching out to help you keep them and what are you doing to help others keep theirs? Please let my neighbor, inspire you to encourage and invite others to get fit with you. Let my sister’s team approach to research papers inspire you to connect with others and learn something new and let your fellow funeral directors, cemetery managers, and aftercare providers inspire you to expand your and your community’s efforts to give back.

May 2012 bring you and yours Joy, Fulfillment, and Opportunity. I look forward to hearing your thoughts. Please call 781-331-5308 or, if you prefer, email kristan@mooneytunco.com.

In 2000 Kristan Dean began working with her family to bring Merry Christmas From Heaven® to all who need the gifts’ message of Comfort, Love, and Faith. Today she is the Vice President of Marketing and one of the primary members of her family’s Bereavement Ministry.

Thanks, in great part, to the thousands of funeral directors and retailers nationwide who make Merry Christmas From Heaven® a part of their communities, countless numbers of families reach out to their family every year. Their bereavement ministry helps families realize that those in Heaven live forever in our hearts. Their love is with us always.

Prior to Mooney TunCo, Inc. Kristan worked with companies nationwide helping them build revenues by creating greater sales opportunities through the use of sales intelligence and marketing alignment.



2012 Women of Power: African American Jewels of Funeral Service

"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning."

The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service celebrates 19 years of Excellence in 2012 and proudly presents the Women of Power: The African American Jewels of Funeral Service. The Nation's finest in the Funeral Profession. Women who are Leaders - Role Models - Mentors - Visionaries - Legacies to the Funeral Profession - Trailblazers - Community and Civic Servants - Scholarship Donors - Funeral Directors and Owners. They all possess a very Diverse Educational background and who will leave the funeral profession better off because they took the time to continue the great legacy of those who came before them. Their dedication, professional care, family values and determination to serve families with a high standard of excellence make them an important part of a management team that gives more than 110% to every involvement relevant to their funeral service career. We now present the "Best of the Best" from Florida, Georgia and Alabama.



*By Eleanor Davis Starks, CFSP,
Founder and Executive Director of the 100 BWFS, Inc.*

Curtiss W. Wilson



Curtiss Wilson

In 1957, **Curtiss W. Wilson** suggested to the late **Preston M. Pughsley** the idea of an organization for the women who attended the meetings of the Second Regional Dis-

trict of the *Florida Morticians Association*. Mrs. Pughsley presented the idea to the governing body of the organization, and in June of 1957, the *Ladies Auxiliary of the Florida Morticians Association* was founded. Curtiss Wilson, **Keturah S. Creal**, and **Jonnye Charlow** joined the late **Helen G. Wilson**, **Mildred Allen**, **Florence Williams**, **Louise Taylor**, **Anna Bell McRae**, **Mary McRae**, **Minnie Roberts**, **Artie Richardson** and **Preston Pughsley** for the first meeting in St. Petersburg, FL.

Mrs. Wilson has remained active in the organization,

which has honored her as Woman of the Year, as well as being a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, the NAACP, and the *Morticians Ladies Auxiliary* at the National, State and Regional level.

Curtiss received a BS degree from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida. She taught in the Florida public school system for 22 years, before joining her husband, **Clarence P. Wilson**, at **Wilson Funeral Home** in Tampa. Currently, she assists the Wilson Funeral Home in public relations and community involvement.

Karen Jones Smith



Karen Jones Smith

Business proprietor, licensed mortician, beloved wife, devoted mother and quiet leader **Karen Jones Smith** is passionate about a life of service, not only in business, but also in church, community, and family. For Karen, being involved, giving back and enhancing the lives of others is a way of life. She is committed to: her family's legacy of exemplary funeral service, her deep-rooted religious values of service to the church and providing educational opportunities for others in need.

Her family firm, **Royal Funeral Home**, was established in 1918, and is the oldest African American owned business in Huntsville, AL. Karen is a proud third generation entrepreneur. Her grandfather, **Lawrence Hundley Sr.**, bought the firm in 1946, and sold it to **James A. and Barbara Hundley Jones**, Karen's parents, in 1967. Karen and her husband, **David W. Smith**, bought the firm in 2000. In 2009, Karen created the Lawrence Hundley, Sr. Funeral Service Scholarship to honor the legacy and wonderful memories of her late grandfather.

Karen received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Morris Brown College. She later attended *Gupton Jones College of Mortuary Science* and graduated with highest academic honors. Karen then returned to Alabama, where she became involved in the family funeral business, earned her CFSP designation, and gracefully made a dynamic impact on the Huntsville community.

Karen is a member of the *Alabama Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*, *NFDA*, *Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority*, *The Links*, *NFDMA*, and *The 100 BWFS*. She serves on the Women's Council Board of the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce, and always finds time to be involved at the Oakwood University Seventh Day Adventist Church.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A23

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Special Event Raises Nearly \$38,000 for The Wilbert Foundation

BROADVIEW, IL— In an impromptu fundraising event at the annual **Wilbert Manufacturers Association** meeting, \$37,691 was raised for the **Wilbert Foundation**, an organization providing grants and resources to help children and families cope with the trauma of grief and death.

In a moment of "shear madness," two volunteers had their heads shaven while a third had his signature beard shorn in return for donations to the Wilbert Foundation. **Chris Wood** of Wash-

ington Wilbert Vault Works in Laurel, MD and **Mark Klingenger** of **Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc** in Broadview, IL received buzz cuts, while **DeWayne Dills** of **Blairsville Wilbert Vault** in Blairsville, PA went for the clean shave.

"Watching the pledges climb to almost \$38,000 for this wonderful cause was extremely heartwarming," said **Mark Minnick**, president of the Wilbert Foundation. "But even more amazing was that this was an unplanned, spur-of-



Chris Wood (seated) warily eyes the clipper in the hands of newly-shaven **Mark Klingenger**

the-moment event. This outpouring of support for programs to help children and their families during difficult times is gratifying."

Formed by Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. in September 2002, the Wilbert Foundation provides crucial funds and resources for children and their families coping with the trauma of grief, death, or preparation for surgery.

By the close of 2011, the foundation will have distributed \$645,000 in total grants, including funds for the country's most

comprehensive training program for pediatric chaplains. The Wilbert Foundation remains diligent in its journey to build an endowment fund of \$1,000,000. It has also given a total of 2,750 teddy bears to grieving children at eighty six hospitals.

To donate or learn more about the Wilbert Foundation, please visit www.wilbertfoundation.org or call **Terry Whitlock** at 1-888-WILBERT.

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Cremation Issues and Answers

By Ronald Salvatore

Matthews
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Cremation Forms (Part 1)

Whether you have a crematory or you utilize a third party cremation service facility, you should be reviewing your cremation forms on a regular basis to ensure they reflect and address any changes in state laws or requirements along with current industry procedures, and any new issues that may be of concern. The following can be used as a guide. Some states require specific forms and wording, and you should contact your state to ensure compliance and review all forms with your attorney before implementation. In addition, if you cremate for other firms, it is advisable to have a contract that clearly spells out the services to be performed, the responsibilities of each party, terms and conditions, limits of liability, and other pertinent issues.

Cremation Authorization and Disposition Form

The authorized representative, the person with the legal right to control the remains of the deceased, must sign and complete this form. If you perform cremations for other firms and do not have a completed and signed form, the remains should not be accepted for cremation.

When the authorized representative cannot appear in person to provide authorization, the crematory should require a signed and notarized original of the cremation authorization and disposition form to be forwarded by fax. Positive identification of the authorized representative, such as a photocopy of a driver's license, should accompany the faxed authorization if a notary is unavailable.

The authorization form contains information about the remains delivered to the cremation facility, as well as the authorization to cremate and the method of disposition. It should contain at least the following information: full name of deceased; address; date of birth or age; date of death; cause of death, if known; infectious or contagious diseases; pacemakers, radioactive implants, etc; name, address, signature and relationship of authorized representative; name and address of funeral home handling case; signature of funeral director responsible for making arrangements and disposition of cremated remains.

These 11 items are used as a checklist for your authoriza-

tion form. Additional information such as a release of liability and other information required by statute may be necessary and should be discussed with your attorney.

Cremation Receipt Form

This form is completed at the time the human remains are received by the crematory. It should include the following: full name of deceased as it appears on the authorization form; name of firm and person delivering the remains; date and time of death; date and time of receipt of remains and type of container or casket.

The receipt form should also include a statement signed by the delivering party as to the identity of the delivered remains and that the casket /container contain only those remains as identified in the cremation authorization. The attendant or crematory operator should sign the receipt. Both the delivering party and the receiving party receive a copy.

Release Form for Viewing of Cremation

This form is important for crematories that allow attended committal services. All persons who wish to view should complete and sign a release form.

Cremation Records

The crematory must maintain records in accordance with applicable laws. Photocopies of disposition permits should be kept with these records. For each cremation performed, the following information is entered in a cremation log book: cremation number on ID disc; name of deceased; name of funeral home handling the arrangements; cremation date; disposition of cremated remains; time and date remains were placed in the cremation chamber; time and date cremation was completed; crematory operator's initials; time and date final processing was completed; name and address of authorized representative and for facilities with more than one cremator, the number or description of the cremator in which the cremation was performed.

Ron has been with the Matthews Cremation Division, consisting of Industrial Equipment & Engineering (IEE) and ALL Crematory (ALL) for 20 years.

He is a certified crematory operator trainer and has trained thousands of crematory personnel through both Matthews' and CANA's Crematory Operator Training and Certification Program. Ron has published numerous cremation related articles and is a frequent speaker at industry trade shows and meetings.

With over 100 years of combined experience and nearly 3000 installations, the Matthews Cremation Division is acknowledged world wide as the foremost experts in the cremation industry setting standards in cremation equipment design, manufacture, service and supplies. This column is dedicated to the further education of cremationists, funeral directors, cemeterians and other industry professionals.

Oakland Memorial Home purchases New Hearse



OAKLAND, NJ— **Brad Waudby** (right) of **Oakland Memorial Home** in Oakland, NJ accepts delivery of a 2011 Federal Lincoln Hearse from **John O'Donnell** (left) of **Parks Superior Sales**. Founded in 1966 with the express desire to serve the families of Oakland and the surrounding communities, the Oakland Memorial Home remains a local family business serving the North Jersey area.

Rachubinski Funeral Homes, Inc. purchases New Hearse



PHILADELPHIA, PA— **Frank and Mike Rachubinski** of **Rachubinski Funeral Homes, Inc.** in Philadelphia, PA recently accepted delivery of their new 2011 Lincoln Eagle MKT ICON Hearse from **John O'Donnell** of **Parks Superior Sales**.

The ICON is the next generation of **Lincoln Professional Vehicles** from **Eagle Coach Company**. Rachubinski Funeral Home has been serving the Philadelphia community for over 70 years.

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Lisa P. Williams
Lisa Pauline Williams, the youngest of three daughters born to the late **Bennie A. & Mildred D. Williams** of Augusta, GA, grew up in her family's business, **Williams Funeral Home, Inc.**, and demonstrated a passion for funeral service early in her life.

After her graduation from *Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service* in 1979, Lisa completed her apprenticeship under the supervision of her father and passed the Georgia State Board of Funeral Service. Lisa is a Master of Restorative Art, a skill which she learned from her father, and is professionally affiliated with: the *8th District Georgia Funeral Service Practitioners Association*, where she has served as Treasurer for eleven years and was honored as the district's 2000 "Mortician of the Year"; the *State of Georgia Funeral Service Prac-*



Lisa P. Williams

Continued from Page A21

tioners Association; the *National Funeral Directors and Mortician Association*; and the *5th District National Funeral Directors and Mortician Association*. She is a member of the Grace Street Church of Christ, Augusta, GA and a former Board member of the Augusta Chamber of Commerce.

"Paula", as Lisa is known to family and friends, is presently co-owner and treasurer of Williams Funeral Home, Inc., which has been in business for over thirty-five years. Williams Funeral Home is truly a family run business as Paula works alongside her sisters, husband and son. Since the death of her parents, a second location was completed in 2002, based on plans initiated by her father in 2001. Paula and her husband, **Bernard**, of twenty-eight years have two sons, **Bernard II** and **Bryan**.

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what inspired you?

“My interest in funeral service began at a young age, and I have many mentors to thank for that. Among them was my childhood neighbor, Ralph Jones, who owned the local funeral home. After my grandmother’s death, I began visiting Mr. Jones each day at the funeral home after school. From there my passion for funeral service started. Mr. Jones and others opened my eyes to the opportunity to have a servant’s heart when assisting families during their most difficult times of loss.

I want to show others the tremendous opportunity that exists in this profession, and the Funeral Service Foundation allows me to do that. Supporting the Funeral Service Foundation is my way of giving back to a profession I love, and encouraging others to join me in it.”

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Postell Appointed Presiding Elder



Rev. Henry L. Postell II
ORLANDO, FL— At the close of the 11th Episcopal District 2011 Post Conference Planning convocation, Bishop McKinley Young gave the final Certificate of Presiding Elder Appointment to the **Rev. Henry L. Postell II**, pastor of New Bethel A.M.E. Church. Rev. Postell was appointed the Presiding Elder of the Orlando District of the Central Annual Conference.

Rev. Postell will take over the duties of retired Presiding Elder *Leroy Kennon*. The entire 11th District Presiding Elders council, Supervisor *Dr. Dorothy Jackson Young*, Clergy, Lay, and family members were there to congratulate Rev. and **Beverly Postell** for this great accomplishment in the church of Allen.

Rev. Postell is the founder and operator of **Postell’s Mortuary**. He has been serving the central Florida community since 1991.



The Basics of 21st Century— Temporary Preservation Technology (Part 27)

By John A. Chew

Over the past several years, I have been working and testing formalin free formulations to meet current and future needs of funeral services in the preservation of human tissue. I still find the old methodology to be adequate if guidelines, safeguards, are followed. The major concern is exposure due to the lack of basic understanding of the principles of applied embalming as a temporary process.

Step-up methodology works as effectively with formaldehyde based formulations as the non-formalin multi-purpose enzyme neutralizer does when either is properly injected and retained in the tissue. After several years, I have found the enzyme neutralizer is compatible with most formalin based concentrates.

During pre-analysis, the amount of formulated chemical is based on overall body weight using an enzyme neutralizer, freeform. A non-formalin arterial composition should be used as the base active ingredient. One bottle of 16 ounces diluted with 112 ounces of water will make one gallon of working solution.

Retention of the multiple enzyme neutralizers as a temporary preservative may be one answer to non-formalin embalming chemicals. Knowing that an average body can retain six gallons of additional liquid without showing distention provides space

for special additives.

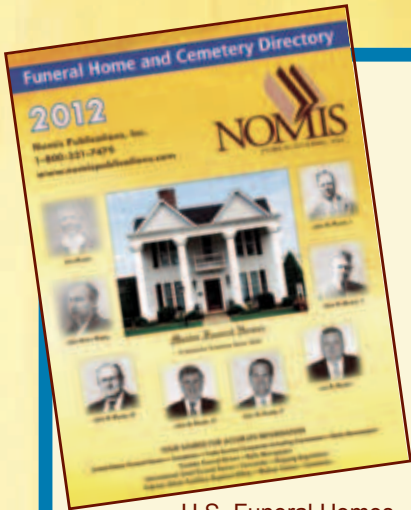
To determine the approach it is important to carefully observe the total body during the primary cleansing and disinfecting procedures. Discolorations and odors usually influence the outcome of the embalming. The use of versatile pre-injection chemicals provides the embalmer with a wide range of treatment options.

The major concern is lack of control when injecting fluids into a body. In past years, when talking with experienced embalmers, gravity injection was used with very few problems concerning preservation and the time frame. Low ceilings in a prep room limited the injection pressure. Most felt saturation met the needs until formaldehyde was introduced and used in close quarters exposing the embalmer to the fumes.

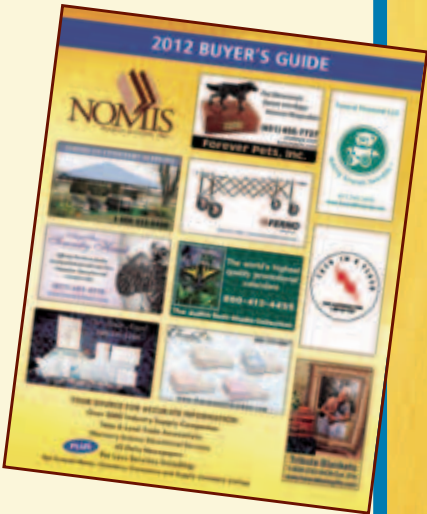
The pre-injection treatment using the enzyme neutralizers as part of the formula provides a non-toxic, vapor free base for temporary preservation and does not create an environmental hazard. The properly formulated solution may be injected against closed drainage and retained for several hours prior to final injections of the freeform concentrate.

Article 28 will deal with the application of non-formalin based embalming chemicals to the average body.

John A. Chew is a Funeral Service Education Specialist, Consultant, Tutor, Thanatogeneticist, and a Licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer. He is a retired former Associate Professor and Director of Funeral Service Education at Miami Dade Community College as well as the Institute for Funeral Service Education and Anatomy at Lynn University (1967-1997). He is presently Director of Education at Embalmers Supply Company, Recinto De Ciecias, Medicic, UPR, ESCO/OMEGA, and the Academy of Restoration and Embalming.



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Association NEWS

100 BWFS Celebrate Cancer Awareness Day with NFL "Think Pink" Campaign for Roberta's House



The March Family

CHICAGO, IL—Julia Roberta March was known as the "Heartbeat" of **March Funeral Home**. She was professional, dedicated, caring, sophisticated and a well-respected matron of the funeral industry. Mrs. March, a licensed funeral director, co-founder of March Funeral Home and former Living Legend of Funeral Service, was a comfort to thousands of families during her lifetime. Her impeccable character and reputation of honor and compassion in service is an outstanding example of providing sensitive death care.

Mrs. March's memory is celebrated every October at the *NFDA* Convention, as a tribute to funeral directors who have succumbed to or are battling the remnants of cancer, and a celebration of life for survivors such as the *100BWFS* founders, **Eleanor Starks** and **Doretha Hector**.

Roberta March and her late husband **William C. March**, founded March Funeral Homes in 1957. Together they grew one of the most successful funeral businesses in the nation. Currently, March Funeral Home serves the states of: Maryland, with 3 locations; Virginia; and Washington, D.C. It all began in a small row-house funeral home, with a commitment to Baltimore families and a decision to happily provide dignified, affordable service to low income families in need. What a blessing they were to Baltimore families. From these humble origins, the firm has become one of the largest funeral operations for African American Families in the Nation.

The family has followed her fine example of caring for the people of Baltimore, and honored their beautiful memories of Mrs. March with the founding of *Roberta's House*, a Bereavement Program Center, founded in June, 2007. Roberta's daughter, **Annette March Grier**, a LFD, RN, and Grief Facilitator has made the program a great success in Baltimore. Her program is modeled after the successful *High Mark Caring Place* in Pittsburgh, PA., with the goal of providing hope and healing to those in need. Already providing trained grief counseling through the funeral home, Annette, felt that her city was suffering due to its high crime rate, and wanted to offer her services to the community. Roberta's House is a great comfort to those suffering and hurt after a loss, in Baltimore.

Each year, at the National Funeral Directors Convention, the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service Organization recognizes Cancer Awareness Month as a time to salute the women of funeral service who have battled breast cancer and lost,

those who are currently battling the disease, and those women who proudly wear a survivor pin and are spreading the good news of their commitment to help others. J. Roberta March Day was celebrated on Tuesday, October 24, 2011. Informational brochures and "Think Pink" scarves were given away at NFDA Booth 1121 to everyone that came by to share a cancer story or to contribute to the Roberta's House Charity.

The 100 BWFS enlisted the help of **Max Starks**, son of Founder Eleanor Davis Starks and godson of Doretha Hector and the Pittsburgh Steelers to promote the event. Max has worked with the High Mark Caring Place on their Board since being drafted as a Pittsburgh Steeler. Each year, he participates in the Merrill Hoge-Max Starks-Hines Ward Golf Tournament, raising funds for the program. "It was an easy decision to help raise funds for mom's charity Roberta's House in honor of the late Roberta March," says two time Super Bowl Champion, Max Starks, "In 2012, mom will celebrate a milestone; 20 years, cancer free. She has always taught me to give back and make a difference".

Max's partners on the offensive line, and other players including, Troy Polamalu, Ben Roethlisberger, James Farrior, and Larry Foote offered signed NFL licensed, pink, Pittsburgh Steelers Cancer Awareness items, to be auctioned in Chicago, with all proceeds to benefit Roberta's House Charity. The funds were donated at a special-recognition, Breast Cancer Awareness Day reception sponsored by the 100 BWFS, 100 BMFS Charter Members, Tyra Butler of Mathews Casket, NFDA, John Sparacino and Jennifer Branton of Woven Remembrance and Vera Lee Garments.

The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service also support the Sisters Network, The American Cancer Society, and Susan G. Komen -Race for the Cure.

The March Family is currently launching a city wide initiative to establish the grief and loss center, using the three row houses where it all began for March Funeral Home in 1957. The program offers comprehensive bereavement support, to heal the hearts and minds of children and families, emotionally, physically and spiritually. The program is governed by a board of directors and counseled by an advisory board, which promotes partnerships with a network of health providers and volunteers.

For more information, call Annette March Grier at 401-435-0500 or send e-mail to amarchgrier@marchfuneralhome.com.



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Association NEWS CONTINUED

Indiana Funeral Directors Association Reaches Two Year Milestone with its Pre-Paid Pet Care with MasterChoice PetCare Trust Fund

INDIANAPOLIS, IN— The **Indiana Funeral Directors Association** is proud to celebrate two successful years in the ever-changing pet industry with its pre-paid pet care with *MasterChoice PetCare* trust fund. Believed to be the first such fund in the nation, it addresses a growing trend of pet owners to memorialize their pets, offering its members a safe and proven investment for securing these memorials.

"We are continually gratified that funeral directors across the nation have chosen the MasterChoice PetCare trust fund. They clearly appreciate the importance of being able to assure pet owners that their pet care funds are safely deposited and will be available when needed," said IFDA executive director, **Curtis Rostad**, CAE, and CFSP.

Americans spend an estimated \$41 billion a year on their pets. Much of this is spent on improved medical care. Years ago, no one would have considered a root canal on a cat or cancer surgery on a dog, but that and much

more is now being done on a daily basis. An increasing amount is also being spent on pet memorialization.

MasterChoice was originally created to give funeral directors a safe and reliable place to deposit preneed funds for preneed contracts. Funds are deposited with a trustee at Fifth-Third Bank of Evansville, IN. High-tower Services, a subsidiary of the association, serves as administrator.

Since pet funds are generally not regulated on a state by state basis like preneed funds, funeral homes in other states can also take advantage of the PetCare trust fund. The contract form allows the funeral home the flexibility to offer a wide variety of services and contract options.

The Indiana Funeral Directors Association, headquartered in Indianapolis, was formed in 1880, and serves over 480 member firms. For more information on MasterChoice and IFDA, visit www.indiana-fda.org.

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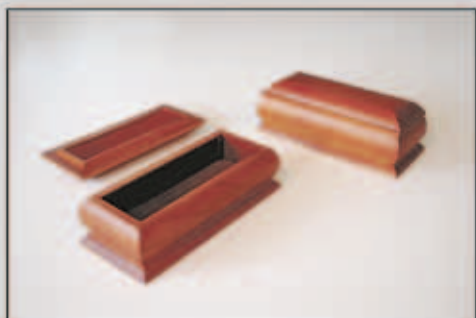
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CANA Installs Nicodemus as President



Michael W. Nicodemus

WHEELING, IL— **Michael W. Nicodemus** of **Hollomon-Brown Funeral Homes** of Virginia Beach, VA was installed as president of the **Cremation Association of North America (CANA)** during their annual Convention & Expo, which took place October 23-26 in Chicago, IL. His term will run through August 16, 2012. Nicodemus also serves as chairman of the CANA Crematory Operations Certificate Program (COCP) and is a member of the board of directors at the *Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science*, Pittsburgh, PA.

Additional CANA officers include **Kevin Waterston**, president elect, and **Rick Wiseman**, treasurer. **Sheri Stahl** joined the executive committee with **Bob Boetticher, Jr.** and **Mark Matthews**.

Founded in 1913, CANA is an international organization of over 1,300 members, including cemeterians, cremationists, funeral directors, industry suppliers and consultants. CANA members believe that cremation is preparation for memorialization. Please note CANA's new address and update your records accordingly.

Association NEWS CONTINUED

NFDA Receives Grant from the Funeral Service Foundation to Study Formaldehyde-Free Embalming Chemicals

BROOKFIELD, WI— In the last five years, leading domestic and international organizations and government agencies have evaluated the health risks from exposure to formaldehyde. In 2009, the National Cancer Institute found that funeral directors who embalm for more than twenty five years and are exposed to high concentrations of formaldehyde are at risk for developing myeloid leukemia. In the last year, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Toxicology Program (NTP) of Health and Human Services have each evaluated formaldehyde and its risks. In June 2011, the NTP, for the first time, labeled formaldehyde as a known carcinogen in the 12th edition of its report on carcinogens.

The *Funeral Service Foundation* (FSF) has awarded a \$40,000 grant to the **National Funeral Directors Association** (NFDA) that will fund a study to examine the performance of formaldehyde-free embalming chemicals. The "Formaldehyde-free Embalming Project" will not compare the performance of each product being tested. Rather, each product will be used in up to ten embalmings and evaluated in an objective manner based on the performance of that product against specified embalming standards.

Initially, project embalming will be conducted by three mortuary schools: the *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science*, under the supervision of **David Hicks**; the *Pittsburgh School of Mortuary Science*, under the supervision of **Gene Ogrodnik**; and the *Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, school of Allied Health, under the supervision of **Thomas Shaw**. As new products become market-ready, additional mortuary schools may have the opportunity to participate.

All testing will be "blind," without revealing the name of the product or other identifying characteristics to the embalmers. A standardized protocol and report form will be used for each embalming in order to ensure, the greatest extent possible, uniform testing of each product.

The embalming chemicals will be supplied by the product manufacturer at cost. Each product that is included in the study will be tested and analyzed for formaldehyde concentration prior to its use.

Since the 1990's, NFDA has worked to educate the funeral service community about the benefits of environmentally-friendly embalming products. A larger proportion of consumers are seeking information about alternatives to traditional embalming practices. Although

NFDA has developed a Green Funeral Practices Certificate program, provided training on operating a green funeral home, issued the "Formaldehyde Best Management Practices" document and released the groundbreaking ventilation study, to date, the association has not provided funeral directors with any information or guidance about the use of formaldehyde-free embalming products. This study will fill that gap. NFDA's goal is to educate its members and the funeral service community about best work practices and provide information, tools and resources to enable funeral directors to create safe and healthy working conditions. As new studies and new products become available, the association enhances its efforts to educate funeral service professionals. NFDA anticipates testing will be completed by August 1, 2013, with announcement of the project's results dur-

ing the 2013 NFDA International Convention & Expo. The results of the study will be published in a leading scientific or occupational health journal during the first quarter of 2014. For more information on membership benefits visit www.nfda.org. To learn more about the foundation visit www.funeral-servicefoundation.org.



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Indiana Funeral Directors Association holds Annual OSHA Employee Training Teleconferences

INDIANAPOLIS, IN— The **Indiana Funeral Directors Association** (IFDA) held its annual OSHA Employee Training Teleconferences October 18-20. The teleconferences were open to members of IFDA as well as members of other state associations. These one hour teleconferences were attended by employees from 152 funeral homes in eight states.

Presenter, Executive Director **Curtis Rostad**, CAE, CFSP, said "OSHA requires that employers offer annual training to their employees. This is the most cost effective way for an employer to provide this training and we are glad that funeral directors in other states were able to join with us."

Among the topics covered were General Workplace Safety, Hazard Communication, The Formaldehyde Standard and Bloodborne Pathogens. Rostad encouraged everyone in attendance to make October "OSHA month" to make sure their compliance plan is kept up-to-date on an annual basis.

Founded in 1880, the Indiana Funeral Directors Association is the professional organization serving Indiana's funeral service professionals with member services, advocacy and education. One of the oldest funeral service associations in the nation, IFDA represents 1,600 licensed funeral directors in Indiana. IFDA members subscribe to the highest ideals of ethics and professionalism.

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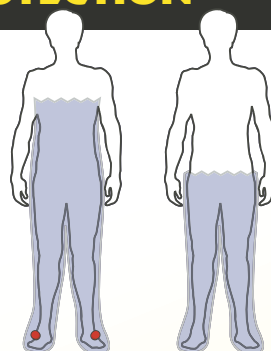
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Educational NEWS

Nu Chapter of LA host Vernie Fountain for Conference



Vernie Fountain, CFSP



Anthony S. "Ted" Felder, CFSP



Dr. Brian Porteous

LOS ANGELES, CA— The western region of **Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc.** will hold its annual professional development embalming seminar and conference April 26–27, 2012, at the Irvine Marriott Hotel in Irvine, CA. The conference will be hosted by Nu Chapter and **OneLegacy** tissue services as they focus on reinvigorating, rejuvenating and reviving the embalmers skills with instructive workshops presented by **Vernie Fountain**, CFSP and other expert presenters.

Nu Chapter president, **Shun Newbern**, CFSP stated, "We added a workshop that will allow some of the attendees to have hands-on involvement. Hair replacement is more common, but there are few classes where embalmers can go to improve on the art and hone their skills. This is the place." The funeral profession has evolved with more direct services, deficient of the value of the open casket, little practice of restorative art, and an increasing demand for tissue and/or organ donations. The two days will involve video presentations on extreme RA subjects and portions of hands-on workshops on hair replacements and other treatments.

In 1990, Vernie Fountain founded **Fountain National Academy** (FNA) to provide quality, specialized training for licensed embalmers. Fountain's embalming and reconstructive techniques help embalmers deal with severely traumatized and difficult cases and have proven effective in converting many non-viewable cases to a more acceptable viewable condition. His ability to

teach his valuable expertise in seminar settings has made his presentations popular among funeral service professionals around the globe.

The practitioners must currently have the leverage to retain the families that are being served and safeguard future business or the firm will be out of business. Joining Fountain are several outstanding embalmers: **Anthony S. "Ted" Felder**, CFSP of **Ted's Affordable Mortuary and Cremation Services** in Los Angeles, CA; **Dr. Brian Porteous** of **West Side Memorial Service-Porteous Family** in Taft, CA; **David Session** of **Session's Embalming Service** in Riverside, CA; **Gerrylynn Green** of **Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary** in Whittier, CA, and from OneLegacy are **Aaron Cohen**, and **Anthony Maldonado**. Attendees can earn up to twelve CEUs during the two days.

There are several registration options available from full registration to the any day option. Register early for the best discounts. Registration will include continental breakfast, daily luncheons, and receptions. Each year Nu Chapter presents scholarships to California students of mortuary science at the Scholarship Gala and Undertakers Ball. The Ball will be held Friday evening, April 27, 2012 at the conference hotel.

Information on presentations, breakout sessions, vendors, special events, registration and to reserve a hotel room is available at <http://2012epsilonseminar.eventbrite.com>.

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Pima Medical Institute Hires Clinical Director for New Mortuary Science Program



Mark Hendriksen

SEATTLE, WA— **Pima Medical Institute** named **Mark Hendriksen** as the new clinical director of the Mortuary Science program at the Seattle campus. In his role, Hendriksen will oversee the clinical activities for the Mortuary Science program, assist in the development and management of the curriculum and instruct classes.

"I am excited to join the team at Pima Medical In-

CONTINUED ON PAGE A29

Educational NEWS CONTINUED

Pima Medical Institute Hires Clinical Director for New Mortuary Science Program

Continued from Page A28

stitute,” said Hendriksen. “I am eager to share my knowledge with Pima Medical Institute’s mortuary science students and work closely with the funeral homes in the community to help them grow their businesses by providing qualified new funeral professionals.”

Hendriksen brings 21 years of experience in the funeral profession as a funeral director, embalmer and in several management capacities. Prior to his current position with Pima Medical Institute, Hendriksen served as the location manager from **Crist Mortuary, Service Corporation International** in Boulder, CO where he was responsible for the oversight of funeral home operations and growth of the location. In addition, Hendriksen was a member of the Boulder Flats Irons Rotary. He served as a North Boulder Little League coach and volunteered with Meals on Wheels.

“We are thrilled Mark has joined the Pima Medical Institute family as the clinical director for our Mortuary Science program,” said **Carey Hochman**, campus director for Pima Medical Institute, Seattle campus. “With Mark’s extensive background in the funeral profession, we look forward to seeing him promote the program both in the

community and the region, and share his passion for the profession with a new generation of students.”

Hendriksen earned a bachelor’s degree in Mortuary Science from *Wayne State College* in Nebraska. He resides in Lynwood with his wife, Loretta, and their two young boys.

Established in Tucson in 1972, Pima Medical Institute is one of the premier medical career colleges in the western United States. Pima Medical is a private, family-owned, accredited school dedicated to providing students with a well-rounded education that offers theoretical classroom studies coupled with real world training on-site at medical facilities. Pima Medical offers a wide range of certification and associate degree programs, such as medical assistant, radiography, veterinary assistant and pharmacy technician.

Pima Medical Institute operates a total of 13 campuses in seven western states, with locations in Albuquerque; Tucson and Mesa, AZ; Denver and Colorado Springs, CO; Seattle and Renton, WA.; Las Vegas; Houston; and Chula Vista, CA. For more information and a complete list of programs offered visit pmi.edu or call 1-888-442-5998.

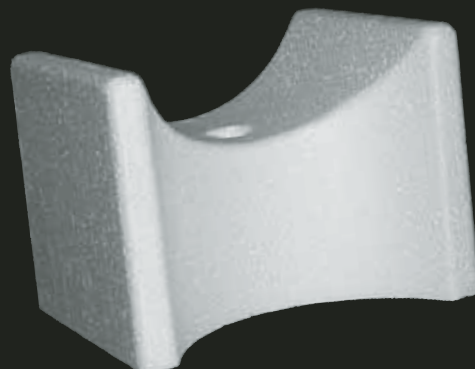
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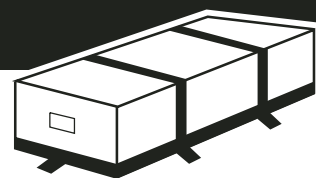
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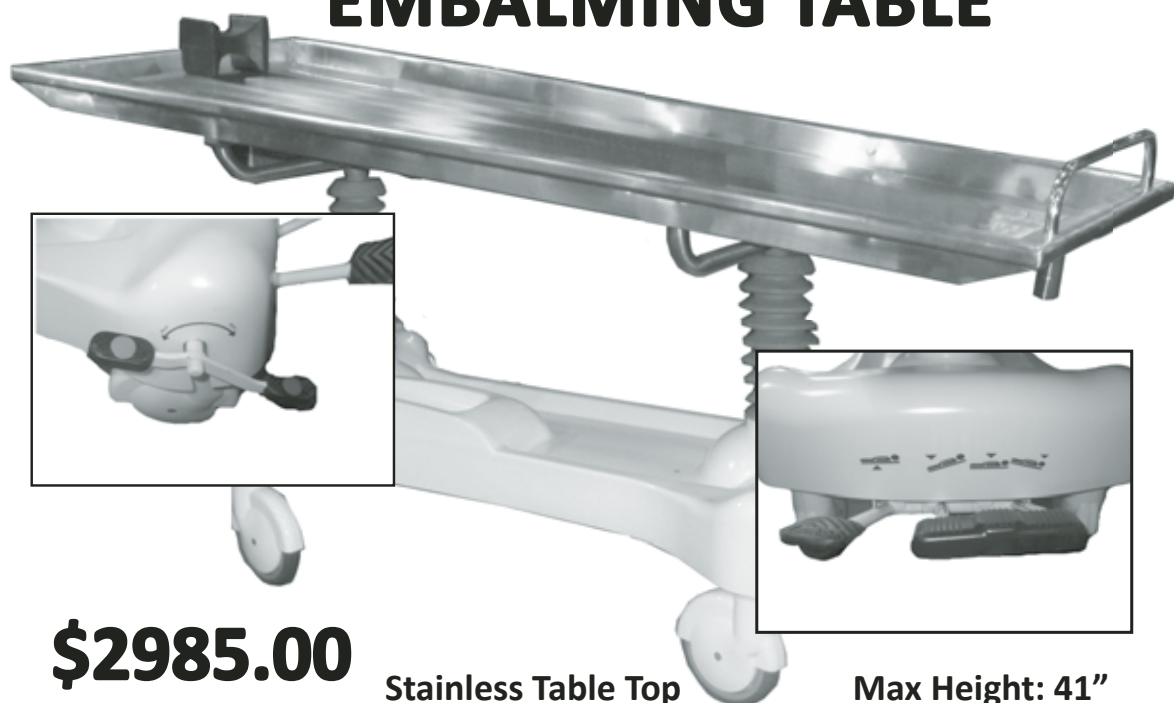
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Educational NEWS

CONTINUED

AAMI Holds 194th Commencement

NEW YORK, NY— August 12, 2011 was the 194th graduation of **American Academy Institute of Funeral Service, Inc.** It was held at the Pope Auditorium of Fordham University in New York City. The guest speaker was **Dr. Gretchen Warner**, Executive Director of the *American Board of Funeral Service Education, Inc.*

Members of the graduating class who completed the online program were: **Joseph Adduci**, Blue Island, IL; **Rita Alvarez**, Oradell, NJ; **Donna Amaro**, Helena, MT; **Colleen Banasz**, Haddon Heights, NJ; **Ronald**

Barba, Brooklyn, NY; **F. Scott Barrett**, Paris, IL; **Joanne Beldotti**, Norwalk, CT; **Gerard Bellizzi**, Oakland, NJ; **Daniel Bitecola**, Mendham, NJ; **Joanna Brief**, Brooklyn, NY; **Anthony Bracy**, Columbia, SC; **Francis Camardo**, Rochester, NY; **Yrcania Castillo**, New York, NY; **Benjamin Clark**, Mount Pleasant, MI; **Larissa Cruz**, Carteret, NJ; **Erick Crawford**, Lancaster, SC; **Helen Daurman**, Staten Island, NY; **Rachael Davidson**, Concord, CA; **Lisa Dodson**, Sanborn, NY; **James Demyen**, Cranford, NJ; **William Faircloth**, Alpena, MI; **Justin Ford**, South Jordan, UT; **Brian Foster**, Madison, WI; **John Gawronski**, Norwich, NY; **Jason Guest**, Jefferson, ME;

Michael Heath, Saugus, MA; **Jaclyn Himmel**, Middle Village, NY; **Carla Jacob**, Detroit, MI; **Crystal Johnson**, Harrington, DE; **Melissa Johnson-Pierce**, Wells, ME; **Julian Keene**, Newark, NJ; **Stephanie Kindle**, Muskegon, WI; **James Leonardo**, Bensalem, PA; **Robert Lindquist**, Ogden, UT; **Patrick Mang**, Los Angeles, CA; **Keith Mattei**, Brightwaters, NY; **Jamie McIntosh**, Ely, NV; **Jennifer Meagher**, Binghamton, NY; **Justin Megaro**, Bloomfield, NJ; **Zachary Menter**, Fulton, NY; **Mary Ann Menuau**, Hopewell Junction, NY; **Andrew Miranda**, Schnecksville, PA; **Bridget Monaghan**, Philadelphia, PA; **Laura Mudlock**, Pittston, PA; **Valerie Palumbo**, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ; **John Ragone**, Yonkers, NY; **Jason Rhodes**, Grover, SC; **Peter Robinson**, Warsaw, NY; **Jason Roefaro**, Dumont, NJ; **Robert Rothwell**, Selden, NY; **Carla Sacco**, Elizabeth, NJ; **Shawn Salamon**, Guttenberg, NJ; **Krystal Salvator**, Danvers, IL; **Matthew Scamardella**, Staten Island, NY; **Corey Schaffer**, Endicott, NY; **Eddie Sheffield**, Huntington, NY; **William Senik**, Cortlandt Manor, NY; **Jon Valentino**, New City, NY; **Porchia Wilson**, Philadelphia, PA; **Nicholas Wood**, Portland, OR; **Travis Woodley**, Iowa Falls, IA.

Members of the class who completed the campus program were: **Audra Brooks**, New York, NY; **Liana Candrilli**, Staten Island, NY; **Tracy Casella**, Bayside, NY; **Cristi Cedeno**, Staten Island, NY; **Amy Cunningham**, Brooklyn, NY; **Bryan DeJesus**, Brooklyn, NY; **Cheroi Delaney**, Philadelphia, PA; **Steven Duca**, Forest Hills, NY; **Ralph Faiella**, Bronx, NY; **Sylvia Fernandez**, New York, NY; **Anamaria Ford**, Flushing, NY; **Matthew Hazard**, Brewster, NY; **Shyane Howe**, New Brunswick, NJ; **Jocelyn James**, White Plains, NY; **Vladimir Khazanyuk**, Brooklyn, NY; **Veronica Klimek**, Yaphank, NY; **Peter Kucera**, Harrington Park, NJ; **Millan Lawrence**, Brooklyn, NY; **Kristen Liberatore**, Staten Island, NY; **William Luciano**, New York, NY; **Dana Lufrano**, Staten Island, NY; **Laura Mann**, Plainfield, NJ; **Justin Martinez**, New York, NY; **Nicole Ortega**, Jackson Heights, NY; **Karen Perrello**, Fallsburg, NY; **James Pescitelli**, Staten Island, NY; **Matthew Pinto**, Staten Island, NY; **Bernadette Reed**, Astoria, NY; **Patience Rhodes**, Bronx, NY; **Elizabeth Sanchez**, Bronx, NY; **Qiydaar Saduddin-Singh**, South Ozone Park, NY; **James Scott**, Staten Island, NY; **Tyechia Sloeyn**, Brooklyn, NY; **Ralph Squitieri**, Orangeburg, NY; **Michael Sztuk**, Morris Plains, NJ; **William Tiani**, Norwalk, CT; **Shevonne Tucker**, Brooklyn, NY; **Eric Vandross**, Bronx, NY; **Ashley Wang**, Corpus Christi, TX; **Richard Weisse**, St. James, NY.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A35

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Leadership and Life Enrichment

By Ralph L. Klicker, Ph.D.

It feels good to be back on the pages of the Funeral Home and Cemetery News. For many years, I enjoyed writing Klickers Crosswords. My goal was to make it more than a game. I wanted it to be a learning tool that was fun and a bit challenging. It was a once a month refresher of death related information that was both familiar and obscure.

My goal for this new column is somewhat similar in that it will be educational and interesting to read. The focus of the column is evident in the title. I chose these two topics because that is the direction my life has taken. In the past my writing, speaking and research has been general and eclectic. I enjoyed teaching different broad topics in our profession. Lately my focus has been in two areas, leadership and life enrichment.

I do not think I chose these two areas but rather they chose me. The same as I did not choose the funeral service industry, it chose me. I know this same dynamic has occurred with many funeral directors. Early in my career, I realized my destiny was not to stay as a practitioner but was instead in the areas of education and research in the profession.

As a funeral service educator in both a university mortuary science program and then as CEO of a continuing education organization, it was necessary to be fluent in the many broad areas of the profession. Now, as I am a member in good standing of the AARP, I am dedicating my energy in two areas I believe need attention, not only in the funeral service, also in most businesses and professions. A catch phrase you see in most business articles and seminars is "there is a crisis in leadership in today's business world. There are many good but few great leaders."

Along with a crisis in leadership, I have discovered a crisis in the quality of our personal and professional lives. Through my personal and executive coaching, I have found many professionals within and outside of the funeral service who are simply not happy, fulfilled or are frustrated

with their lives. The uncertain economy, long work hours, missed family interactions, personality conflicts unfulfilled promises and an uncertain future has left scores of owners and employees disheartened and unfulfilled.

Leadership and life enrichment might seem like strange bed fellows but in reality they are not. We all bring our work life home and our home life to work. It is impossible to keep them separate. I have such a strong feeling about this that I have developed a new course at the State University of New York at Canton called Happiness, Health and Wellbeing and have included leadership into the bachelors degree program in Funeral Service Administration. I wanted to catch students early in their career and personal lives.

So that is what this new column is all about. To make this column as relative and timely as possible I would hope to get readers to email me questions and comments. I truly want this to be a collaborative project combining my education and research and your down in the trenches and everyday influences. The New York State Funeral Director Association once had a motto for the year that was "Together We Are Something." Together, let us make this the best column ever.

Dr. Ralph L. Klicker has been involved in the funeral service since he was a high school student. He has been a funeral director, embalmer, training director, educator, and speaker. He has authored four of the text books used by funeral service students, as well as twelve home study and online continuing education courses. His latest books are Leadership According To St. Peter, Don't Wait Until You Are Six Feet Under: It's too late to change your life when you hear dirt being thrown on your casket, and Grief coaching. Ralph can be contacted by email at rklicker@thanosinstitute.com or at 800-238-5187.

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Joseph A. Scarano

Educational CONTINUED

Fine Mortuary College Announces Dean's List for Fall 2011 Term

NORWOOD, MA— Fine Mortuary College, LLC is a private two year college that is proud to announce the dean's list for the Fall 2011 term.

Full time student, **Christen Bergeson** earned high honors. Part-time students earning high honors were: **Tara McCarron, Christopher Todd and Juliann Zinsner.**

Two full time students received the academic level of honors award, **Kenneth Kirkland and Michael Perez.**

Part-time students who earned honors were: **Tabitha Branchaud, James Burtt, Jonathan Cain, Larissa Christiansen, Eric Fay, Nathan Fetterhoff, Courtney Gird, Stephanie Grinvaslsky, Lauren Ladd, Lee-Ann Laurenza, Lee Lavoie, Diane Leitao, Carolyn Lewis, Alexandra Manasas, Michele Marani, Erik Mattson, Sarah Miller, Heather Reiter, Yesenia Torres, Mercedes Valdez, Brian Veras, Arden Wallace and Kimberly Wallace.**



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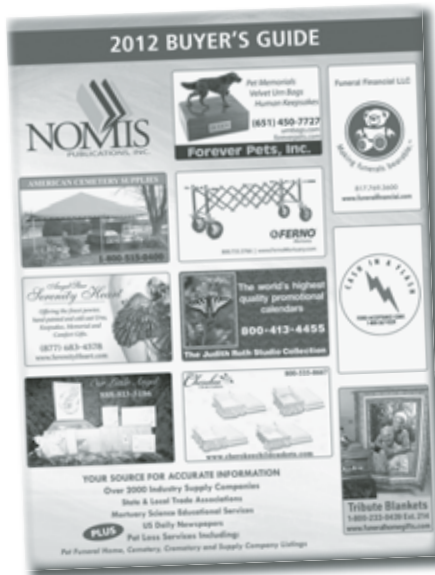
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2 whole boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1-2 jars pre-made or home made pesto
1 container of grape tomatoes cut in half
Pine nuts, toasted lightly

Cook orzo using the directions on the package, however, use ½ cup of chicken broth and ½ cup of water.

Liberally coat chicken breasts with olive oil, kosher salt, garlic powder and pepper on both sides, grill and dice into cubes

If you want to make your own pesto, puree and blend fresh basil, parmesan cheese, olive oil (1-2 TBS), pine nuts (handful) or to taste, salt and pepper. You can also use ½ cup of premade pesto and ½ cup of home made pesto.

To cooked orzo, add grilled chicken, pesto, tomatoes and toasted pine nuts, salt and pepper to taste.

FRIED ARTICHOKE HEARTS

Artichokes, one package frozen or 1-2 can, drain and rinsed

1-2 eggs, beaten with a little water

Panko bread crumbs, plain or Italian flavored

1 jar pepperocini, sliced

Dredge artichoke hearts first in flour, add a little salt and pepper, then dredge in egg, and lastly in bread crumbs

Fry in a couple of inches of olive oil (be liberal with this, the more oil gives them great color and crunch).

Drain on paper towels. Right before serving pour a jar of slice pepperocini rings, including juice, on top.

TIP: Wonderful served with Ranch dressing

Good Eating!

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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

Trigard Awards Two Scholarships



DANVILLE,IL— Trigard awarded two \$250 scholarships in November as a continued investment in the next generation of funeral directors who will care for families across the country.

Trigard’s Chief Executive Officer, **Linda Darby-Sempsrott** (left) and **Blake Swinford** (right), project manager, presented a \$250 scholarship to **Sarah Morgan**, a junior at *Mid-America College of Funeral Service* in Jeffersonville, IN.



Lanae Richards (left), a mortuary science student at *Des Moines Area Community College* in Ankeny, IA, also received \$250 toward her education. **Lowell Coburn**, **Watts Vault** and Monument Sales Consultant, awarded the second scholarship on behalf of Trigard.

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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

Epsilon's National Osiris to Hold Education Sessions at Malcolm X College



Mark E. Fisher



Christie K. Winn

CHICAGO, IL— Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity will hold continuing education sessions at *Malcolm X College* during the fraternity's National 70th Osiris in Chicago. "Epsilon was very thrilled that Malcolm X College and director **Karen Scott** were so accommodating for our education sessions," stated national education chair, **Shun Newbern**, CFSP. "One goal of Epsilon is to reach out to the mortuary science programs and their students, building sustainable bridges that will benefit the future of the profession."

The continuing education sessions will be held Monday, March 26, 2012 on the campus of Malcolm X at 10am to 2pm and will be open to non-member licensees and students from surrounding programs. The speakers for this winter session will be **Mark E. Fisher**, CFSP of **M. E. Fisher Funeral Home** in Newport News, VA and **Christie K. Winn** of **Winn Funeral Home** and **Sunset Concepts** in Muskogee, OK. Mark will speak on "The Above Average Embalmer" and how the skilled or novice can take passion and excel through confidence, competence and character. Mark will also share various embalming techniques to put into use. Christie will address "Re-Evaluating Our Profession and the Future of Embalming" through three concepts. The areas include maintaining solidarity and commitment, creating wealth for the generations, and creating longevity within your business.

The **Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice**, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin Boards have approved the sessions for two CEU for licensees. To obtain an updated list of CE approved states, detailed brochure and registration form please contact the education chair, Shun Newbern at shunnewbern@aol.com.

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PIMS Student Senate elects Officers



(L to R) Ted Borden, Kristen Norris, Annie Cerutti, Megan Graham, David Mahlstedt and Cathy Mullin.

PITTSBURGH, PA— Students at **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)** recently elected their student senators who have elected their officers. Student senators from class #144 are: **Ted Borden** of Cranberry, PA; **David Mahlstedt** of Pittsburgh, PA; and **Me-**

gan Graham, President of the Senate, of New Castle, DE.

Student senators from class #145 are: **Cathy Mullin** of Pittsburgh, PA; **Kristen Norris**, Vice-President of the Senate, of Morgantown, WV; and **Annie Cerutti**, Secretary/Treasurer, of Irwin, PA.

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Officers and
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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

AAMI Holds 194th Commencement

Mu Sigma Alpha Honors

Mu Sigma Alpha is a scholastic honor society with membership granted to the top ten percent of the graduating class. The following students from the online program were inducted into Mu Sigma Alpha: Matthew Scamardella, Joanna Brief, Valerie Palumbo, Keith Mattei, Larissa Cruz and William Senik. Those in the campus program inducted into Mu Sigma Alpha were Peter Kucera, Ralph Faiella, Matthew Hazzard and Laura Mann.

The Dr. John McAllister Award for academic excellence was awarded to Matthew Scamardella and Joanna Brief, both in the online program. The Faculty Award was given to Peter Kucera of the campus program. The Stellato Funeral Home Scholarship Awards went to Matthew Scamardella and Joanna Brief. The William F. Flooks, Sr. Memorial Award for excellence in embalming was awarded to Justin Megaro of the online program and Ralph Faiella of the campus program and the Michael R. Rosenberg Memorial Award for excellence in embalming was awarded to Elizabeth Sanchez of the campus program and Yrcania Castillo of the online program. The Buddy Wolfe Award for proficiency in embalming was awarded to Jamie McIntosh of the online program. The Thomas M. Quinn Memorial Award which is given to the graduate, who in the judgment of his or her fellow students has contributed the most to the welfare of the class, was presented to Amy Cunningham and James Pescitelli. The New York State Funeral Directors Association Award of Merit for the graduate who in the judgment of his or her fellow students best typifies the highest ideals of the funeral service profession, was awarded to Matthew Pinto and Ralph Faiella, both of the campus program. The Board of Trustees Award was given to Valerie Palumbo of the online program. The Student Academic Achievement Awards were presented to Bernadette Reed and Anamaria Ford both of the campus program. The Thomas J. Pontone, Sr. Memorial Award was won by Steven Duca of the campus program and The Sprung Monument Award of Merit was presented to Keith Mattei of the online program.

Summer 2011 Honors

AAMI is also pleased to recognize the following students for their academic success in the summer 2011 Semester. **Sekou Johnson** of Grenada, WI; **Michael Kovach**, of Oxford, CT; **Maria Oquendo**, of Riverdale, NY; **Alva Stuart**, of Barbados and **Joseph Velez** of Staten Island, NY were named to the president's list, by maintaining a grade point average of 3.80 to 4.0. **Donna Bustamente** of Cedar Grove, NJ; **Eunjeong Park** of NY; **Cherice Phillips** and **Matthew Stein** of Hoboken, NJ were named to the dean's list by maintaining a semester grade point average of 3.50 to 3.79.

Continued from Page A30

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Educational NEWS CONTINUED



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PIMS Students Support Children's Grief Awareness Day



PITTSBURGH, PA— Students from the **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)** were proud supporters of the Children's Grief Awareness Day that was celebrated November 17. The entire student body, staff, and faculty wore blue that day in recognition of this special event. Children's Grief Awareness Day is celebrated annually to support children who have experienced the death of someone they love. PIMS was happy to support this event as they gathered in the school lobby proudly wearing blue.

In other PIMS news, **Spencer Jones**, of Verona, PA, presently in the associate degree program, was awarded the Fred Donatelli Scholarship after writing a paper on: "*Marketing Cremation in the New Millennium*." Fred Donatelli, owner of **Pittsburgh Cremation Services** and **F. Donatelli Memorials**, established the scholarship for a student from PIMS who wishes to continue their education and earn the Associate in Specialized Business degree in Funeral Service Management. Congratulations to Spencer and many thanks to Fred Donatelli for his continued interest in funeral service education.

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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

The Southern Illinois University of Mortuary Science Hosted Continuing Education Seminars



(L to R) Anthony Fleege SIU Program Director, Matt Smith and April Kesterson, Student.

CARBONDALE, IL— The Southern Illinois University of Mortuary Science in conjunction with the *Illinois Funeral Directors Association* hosted a full day of continuing education seminars with **Matt Smith** of **mor-bid.com** presenting. The day began with a Keynote presentation followed by a catered lunch under the lake front pavilion and then continued back inside for a hands-on embalming class focusing on advanced techniques for closing the mouth, setting features, and creating the smile. Other embalming techniques showed embalmers how to become more efficient in the prep room. “The most important part of the visitation is the mouth, because that is the most important feature of the face,” said Smith. For more information on the advanced training received at SIU Mortuary Department call 618- 453-7214. For more information on Matt’s technical program please call 866-774-4746 or visit www.mor-bid.com.



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MILBERN "BILL" KINARD BATES of Vero Beach, FL died November 25, 2011 at the age of 72. Bates founded **Life Appreciation Training** in 1974. The LAT seminars involved 2 days of intensive training in a funeral arrangement system that allows the arranger to bond with the family and discover ways in which a funeral may be personalized as a deeply meaningful tribute to the decedent's life, while ensuring that the funeral service provides the family with a ceremony that fulfills their individual needs. Bates announced his retirement from LATs this past summer.



MICHAEL G. VINCENT of Laconia, NH died November 16, 2011 at the age of 57. He owned and operated **Simoneau and Son Funeral Home** for many years until retiring in 1997. He previously worked with **Tom Eaton** at the **Fletcher Funeral Home** before moving to Laconia. He was a graduate of *Simmons School of Embalming and Mortuary Science* in Syracuse.

ROBERT S. LEWIS of Memphis, TN died November 21, 2011 at the age of 92. He was the owner and operator of **R.S. Lewis and Sons Funeral Home** which was started by his father nearly 90 years ago. A graduate of *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*, Mr. Lewis was co-funeral director at **Dr. Martin Luther King's Services** in Atlanta, GA.



KENNETH W. MERLE of Brocton, NY died November 27, 2011 at the age of 68. He was the owner and operator of the **Morse Funeral Home** since 1968. He was a former coroner for Chautauqua County from January 1979 through 1981 and was a member of the *National Funeral Directors Association*.

FREDERICK JULIUS TIPS, JR., of San Antonio, TX died December 3, 2011 at the age of 88. He was a third generation funeral director and owner, along with his brother, **Will Chambers Tips**, at **Mission Park Funeral Chapels and Cemeteries**, founded in 1907. This firm offered the first-in-the-nation funeral home and cemetery combination. He pioneered the custom fabrication of the six-door limousine and designed the first hydraulic cemetery carts. He was elected as president of the *Texas Cemeteries Association*, *Southern United States Cemeteries Association*, and the *National Association of Cemeteries*.



RAYMOND DOUGLAS "DOUG" ROBBINS of Benton Harbor, MI died October 22, 2011 at the age of 57. He served under the apprenticeship of his father, **Raymond A. Robbins**, at the **Robbins Brothers Funeral Home**, which has been in business for 79 years. He was the director and owner of the firm until his death. In 1980, he graduated from the *Mid West College of Mortuary Science* in Indianapolis.

ROBERT THOMAS OWEN SR., of Jarratt, VA died November 4, 2011 at the age of 76. He was a second generation funeral director and owner of **Owen Funeral Home**, which his father and uncle started in 1938. He moved the firm from a converted home into a new building, built for the purpose of being a funeral home. He attended *Virginia Tech* for two years.

If you have an Obituary you would like to see listed here, send to:

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DAVID W. RUZICH of Whiting, IN died October 31, 2011 at the age of 58. He owned his first funeral home, **Kosier-Ruzich Funeral Home** in 1975. He later opened **Ruzich Funeral Home** in Whiting and South Chicago along with **Brown Funeral Home**; **Edgar Funeral Home** in Oak Lawn; **Sheldon-Goglen Funeral Home** in Chicago; **Owens-Ruzich Funeral Home** in Whiting and **LaHayne Funeral Home** in Hammond. He was a former Lake County deputy coroner and was a graduate of the *Indiana College of Mortuary Science*.

JOHN L. SHOWALTER of Connersville, IN died December 5, 2011 at the age of 70. He served as president of **Showalter Blackwell Long Funeral Chapels** in Connersville, IN, Liberty, IN and College Corner, OH. He served as district director of the *Indiana Funeral Directors Association*. He graduated from the *Indiana College of Mortuary Science* in 1963.



JOHN R. MINNOCCI of Clarksburg, WV died November 15, 2011 at the age of 74. He was a licensed funeral director and embalmer assistant, working at several funeral homes over 59 years including **Lynch-Stacey Funeral Home** and **Dorsey Funeral Home** in Shinnston, **Bartolo Funeral Home** in Clarksburg and at **Davis Funeral Home** in Clarksburg most recently for the past 12 years. He was a member of the *West Virginia Funeral Directors Association*.

WILLIAM N. SNYDER JR., of North Huntingdon, PA died December 3, 2011 at the age of 87. He was a 62 year funeral director, owner and operator of **William Snyder Funeral Home**. He graduated from the *Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science* in 1949.

TYRONE C. DURHAM of Philadelphia, PA died November 2, 2011 at the age of 59. He was a licensed funeral director, working for **Julian V. Hawkins Funeral Home** in West Philadelphia. He graduated from the *McAllister School of Embalming* in 1994.



WILLIAM "BILL" HAGEMAN JR., of Denver, CO died October 12, 2011 at the age of 72. He established **Hageman's Mortuary Transport Service** in 1987. He was a member of the *Colorado Funeral Directors Association*.

KENNETH D. MORRISON JR., of Ivoryton, CT died December 5, 2011 at the age of 83. He was a long time funeral director at **Munson Funeral Home** in Woodbury for many years, also at **Robinson and Wright Funeral Home** from 1967 to 1974.



DONALD J. BIERCHWALE of San Antonio, TX died November 6, 2011 at the age of 78. He was a licensed funeral director and embalmer for over fifty years. He initiated five funeral homes in San Antonio, including **Brookhill Center Home**, **Dellcrest Funeral Home**, **Oak Hills Funeral Home** and **Palm Heights Funeral Home**. He was a partner in the **Tri City Funeral Home** in Jourdan. He established the first emergency medical and limo service in San Antonio. He was a graduate of the *Commonwealth College of Mortuary Science*.



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KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Robert Cialdini, *Influence: Breaking Down the Barriers to 'Yes'*

Robert Cialdini, author of *Influence: Science & Practice*, will identify six universal principles of persuasion that move people toward "yes." You'll learn how to break through emotional barriers to reach both the minds and hearts of your customers, your prospects, your staff and your community. Cialdini is author of *The New York Times* best-seller "*Influence: the Psychology of Persuasion*." His clients include such organizations as Google, Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Coca Cola.



Libby Gill, *You (and Your Staff) Un-Stuck*

Eventually, every individual or organization gets stuck. This "stuckness" manifests as a lack of agility or an unwillingness to innovate or take risks. If your company ignores this stuckness, it runs the risk of mediocrity becoming the new normal. Gill will show you how to clarify a bold vision for success, simplify the most direct route to get there and execute a plan against measurable milestones. Gill was the PR/branding strategist behind the launch of *The Dr. Phil Show*. She has shared her success strategies on the *Today Show*, CNN, NPR, and in *Business Week*, *Time Magazine*, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*.



Stephen Shapiro, *Speed Ideating*

An innovative organization is built on new ideas—good new ideas. Bad ideas, or even "OK" ideas, if they are not as good as your competitors' ideas, aren't worth much. So how do you make sure you and your staff come up with good ideas, and how do you recognize a good idea when you see one? Shapiro will guide you through "Speed Ideating," a hands-on, rapid-fire creativity session where you'll gain insights into problem statement development, techniques for generating breakthrough ideas and tools for enhancing team creativity. Shapiro's work has been featured in *Newsweek*, *Investor's Business Daily*, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *O Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. His clients include Staples, GE, NASA, Johnson & Johnson, the U.S. Air Force, Fidelity Investments, Nestlé and Bristol-Myers Squibb.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Marketing to (the New) Boomer

Larry Merington, Vice President of Strategic Market Development, Stewart Enterprises Inc.

Boomers: You've heard it all, right? Wrong. Turns out, much of what we thought we knew about the Baby Boomer generation has shifted in the past few years. The recent economic downturn has had an effect on the psyche of this consumer segment, and the "rules" for marketing to them have changed.

Join Merington as he shares extensive new research on why and how today's Baby Boomer makes purchasing decisions and what this means for your cemetery or funeral home's marketing efforts.



Content Is King

Doug Gober, Industry Liaison and Senior Loan Officer, Live Oak Bank, Wilmington, North Carolina

One of the biggest opportunities in our business is what happens between "Dearly beloved" and "Please exit through the doors to your left." Historically, that has been something we've outsourced to people we don't choose, don't control and in many cases don't even know.

How can we take control of this crucial opportunity and make a real difference, both for families and for our businesses? In this all-new presentation based on six months of intensive



research, Gober will evaluate the three sources of ceremony content—the family, the funeral director and the clergy—and delve into how we can make substantive improvements to each to create more memorable events.

It's Time to Redefine Our 'Basic Services'

Karl E. Jennings, Owner and CEO, Borek Jennings Funeral Homes, Hamburg, Howell, Manchester and Brooklyn, Michigan

What exactly is the service we provide, and how do we communicate the value of that service to families? According to Jennings, funeral service has come to be treated as a retail transaction, which has not served the profession well. It is time, he says, to place the focus back on helping families deal with their grief. In this session, he'll examine the acute loss period—the three to 10 days following the death—and the seven phases families must complete during that crucial time to be able to begin the necessary trajectory toward healing. Next, he'll discuss the role of the funeral and the funeral director in making that happen.



3 Keys to a Successful Aftercare Program

Regina Nassif, Senior Consultant, Cedar Memorial, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Do you know the three most important components of an effective aftercare program? In this session, Nassif will share how you can provide excellent service and capture solid sales opportunities by focusing on the three W's:

- Who you hire
- What you present
- When you schedule the aftercare appointment

Your aftercare program is the final face and kind gesture from your cemetery or funeral home to the family you have served. Make it a good one.



Options for Municipal Cemeteries: A Case Study

Rachel Fox, Cemetery Program Manager, Metro Regional Government, Portland, Oregon, and Doug Flin, Principal/Owner, Cemetery Planning Resource Alliance (CPRA), Denver, Colorado

Throughout North America, municipal cemeteries struggle to maintain viable operations while planning for the future. Many of them face dwindling inventories, insufficient perpetual care funds and deteriorating infrastructure. Meanwhile, cremation rates continue to rise and 84 million aging Baby Boomers are changing the remembrance experience.

Find out what one high-density urban planning agency is doing to ensure that its cemeteries remain sustainable and provide the options today's emerging customers want. Fox and Flin will share their firsthand experiences with:

- creative cremation options
- accelerating contributions to a newly established perpetual care fund
- preparing for the aging Baby Boomer population
- high-density urban planning for cemeteries
- managing the closure of two cemeteries that are at capacity



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