

Information about the new TSA
"Known Shipper" Regulations,
Effective July 1, begins on Page A2

Reaching out Around the World...



See "Mount Calvary Cemetery dons Red Noses
for US Troops Abroad" on Page A12



See "Uganda Orphanage receives help
from group of Women with Hundreds
of Donations Arriving" on Page A4

"The candle has been
named after **Denis** and **Deb
Thompson's** daughter Han-
nah who, at the age of eight
years, died as a result of an
accident in 1986...The sun
charges the rechargeable
battery during the daytime
which allows the 'flame' to
glow brightly at night."



See **Thompson Monuments**
introduces **Hannah's Light**
Solar Powered Candle
on Page B1

Alexander Cremation & Funeral Service holds Grand Opening in Ft. Worth



Waiting Area



Cutting the Ribbon for Alexander Cremation & Funeral Service

FT. WORTH, TX— Alexander Cremation & Funeral Service is pleased to announce their Grand Opening. The ceremony was held January 11, 2009 at their location, 4126 West Vickery Boulevard in Fort Worth. "It is our mission to always place the families we serve first. With our experience, we will

help guide and ease the pain of people we serve during their time of need," states owner **James Alexander**.

Alexander Cremation & Funeral Service offers a variety of both traditional and non-traditional services. Being family owned and operated allows the firm to specialize in per-

sonal service that is not able to be met by most large funeral homes.

After years of being in the floral business, James Alexander made a decision to go back to school. He graduated from *Dallas Institute of Funeral Service* in 2004, with perfect attendance.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A14

Walker Funeral Home opens in Wyoming

GILLETTE, WY— At the newly completed **Walker Funeral Home**, located at 410 Medical Arts Court in Gillette, their mission is to help families celebrate and commemorate life while mourning the loss of someone they loved. They provide caring, professional service to families experiencing a death, and serve families of all faiths and cultures with sensitivity and compassion.

The new 8,000 square foot facility features a formal chapel with seating for 150 people, a centrally located multipurpose family room, which can be transformed to provide expanded seating for the main chapel, a



second visitation space or a family lounge, complete with kitchenette, a large lobby, spacious casket selection room, a preparation room, children's room and an extensive grief library.

They are confident that the new funeral home will

enable future generations of area families to be served in a warm atmosphere.

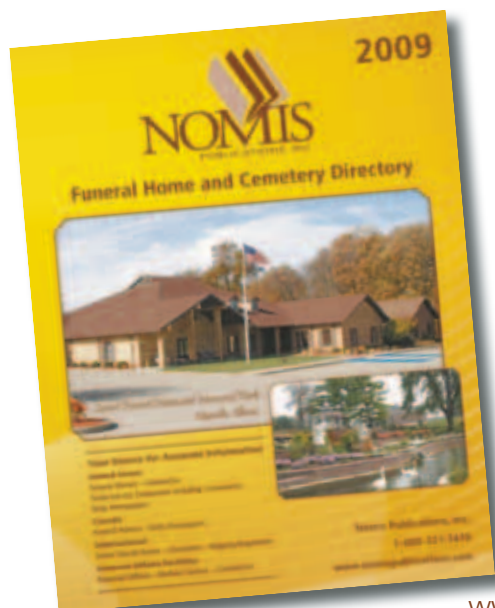
Walker Funeral Home is a member of the *Wyoming Funeral Directors Association*, *National Funeral Directors Association* and the *Campbell County Cham-*

ber. The funeral home also participates in the Celebration of Life with NFDAQ, are proud sponsors and winners (2006) of the annual spelling bee for the Literacy Council of Campbell County, participated in the local Trash for Trees event, hosts a planter for the community of Gillette, and is involved in various community churches, special events and organizations.

The staff at Walker Funeral Home welcomes ideas on helping a family to say goodbye to their loved one. According to the staff, "We are honored to have earned the trust and confidence placed in

CONTINUED ON PAGE A21

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HAVE YOU SEEN THESE CHILDREN?

The photographs below have been provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Please help locate these children by posting in your lobby, office, on your bulletin board, etc.

Family Abduction

SARAH RAQUEL ELSAFI



Date of Birth: 2/4/94
Date Missing: 5/9/03
Missing From: Miami, FL
Age at Disappearance: 9 Yrs
Age Now: 15 Yrs
Sex: Female
Race: Biracial
Height: 4'6"
Weight: 59 lbs
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown

TARIQ AHMED ELSAFI



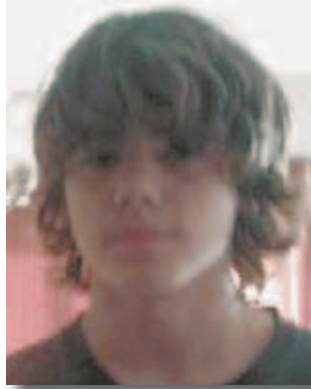
Date of Birth: 10/4/90
Date Missing: 5/9/03
Missing From: Miami, FL
Age at Disappearance: 12 Yrs
Age Now: 18 Yrs
Sex: Male
Race: Biracial
Height: 5'0"
Weight: 89 lbs
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown



Abductor AHMED ABDULLA ELSAFI
Date of Birth: 9/22/61
Age Now: 48 Yrs
Sex: Male
Race: Black
Height: 5'11"
Weight: 220 lbs
Hair: Black
Eyes: Black

Endangered Runaway

STEVEN ALLE BROWN



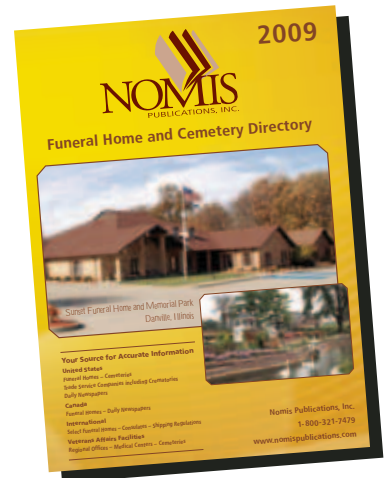
Date of Birth: 1/21/1994
Date Missing: 12/9/2008
Missing From: West Palm Beach, FL
Age at Disappearance: 14 Yrs
Age Now: 15 Yrs
Sex: Male
Race: White
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 135 lbs
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown

Circumstances: Steven was last seen on December 9, 2008.

Circumstances: Sarah is shown age-progressed to 14 years. Tariq is shown age-progressed to 18 years. They were last seen on May 9, 2003. Sarah and Tariq were abducted by their non-custodial father, Ahmed Elsaafi. An FBI felony warrant for Kidnapping was issued for the abductor on April 12, 2004. They may have traveled to Sudan. Sarah and Tariq are Biracial. They are Black and Hispanic. Sarah has a scar on her right eyebrow and right upper thigh. Ahmed has multiple scars.

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

Your Firm could be pictured on the front cover of the 2010 Funeral Home & Cemetery Directory



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NOTICE

The FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERY NEWS is now sent in two parts. Section A, which includes pages A1-A48 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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NFDA meets with TSA about "Known Shipper" Regulations

TSA will also discuss air cargo security policies at upcoming NFDA Advocacy Summit

BROOKFIELD,WI— In late January, staff members from the National Funeral Directors Association's (NFDA) Advocacy Division met with officials of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and airline officials to discuss enforcement of a "known shipper" policy.

Effective July 1, all human remains shipments originating in the U.S. or its territories must be tendered by a "known shipper." This policy will apply to all airlines accepting human remains for transport, and requires funeral homes to register as a "known shipper" for each airline they use to ship bodies. That process might require an inspection and payment of an inspection fee.

In their meeting on January 28, officials from NFDA discussed how funeral service might work together with TSA and the airlines on this issue. A single application to one airline, which can be used by all, as proposed by NFDA, is not an option

Background on the "known shipper" policy

The TSA's "known shipper" policy is not a new; Congress just recently mandated TSA and the airlines to strictly enforce it.

TSA originally developed the "known shipper" policy in 2004 as a way to "impose significant barriers to terrorists seeking to use the air cargo transportation system for malicious

Eagle's Wings Air advises Funeral Homes to prepare now for "Known Shipper" Mandate

FT. WAYNE,IN— Effective July 1, 2009, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has mandated that all human remains shipments originating in the U.S. (or its territories) must be tendered by a "known shipper."

The shipping funeral home must be considered "known" to each airline with which they intend to transport human remains. Each individual funeral home (address) location which ships remains must complete the steps required to become known prior to shipping on or after 07/01/09.

To become a known shipper you must complete a known shipper application which must be submitted to the appropriate airline(s). A site visit must be conducted by the airline. If a funeral home location is already known to one airline, additional site visits may not be required though the application process must still be completed.

"Eagle's Wings Air appreciates the magnitude of this change and recognizes that the known shipper verification process may be time consuming and even confusing. However, we strongly recommend that our funeral home clients take the appropriate steps now to meet this new requirement," says Frank Kaiser, president of Eagle's Wings Air.

In the interest of convenience, EWA has consolidated the various airline known shipper applications as well as the corresponding contact information on their website at www.eagleswingsair.com within the News & Events section.

Eagle's Wings Air was formed by dedicated professionals armed with invaluable advice from industry leaders and one innovative idea. After recognizing an opportunity to deliver a higher standard of air transportation management to the death care community, a plan was put in place. Please do not hesitate to contact EWA if you require further assistance by calling (866) 550-1392 or visiting www.eagleswingsair.com.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A12

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Uganda Orphanage receives help from group of women with hundreds of donations arriving

ORMOND BEACH, FL—Peggy Farmer, Lorry Garafolo and Nancy Lohman organized hundreds of donations which arrived late in January at New Hope Ministries in Luwero, Uganda.

On a whim, Nancy Lohman forwarded one of the monthly newsletters she receives via email from her sister Ann Ries to a group of her girlfriends. Ann, a RN from Seattle, WA, is on an



(L to R) Susanne Fleuchaus and Nan Heebner



(L to R) Lorry Garafolo and Laurentia Lucas

18 month work assignment at the New Hope Ministries Orphanage and Health Clinic. Their admiration of Ann's courage and commitment lead Peggy Farmer to ask, "What can we do to help?"

From Peggy's question, "Project Uganda-Girlfriends helping Girlfriends" was born. Peggy, Lorry and Nancy organized an evening at Nancy's home to introduce the idea of gathering items to ship to Uganda. Approximately 20 of their girlfriends attended and they shared lists of items most crucially needed for the children. Lohman Funeral Home Ormond was established as the drop off site for their collection.

For weeks following that evening, the piles, bags and



Project Uganda - Girlfriends Helping Girlfriends



Two sisters receive their first doll, naming her Esmee.



Ann Ries receives her first chocolate in months.

boxes began to mount in the funeral home. And, one evening, the women joined together again for an evening of sorting, packing and boxing. At the end of the evening, 24 very large boxes were ready to be shipped.

After some investigative work as to how the boxes could be shipped and some insight into customs regulations, the funeral home staff, **Allen Storms, FDIC, Todd Winninger, FD, and Felicia Vitiello**, Nancy's Administrative Assistant taped, labeled and delivered the boxes to the US Postal Service.

The shipment took eight weeks to arrive and was delivered without any harm or tampering. Ann's joy was expressed in this email message she sent shortly after receiving the shipment:

Dear Nancy,
They're here!!! All the boxes arrived together...can you believe it??? We had them delivered to the clinic since there wasn't enough room at my house!!

I just couldn't get over all the brownie mix, muffin mix, chocolate chips, candy and so much more!!! Everything arrived safe and sound. We will enjoy all of it for months! I don't know who donated the beautiful doll but the two girls pictured here fell in love with her and so I gave it to them. They are delighted...the doll looks handmade??

I will continue to take pictures as we distribute clothes, shoes and medical supplies. Everyone here is truly amazed and overwhelmed by your generosity. Aunt Betty, who

CONTINUED ON PAGE A22

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The Gift of Aftercare

By Sherry L. Williams

Many of you have just lived through one of the worst winters of this century. The snow and ice storms have been wide spread across the US and even though you can still feel the cold winds of winter, your minds move quickly to the warm breezes of spring. The Easter holiday is just around the corner, the crocus will soon be popping up and spring will be here.

But spring for grievers can be very isolating. While everyone is happy to see the flowers and green grass again and their spirits lifted by the sunshine; the griever wants to pluck the heads off those crocuses. Grievers are not feeling happy. They do not have a loved one to share the bright colors or the rising spirits of spring.

Over the years, many of you have chosen to do holiday programs during the Christmas season; do sunrise services for the Easter holiday or hold some sort of memorial. Take a risk, do something different. Something you can feel good about and something that can help the families you serve as well as other members of your community. Provide a seminar designed to help people grow through the grief process. This kind of program, call it Growing through Grief, will help those who are grieving better understand their feelings; find creative ways to move through the grief process and grow through their grief experience. Grieving people need more than having their loved one remembered in some sort of memorial service. They need to know how to go on living when everything seems to fail them. They need to know that spring can come again in their lives. Not the way it used to, but in a different way, a way that can be positive and have meaning.

In today's market with everyone's dollars shrinking, it is important to be visible and provide value perceived services in your market area. Now more than ever, you

need to reach out and let the people in your community know you are invested in their welfare. A Growing through Grief program is good for the families you serve and provides goodwill throughout your entire community. It is the kind of program that can give you very positive exposure in a market that makes it tough to reach people.

While this might seem like a good idea, you might find yourself saying, my dollar is shrinking just like everyone's. So, if cost is a factor, consider co-sponsoring the program with other agencies such as; hospitals, colleges, churches, banks, or other corporate entities that would be complimentary and not competitors of your business. You can go to the Rotary, Kiwanis, Women's Clubs and other social organizations for sponsorship. This will help you defray the costs and increase your exposure so you have good attendance. In addition, you will be networking with agencies that will gain a better appreciation for funeral service and what it has to provide for the community.

For more information about agencies that can help you put together a spring Growing through Grief program or other special community events, you can contact us at 1-800-346-3087.

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

The "Classic" Cremator

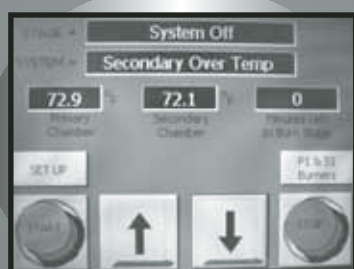
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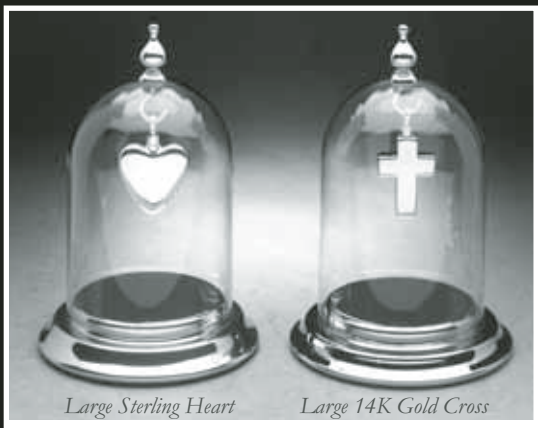
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To Dwell With Fellow Clay: The Story of East Cleveland Township Cemetery

CLEVELAND, OH— What started out as a search for her own family's genealogy became a passion for the history of her community in Nancy Fogel West's new book, *To Dwell With Fellow Clay: The Story of East Cleveland Township Cemetery* (published by AuthorHouse, www.AuthorHouse.com).

The East Cleveland Township Cemetery is approximately 12 acres of land situated in University Circle off East 118th Street, having been forgotten by some Clevelanders and unknown to the majority. It has been surrounded by urban legend for decades and embroiled in litigation since its founding in 1859. The story has now been uncovered and fact has been separated from fiction; the story begins in 1823 when early Cleveland settlers created a "Public Burying Ground." Today there are a little over 17,000 people that have been laid to rest within its gates, many of whom were instrumental in creating the Cleveland we know today. There have never been any racial, ethnic nor religious lines drawn in the cemetery, despite its date of origin. On August 31, 2009 East Cleveland Township Cemetery will celebrate its 150th anniversary.

The stories of the permanent residents of the cemetery are not of those who lived during the era of Millionaires Row on Euclid Avenue, but those that mapped out and cleared Euclid Avenue, those that migrated to Cleveland with Moses Cleaveland and of those who followed. These are the stories of the early settlers of Cleveland who worked relentlessly so that we can enjoy the riches that the city has to offer today. You will be introduced to

the first Mayor of Cleveland who was referred to as the Chairman, hear stories of how young boys spent their time eliminating rattle snakes from the area, and learn of the lives and sacrifices of many of the people whose surname is reflected in street names around the city like Silsby, Dille, Wilson Mills Road and, of course, the Doan family. And then there are the stories of our local heroes: a firefighter who died in the line of duty, a military veteran who died at

Gettysburg, and a street car conductor who lost his life in the Central Viaduct disaster to name but a few.

"The story of East Cleveland Township Cemetery is written with the hope that our history and heritage will not be lost and will be revitalized through the telling of its story," says West.

West was born in Berea, Ohio, in 1957 and graduated from Baldwin Wallace College in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. She currently works consulting with employers on their insurance programs. She also holds the position of Vice President and Secretary of the East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation that now owns and operates the cemetery and continues her work in restoring and revitalizing the cemetery. *To Dwell With Fellow Clay* is her first book.

Genealogist UnCOVERS Rich History of Early Ohio Cemetery



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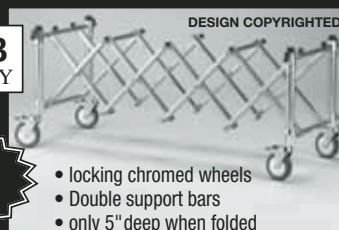
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A Proactive Approach to Advance Funeral Planning

By Christopher Kuhnen

It's All in Your Head

There's a lot of talk these days in pre-need circles about how our national economy, in its current state of crisis, is affecting pre-need sales. Will families stop prearranging altogether? Will sales dip? Will families choose less expensive services and merchandise? Will the bottom fall out of the pre-need market? Worry, worry, worry seems rampant. Enough already!

Truth is, you and I have complete control over what happens. Not Wall Street; not the economy and certainly not the doom and gloom prognosticators. What will occur is what we believe and tell ourselves will occur. That wee small voice "inside our head" is the master of our fate and we have complete power to control the message and volume. We can take control of negative thoughts creeping into our subconscious and control our actions by taking the following steps.

Stop listening to the news day in and day out letting the constant spin of gloom and doom fill our minds. Start focusing instead on improving our personal skill

level through additional training; reading educational and skill building books, listening to positive motivational audio tapes. Take the time to better hone our pre-need presentation and appointment setting skills. Stop talking at our prospects and start talking with our prospects. Listen to their unique wants and needs and fulfill their desires, not our own.

Stop hanging around with those who buy into the sky is falling mentality and start hanging around with positive people. People who are successful. People whose strong work ethic and talents you can learn from and emulate.

Take action! Stop pulling back from reaching out to prospects to "tell your story" and start reaching out to see more people with the positive news of funeral pre-planning. The last time I checked the vast majority of prearrangement plans in this country were still fully intact and still being faithfully honored by funeral homes. Promises made years ago have been promises kept. Families that prearranged have been and are saving hundreds (if not thousands) of dollars on their funeral expenses, thanks to the fact, they prearranged and pre-paid in advance. The consumer is not falling short financially, they are gaining. This fact alone should make it easier for you to sell more plans—not less.

If you want 2009 to be your best year ever, then you must plan and execute a carefully conceived sales and marketing strategy. Your strategy is your plan. It's how you will get the job done. It's not enough to just develop a strategy; you must daily execute that strategy and be prepared to make necessary adjustments along the way to compensate for unexpected occurrences that inevitably come up. Also, take the time to effectively communicate your pre-need sales strategy and marketing plan with everyone in your organization.

Gain their buy-in to help you in any way they can achieve your goals and objectives. Without consistent and effective communication with all those who work beside you your vision and strategy for success are worthless.

Review your strategy each month. Is it on track? Does it need bolstering in one area or another? Does part of the strategy need revision? Don't wait to take action if one area is weak. Take daily action, as needed, on your plan to keep it and you on track.

2009 can and will be all you make it. Don't buy into the "chicken little philosophy" that the sky is falling. The sky is deep blue and cloud free for those in funeral pre-planning. Get out there and make 2009 all you know it can be; namely your best sales year ever!

Christopher Kuhnen is Vice President of Marketing for The Outlook Group, Inc., Franklin, Ohio. Mr. Kuhnen has considerable experience in the field of funeral prearrangement planning sales, training and marketing. He provides comprehensive consultation and support to funeral directors nationwide to help them coordinate and develop their funeral prearrangement advertising, marketing, image, sales and public relations strategies.

He is a Kentucky Licensed Funeral Director, Life Insurance Agent and member in good standing Funeral Directors Association of Kentucky. Additionally, Chris is a recognized Certified Preplanning Consultant (CPC) as bestowed by the Funeral Service Foundation and a recognized Certified Marketing Specialist as bestowed by the National Marketing Academy.

He has presented numerous continuing education, advertising, marketing and pre-need seminars to a variety of national, state and regional funeral associations. Chris can be reached at (800)331-6270 or ckuhnen@theoutlookgroup.com.

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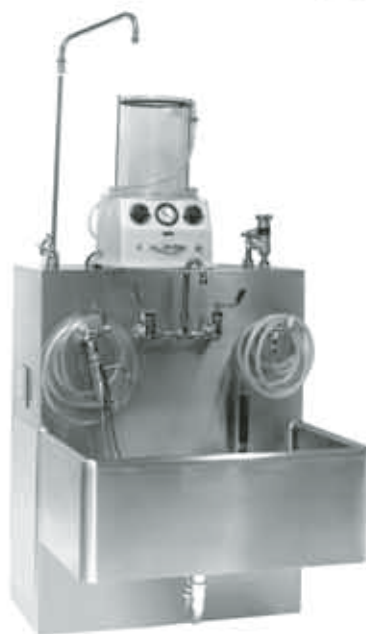
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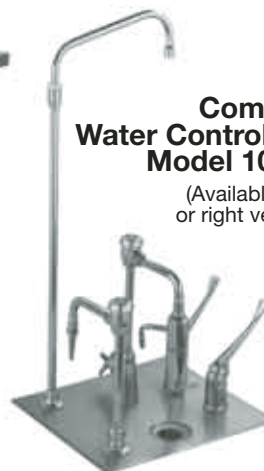


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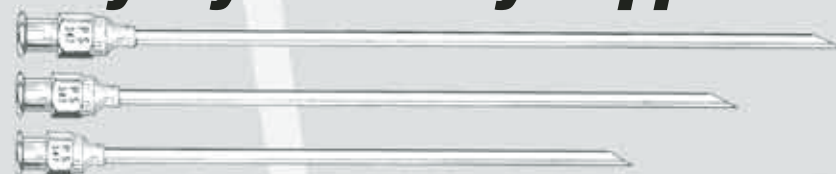
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Veterans & Family Memorial Care Providers hit home runs with Community Outreach

SANIBEL, FL— Mark E. Davis, president and CEO of Veterans & Family Memorial Care, a division of ValMark Memorial Group, Inc. has reported that VFMC's community outreach and public relations programs are driving visitors through the front doors of their Provider locations for reasons other than attending a funeral service or visitation. "Veterans reach out to companies that reach out to them," said Mark Davis. "Our market research and experience indicates that Veterans will bypass family heritage in another funeral home to avail themselves of services provided by a firm that honors and pays due respect to those who have served our country. Perception is paramount," he added. VFMC is creating value for family owned firms nationwide by wrapping them in a brand that is commanding huge respect among veterans from coast to coast. There are over 400 VFMC Provider locations in 41 states including Guam. Today's successful funeral home owner understands the longer-term importance of enhancing brand image and also feels the immediate pressure to generate revenue and profitability. "Collectively under the VFMC Brand, funeral home owners are gaining a competitive edge by reaping the rewards of niche marketing under a national brand that trickles down to the local level," said Mr. Davis. Greater market presence results in increased case volume, more preneed sales and enhanced image perception. "Work the programs and the programs will work for you," is the mantra within the VFMC organization.

The positive feedback from Exclusive VFMC Providers has been overwhelming. **Nadine Pantano** of **Oak Ridge Funeral Home** in Polk County, FL wrote: "Dear Mark, just wanted to let you know that we mailed out 96 Christmas stockings to military personnel thanks to your initiative...we had a very successful result." **David Knarr** of **Lane Funeral Homes**, Youngstown, OH wrote: "I just thought I'd let you know that literally within minutes of our Cell Phones For Soldiers press release hitting the media we had a local TV Station call to come do a story! We just finished the shoot a few minutes ago". **French Mortuaries** four locations throughout Albuquerque, NM, along with many other VFMC Providers nationwide, now fly the VFMC Proud Member Logo flag beneath the American Flag in front of their buildings.

All twelve of **Heffner Family Funeral Homes** based in York, PA have become exclusive, certified VFMC Providers. **Ernie Heffner's** funeral homes have been selected for their high ethical business standards and integrity. He has demonstrated a willingness and commitment to reach out to veterans and their families by extending benefits and savings beyond those provided by the VA. In addition to offering a 10% preneed discount off services & merchandise to veterans, their spouses and dependent children they promote the use of VA cemeteries for burial when geographically possible. This saves families thousands of dollars in final arrangement expenses. Upon the death of a veteran that has made a pre-arrangement with any of Heffner's locations, the staff presents a complimentary wood and glass flag case to the surviving spouse.

Heffner's tribute to Veterans begins with the first call. "Regardless of whether the contact is from a family member, hospital or nursing home, when we are notified of a death, we ask if the deceased was a veteran. When we transport the Veteran, we drape the stretcher with the American Flag. This is our procedure whether the transfer is at 2 p.m. or 2 a.m., from a private residence, a hospital or a nursing home. Our respect for a Veteran is demonstrated from the moment we are summoned to serve," said Ernie Heffner. The Veterans Tribute continues through the entire arrangement process and all the way to the gravesite where Heffner's staff prepares the "Patriot's Walk" in honor of the Veteran. Mr. Heffner will be instrumental in the formation of the first VFMC Advisory Board for which he has accepted the honor of being the First VFMC Advisory Board Chairman. The VFMC Advisory Board will consist of funeral professionals and members of Veterans Service Organizations. Mr. Barry Hagge, the National Secretary of Vietnam Veterans of America has accepted a slot on the Board as well.

Exclusive VFMC Providers are all family owned & operated and range in size from small firms serving 40-50 families per year to big firms with multiple locations serving hundreds, even thousands of families per year. Funeral home owners that would like to be considered for this unique opportunity should visit the VFMC website at www.VeteransFuneralHomes.com and click on "Become a Provider" or call toll free, (866) 770-6791.

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For Keep Sakes

By Adrienne Kalmes

The "Keeping" of Memorial Flowers

Today's "For Keep Sakes" column has been written by **Dana Adkinson**, owner of Keepsake Floral, Inc. Established in 1994, Keepsake Floral specializes in the creation of memory displays, leading the nation in special occasion floral preservation and memorabilia display. For more information call (800) 616-5337 or visit www.keepsakefloral.com.

Floral preservation has been around for a long time. A floral keepsake preserves the actual flowers used in a tribute to the deceased and displays them within an airtight environment. Over the past decade the art form has surged in popularity within the funeral service industry, due in large measure to technological advances that produce a much higher quality product today.

For many people, pulling a stem from the casket spray or gathering buds from a memorial arrangement are common practices. It is as if holding on to a flower somehow extends the life of the loved one for a little while longer. But knowing what to do with the flowers has always been a problem. Unless preserved, the colors fade, the leaves dry out and the petals fall. Professional floral preservation offers a solution, taking the blooms soon after the funeral to create keepsakes that will hold their beauty and memories for generations.

The flowers in and of themselves make a simple, elegant statement, but flowers do not need to be the artwork's main focus. Floral keepsakes often include mementos special to the deceased or to the grieving family member: grandma's reading glasses or her favorite sheet music; dad's fishing flies or pocket knife; a teenager's favorite CD or swimming medal; or perhaps the baby's spoon and booties. Such items can be artistically entwined among flowers or displayed by themselves with decorative ribbons or colored matting. Many times

photos can be worked into a piece.

Floral preservation is a memory service that requires little work on the part of the funeral director. Most service providers provide literature at no cost for distribution to interested families. The family (NOT the funeral director) is responsible for shipping the flowers and mementos to the preservation company. And the preservation company's customer service team is available to the family directly to provide instructions regarding shipment and other issues. The funeral director's role is simply to facilitate an introduction to the service. Some companies reward the funeral director with referral compensation or a mark-up program.

To be sure, professional flower preservation is more than just the "drying" of flowers. It involves the immediate preservation of the blooms upon their receipt at the preservation facility, a consultation with the family to finalize aesthetic details, color-enhancement, floral design and professional framing. The entire process can take up to 12 weeks.

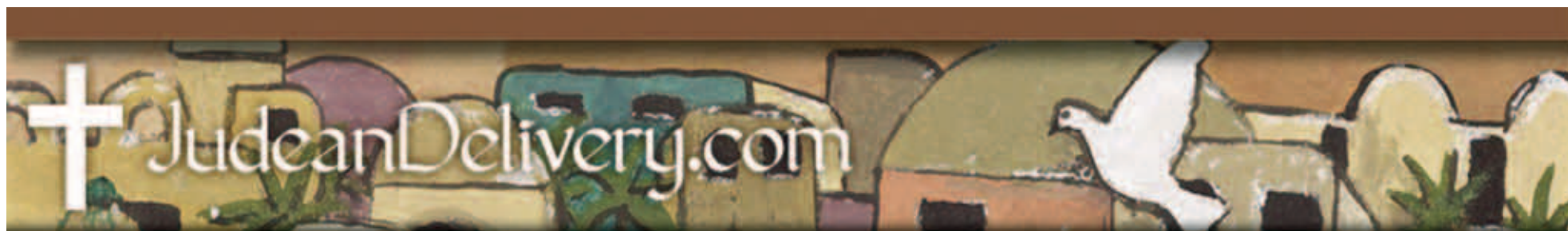
Flowers have always been an integral part of the funeral or memorial service. They are powerful symbols: the rich colors and subtle hues help us recall the vibrancy and complexity of life. At the same time their delicate structures, remind us of the fragility of life. When preserved, they become a beautiful tribute to the deceased, and a meaningful way to help people remember those who have been a part of their lives.

Since 1998 Adrienne Kalmes has directed the sales and marketing efforts of Meadow Hill Company, Inc. The ten-year-old, Chicago-suburban company produces Thumbies® Fingerprint Keepsakes for more than 3,000 funeral homes across the United States and Canada.

Adrienne did her undergraduate work in communications at the University of Toronto and has done graduate work in both business and pastoral ministry at Loyola University in Chicago. Her divergent interests in bereavement and marketing make her the ideal candidate to write compassionately about the role of keepsakes in the grieving process and practically about the business opportunities presented with keepsakes sales.

In this monthly column, For Keep Sakes, Adrienne explores the history and use of keepsakes and features specific products from the wide variety of options available in today's market place. Over time she hopes to share interesting stories about keepsakes gathered from funeral directors across the country.

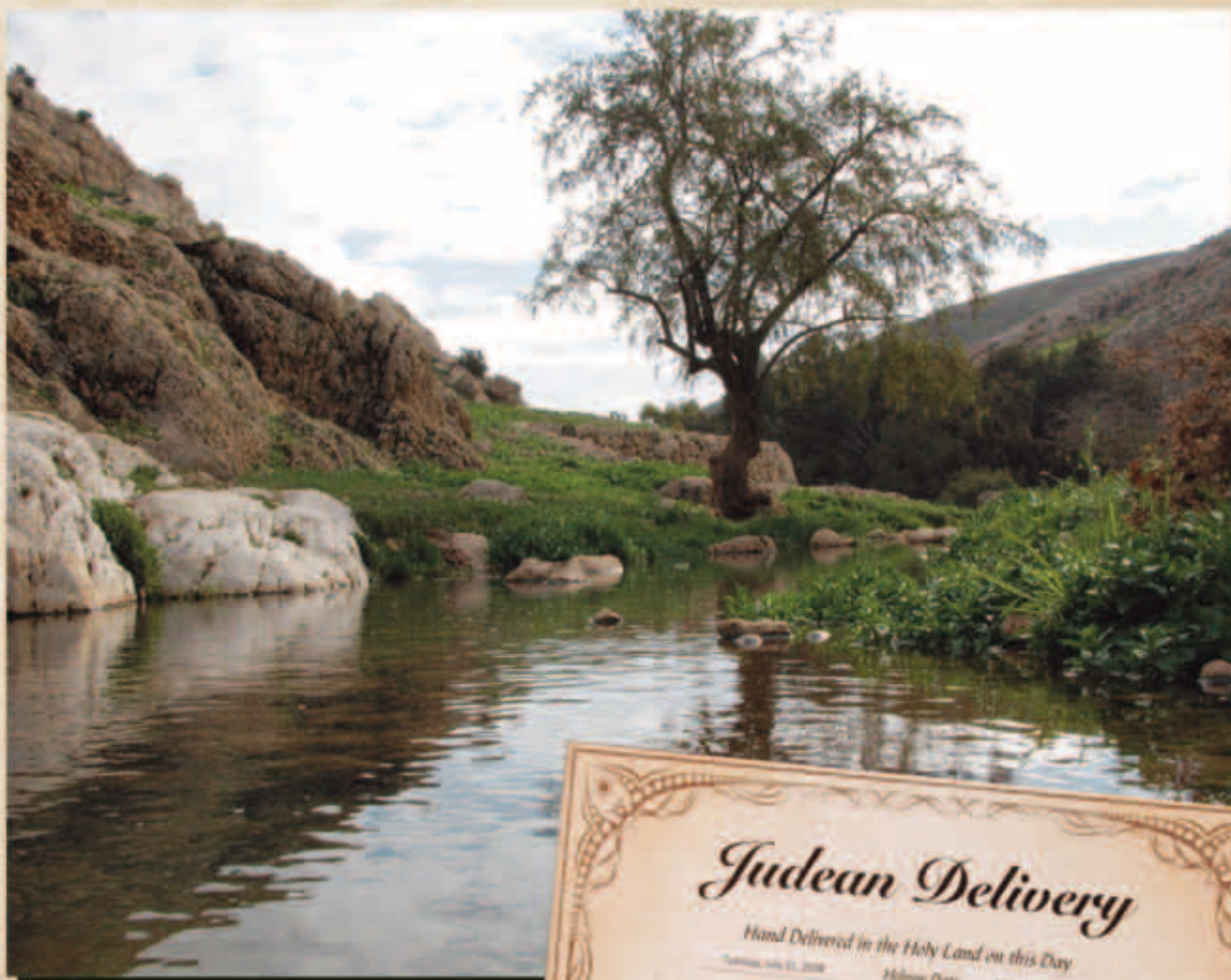
Adrienne can be reached by phone, toll free, at (877)848-6243 or via email at adrienne@thumbies.com. Her mailing address is PO Box 274, Fox River Grove, IL 60021.



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Miller-Jones staff receives recognition at Graystone Associates Summit Conference

SCOTTSDALE, AZ— Miller-Jones staff members were recognized for individual success in service to families by Frank Sessions of Graystone Associates, Inc. during their Summit Conference 2009 in January. Funeral Directors Ron Beaver, Mark Van Camp and Joseph Ley were awarded certificates of achievement for ranking in the top 15 in the category of Value of Experience. The category measured customer value of services received compared to financial charges as recorded on evaluation forms filed throughout the year. Funeral Director Kim Kojan was similarly recognized in the category of Overall Satisfaction, the grouping that ranked successful overall customer experience of total funeral home service. Hamilton Jones, Miller-Jones President said, "We are very pleased to have received such recognition. We have lots of moving parts to organize as we provide service to our families. Each member of our professional team has control of a specific critical component of our service and together determines customer success."

Miller-Jones personnel participated in Graystone Associate employee performance training program for the 2008 year along with sixty one other national funeral firms. The privately owned businesses were divided into four categories based on number of families each had the privilege of serving annually. Miller-Jones was placed among the large funeral home classification serving over 1200 families yearly. Customer surveys were sent to all families served with 735 responses received for Miller-Jones. Data collected and analyzed throughout the year was used to address training exercises and interventions that focused on developing advocate customers for the funeral home. Graystone compiled statistics for 626 individual funeral arrangers.

Established in 1975, Miller-Jones Mortuary and Crematory, Inc. has grown to be the most frequently selected funeral home in Riverside County. The family-owned funeral home has offices in Hemet, Moreno Valley, Perris, San Jacinto, and Sun City with Menifee Valley Memorial Park located adjacent to the Sun City Facility. The company has its own exclusive on-site crematory for Miller-Jones families. Staff is available to serve 24-hours daily. For information, call (951) 658- 3161 or visit www.miller-jones.com.



Legal Speak

By Atty. Harvey I. Lapin

Is it Risky to be an Association Officer or on a State Board?

for monetary relief under one Count of the Complaint. In addition, all Defendants may be sued for injunctive and equitable relief pursuant to all counts of the Complaint.

Another situation that recently occurred is a lawsuit that was filed against the trustees, officers and directors of the Illinois Funeral Directors Association ("IFDA") related to some problems with IFDA Preneed Trust that have been reported in the trade press. The complaint related to alleged violations of state laws, improper investments and breaches of duties to the members. The allegations in the complaint were made against various individuals for imprudent acts.

It would be prudent to investigate the available safeguards before seeking a position on a state board or as an officer or director of an association.

Most associations are established under state corporation laws. Usually the association will be organized under the non-profit laws applicable to associations. However, some associations have established profit subsidiaries to perform specific functions that would be established under the corporate laws applicable to profit entities. Both types of laws provide for the indemnification of board members and officers by the entity. However, this indemnification may not be unlimited and usually intentional acts are not covered. Generally, associations obtain directors and officers insurance. The coverage of such a policy should be reviewed before accepting a position, as these policies do not cover every possible liability.

Generally, a member of the state government is immune from liability, but this does not mean they cannot be sued as individuals as illustrated by the Heffner case discussed above. In addition, in most states, if an employee or board member acts in an intentional manner outside the scope of their duties they can be personally liable. One question that should be asked is whether the attorney for the state would defend a board member if a lawsuit were filed.

When the author first became involved in the industry it was an honor to be appointed to a state licensing board or to be elected as an officer of an industry association. However, industry members seeking those positions today may want to reconsider or confirm there are safeguards in place because of recent events.

The first situation of concern was illustrated by the decision issued by a federal court in Pennsylvania in the case of *Heffner v. Murphy, et al*, 2008 WL 5336911 (U. S. District Ct., M.D. PA, Dec., 2008). The decision involved the judge's decision on a Motion to Dismiss in the case filed by the defendants. The complaint in the case challenged restrictions in the state laws and the regulations issued by the Funeral Board that the Plaintiffs alleged were restraining competition and had been enacted to protect the monopoly position of some of the licensees. The Plaintiffs were individual and entities in the funeral, cemetery and cremation business. The Defendants were the individual current members of the Pennsylvania Funeral Board ("Board"). The judge basically denied the Motion and held that all of the Defendants might be sued

The purpose of this column is not to deter industry members from seeking or accepting positions as an officer or director of an association or appointment as state board members. Instead the intent is to caution industry members that are seeking those positions to do their due diligence before they become involved. The due diligence should also include an inquiry about any pending actions.

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 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 also prepares material for CB Legal Publishing Corporation CB Legal Publishing Corporation's Release Form Kit, which was prepared by the author, contains Release and Hold Harmless forms for Funeral Homes to use in situations where it has resolved a complaint with a customer, such as a problem occurring in a ship in, and wants to be sure that there will be no further action by the customer or their relatives. Other situations that are covered are obtaining Releases and Hold Harmless Agreements in advance from family members who insist on viewing an unembalmed or disfigured body or who may be identifying the body. The Funeral Home Kit contains 9 Special Releases for specific funeral home situations and a General Release form to be used for other situations not specifically covered. There are Release Kits for Crematories, Cemeteries and Combination Funeral Home/Cemetery Operations. The forms can be purchased on a custom basis with your business name and address preprinted at the top of each form. Call Cheryl Lapin at the number below for information.

The author also writes more extensive articles on subjects of interest to the industry in a newsletter, the Cemetery and Funeral Service Business and Legal Guide. Subscriptions to the Guide cost \$110 per year for ten issues on different topics. New subscribers are usually eligible for introductory rates. Anyone interested in subscribing can contact Cheryl Lapin, CB Legal Publishing, P.O. Box 1327, Northbrook, IL 60065-1327, fax to (847)509-1027 or call (847)509-0501.



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Mount Calvary Cemetery dons Red Noses for Troops



BUFFALO, NY— The Mount Calvary Cemetery staff in Buffalo, took a moment to clown around on the job to benefit *The Red Nose Institute*. The Red Nose Institute sends red foam noses to U.S. troops deployed anywhere overseas. The noses are meant to be shared with others who might need a smile! Some of the noses are given to the children in the communities where the troops are stationed, while

others are used by the military personnel themselves.

While more serious needs and concerns are part of everyday life for our troops, the Red Nose Institute believes that the tiny bit of fun and silliness that these noses might bring covers an area that isn't addressed quite as much on an everyday basis—their mental health! After all, laughter is the best medicine and silliness is good for everyone—even those in harm's way.

When Mount Calvary Cemetery's Certified Laughter Leader and Aftercare Director, **Nancy Weil**, learned of the project, she knew that they had to participate. "Our cemetery supports many different veterans' causes," said Weil, "and this was a great way to show our gratitude and add some fun to a soldier's day." Through their staff's efforts, three hundred clown noses will now find their way to faces of people they will never meet. And that is nothing to laugh at.

For more information about how your company can be a part of this project, visit www.TheRedNoseInstitute.com.

NFDA and TSA "Known Shipper" Regulations

Continued from Page A2

purposes." As this policy was being developed five years ago, NFDA Advocacy Division staff met with TSA representatives to discuss the potential security threat presented by the shipment of human remains by air. NFDA staff outlined the typical procedures and chain of custody involved in preparing human remains for air shipment. At that time, TSA agreed that the "known" status of the funeral homes that ship by air, the limited access to the preparation room and the transportation procedures used created a minimal security risk.

Congress and TSA have revised their assessment, however, and have identified the shipment of human remains as a potentially serious security risk requiring stricter security measures.

Compliance with the "known shipper" policy

Funeral homes will be required to register as a "known shipper" with each airline they use to ship bodies; the application process might include an inspection and payment of an inspection fee. While registering with multiple airlines can create an administrative burden on funeral homes, TSA and the airlines have told NFDA that it must be done.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A33

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Observations

By Steven Palmer

Remembering a Snowy Night in Iowa

"But February made me shiver
With every paper I'd deliver.
Bad news on the doorstep;
I couldn't take one more step."

—Don McLean's "American Pie"

Buddy Holly needed a laundry bad.

His idea of a winter tour to make some money for his expectant wife and provide middle of the country kids with big time rock n' roll proved to be a test of fortitude.

A broken down touring bus and frigid cold weather were enough for Holly to decide that he needed to get to the next stop, Fargo, North Dakota, faster than the slow and unreliable vehicle would take them.

Carroll Anderson, the manager of the Surf ballroom, their last performance in Clear Lake, Iowa made arrangements with air charter service provider Jerry Dwyer to fly a few of the performers willing to pony up \$36 a person. Holly was in, Holly's bassist Waylon Jennings was in as was lead guitarist Tommy Allsup. The Beechcraft-Bonanza could only take three plus the pilot, Roger Peterson. Jennings gave up his seat to "Big Bopper" Richardson when he saw he was running a fever. Valens won a fifty cent coin toss backstage with Allsup to get a seat as he, a southern California boy, was stricken by a cold.

The "Day the Music Died" is now legend. The concert ended shortly before midnight. The plane took off an hour later. The pilot was not instrument rated. The snow was blinding, as experienced pilots will tell, without instruments up is down, down is up. John F. Kennedy, Jr. allegedly suffered the same phenomenon. Peterson flew the plane hard into an Iowan cornfield eight miles from the airport. The bodies of the

three upcoming musicians were found the next day scattered around the wreckage of the plane. Tommy Allsup had given his wallet to Buddy Holly for ID purposes to pick up a letter from Allsup's mother, leading authorities to release Allsup's name among the victims. The only victim left in the plane was the 21-year old pilot.

CHARLES "Buddy" HARDIN HOLLEY, 22, of Lubbock, Texas had his last name misspelled on a contract forever changing it. (Buddy came from his mother, Ella). His funeral was held in the family church, Tabernacle Baptist Church of Lubbock on February 7 at 2 PM with burial in Lubbock Cemetery. The Rev. Ben D. Johnson officiated and **Sanders Funeral Home** handled the arrangements with over 1,000 persons attending. His pregnant wife, Maria Elena would not attend his funeral as she miscarried their son due to her grief.

The city of Lubbock, Texas has just reached a settlement with Holly's widow, Maria Elena to allow The Buddy Holly Center to keep its name with a licensing fee to be paid to Holly's widow. A local park will be created in the name of Maria Elena and Buddy Holly.

RICHARD STEVE VALENZUELA, 17, of Pacoima, California was absent from Junior High School, attending his grandfather's funeral, the day two planes crashed over the school, killing three students and all of the crew of the planes. The event made the young musician afraid of flying. Donna Ludwig, the "Donna" of Valens song fame, heard the news of the crash from her girlfriend at High School, but school officials would not let her leave school. A letter from his mother was found in his coat pocket. It ended "Be good and I miss you more every day." Over a thousand mourners crowded St. Ferdinand's Church in San Fernando for the Funeral Mass, with burial following in the **San Fernando Mission Cemetery**, (the final resting place of Walter Brennan, "Life of Riley's" William Bendix, Chuck Connors, William "Fred Mertz" Frawley and many other famous persons).

JILES PERRY RICHARDSON, Jr., 28, of Beaumont, Texas earned the name "The Big Bopper" while at KTRM due to his 240 pound frame. He earned fame by broadcasting six days straight, over 122 hours and playing 1,821 records which established a world's record for continuous playing. Well known for "Chantilly Lace", J. P., also wrote "Running Bear" for Johnny Preston and George Jones' hit "White

Lightning". The Big Bopper's funeral was held at **Broussard's Funeral Home** in Beaumont, Texas on February 6, 1959, and he was buried at **Forest Lawn Cemetery** in Beaumont. Controversy over a gun found on the plane always caused questions as to whether a shooting in air had taken place. Jay Richardson, son of the radio personality had his father exhumed, the vault and casket opened, his father's remains removed and x-rayed. The investigation confirmed the original cause of death as trauma from the plane crash, nothing else. The younger Richardson is selling his father's original 16 gauge **Batesville Casket** to raise funds for memorializing the late performer. (The Big Bopper was reburied in a new casket).

ROGER PETERSON, 21, of Clear Lake, Iowa the hapless pilot who flew a plane into the ground and into infamy was buried February 6 in the **Buena Vista Memorial Cemetery** in his hometown of Alta, leaving a young wife.

Ella Holley, mother of Buddy, wrote a letter to the families of Valens, Richardson and pilot Peterson. Her thoughts were ones of bewilderment and grief and the hopes of celestial reunion. Her letter to Peterson's family showed great character.

"We are crushed by this terrible tragedy and the loss of our son, and we know you are suffering the same. We have never known before the grief and suffering from the death of a loved one but we do know now, and our hearts go out to you because we know what you are going through. We will keep you in our prayers"

Graciousness in the face of untold grief. Meaningful lives aren't always on stage; they can be lived in simple lives and in forgiving hearts.

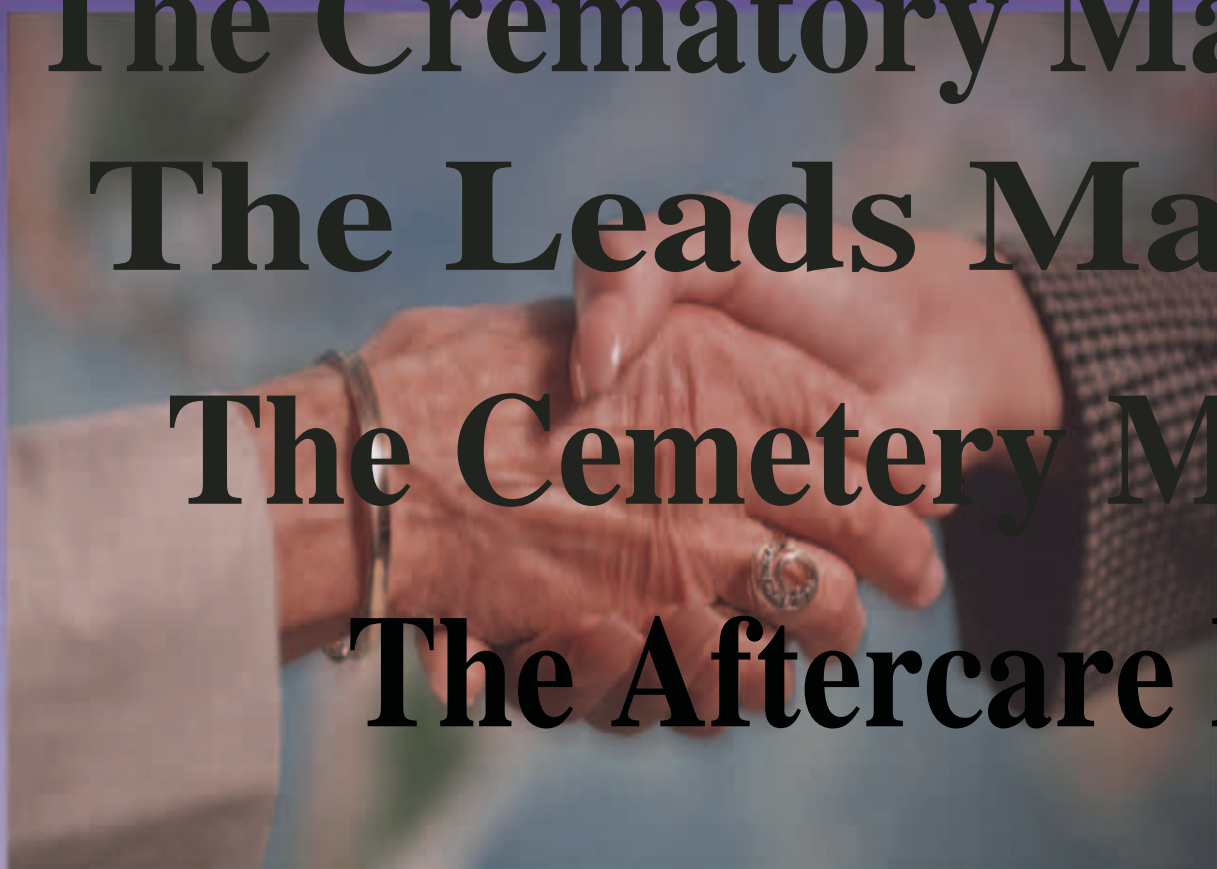
Fifty years ago on February 3, 1959, four lives were lost. The impact is still felt beyond the "Day the music died."

"I can't remember if I cried
When I read about his widowed bride,
But something touched me deep inside
The day the music died."

—Don McLean's "American Pie"

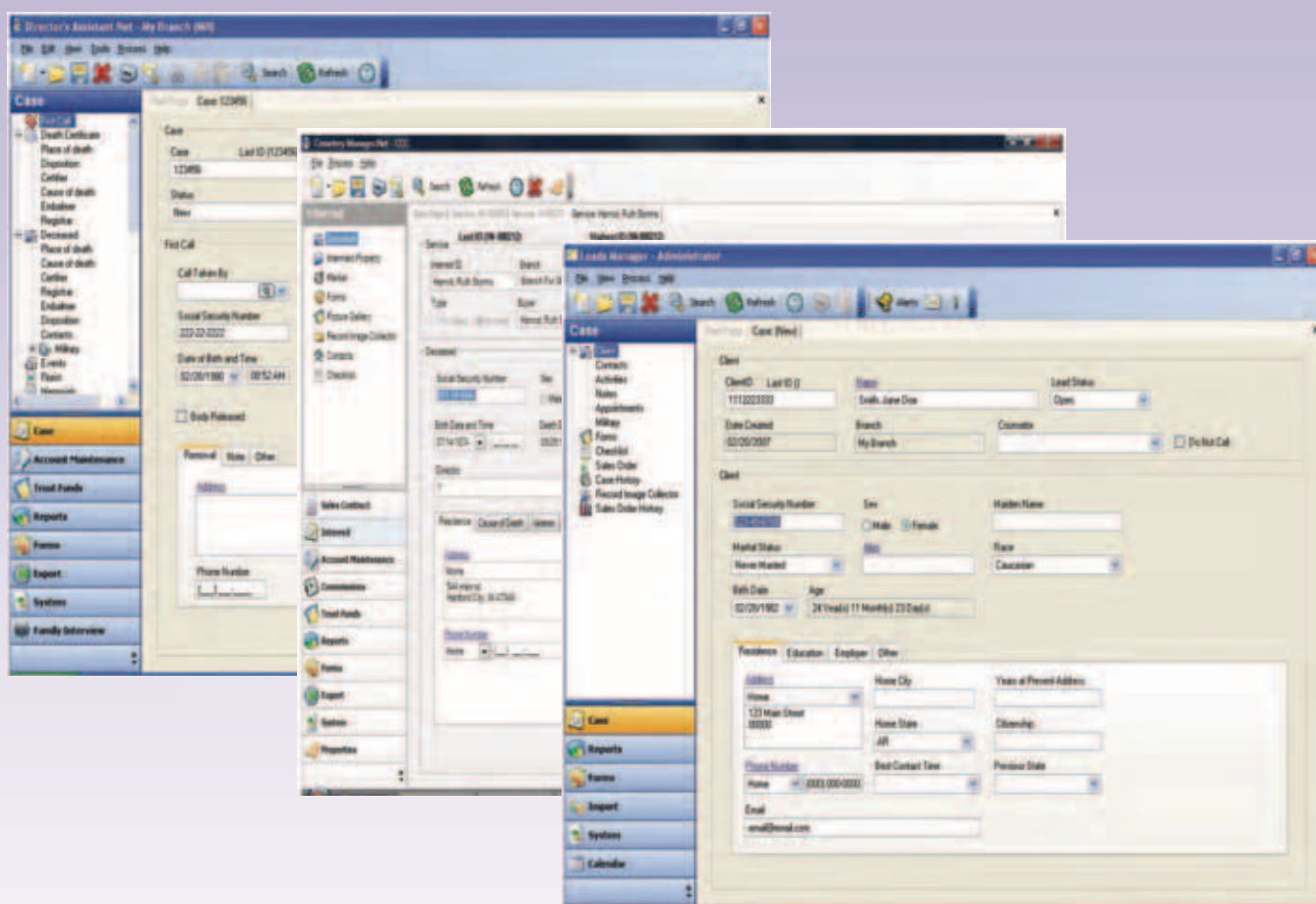
Steven Palmer entered funeral service in 1971. He is an honors graduate of the New England Institute of Applied Arts & Sciences. Licensed on both coasts, he owns the Westcott Funeral Homes of Cottonwood and Camp Verde, AZ. Steve offers his observations on current funeral service issues. He may be reached 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 westcott@commspeed.net or through his website at www.westcottfuneralhome.com.

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Alexander Cremation & Funeral Service Grand Opening

Continued from Front Page



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James was born and raised in the Fort Worth, area. He is a multi-talented person who has been in the service industry all of his life. James lives in Burleson, and enjoys working in his yard, decorating for the holidays, and entertaining friends. He is a member of Celebration Community Church in Fort Worth. He has two dogs, Montgomery and Coco, a cat, Sassie, and four birds, Stolee an African gray, Jessie and Diego which are cockatiels, and Baby, a Quaker parrot. You can learn more about Alexander Cremation & Funeral Services by visiting their website at www.fwcremation.com.

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OSHA Compliance

By Gary Finch

Recent OSHA Interpretations You Should Know About

What we have today are recent interpretations that seem to break new ground. They are worth a look. They will have a bearing on how your safety program will be delivered in the future.

These are excerpts. I think you will get the gist of each question, and OSHA answer.

This interpretation applies to the following standards.

- 1910.146(c)(4)
- 1910.1030(c)(1)(i);
- 1910.1030(c)(1)(iii);
- 1910.1200(e)(1);
- 1910.1200(e)(4)

Can a written program be kept solely in an electronic format?

Computers are much more common in the workplace now than when most OSHA standards were written. **We agree that in many instances electronic access to programs could be beneficial. Therefore, OSHA would allow a written program to be in either paper or electronic format, as long as the program meets**

all other requirements of the standard in question.

Where the standard requires that the written program must be made available to employees, the employer must ensure that employees know how to access the document and that there are no barriers to employee access.

Compliance Plus will move to a digital manual once we complete our "Plug and Play" training series. We will continue to use paper for awhile even after the digital is available.

Does 1910.1030(g)(2)(viii) require that the person conducting bloodborne pathogens training be a health care professional?

No, however, the trainer must be: knowledgeable in the subject matter covered by the elements contained in the training program. No, possible trainers include a variety of healthcare professionals such as infection control practitioners, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, occupational health professionals, physician's assistants, and emergency medical technicians. Non-healthcare professionals, such as but not limited to, industrial hygienists, epidemiologists, or professional trainers, may conduct the training provided they are knowledgeable in the subject matter covered by the elements contained in the training program as it relates to the workplace.

Does this trainer need to physically be in the classroom or is it acceptable for the trainer to be contacted via phone, e-mail, etc. to answer any questions the students have during internet (electronic) training classes?

The standard does not specify that the trainer be "physically" in the classroom while training is being conducted.

The training requirements established under 29 CFR 1910.1030(g)(2)(vii)(N) require an employer to allow for an opportunity for interactive questions and answers with the person conducting the training session. Employers use a variety of methods to meet the intent of the standard. As an example, training conducted by compressed digital video (CDV) where the trainer is in one location but is in direct communication with the trainees would provide for an interactive exchange and is an acceptable method for meeting the requirements of the standard. Additionally, OSHA has previously stated that an employer can meet OSHA's requirement for trainees to have direct access to a qualified trainer by providing a telephone hotline. The trainer must be accessible to employees during the time of training. It is important to note, too, that employees must be trained initially prior to being placed in positions where occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) may occur.

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.

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Fallen Heroes Funeral Care is Launched and accepting Affiliates

NEW HAVEN, CT— FuneralBranding.com has announced that it is accepting affiliates for **Fallen Heroes Funeral Care**, an affiliate network for funeral homes and cemeteries who wish to promote their policy of offering services and merchandise at no charge to families of military and emergency service personnel who lose their lives in the line of duty. Many funeral homes and cemeteries have such a policy, but fail to garner the goodwill that comes along with it.

Fallen Heroes Funeral Care is a network that will list affiliates on its online national directory. Members are also provided with a plaque of membership which may be prominently displayed in a public area of the funeral home and cemetery. Members are also provided with a collection of specialized brochures which explain Fallen Heroes Funeral Care to the community. A press release is provided for distribution to local media. An ad slick is also available which allows the member to pay tribute to those who serve in the military and as police, fire, and EMS personnel while explaining the program.

Members may join online at www.FallenHeroes-FuneralCare.com.



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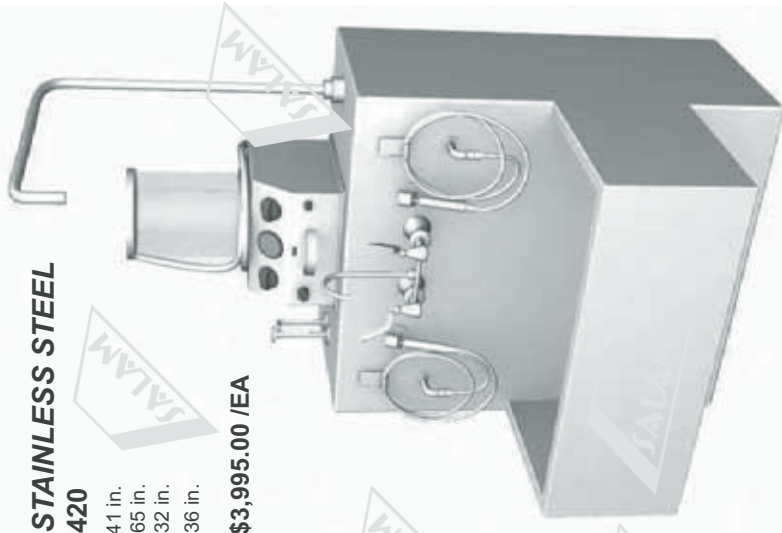
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Todd Van Beck

All this fuss and feathers about ceremonies, and I mean what motivates people to do them anyway?

Ceremonies are usually elaborate ways of doing things that really don't have to be done at all except to satisfy important emotional needs. That is the motivation – the satisfaction of emotional needs.

It is certainly easy and possible to get a diploma without attending elaborate commencement exercises, but nonetheless "graduation days" are wonderful occasions, particularly for the parents, here and there, who paid the bill. Ceremonies mark important life milestones.

A couple can be just as legally married by obtaining a marriage license and having a legal official mutter a few legal words, yet many thousands of people are not satisfied with

just that. They choose instead to spend hundreds or even many thousands of dollars that might otherwise be invested or used for furnishing the home to have a big wedding with many friends in attendance, a grand reception with an expensive dinner and flowers, gowns, and much, much more. They take pictures of it so that they will never forget this wonderful moment. None of this wedding ceremony is legally necessary, but it serves an

important purpose in the lives of the participants. They seek to surround a most important event in their life with all the meaning, dignity, tradition and joy they can employ.

Actually, as with most ceremonies, it is an investment in meaning, not permanency. It is perhaps difficult to justify in terms of hard dollars and cents, yet so important to the emotional needs of the participants that wherever you find human beings you will find elaborate ceremonies, often times made lavish with an extravagance that reason alone won't easily justify.

I remember the many times I have watched the changing of the guards at Buckingham Palace, or the ceremonies at the Royal Horse Guards, or watching Princess Di-

CONTINUED ON PAGE A27



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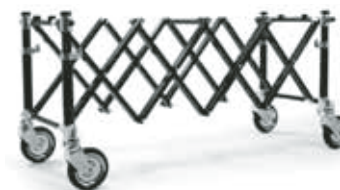
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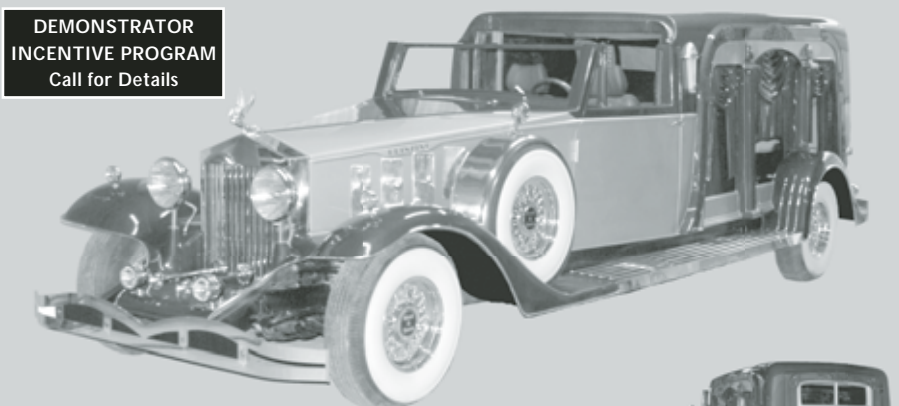
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NEW ORLEANS, LA— Yes, that's right. Hundreds of funeral homes and cemeteries—the professionals who deal with death every day—are encouraging people to Plan to Live. Life is short, and one way to make it more enjoyable is to plan for the future now. To help spread that message, Simplicity Plan® providers across the country are asking this question: "Life is short. What would make yours sweeter?"

Anyone who answers and shares his or her special dream of a lifetime, whether it's climbing Mount Everest, seeing the Seven Wonders of the World or going to a Super Bowl, will have the chance to win the one, overall grand prize of \$10,000 to help make that dream come true. Also, this nationwide giveaway offers 225 additional prizes, all thanks to the innovative Plan to Live Giveaway!

Here's how it works: from November 3, 2008, to March 31, 2009, the public can enter the giveaway two ways: (1) Visit any funeral home or cemetery that is a Simplicity Plan® provider and fill in and submit a printed entry form. Or (2) Visit www.PlanToLiveGiveaway.com and enter online. Plan to Live Giveaway Prizes include: Grand Prize - One Grand-Prize winner will receive \$10,000 to help grant

his or her dream of a lifetime. Second Prize - 50 winners will win Simplicity Plan memberships. Third Prize - 75 winners will get a DVD of *The Bucket List* movie, starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman. Fourth Prize - 100 winners will receive the book *1,000 Places to See Before You Die* by Patricia Schultz.

No purchase is necessary to enter, and the giveaway is open to legal residents of the 50 United States and District of Columbia who are 18 years of age. Official rules are available at www.PlanToLiveGiveaway.com. Prize drawings will be held Thurs., April 30, 2009.

Backed by a national network of funeral, cremation and cemetery service providers, Simplicity Plan® is a complete final needs program that offers the tools, information and resources individuals need to organize, document and store personal end-of-life decisions. It is a registered trademark of Stewart Enterprises, Inc., which currently owns and operates 221 funeral homes and 140 cemeteries in the United States and Puerto Rico and is publicly traded on NASDAQ under the symbol STEI.

Stewart Results for 2008

NEW ORLEANS, LA— Stewart Enterprises, Inc. (Nasdaq:STEI) has reported its results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year ended October 31, 2008.

Thomas J. Crawford, President and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "For fiscal year 2008, our funeral operations performed very well, and our cemetery operations did well under difficult economic conditions. We have been aggressively implementing our 'Best in Class' initiative and finding ways to improve efficiencies, reduce costs and deliver better services and products to the families we serve. The dramatic fall in the U.S. stock prices and the failure of several large institutions such as Lehman Brothers, Washington Mutual, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, have caused us to realize some losses in our trust portfolios and have resulted in a substantial decline in the value of our trust assets. However, our preneed obligations are long-term in nature and we believe that the trust investments have the potential over the long-term to appreciate in value. We cannot control the financial markets; nevertheless, we can control the continuous improvement of our funeral and cemetery operations and this effort has been well established in fiscal year 2008. In fiscal year 2009, we will increase our focus on finding innovative ways to enhance our revenues and profits."

Thomas M. Kitchen, Chief Financial Officer, stated, "While we have realized some losses related to the financial markets, we are pleased that the Company's liquidity position remains strong. Our balance sheet and cash flow are solid with \$72.6 million in cash on hand as of October 31, 2008 and no amounts drawn on our \$125 million revolving credit facility. We generated \$84.5 million of operating cash flow during the year, and we are currently working with our bank group to renew or replace the credit facility, which expires in November 2009. Although we have nothing drawn, we do have \$12.0 million in let-

ters of credit that would be required, and a \$30.8 million bond that may be required, to be covered with cash on hand should we not obtain a new facility by next November. Based on recent discussions with our banks, we are optimistic that we will be able to obtain an acceptable credit facility reflecting current market conditions. Until the negotiations with regard to the credit facility are finalized, we plan to conserve our cash. Otherwise, we plan to continue to evaluate our options for deployment of cash flow as opportunities arise."

Mr. Kitchen continued, "For fiscal year 2008, cemetery perpetual care trust earnings, funeral and cemetery merchandise and services trust earnings and ITI trust management fees comprised 7 percent of our revenue and 36 percent of our gross profit. Based on current market conditions and current realized losses, we believe the decrease in revenue from trust earnings recognized on delivery of preneed services and merchandise, cemetery perpetual care trust earnings and ITI trust management fees for fiscal year 2009 could be as much as \$10 million, or approximately 2 percent of fiscal year 2008 revenue and approximately 10 percent of fiscal year 2008 gross profit. The Company will continue to monitor its investment strategy to seek the proper asset allocation and diversification to mitigate risks in this difficult environment."

Mr. Crawford concluded, "Overall, if you isolate the unusual items that occurred in the fourth quarter, the performance of the underlying operations of our funeral homes and cemeteries was good. This is due to the steady progress of our 'Best in Class' initiative and continuous improvement initiatives and the enthusiastic reception and dedication from our employees."

In addition the Board of Directors has declared a quarterly cash dividend of \$0.025 per share. The dividend is payable on January 28, 2009 to holders of record of Class A and Class B Common Stock as of the close of business on January 14, 2009.

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Let's Chat

By Kristan Dean

years older than she, an active part of her life. We see the group joking in Hilda's beauty shop, in the Suarez home making a quilt from their late husbands' clothes, and talking about the upcoming senior trip they will be taking to Coney Island.

It is then that Mr. Suarez jumps in to take Hilda aside and ask, why is Hilda becoming a senior citizen? It is a simple question that lets us hear the truth. The answer is simple: Hilda needs to be with people who understand her sadness and these women do.

Today I ask you: Do you know anyone like Hilda? How can you bring the people you know, who need someone that can understand where their heart is, together? What can you do to help people reach out to one another in understanding and community? How can you help your families connect with those who understand where their hearts are?

Will you take Hilda's lead and bring people together to make a quilt? Can you see yourself inviting people in your community to come together for a scrapbooking party? Or are you thinking...I am not crafty? No worries—what do you think about inviting the people in your community to join you on a dog walk, a hike, or a community beautification project?

I look forward to your thoughts. Please give me a ring at 781-331-5308 or, if you prefer, email me at 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.

There is a saying "Misery Loves Company" that has always bothered me. Why would someone want to spread sadness? Thankfully, what I now think these words are trying to convey is how much we need to connect when our hearts are broken. They tell us how letting people in can help us heal and find our way back to joy.

Believe it or not, I came to this understanding while watching ABC's primetime show "Ugly Betty." For those unfamiliar with the program, the show centers on the adventures of, you guessed it, Ugly Betty. The series lets viewers experience Betty's life in the office, the relationships she shares with her family in Queens, and all the comedy and drama that these two worlds can create.

As interesting as Betty is, she is not the inspiration for this month's chat. Today, I would like to introduce you to her sister, Hilda Suarez. A free spirit and a mom who raises her son with acceptance, she was the woman who viewers saw sobbing on the floor in the final episode, as Betty told her that the man she was about to marry was dead. That scene brought so many viewers to tears that they took to the blogs to express how the actress's (Ana Ortiz's) performance made their hearts break for Hilda.

More than this, I thank the writers of "Ugly Betty" for taking viewers beyond the cliffhanger and letting us join Hilda on her path to healing. In this episode we see Hilda making three women, each at least thirty

Walker Funeral Home opens in Wyoming

Continued from Front Page

us by those that we serve. From the time the first phone call is received, throughout the service and beyond, each staff member at our funeral home contributes in an important way."

Funeral Director **Tom Walker** has been associated with the funeral industry since 1973, and worked for the **Noecker Funeral Home** in Gillette in the early 1970s. Born and raised in Lovell, WY, Tom attended *California College of Mortuary Science*, graduating in 1973. Tom has lived in Gillette and Sheridan for over twenty years. He is committed to serving the Gillette area. Tom and his wife, LoisAnn have five daughters, four of whom are grown and live away. Their youngest daughter, Katie is a high school sophomore and will help out at the funeral home on occasion.

Office Manager **Brenda Walker** was born in Lovell, WY and graduated from Lovell High School in 1979. In 1980, Brenda married **Paul Walker** in Gillette where they have made their home since. Paul and Brenda have three children, Andy, Matt and Ashley, whom all live in Gillette.

Brenda has been on the committee to plan the drug and alcohol free party for the graduates of Campbell for many years and previously worked for the CASA Agency for the 6th Judicial District advocating for abused and neglected children.

Funeral Director **Rita Mashak**, CFSP, was born and raised in Bangor, WI and is a first generation funeral director that is proud to serve in the community of Campbell County. She has lived in Campbell County for almost thirty years. Rita has been a funeral director for over fifteen years and received her Bachelor's Degree from the *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science*.

Rita has been a licensed embalmer in the State of Wyoming since 1992. Rita has served Campbell County as a deputy coroner for seven years. Rita has successfully completed the requirements for the Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP) awarded by the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice, Inc.

Rita is certified in cornea and whole eye enucleation with the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank, a past member of the Hospice of Campbell County and recently was elected to serve on the Campbell County Cemetery Board. She has three sons, and enjoys spending time with her family. Her passions are to garden, read, bike ride, travel and ski.

Office Assistant **Kathleen Bridges** grew up in northern Minnesota and graduated from Mahanomen High School. She attended Lab and X-ray

School in Minneapolis and following graduation moved to Gillette to work. Kathy and her husband Jim, along with their two children and 10 grandchildren, have called Gillette home since 1961.

She has been a part of **Gillette Funeral Service** since 2007, recently moving to the Walker facility. She's an active member of St. Matthews Catholic church and enjoys spending time with grandchildren, gardening and sewing.



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Uganda Orphanage receives help from group of women with donations arriving

Continued from Page A4

is the one responsible for finding clothes for the children, feels like she has died and gone to heaven. She had to sit down this morning when she first saw everything. Aunt Joy walked into the room and her mouth dropped open, she said "what is this???"She said 'God bless you Auntie Ann'...and I said, "No, God bless my sister, Nancy!!!"You can't even imagine how much fun it will be to hand out these gifts.

Thank you seems so inadequate. But I trust God will bless you and all the others for your generosity. Please convey my heartfelt gratitude to all the people who participated. (A card is on the way...!) The poster with pictures and greetings from everyone put a huge smile on my face. I plan to hang it up at the clinic - so everyone can see all the kind and gracious faces of our friends in Florida!!

I'll keep you posted on the "distribution program"



(L to R) Volunteers Nancy Lohman and Sally Reelick



(L to R) Bonda Garrison and Peggy Farmer packing and boxing.



Michelle Carter-Scott, part of the packing and sorting team.

The project was especially meaningful as the gathering of donations and the hours and hours spent packing the boxes all took place during the holidays, a time of year which reminds us to give thanks for our blessings and to share our blessings with others. Comments via emails and phone calls came to Peggy, Lorry and Nancy from many of the women who participated once they received the message from Ann that their donations had safely arrived:

"Thanks for sharing with us - how blessed are we to be able to bring such joy to them with so little of our own resources...Thanks so much for including me... Bonda Garrison"

"Your sister is really a cutie... Thank you for all you do in this life for others. I really appreciate your spirit... Hugs always. Nan Heebner"

"This is fantastic news. I am so grateful to have been involved in this. Michelle Carter-Scott"

"Hi Nancy, Sooo happy that they all arrived! It was a blessing to the boys and me to help with this....thank you for the opportunity and know that we are keeping Ann and the children in our prayers.....love the pictures! Jill Crouch"

"Hi Nancy, thanks for the letter we are happy that all your work paid off. I could cry when I saw the pic with the doll. My niece got her first baby Oct 1 and I bought the baby and toddler wardrobe with the doll in her name, ESMEE, I am so happy they liked it, bye see you, love, Laurentia Lucas"

The women that participated included Peggy Farmer, Lorry Garafolo, Nancy Lohman, Bonda Garrison, Nan Heebner, Michelle Carter-Scott, Jill Crouch, Laurentia Lucas, Bonnie Schillinger, Sally Reelick, Jill Stephens, Sharon Damante, Suzanne Fleuchaus, Muffi Chanfrau, Vonda Sullivan, Peggy Stockman, Patti Surguine, and Linda Lampman.

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Cremation Issues and Answers

By Ronald Salvatore



Causes of Upset Conditions (Part 6)

We left off last month wondering why the crematory room is hotter than it was before the improper refractory repairs were made. Brick absorbs heat from the charge (body and container) and the burners just like a sponge absorbs water. However, there is a saturation point, and once brick reaches the saturation point, heat will transfer through it.

Think of it this way: Place a paper towel on a counter top. On top of the paper towel, place a sponge. The sponge represents the first layer of refractory brick and the paper towel represents the second layer of insulating material. Slowly pour a little water on top of the sponge and watch as it is absorbed. Note that the paper towel is still dry. Continue to pour water. You will notice that eventually the sponge passes water from its top surface all the way through to the other side soaking the paper towel and the counter top.

Pour more water and it simply passes through the sponge and paper towel and on to the counter top because the layers are fully saturated. The same is true for brick. As the brick becomes saturated, it passes heat through its entire thickness and on to the next layer of insulation. As this layer becomes saturated, heat radiates into the room.

Cremation equipment manufacturers use a specific combination of refractory materials in designing the lining of the chambers. Change this configuration or the type of materials and you affect the performance of the cremator. It may also create a

hazardous operating condition.

We have covered two causes of upset conditions – operator error and improper refractory repairs. The next section will focus on maintenance and service of the cremator. Burner fuel and air adjustments should only be performed by authorized factory technicians. They know the equipment, and they understand the dynamics of the cremation process which is critical in correctly calibrating the fuel and air settings.

Correct fuel and air settings are necessary to ensure compliance with applicable emission standards, minimize fuel consumption, prolong refractory life, and allow for a smoke and odor free operation. Too much fuel or insufficient air to the burners is a fuel rich mixture. This can cause visible emissions, and can lead to overheating of the cremator. Overheating causes both short and long-term problems. A fuel rich setting can elevate the temperatures to a point where damage may occur, and cause the refractory to glaze over leading to premature deterioration.

Too little fuel or too much air is a lean mixture and can prevent the cremator from achieving proper temperatures resulting in the discharge of white smoke. This mixture can also prevent the cremation from being completed in the normal time increasing operating costs.

The fuel/air mixtures should be recalibrated on a regular basis as part of your preventative maintenance program. More about this next month.

If you have cremation related questions you would like addressed in this column, please contact Ron Salvatore at Matthews Cremation Division, PO Box 547248, Orlando, FL 32854, (800)327-2831 or via e-mail at Rsalvatore@matw.com.

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, cemetery workers and other industry professionals.

8-Year-Old Daniel Mahn leads crusade to save City Landmark



The DeSoto Texaco Station, before (top) and after renovation.

DESOTO, MO— DeSoto has a lot of history behind its name, as do many businesses and families. Many prominent families have lived in and around this small railroad town with many descendents still here. Lots of businesses are now gone due to numerous circumstances, but restoration of a small gas station has caught the eye of several passer-bys. Many stop just to refresh memories of their past, some to admire a restoration of history, a few have ideas of how to utilize this renewed historic site, but for this particular Christmas season an old familiar face has been seen and visited by several hundred curious and excited youngsters awaiting the eve of Christmas.

The Texaco Station was refurbished just in time to brighten the faces of all the little ones and their parents for this holiday season. Young children and those young at heart could be seen inside visiting with the jolly old elf himself, Santa Claus.

Many visitors came to the Texaco Gas Station on Friday and Tuesday evenings, bringing their children and taking pictures. Children of all ages expressed to Santa Claus how good they have been, informing him of their wishes of what to leave under the Christmas tree. The excitement on a child's face, knowing they are going to visit with Santa is a joy to remember—even though some are very reluctant to sit on his lap and wish to stand a small distance from him. It's also a parent's joy.

Several youngsters told Santa there will be cookies and milk; some worried about how he will get presents under their tree because there isn't a fireplace chimney to come down; how they worry about the reindeers and if Rudolph will be guiding his sleigh. The bewilderment of a child is endless.

The Texaco Gas Station dates back to 1934, and was scheduled to be torn down to make way for a parking lot. But **Todd Mahn's** 8 year old son, **Daniel Mahn**, convinced his father, owner of **Mahn Funeral Home** in DeSoto and Festus, MO, to keep the building, refurbish and utilize for business purposes. This lad loves the his-

tory behind antiques and on his shopping sprees can be found somewhere visiting the antiques shops.

Todd, Rita, and Daniel

opened the station for Santa's House this year at the request of the DeSoto' Chamber of Commerce. There will be a car cruise planned from the

old station this spring.

The history of Mahn Funeral Homes dates back to 1914, when **Daniel J. Mahn, Sr.** received his embalming license.

In 1922, he opened **Mahn Hardware Store** in DeSoto. The Mahn family home on 4th Street in DeSoto also served as

CONTINUED ON PAGE A26

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Prelude to the Science of Embalming (Part 43)

By John A. Chew

Cavity treatment has been considered the simplest form of embalming but, in my opinion, it should be considered a method of basic preservation. The value of cavity treatment is the most controversial process in the treatment of a dead body.

Some practitioners believe that it is not necessary in the treatment of a dead body while others are of the opinion that aspiration and injection are necessary. In actuality, a body is sterile and after the integrity of the life processes have been jeopardized, decomposition may occur due to tissue enzymatic and microbial contamination.

All we have had to work with has been early visual observations of the physical/chemical changes a body undergoes. An early sign may be distention and purging from the orifices of the body. This expulsion may be liquid or semi-solids from the nose and mouth. When associated with pulmonary and/or some cardiac conditions, such purge may be odorless or putrid. In some conditions the purge will be a frothy light yellowish or pinkish color, specked with pus indicating the existence of pyogenic micro-organisms and/or small clots.

Another common occurrence from the nose and mouth may originate from the stomach referred to as gastric purge with a coffee ground (brown) appearance. This purge contains particles of partly digested food with a sour fecal odor.

Purge may be the only indication of pre-existing conditions associated with a specific cause of death which, in some cases, can be determined through the pre-

analysis process. Early thoughts were to discourage the purge and continue to wipe the oral area during the treatment. As the years passed, thinking changed and the body was placed on its side with the head extended over the side of the preparation table to encourage the elimination of the purge by applying regional pressure. The major concern is the actual burning and staining of the tissue around the mouth from the gastric acid. This is easily corrected by applying a liberal amount of massage cream around the mouth area.

Today I question the need of cranial aspiration in an average body and those conditions that warrant its use. I can remember working with a firm over fifty years ago where we did cranial treatment on every body. In thinking back, I only saw a few cases where it was necessary to treat the cranial vault due to bone erosion of the cribriform plate because of infections in the central nervous system.

The sign of a cranial purge is leakage a creamy blood spotted viscid fluid through the nose. Treatment would be aspiration, injection of two or three ounces of preservative and then packed with cotton.

Today the opening of the cranial cavity (vault) is not recommended in individuals suffering from dementia if the etiology is a prion (a filterable self-replicating agent). Pathologists have been infected through accidental self-inflicted punctures (wounds) during surgery or in the performance of a post-mortem examination. Using common sense will keep the practitioner/embalmer from risk during the preparation of a body. All that is known is that it is fatal through accidental exposure.

Prelude Forty-Four will review and compare methodologies

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, Medicin, UPR, ESCO/OMEGA, and the Academy of Restoration and Embalming.

SAINT JAMES, NY— As the concrete mixer whirled in the background, the Maher family, along with beloved friends from the community which they've served for over three decades, stood at the spot that is to become the fulfillment of a dream. As the foundation for **St. James Funeral Home's South Chapel** was poured, owners **Kenneth Maher, Sr.** and **Betty Maher**, along with their children **Kenneth Jr.** and **Kerry**, knelt down to put their handprints in the wet concrete, adding an American Flag pin and mementos that represent their family; their heritage; their commitment.

"We're incredibly excited that our new location is nearing completion," said Kenneth Sr., who, with his wife and children, has operated the original St. James Funeral Home on Route 25A for more than 30 years. "We felt such a sense of joy and excitement watching the foun-



James Funeral Home's South Chapel in Construction



The family's handprints in the new cement.

ation being set, and wanted to include items that have deep meaning to us. We put in family photos, and, as you'd expect, if you know our family, a shamrock!"

In addition to their handprints, the four members of the Maher family added a fifth set, in honor of their daughter *Aelysche*, who passed away October 4, 2007. "My sister was not only a treasured member of our family and our hamlet, but also of our business," said Kerry, who serves all local funeral directors as a member of the Board of Directors of the *Nassau-Suffolk Funeral Directors Association* and, like her dad and her brother are members of that prestigious organization, as well as a new member of the Board of Directors and a very active member of the St. James Chamber of Commerce. "In addition to teaching elementary students, who still call us regularly to tell us how much they miss her, Aelysche spent many hours comforting grieving families, so, adding a handprint for her was our way of honoring her memory."

A labor of love in the making for more than three years, St. James Funeral Home's South Chapel, located at 829 Middle Country Road, Route 25, Saint James, will not only be one of the largest of its kind in the region, but also a place of beauty and serenity, designed with the needs of the community uppermost in mind.

"Our architect, **Marc Mancini**, exceeded all of our expectations with his amazing design," said Kenneth Jr., who, with his father, dedicates his time to the Knights of Columbus, the Saint James-Smithtown Little League and other community activities when he's not working at the St. James Funeral Home's 25A location, which will still operate in full upon completion of the new site. "We drive by each day and are thrilled with the progress."

Betty, a native of Cork, Ireland, and former teacher, played a special role in the plans for the new building's children's room. "It will include a children's library, a selection of appropriate, educational toys and a beautiful hand-painted mural to calm and soothe anxious children, along with flat-screen monitors so adults won't miss a moment of a ceremony while accompanying their children," explained Betty. "The science teacher in me did constant research into implementing many 'green' features in our new facility: eco-friendly windows with extra insulation and low-e glass, overall insulation that exceeds town, state and federal regulations, the use of low VOC-emission paints and materials throughout the building; these items are of the utmost importance in doing all we can to preserve our planet Earth." Betty also plans to include children's artwork in the community gallery.

The Maher family expects the building will be ready for its grand opening sometime early this summer, and is eager to welcome the entire community to the opening festivities. "We've had the honor of serving the families of St. James for many years," said Kenneth Sr., "and we will continue with the same compassion and dedication in our new location."

“Honey The Rock Hound” is a Grief Recovery Book for Kids and a Resource for Funeral Directors

ST. LISBON FALLS, ME—A new book for kids grieving the loss of a beloved pet or loved one can become a powerful public relations tool for funeral directors, according to Tom Lord author of *Honey The Rock Hound*. In many households, a pet is an important member of the family. To offer the book when a pet or loved one dies is an excellent way to say “we care.”

Lord says the book can do no good if nobody reads it, and suggests funeral directors look for an excuse to loan it to a parent or grandparent when a pet or loved one has died. Place it in their hands and suggest they read it to the child and encourage discussion. There are helpful suggestions for adults in the book as well. Mention something in the book that could be helpful to them when you loan it.

According to Lord, “When you loan someone the book, you have an excuse to talk with them about their pet or loved one when they return it. You or a staff member may be the only one in that person’s life willing to take a few minutes to talk with them about their loss. A strong bond develops when a person knows someone cares about them. Relationships are the building blocks of any funeral business.”

Tom Lord says he had no idea the book would be helpful to anyone outside his family when he wrote it. He said everyone at his camp used to laugh hilariously each time they watched his Cocker Spaniel puppy leap into the air. Each time her feet left the ground her long curly ears flapped out to the sides giving the appearance she was trying to fly. Actually, she was straining to see where the rocks landed that his grandchildren were chucking into the woods for her. She’d lay in the underbrush for long periods of time, half yipping, half growling. Invariably she’d return and spit the same rock at the feet of whoever had chucked it. Then she’d beg to have them do it again, and again.

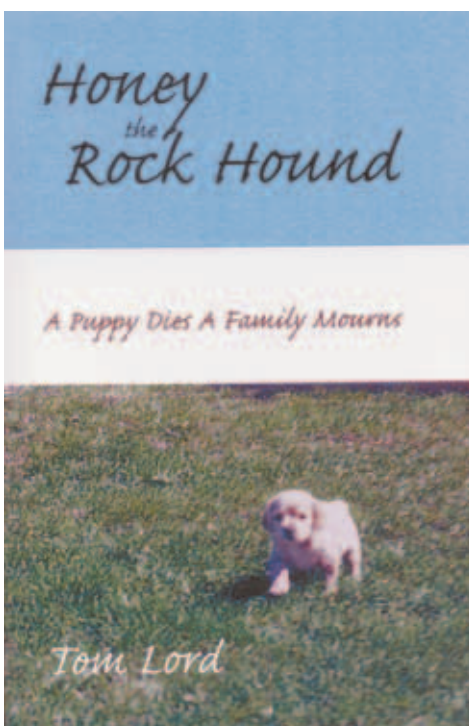
As time went on rocks began turning up inside, under the furniture. The pup was hiding them in her mouth when she came in. Later when no one was looking she’d drag them out and roll on them to scratch her back. Thus they dubbed her “Honey The Rock Hound.”

In the book, she runs under the tires of a huge truck and dies. In a subtle way the book guides kids and adults through the grieving process, should their own pet die. Young children can act out the story as they play. There’s not a whole lot of difference for a child that’s grieving the loss of a beloved pet or a loved one.

The book offers parents an opportunity to interact with their children on a host of issues. It becomes a powerful teaching tool, giving them a chance to shine in the eyes of their child.

The funeral director is making a lasting impression with the parents and will be fondly remembered by them. There’s an old saying, “He who takes the child by the hand takes the parent by the heart.”

The book takes a hard look at issues that are difficult for kids to grasp. Questions like, “Will I see my pet in heaven? How can my pet be buried in



the ground and be with God at the same time? I’m mad at God! He didn’t answer my prayer when I prayed for my pet. And should I get another pet right away after mine has died?”

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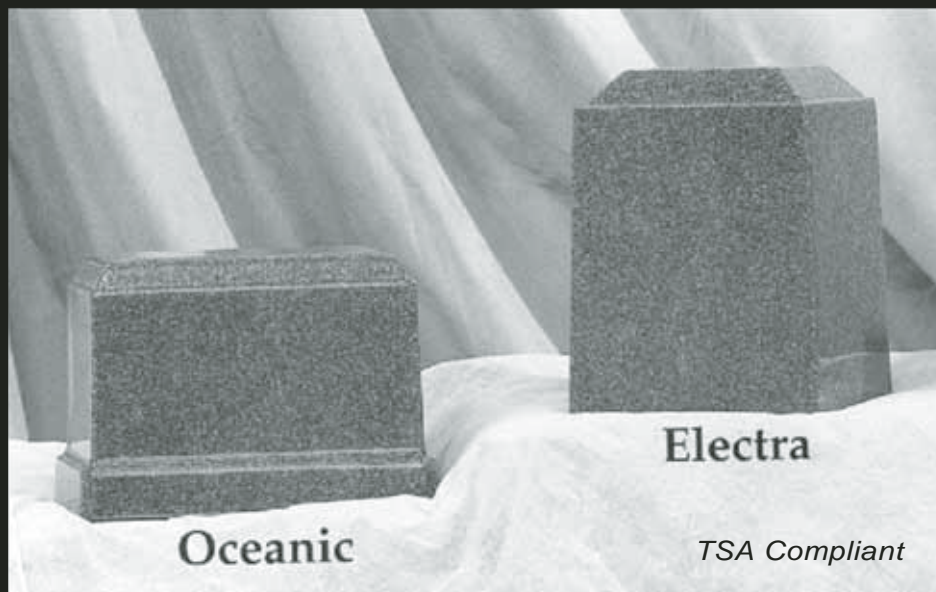
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Hutchens Mortuary takes delivery of New GMC Savana Van



FLORRISANT, MO— John Hutchens of Hutchens Mortuary and Cremation Center, Florrisant, MO, takes delivery of their new GMC Savana Van Conversion from Joe Molina of Royal Coachworks, Inc., St. Louis, MO, who did the conversion for funeral work.

Crusade to save Landmark

Continued from Page A23

a parlor after World War II. Then in 1954, D.J. Mahn, Jr. purchased a home at 900 N. Main Street from Tony Datillo, and the first official Mahn Funeral Home open house was celebrated.

Gerald "Jerry" Mahn graduated from mortuary school in 1955 and joined his brother D.J. in the business. Together they built one of the most successful businesses in Jefferson County. Two large chapels were added and a large capacity garage. The funeral home provided em-

balming services for other funeral homes throughout the county, and also operated one of the largest privately owned ambulance services.

In 1999, the acquisition of a local funeral home in Festus, MO provided Mahn Funeral Homes the opportunity to continue the tradition of valued service. Today, Todd Mahn is owner of Mahn Funeral Homes. Todd, along with his dedicated staff, continues to serve families with the same trusted service that began so long ago.

Women of Distinction



The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service honor our female funeral professionals who have impacted the profession in their respective communities, their state and on the national level. They have accepted the challenges of being a female in a non-traditional profession in one of this nation's most demanding industries. They have exhibited professionalism, leadership, longevity and class. Because they continue a strong legacy and make a commitment to the funeral service

profession, women are at the forefront. Many of these women were honored as 100BWFS Women of Distinction, receiving the M. Athalie Range Trailblazer Award. For the next several months these fine women will be featured in this column. If you would like more information on the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service go to www.100Blackwomenoffuneralservice.com or email Hundredbwfs@aol.com.



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

Women of Distinction: Valoria Ann Dillon and Cecile Clayton Davis

Valoria Ann Dillon is one of the hardest working funeral service professionals in the industry. I met her when I joined Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, where she was serving as the National Recording Secretary over 20 years ago. Epsilon Nu Delta is the oldest African American mortuary fraternity, started at *Worsham College of Mortuary Science* as a study group for students. History is very important to Valoria and she knows her END history. She worked with the late national secretary, Gertrude Roberts, and she was a national officer who worked with many historic officers in the past and learned from the best there was.

Valoria is truly a Chicagoan having received her primary and secondary education from the Chicago Public Schools. She later attended the University of Minnesota, St. Olaf College, and the historic *Worsham College of Mortuary Science* in 1974. She later attended Chicago State University. She has been licensed from the Illinois State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. Valoria will not hesitate to tell you she's been around the block a few times and that "age is just a number."

Valoria is a jack of all trades and has combined her funeral service career with her 30-year career at the University of Chicago Hospital. She presently holds a senior status position as a Medical Records Technician II. So many of our honorees are members of family owned businesses that have existed for many generations, but Valoria has not owned or managed a funeral home. She has loved the profession and affiliated with some of the finest funeral establishments in the city of Chicago and been a devoted and wonderful licensed professional. She brings lots of zest and enthusiasm to every firm she has affiliated with and has accumulated loads of experience and expertise.

She has taken to the professional organizations and has held many important offices and worked behind many successful national and state officers. So when I say she is a jack-of-all-trades, I am not kidding. I know she was the wind beneath my wings when I took over for the late Gertrude Roberts and she led the way for me. I am eternally grateful for her knowledge and expertise as well as the lifelong friendship.

Valoria has held her CFSP Academy designation for over seven years. She has served as the President and Chairman of the *Illinois Select Morticians Association*, she is a member of Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc. Alpha Chapter; she is the current District 4 Governor of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, Inc.* and is an active member of the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service. She has always found time to be actively involved in the funeral service profession and the many social and service organizations within the funeral industry. In the midst of this hectic schedule she is the proud mother of one daughter, Itaria Anissa Dillon.

Everyone has a secret passion and talent and Valoria's is a passion for the culinary arts. "Miss Cordon Bleu International" is a culinary professional and she does it with a great passion. She finds time to cater and prepare exotic foods for parties, weddings and other VIP social events in her spare time. Spare time you might say? Yes, we always find time to do those things we have a passion for. I can't wait to plan a funeral service meeting in Chicago to put Valoria Dillon to the test! I hear she does a fabulous job.

We salute one of Chicago's most dedicated and available funeral professionals, my friend and sister Valoria Dillon, a 2008 Woman of Distinction for the 100 BWFS.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A29

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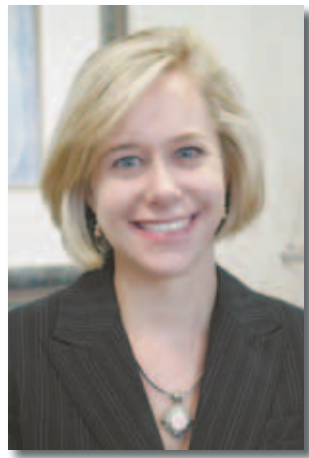


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The Face of Funeral Service on Facebook

By Lacy A. Robinson



Lacy A. Robinson

Have you been tagged? Poked? Or even Super Poked? If you've been any of those then you have definitely been on Facebook and know that Facebook is not only smart, but highly addictive. It's the premier social networking website designed to "help you connect and share with the people in your life." Facebook continues to grow as the largest social network and the emergence of funeral service connections are quickly becoming a Facebook trend.

I've been an active user of Facebook since 2007. For over a year, the social dynamics of Facebook have allowed me to connect with high school and college friends, far and near relatives, and even my in-laws. Most recently, I've been connecting with funeral service professionals. Funeral directors, embalmers and funeral service related people don't make up a huge percentage of the 150 million users of Facebook, but it certainly has a strong and growing presence.

Through Facebook I've been able to reconnect with ladies from the *NFDA Professional Women's Conference* and fellow alumni from *Mid-America College of Funeral Service*. Just the other day I received a "wall post" from a fellow alumni looking for an experienced pre-need arranger. I've also formed a group, or an online community, specifically for Kentucky licensees to connect and communicate. As creator of this group I'm able to post news, upcoming events and interesting funeral-related articles.

There are numerous funeral service related groups on Facebook, and it's very easy to find an online community to suit your needs. Simply type in the Facebook search engine your specific funeral interest. Looking to connect with classic hearse enthusiasts? You'll find that group which attracts new members daily. Are you a female funeral director and embalmer? There's a group for that, complete with a picture of a pink embalming machine. There's no doubt that our profession attracts unique and diverse people and this is clearly indicated by the number of groups and types of groups present.

You will also find when searching for groups related to your specific funeral interests that many individual funeral homes have formed their own online community. Those funeral homes, using Facebook to connect virtually with their community, are well aware that Facebook not only reaches out to high school and college students but adults and professionals as well.

A few useful communication ideas for funeral home Facebook groups:

- Share news/press releases about the funeral home (e.g. introduction of new employees)
- Invite and inform members of event details such as the annual Christmas Memorial Ceremony
- Encourage members to ask questions and take the opportunity to educate and inform
- Address negative media attention when funeral service comes under fire
- Incorporate a poll to gain additional demographics about the community

There's no doubt that the creator of Facebook has incredible ambition for its functionality. As Facebook becomes more ambitious the possibilities for people to connect become endless. Which ever way you choose to use

Facebook, professionally or personally, the funeral service connections are waiting for you. Facebook helps put the fun in funeral service one connection at a time.

Lacy Robinson is a Kentucky licensed funeral director/embalmer and a certified member of the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice. She is a graduate of Georgetown College, Georgetown, KY and Mid-America College of Funeral Service, Jeffersonville, IN. As a Professional Development Trainer at Aurora Casket, Ms. Robinson specializes in helping funeral directors partner with families to create funerals that honor both their basic and personal needs at the time of loss. She presents continuing education programs on both the local, state and national level. Ms. Robinson serves on the Mid-America College of Funeral Service Alumni Board and is an active member of the Funeral Directors Association of Kentucky. She is a Certified Celebrant, certified Wilson Learning Facilitator and member of the Kentucky Speakers Association.

Hempfen Funeral Home purchases Superior Coach



NEW BADEN, IL— A new 2009 Superior Cadillac Statesman Funeral Coach is delivered to **B. Carson Hempfen of Hempfen Funeral Home**, with funeral homes in New Baden, Breese, Aviston and Albers, IL, by **Joe Molina of Royal Coachworks, Inc.** St. Louis, MO.

Motivation for Ceremony

Continued from Page A18


ana's wedding and funeral on television, and even the old reruns of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth with all the great pomp and ceremony and being simply emotionally enthralled with the sophistication and history of the British ceremonies. Of course I know logically that the English monarch has not really had any practical political power for years, but that logic and rational view means very little to me when I am emotionally involved with the raw splendor of the ceremony.

Ceremonies help individuals to accept rather than deny their emotions and this is a powerful psychological motivator. Ceremonies help individuals get their arms, so to speak, around the big questions and events of life. Remember just words fail people, so, across the globe they implement ceremonies. In this way there is a type of verification of the person's ability to find the way through the dramatic and traumatic events of living life. Ceremonies offer the human being the ability to communicate thoughts and feelings through acts. These actions may well be one of the most wise and economical paths to mental health available.

It may be the simple baptism of a little baby in a small country church with its quiet joy; or the state funeral of the President of the United States; the motivation and meaning of ceremonies has its value ultimately not in what it costs but in what it does for the participants.


Todd W. Van Beck is one of the funeral profession's most prolific authors and presenters. From simple staff development at the smallest funeral home to clergy seminars to keynote addresses at the largest of gatherings, Mr. Van Beck tailors each presentation to suit any occasion.

Todd W. Van Beck has written over 200 articles and 65 books and manuals covering every possible topic of interest to funeral directors, cemeterians and clergy. His extensive training and experience spans over 35 years at every level of the funeral and cemetery profession and the church. For more information or to contact Mr. VanBeck visit www.vanbeckseminars.com.




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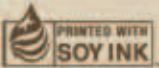


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John Hudson - Marketing Director

HOUSTON, TX— Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Services, Houston, announces the opening of a new 5,000 square foot addition, which houses a Garden Room (chapel), a caterer's kitchen, interior public stairs, outdoor covered arbor, private casket lift, large grief library for public



use, an additional stateroom, casket and other storage areas, as well as a private apartment for the owner.

The Garden Room seats 250 in hand carved upholstered chairs imported from Italy. Four large crystal chandeliers hang in the room also imported from Italy. There are costumed designed cur-

tains covering four windows, which were hand sewn (the outer drapes are dark green silk velvet; the under curtains are pale blue silk; and the shears are coffee colored silk). The rear wall is faux mercury glass, while the main front wall boasts custom curtains made of beige and gold silk. Behind the front drapes is a large flat screen television should families wish to use it. Around the front drapes are antique carved moldings matching moldings in the original portion of Bradshaw-Carter. These moldings were salvaged from the home of one of the founders of Humble Oil, today ExxonMobil. The side walls in the Garden Room are hand painted murals of an Italian countryside on eight canvas that took the artist a year to complete. These murals were then mounted on the walls as wallpaper and filled in to fit the room and then antiqued.

The final touch was to add a longhorn, the mascot of The University of Texas.

The foyer and stair halls are covered in pale blue wallpaper with tiny gold stars and contain numerous antiques. There is a large crystal chandelier also from Italy hanging here as well as several brass lanterns. The stateroom upstairs has faux painted walls in a light green with pale blue wash. The room contains custom designed gold silk drapes with blue silk under curtains and a blue upholstered sofa and chairs. There is an antique stained glass panel built into the center of the wall in this room. The room also contains several Modern works of art by well known artists such as Fernand Leger, James Slurs, Donald Roller Wilson, as well as a collection of antique Chinese porcelains.

Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Services, is inde- **CONTINUED ON PAGE A34**

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Women of Distinction

Cecile Clayton Davis: the First Lady of NFD&MA

Wife, mother, entrepreneur, leader and giver are only a few attributes relating to **Cecile Clayton Davis**, the first lady of the NFD&MA, Inc. Cecile is the devoted wife of National President **Hall L. Davis, IV** and together they are the proud parents of four children. She values her family life and devotes much time to supporting their visions.



Cecile Clayton Davis

Cecile holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Southern University A & M of Baton Rouge, LA. Upon graduation, she received top honors, including the Dean's Award. While studying at the university, she also successfully completed her funeral director internship and obtained her license from Louisiana State Funeral Directors and Embalming Board in 1989. After diverting from a 30-plus year nursing career she is now co-owner and manager of **Hall Davis & Sons Funeral Service**, which currently has three locations.

As described in Proverbs 31, Cecile is viewed by those around her as a "virtuous woman." Out of a heart of unconditional love, she fulfills her duties as a helpmate to her husband and provides her children and others with great words of wisdom. Though humble, she possesses great strength and dignity. She is energetic, trustworthy, wise, kind and is always found in a ready-to-help-others state. She is known for giving help and support to those in need.

Cecile loves the Lord and He is first in her life. She is an active member at Israelite Missionary Baptist Church of Brusly, LA, pastored by Reverend Dr. George C. Pierce. She serves on the board as deaconess and has chaired many committees for special events.

In fulfilling her civic duties she is a member of the Tau Kappa Omega chapter of Al-

Continued from Page A26

pha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is also a member of the *Louisiana Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association*, National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, and 100 Black Women of Funeral Service, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the Nubian Energetic Women, where she currently serves as president.

In her limited leisure time, the first lady of funeral service can be found preparing one of her delicious gourmet meals, riding on the Harley with her husband, traveling or shopping. However, she finds it necessary to make time to attend the YMCA regularly and attend all of her son's collegiate football games.

Compassion is her nature but she has an excellent passion for comforting and servicing all humankind, which she has exhibited throughout her nursing and funeral directing career. She is a true asset to the funeral profession and we are honored to have her grace us with her high ideas, beauty, dedication and commitment to the profession and life career as a business entrepreneur, wife and mother.

We also thank Cecile for standing by the national president of our great association, elected to officially hold the office for two long and productive years. You have shown why you are a 2008 Woman of Distinction.



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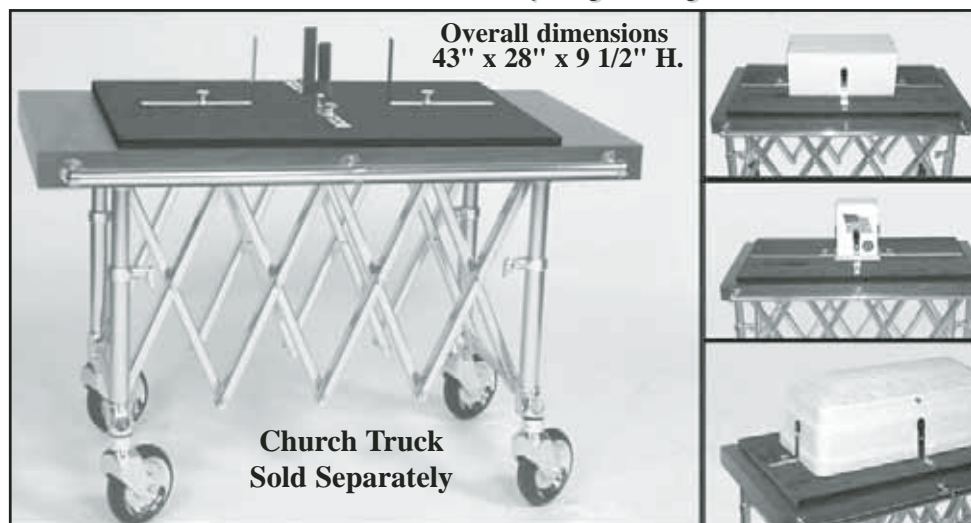
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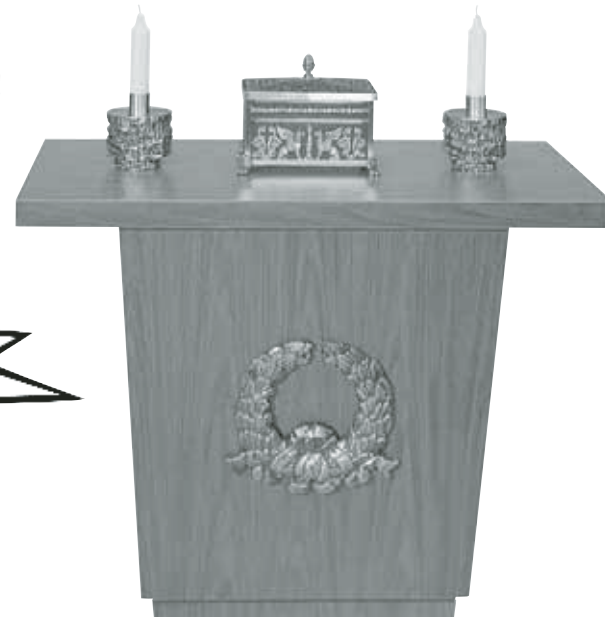
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Shun Newbern

Imagine you are traveling down the highway and all of sudden you see the flashing lights of a highway patrolman in your rearview mirror. Your adrenaline rushes, your palms become sweaty, and there is a momentary panic that swells up inside you. After all, you weren't doing anything wrong. Those same dreadful feelings are mirrored when the receptionist announces the state inspector is in the lobby. Be it planned or surprise, those visits are almost

sure to elevate your heart rate. So how can you be better prepared? Be fully prepared; when the state inspector or OSHA comes you will survive the inspection. This article will take a closer look at some key areas for managers and embalmers to focus on and prepare for. Please refer to specific regulations of your state and an OSHA compliance advisor to ensure that complete observance is understood.

Principal Ground Rules

Unlicensed embalmers and unregistered apprentices are apparent violations. Funeral home owners and management have an ethical and legal responsibility to the families they serve; staffing their business appropriately is a vital responsibility that should never be ignored. Remains should be properly covered at all times. Special care should be given to ensure privacy and dignity of the remains in a respectful manner. Unembalmed remains

should be refrigerated in the appropriate time, per the states requirements. Scrutiny will be placed on the funeral home if there is a cabinet occupied with photos of deceased, containers with viscera in formalin, unidentifiable cremated remains.

Procedures such as taking photos, removal of medical devices, embalming and major restorative art should be documented with a written expressed permission prior to beginning the task. A detailed embalming report should be prepared explaining the decedent's condition before, during and after the procedure instead of taking photos without proper documentation. Some items discussed may not be violations in your state; nevertheless, they raise ethical issues and increase the funeral homes liability for possibly litigation.

Stay Positive

By being prepared and proactive you can pass an inspection and prevent fines. The embalming room is a respectful place that is seemingly sacred. It is to remain secure, odor free and sanitary at all times. Your attitude towards the inspector is paramount; if you begin with false and misleading statements, making excuses for non-compliance issues it will be used against you. Refrain from making unsolicited explanations and excuses where non-compliance issues are concerned.

All containers with chemical in the embalming room should be properly labeled. Separate waste receptacles, designated for hazardous wastes should be placed in a "red" container (properly labeled as such) and another for regular trash. There should be a separate and accessible "sharps" container. Maintain good records of hazardous chemical with MSDS sheets, waste treatment and removal treatment.

Fine Tuning

In order to pass the inspection, one should practice lending timely attention to these, often overlooked details: Immediately after each embalming wash and scour the head / arm blocks, body supports, instruments, the entire embalming table and sundry items used for cleaning and disinfecting. Recording the frequency of housekeeping maintenance can be placed in a three-ring binder or on the embalming report. The autopsy and tissue harvest case becomes time consuming, resulting in less than satisfactory cleaning of additional apparatus that are used. Embalmers should add caution in cleaning the viscera pail, autopsy aspirator and the container of drying compound.

The floor obviously should be swept and mopped, free of hair and debris. The work area should be free of insects and vermin. Additional attention should be given to small corners, ventilation areas and all surfaces. Are there exposed nonporous items in the embalming room? This implies that the items or area must be permeable by water, chemical or body fluids to contaminating surfaces. Commonly overlooked unpainted and nonporous items are: body supports, exposed ceilings, walls, floors, cold storage holding tables or narrow door surfaces.

Some state inspectors include the refrigerated holding unit and the removal vehicles with the embalming room inspection. Attention should be given to all surfaces and floors to ensure that they are sanitized and odor free. The refrigerator unit should not exceed its designed capacity. A six body unit that is storing ten bodies is considered unethical and a violation.

Overlooked areas for OSHA

Take out the time to review your compliance for OSHA regulations as well. OSHA is the law. These guidelines have been enacted to protect employees who work in a hazardous work environment, from the negligence of their employers. The ma-

jority of inspections arise from the whistle blowing of former employees. Furthermore, the failure to comply sends the message that the employer is not concerned with safety of the work place.

Some additional tips to stay compliant on all areas, regardless of the size of the funeral home, is to develop a quality control housekeeping plan with a checklist that enables all areas to be cleaned and sanitized daily, weekly and more detailed checklist monthly. This may include delegating staff members, the apprentice embalmer and a scheduled or surprised inspection by the supervisor or manager on frequent bases. The results of the inspection could be a minimum verbal warning to a drastic decision to move forward to revoking the operating license due to unprofessional practices

It would behoove you to develop a collegial relationship with the state board or state bureau inspector(s). Take the opportunity of the assessment as a learning experience of what is expected for future inspections. As we previously discussed, it is natural to be nervous or anxious; however, remain calm and attentive to all directives that are requested. I am not naïve to believe that all inspectors are social and easy to communicate with.

As a professional, we have to make the effort to build a rapport that would benefit all parties. Invite a representative or inspector of the licensing agency to a local or state association meeting as a presenter and later as a guest. Arguably we perceive the board or bureau as the individuals are simply out to fine all firms and make operating our business unbearable. But there must be someone to limit the buffoons and wrongdoers who enter the ranks and must be governed and removed. Make the effort to create a mutually respectful connection with the inspector. Successful planning is in your reach.

Shun Newbern, CFSP is an embalmer, speaker and consultant on releasable issues. He can be reached at shunnewbern@aol.com or visit www.shunnewbern.com.

National Cremation Storage service for Unclaimed Cremated Remains

BRADENTON, FL— Visionary deathcare industry entrepreneur **Jason B. Rew** announced the opening of the country's only centralized secure storage and scattering services for the nation's unclaimed cremated human remains, **National Cremation Storage (NCS)**.

"Having worked directly with funeral service providers from across the country, we realized that there is a mounting need to provide off-site guardianship and ultimately, final disposition of unclaimed cremated human remains," Rew said.

Andrew L. Whitaker, President and CEO of NCS, provided the impetus for the creation of NCS. "Cremation rates continue to rise across the country. As a result, the volume of unclaimed human cremated remains continues to mount, providing storage and accountability challenges for the nation's dedicated funeral home and crematory owners," he said. "NCS was founded to relieve these challenges and allow them instead to focus on what matters...serving families."

Much has been made in the media about the growing volume of unclaimed remains around the country. The reasons vary, but the challenges associated with them are very real. "While the concept of unclaimed remains may be hard to fathom, it happens every day," Rew said. "Funeral home and crematory owners are left with the task of attempting to place these unclaimed remains with their intended recipients, and maintaining these remains for indefinite periods of time, sometimes far beyond their state's requirements."

The NCS process is easy and cost effective. The shipping firm completes a simple transmittal form and ship the form, nominal payment to cover the storage and final disposition (shipment to the intended recipient or scattering), and the human remains to NCS. The remains are entered into the NCS database and stored in a secure, climate controlled facility. Upon the expiration of the guardianship period, which ranges from one to ten years, the remains are scattered by NCS employees in the Gulf of Mexico, and documentation of the scattering is sent to the funeral home or crematory. If the intended recipient claims the remains before the scattering, they are shipped at no charge to the claimant.

"Our business model is simple, yet it provides a valuable service to the funeral service community," Whitaker said. "We are honored to assist our nation's funeral home and crematory owners by decreasing their responsibility and workload, and allowing them instead to focus on what matters...serving families with time honored traditions and dignity."

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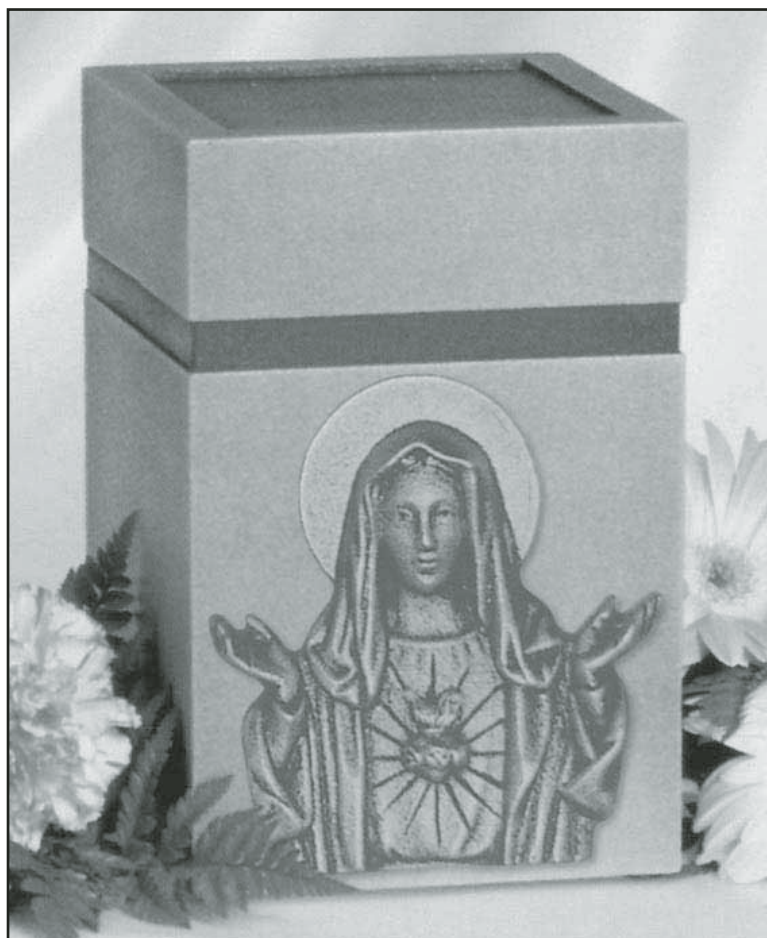
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Fourth Circuit hears Case on Anti-Competitive Funeral Home Cartel

ARLINGTON, VA— The Institute for Justice (IJ) has asked the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to affirm a lower court decision declaring unconstitutional a Maryland law that arbitrarily restricts funeral home ownership simply to make a privileged cartel of state-licensed funeral directors wealthier. The case may set precedent nationwide and has far-reaching implications for entrepreneurs and consumers throughout Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

“All our clients have ever asked for is the chance to exercise their right to earn an honest living by offering consumers the best service at the best price,” said IJ Senior Attorney Clark Neily, who serves as lead counsel. The national public interest law firm represents four Maryland funeral home entrepreneurs.

In October 2007, a federal judge invalidated parts of the Maryland Morticians Act, describing it as “the most blatantly anti-competitive state funeral regulation in the nation.” The court ruled that the U.S. Constitution does not allow states to create laws that exclude companies and entrepreneurs from other states. That ruling is now on appeal to the Fourth Circuit.

Filed on March 1, 2006, the suit challenges Maryland’s law that allows only licensed funeral directors and a handful of specially favored corporations to own a funeral home. Institute attorneys will argue today that the U.S. Constitution forbids the government from unreasonably interfering with citizens’ ability to earn an honest living in the occupation of their choice. The evidence conclusively shows that this law has no public benefits, significantly suppresses competition and drives up the average funeral cost by as much as \$800.

“The Federal Trade Commission, the Maryland Department of Health and the nation’s leading funeral industry economist all agree that this law is a pointless restraint on trade that clobbers consumers,” added IJ Staff Attorney Jeff Rowes. “The only entity to support this outrageous law has been the industry lobbying group, the Maryland State Funeral Directors Association.”

Founded in 1991, the Virginia-based Institute for Justice has represented entrepreneurs nationwide who successfully fought discriminatory government regulation. These cases include the nation’s leading legal battle to reestablish the American ideal of economic liberty when, on May 16, 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down discriminatory state shipping laws that hampered small wineries as well as their consumers. IJ also secured the first federal appeals court victory for economic liberty since the New Deal.

IJ President and General Counsel Chip Mellor concluded, “Small businesses are the heart of the American economy and the American Dream. Yet across the nation, the power of government is being abused to deny entrepreneurs their right to earn an honest living. The Institute for Justice will not rest until this fundamental right—the right to economic liberty—is secure for all Americans.”

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The Funeral Directors' Tribute is printed on heavy fine art paper, double matted to fit a standard 18" x 24" frame, and signed by the artist. Each unframed print is available for \$95.00, which includes shipping and handling.

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Grief From Three Feet

By Fred H. Kitchen, CFSP



Fred Kitchen

Although many children may recognize the rituals of a funeral, most do not fully understand what death is, and in many instances, they do not express themselves outwardly. As adults we sometimes feel that the emotions of children do not run as deep as ours, nor can what they experience be compared to the emotions of adults. Therefore we often times forget about children during the funeral process.

I was inspired to write "Grief From Three Feet" in 1998, when I came in contact with a small boy I met one evening some time ago at the funeral home. Now, here we are some 11 years later and the story remains relevant and I can't help but wonder what path in life this child, now a young man, may have chose and what he may have become today.

As the family began to enter the funeral home for the initial private family viewing, I could literally feel the tension in the air. I greeted them in the same manner as I customarily do with grieving families, trying to show warmth, kindness and compassion.

And yet, this time felt different to me. As I spoke with the deceased's wife and other family members, I noticed one particular child who walked along side of his mother. He was a nice-looking child, seemed well-behaved and well groomed.

I couldn't help but notice the fashion in which this child was clinging to his mother. It was as if he was never going to turn loose. Not only were his tiny delicate hands shaking, his small body was also shaking and trembling in what I could perceive as nothing more than passionate fear.

One hand gripped tight to a piece of the material of his mother's dress, while the other one was wrapped around her body. I closely observed as he fought to keep his face hidden against his mother's body. He refused to look at anyone in the room.

As his mother moved around the room, he walked along side her, trying to keep pace with his mothers much larger footsteps. His tiny feet stumbled across the carpet, and his balance became unstable for a split second, but he was able to regain his stability. Still, it was obvious this child was in fear.

When he did choose to show a portion of his face, his pupils looked as though they were dilated to their largest. I smiled and tried to initiate conversation with this youngster. He quickly turned from me, yet looked back at me from time to time. As time

passed and all of the family had gathered, I slowly escorted the family toward the reposeing room where the remains of this husband and father were displayed.

Later that evening when the crowd began to dwindle, I found myself seated in the entrance of the funeral home thinking of how my feet ached and how tired I was. Alongside of where I was seated was an empty chair. I couldn't help but notice this same young boy as he edged himself closer to the empty chair and sat down beside of me. I offered him a piece of candy, and he eagerly accepted. As he slowly unwrapped the candy, I asked him what his name was. He replied softly, "Seth."

I said, "Seth, how old are you?" He responded by holding up five fingers on one hand and one finger on the other hand and said, "Six."

After a long pause, he looked at me with quite different looking eyes than what I had seen earlier. They now appeared to be droopy, puffy, and full of genuine grief and sadness.

He looked at me and said with his soft high pitched voice, "Mister, why is my daddy in that coffin in there?" Before I could even process the first question, he followed up with a second one, "Why did my daddy leave me? Mommy said daddy left us."

I literally stared at him and sat motionless. I felt temporarily paralyzed and dumbfounded, and I did not know how I should respond. As I became momentarily saddened myself, I looked at him and in the back of my mind; I tried to remember any psychological "words of wisdom" from the old college days. But it seemed the old memory back was empty.

I did however, remember that children around the ages of 4-7 were very inquisitive about death, but really did not understand it. At that precise point in time, I was not too sure I understood death either. I was not even sure I knew what I was doing or emotionally feeling myself. Nevertheless, I had to respond to this child. After all, I had initiated the conversation with him, and he was waiting on a response.

After a long pause, I looked at him and said, "Seth, your daddy did not leave you because he wanted to. He left because he had no choice. His body was real sick and he could not stay with us any longer." I also told him that his daddy would like him to take care of his mommy and make sure that he would do everything his daddy would have done. I told him that he was now the man of the family and would have to look over his younger brother and mommy.

After a brief pause, he looked at me, smiled and said, "Daddy always called me his little man, guess I really am, huh?" I looked over at him and replied "Yes you are."

I thought to myself "I sure am glad that conversation is over." Then I looked for an excuse (I better check to make sure there is plenty of coffee in the lounge) to run from this encounter and any additional difficult questions. Before I could get up out of my chair, however, he continued to ask more questions such as, "Why is everything so big here?"

For a second he lost me. I didn't quite follow what he meant, but after a moment, I thought, "I guess everything does look big to him for he is no taller than about three feet."

From our conversation, I quickly learned that I had a smart boy on my hands, and I had better be on my toes. I also realized he was one of those children who knew if someone was trying to fool him. I looked at him and tried to respond. Then he said, "when I came here tonight with my mommy to see my

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NFDA Meets with TSA About "Known Shipper" Regulations

Continued from Page A12

According to TSA and the airlines, no inspection will be necessary if the applicant is already in the TSA "known shipper" database; however, even if a funeral home is a "known shipper," owners might still be required to submit an application with each airline the firm uses. Most C corporations are in the TSA database, making the application process relatively simple; other funeral homes that are not C corporations may also be in the TSA database.

If a funeral home is not in the TSA database, the airline might be required to conduct an inspection to ensure the legitimacy of the business. Each airline has their own procedures for both the application and inspection process and may charge a nominal fee to cover their costs.

NFDA will continue to work with TSA and the airlines to refine the process to reduce the potential compliance costs and administration burdens for its members. In addition, the airlines and TSA agreed to provide NFDA with a more detailed written description of the program and how to comply with it as soon as possible.

TSA Official and Airline President Will Address "Known Shipper" Policy at 2009 NFDA Advocacy Summit

Given the significance of this enforcement action and how profoundly it's affecting funeral homes across the country, NFDA invited an official from the TSA to address NFDA Advocacy Summit attendees and discuss how the "known shipper" database works during the summit, March 30-April 1, at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. Joining this TSA official will be **Dave Brooks**, president of Ameri-

can Airlines' Cargo Division, who will discuss how airlines are implementing the "known shipper" policy and the steps funeral homes must take to remain in compliance.

The TSA official will also provide an overview of new security regulations for the shipment of human remains, which will go into effect in September. The new program involves a more thorough screening of the shipping container and casket for explosives.

In addition to this timely discussion, **Paul S. Sledzik**, MS, manager of victim recovery and identification with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), has been invited to discuss the process NTSB follows when recovering victims of transportation disasters, such as plane crashes, and how his office works with funeral directors to ensure the respectful handling of human remains.

U.S. Representative **Charlie Wilson**, D-Ohio, a funeral director and NFDA member, will also share his perspective on legislative and regulatory issues impacting funeral service.

The heart of the NFDA Advocacy Summit is the time NFDA members spend meeting with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill, discussing issues of critical importance to the profession. Among the key issues NFDA

CONTINUED ON PAGE A44

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Grief From Three Feet

Continued from Page A32

daddy, I seen the front doors. They were so big and heavy, and when we came inside, the rooms were so big. The ceilings are so high, and the chairs are so big."

He continued, "Sure is a big place you have here, mister." I again smiled and said, "Yes, I guess it is." That night after going home, I replayed the events of the evening and the conversation that I had with this youngster. I came to the realization that we, as funeral service practitioners, generally provide all of our services based entirely on adult themes. I also realized that night that we need to re-evaluate some of our practices and develop a program within our firms that focus more on the children.

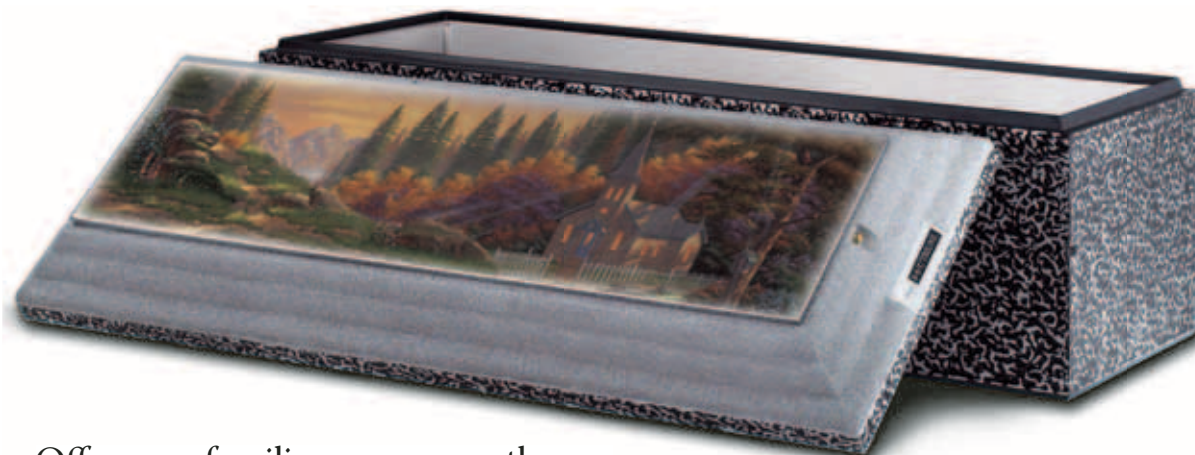
Some firms offer the coloring books that explain death and the funeral process to the child. This practice is a good first step. Even so, a grief program designed on a personal level for children should be developed and incorporated into firm's programs. After all, children are the future.

Fred H. Kitchen, CFSP is a West Virginia Funeral Director and Embalmer, has authored over 80 internationally published articles in funeral and grief related professional journals and is author of web based consumer resource site, www.planningfortomorrow.net. He is employed with one of North America's largest funeral service suppliers. Fred was recently guest on the DAYSTAR Television Network where he shared this story and other information and encouragement with their audience of viewers. Contact Fred at fkitchen@gmail.com.

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What Value has this Diploma?

As I perused this month's edition of *Funeral Home & Cemetery News* (formerly known as the *Yellow Book News*) I couldn't help but notice the ad for the National Academy of Mortuary Science. With the internet being what it is and my internet skills being what they are I still managed to find the National Academy of Mortuary Science. It appears that this "Academy" offers two diplomas that may be of interest to someone, somewhere.

The first "diploma" reminds me of verbiage from one of my favorite movies, *A Christmas Story*. Do you remember when Ralphie receives his Little Orphan Annie decoder ring? Along with the decoder ring comes a letter (signed in ink) that states something to the effect of "with all the honors and privileges pertaining thereto." To which Ralphie states, "Honors and privileges at the age of nine." Well in Hot Springs, Arkansas, this "Academy" is offering such a diploma and the verbiage therein actually states "with all the honors and privileges pertaining thereto." One can only question if this diploma is as useful as the decoder ring. At least the Little Orphan Annie decoder ring has value as a collector's item.

Paying some "Academy" a fee to "learn" how to answer the telephone, make a removal and what a trocar is (and is for) among other things is like waiting for the \$500,000.00 check to arrive from Nigeria once you have sent them the \$250.00 handling fee so they can deliver those funds being held by a courier for you. It appears that one may or may not learn something from this "Academy." Whether it is useful or not to a potential employer is then debatable, as most funeral homes prefer to train new hires in their own methodology.

Next we have the PhD award, "No classes, totally lifework based." This diploma (one must apparently hurry to apply as they only accept six candidates per year) will take about six months to be "earned." How does one earn anything when there are no classes? Again, I am reminded of the Nigeria story...only this time instead of dollars promised, you pay more and they award you with a piece of paper, presumably "with all the honors and privileges pertaining thereto" prominently displayed. As of this date I have had no reply to my question directed to the "Academy" via email: *What response am I to give the next attorney to cross examine me, at trial (pertaining to my educational background) when they ask about how I was awarded a PhD in funeral science?*

The preceding article reflects the thoughts and views of the submitting author and not those of the publishers, Nomis Publications, Inc.

Dan Rohling, CFSP works nationwide as a consultant and expert witness in the funeral, crematory and cemetery industries. He can be reached at dan@rohling.us.

New Providers join Veterans Funeral Care's Rapidly Expanding Network

CLEARWATER, FL— Veterans Funeral Care is proud to announce that several new funeral homes have joined its ever-growing network of providers. As a member of Veterans Funeral Care, the following firms will offer superior burial and cremation services to veterans and their spouses throughout their local areas.

The new Veterans Funeral Care providers include: **Tilghman Funeral Home**, New Egypt, NJ; **New Hyde Park Funeral Home**; New Hyde Park, NY; **Scheid Funeral Home**, Millersville, PA; **Heitger Funeral Homes**, Massillon, OH; **Cremation Society of Tennessee**, Spring Hill, FL; **Cremation Society of Virginia**, Virginia Beach and Newport News, VA; and **Twiford Funeral Homes**, Elizabeth City, Manteo and Hatteras, NC and Chesapeake, VA.

Established in Clearwater in 2000, Veterans Funeral Care currently consists of 100 providers throughout 39 states—and that number continues to grow. The network's mission is to help funeral providers grow their business by offering veterans specialized funeral services at a reduced cost.

Veterans Funeral Care started off as just one funeral home in Clearwater. "Our area has many veterans and retired military in addition to two National Cemeteries and two VA Hospitals," says **Russ Cable**, Veterans Funeral Care representative. "Almost immediately after we opened our Clearwater location, we began to get phone calls from Veterans around the country asking if there was a funeral home in

their area that offered services like ours."

Seeing there was a need for more Veteran-friendly funeral services throughout the country, Veterans Funeral Care decided to expand its network. Today, the network continues to grow at a rapid pace.

Funeral providers benefit enormously from becoming exclusive Veterans Funeral Care licensees. Once they join this prominent network, funeral homes typically enjoy an increase in local veteran's interest. Many providers experience a 15-25% increase in call volume. Veterans Funeral Care's provider network currently spans 41 states.

One feature that makes Veterans Funeral Care unique is that network providers strongly encourage families to choose a Veterans Cemetery. All veterans, their spouses and dependent children are entitled to free burial at any National Cemetery, including concrete graveliners, perpetual care and an upright or flat grave marker.

Veterans Funeral Care also offers a Caregiver Referral plan and a Church Funeral plan. All funeral packages includes a high-quality casket, professional funeral director and staff services, visitation, a church or graveside service a funeral coach and much more.

To find out how you can become an exclusive Veterans Funeral Care licensee visit www.VeteransFuneralCare.com.

Bradshaw-Carter opens new Addition

Continued from Page A28


pendently owned and operated, and was founded in Houston by **Ronald Bradshaw** and **Tripp Carter** in 2003. Both men transitioned from previously successful careers into funeral service—Ron from interior design; Tripp from professional fundraising. It had been a lifelong dream of Ron's to be in funeral service.

Bradshaw-Carter was built from the ground up—designed and decorated by Ron to resemble an elegant family home in the Georgian style. They have filled the home with five centuries of antique furniture and art, collected over three decades. High ceilings, gemtoned walls and Oriental rugs keep the five downstairs rooms opulent, but warm. Marble floors in the entryway lead into a series of rooms that include a library, a Salon or large drawing room, a sitting room, a bar, and a small state room or family room. Most of the

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Bradshaw-Carter opens new Addition *Continued from Page A34*



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Bradshaw-Carter is not your typical funeral home. There is very little in it that feels "commercial". The Home tends to lend itself to allow families to design very special and different types of services. People tend to stay longer and not seem to want to rush out. They schedule services so that only one family uses the home at a time, despite the 15,000 square feet of space. Ron and Tripp always felt that there was something very cold about sharing one's grief in a space with total strangers. Families really appreciate this privacy. They offer morning, afternoon, or evening times.


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Bradshaw-Carter is a proud member of *Selected Independent Funeral Homes, International Order of the Golden Rule, National Funeral Directors Association*, and the *Texas Funeral Directors Association*.

Sadly, Ron Bradshaw died prematurely at age 48 in June 2008 from pancreatic cancer, but the firm he started will continue to honor his memory and love of the funeral profession.

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Now is the best time ever to join IMSA! Plan on attending the 2009 IMSA General Membership Meeting, Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 A.M. in the Bunyan Room, C & D Mandalay Bay Resort. The ICCFA has arranged for Dean Lindsay to make an exclusive presentation to IMSA suppliers and guests from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. "He is the author of "Cracking the Networking CODE: 4 Steps to Priceless Business Relationships."

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Educational NEWS

PIMS Students visit CORE Headquarters



PITTSBURGH, PA— Students from Class #138, **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)**, recently visited the *Center for Organ Recovery and Education (CORE)* headquarters as part of their Professional Seminar Series. The students were welcomed by **Mr. Paul Lignoski**, Director of Clinical Training/Special Projects. Following a power-point presentation of the history and purpose of CORE, several other staff members from various departments spoke to the stu-

dents. Additionally, a heart recipient was present and spoke about his experience. The students were provided a tour of the facilities and a luncheon followed the program. PIMS is thankful to CORE for its interest and collaboration with our students and future funeral directors.

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PIMS Online Distance Education Students attend Campus Visit



Mrs. Darla Triploi instructs Georgia Hampton, of Louisville, KY.



(L to R) Joan Kershaw of Cleveland, OH and Jill Nelson of Belding, MI



Mr. M. Roger Walker instructs Ethan Annis of Dover-Foxcroft, ME.



Mrs. Darla Tripoli assists Derek Marble of Baltimore, MD.

PITTSBURGH, PA— Students from **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science** Online Distance Education class #1014 and #1015 were in Pittsburgh attending their required campus visit to complete their restorative art (RA) laboratory requirements.

Twenty-four students traveled from as far away as Seattle, WA to complete their RA lab work. The students complete all of their theory course work online and have the availability of affiliating with a funeral home to complete the embalming requirements. PIMS online students complete all requirements as the in-house students, including taking the Comprehensive Examination prior to graduation.



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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

PIMS holds 138th Commencement Exercise



Commencement speaker Ms. Debbie Williams receiving her Distinguished Service Plaque.

PITTSBURGH, PA— Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS) held its One-Hundred Thirty-Eighth Commencement exercise Friday, January 16, 2009 at the Calvary Episcopal Church. The graduating class, their families and friends were welcomed to the formal cap and gown ceremony by PIMS president **Eugene C. Ogrodnik**. The commencement address was delivered by **Ms. Debbie L. Williams** who delivered an inspirational address entitled "Three Feathers." Ms. Williams, a PIMS alumnus, owns and operates the **D.L. Williams Funeral Home** in Midland, PA and has taught restorative art laboratory for many years at PIMS. She was presented a plaque by PIMS President Eugene Ogrodnik in recognition of her outstanding and devoted service to the funeral industry.

The Funeral Service Oath was administered by **Mr. Barry T. Lease**, and the graduating class was presented by **Mr. Joseph A. Marsaglia**, Dean of Faculty and Students. Dean Marsaglia also recognized Class Faculty Advisor **Mrs. Amy DeGurian** for her guidance and devotion. In addition to the in-house class #138 graduates, students from PIMS Online Distance Education classes #1012 and #1013 completed the program.

Candidates receiving the Diploma in Embalming and Funeral Directing are: **James Billick** of Monessen, PA, **Dale Billingsley** of DeWitt, MI, Class President **Daniel Crist** of Chambersburg, PA, **Krista Cummins** of Akron, OH, **Justin Dalton** of Morgantown, WV, **Floyd Decker** of Allegan, MI, **Kevin Drobish** of Pittsburgh, PA, **Jessica Hayden** of Warren, PA, **April Hoffman** of Pittsburgh, Class Vice-President **Julie Ann Joyce-Sayer** of Pittsburgh, **Dan Kochenderfer** of Lewis-town, PA, **Valerie Long** of North Braddock, PA, **Brian McBride** of Idaho Falls, ID, **Alexander Martin** of Erie, PA, Class Secretary **Kelley Marzka** of Cambridge Springs, PA, **Bran-**

don Mosby of Pittsburgh, **John Perkes** of Chubbuck, ID, **Amber Quinn** of Chester, WV, Class Representative **Chris Rehberg** of Inverness, FL, **Garry Richter** of Uniontown, PA, **Dan Shingledecker** of Clarion, PA, **Brian Silvis** of Clarion, PA and **Melissa Yeary** of Middlesboro, KY.

Candidates receiving the Associate in Specialized Technology Degree, Funeral Service Arts and Sciences are: **Mark Andreasen** of Rupert, ID, **Eve Bateman** of Brookhaven, PA, **Cory Burzynski** of Cheektowga, NY, Class Treasurer **Alison Crist** of Chambersburg, PA, **Melissa Cushing** of Perry, ME, **Cheri Cypher** of Canonsburg, PA, **Cory**

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Evans of Haymarket, VA, **Noah Hinzman** (Cum Laude) of Pennsboro, WV, **Lisa Meyer** of Groveport, OH and **Kathryn Denise Shumate** (Cum Laude) of Middlesboro, KY. Graduates receiving the Associate in Specialized Business Degree, Funeral Service Management are: **CONTINUED ON PAGE A38**



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Educational NEWS CONTINUED

PIMS announces Dean's List

PITTSBURGH, PA— Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS) is pleased to recognize those students who have been placed on the Dean's List for the Fall trimester ending January 16, 2009.

The following students have achieved a grade point average of 3.50 or better in this trimester of studies.

From class #138: **Kevin Drobish** of Pittsburgh, PA and **Noah Hinzman** of Pennsboro, WV.

From class #139: **George Danielson-Sullivan** of Bristow, VA, **Rachel Dwyer** of Dillsburg, PA, **Emily Fecek** of Erie, PA, **Terri Johnson** of Uniontown, PA, **Jennifer Keopka** of Erie, PA, and **Joseph Kramer** of Verona, PA.

From the Associate in Specialized Business Degree class: **Theodore Cozza** of Bethel Park, PA.

Congratulations to PIMS honor students on their academic achievement.

PIMS holds 138th Commencement Exercise

Continued from Page A37



(L to R) Valerie Long and Dorine Lowery.

Theodore Cozza of Bethel Park, PA, **Sarah Czajkowski** of Pittsburgh, **Karin DePrefontaine** of Lancaster, PA, **Devin Frame** of Eldred, PA, **Dorine Lowery** of Pittsburgh, and **Ian McCreary** of Windber, PA.

Special Awards were also presented at the commencement. The Memorial Award was presented to **Noah Hinzman** who was chosen by his classmates as the student who, through qualities

of leadership, professional conduct and good citizenship, best typifies the ideals of the student body. The John Rebol Award was presented to **Noah Hinzman** who had maintained the highest scholastic average for the school year 2008-2009. The William J. Musmanno Memorial Award was presented to **Kevin Drobish** in recognition of his outstanding ability, attitude, commitment and

achievement in the clinical setting. The Pierce Chemical/Royal Bond Award was presented to **Cheri Cypher** in recognition of her outstanding ability, commitment, attitude and achievement in the areas of restorative art and cosmetology. On hand to present the award was **Michael J. Kuruc**, representative from the **Pierce Chemicals/Royal Bond** company. Mr. Kuruc presented Cheri with a plaque and a complete cosmetic kit.

Ten percent of the graduates received the Mu Sigma Alpha Award which is the honorary society established by the National Association of Colleges of Mortuary Science and gives recognition to those students who have displayed outstanding merit in scholarship and who have conducted themselves as good citizens of the schools they attended. The recipients of the Mu Sigma Alpha Award are: **Alison Crist** and **Kevin Drobish**.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Class President **Dan Crist** gave his closing farewell remarks and classmate **Dan Shingledecker** lead the congregation in the traditional singing of America the Beautiful.

Congratulations to all PIMS graduates and best of wishes in funeral service.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Funeral Service News



Student Usher Tyson Tutor



The Choral Department group "Mississippi Sound"



Funeral Service Program Director Bill Harvey and Student Margaret Levens at the Service



(L to R) Students Erin Ladner and Robin Coon

PERKINSTON, MS— Families in and around the Perkinston community, attended a Service of Remembrance at the Perkinston Community College on December 11, 2008. The funeral service technology students from **Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College** crafted star ornaments with the deceased's name and handed them to family members as they walked through the door. The family members were escorted to a beautiful Christmas tree at the front of Gregory Chapel on the school's campus, and soon after the family's arrived, the Christmas tree was adorned with ornaments.

Student **Jeremy Ingram** was expected to be the featured speaker, but due to a heavy snow fall, he was unable to attend. **Bill Harvey** then led the service. Featured hymns included "Surely the Presence" and "The Prayer" and were performed by the Mississippi Sound under the conduction of *Ms. Marilyn Lott*, and featured pianist was *Mr. Jason Ross*.

Students Visit Batesville Casket Company

What's the best way to spend Halloween? Some say dressing up in crazy costumes or giving out candy. But what if you were offered the opportunity to spend the day at a casket company? Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Funeral Service Students did. The day before the tour, the students spent a night in Batesville, MS and funeral director **Jerry Cooley** of **Cooley's Funeral Home** came to talk to the class about his experiences in the funeral business. His experiences were very inspiring to the students. One of the most important things he discussed was how to put the families' needs first and how it is important that they received a good meaningful service.

The next day the funeral service students went to **Batesville Casket Company** and two employees gave the students a tour of the plant. They watched in awe as various caskets were made before their eyes. They couldn't believe how much work it takes to build one casket. The plant had an assembly line where each group of people worked very carefully on each of the casket parts. The employees from the company explained that each part was built with care and was just as important as the next part. One faulty part could ruin the casket and leave families very upset so it was important that the caskets were done properly and checked before they were sent out.

It was once in a lifetime experience, something that not many people get the opportunity to do. The students enjoyed the Batesville experience and will never forget it.

Organ Recovery Association presents to Students

The **Mississippi Organ Recovery Association** visited Funeral Service students on October 2, 2008 at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. MORA gave a power point presentation and educated the eager students on organ and tissue donations. Special guest **Jeff Chancellor** was at attendance and was sharing his experience and knowledge on working in



A Service of Remembrance Attendee places an ornament on the Tree.



Alexandra Bento delivers the Prayer at the Service.

the funeral business. The students learned what they will be facing once they graduate from the college, and how to handle what the business offers them.

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Association NEWS

National Funeral Directors Association to Launch Nationwide Consumer Education Video

NFDA-produced segment will reach millions via television and Internet

BROOKFIELD, WI— As part of its targeted national public education efforts, the **National Funeral Directors Association** (NFDA) is currently wrapping up production of a video segment it's producing for "National Report," a series of short educational programs hosted by world-renowned journalist *Hugh Downs*. "National Report" segments air in-between regularly scheduled programs on major television networks, including the Public Broadcasting System, TLC, Discovery Channel, CNN, FOX News Channel and MSNBC. The "National Report" series is also available online through popular sites, such as Google Video, YouTube and WebMD.

Last week, **Robert Biggins**, CFSP, CPC, **James Olson**, CPC, and **Ellen Wynn McBrayer**, CPC — three members of the NFDA Spokesperson Team — traveled to the association's headquarters in Brookfield, to participate in a video shoot for the segment.

The NFDA-produced program focuses on advance funeral planning, including how preplanning can help individuals and their family plan a meaningful funeral or memorial service, and offers tips to help consumers make educated choices when preplanning or prepaying for a funeral or memorial service.

The program is scheduled to begin airing in late-March or early-April. NFDA will share the anticipated broadcast schedule on its Website, www.nfda.org, and on its Facebook page when it becomes available.

"The opportunity to produce a segment for the National Report series was something we couldn't pass up," said NFDA Public Relations Manager **Jessica Koth**. "The exposure funeral service professionals will receive on major television networks is invaluable and will further NFDA's goals of educating the public and shaping public opinion about the value of all facets of funeral service."



Pictured (L to R) at the end of a long day of filming, are **Bob Biggins**, CFSP, CPC; **Jessica Koth**, NFDA public relations manager; **Ellen Wynn McBrayer**, CPC; and **James Olson**, CPC (photo courtesy of NFDA).



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News from NFDA continues on Page A41

Association NEWS CONTINUED



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Zwick & Jahn Funeral Home Entry wins OGR Student Writing Contest

ST. LOUIS, MO— Appreciation of her extended family was expressed with maturity and pride by the winner of a student writing contest conducted in October by the **International Order of the Golden Rule** (OGR). The contest is the central component of the association's National Family Appreciation Month (NFAM) annual awareness campaign. The winning student, Mary Kenney, a senior at Belmont High School in Decatur, IN, will receive a \$5,000 college scholarship, being sponsored by **Aurora Casket Company**.

The essay, "What My Family Means to Me," was submitted by **Jonathan Zwick, Zwick & Jahn Funeral Home**, Decatur, IN. Kenney's essay was judged along with dozens of other first-place local entries submitted by member firms across the United States and Canada. The winning firm and student will be honored in April at OGR's Annual Conference in Nashville, Tenn. Each submission received an honorable mention certificate. Members acknowledge their local winners in separate award ceremonies.

"We saw another great year of members exemplifying the Golden Rule through their efforts to promote family appreciation," said **Norm Juday**, chair of OGR's Communications Commit-



Mary Kenney with (L to R) Bill Zwick, Jonathan Zwick and Mark Jahn, being congratulated for winning OGR's 2008 NFAM Student Writing Contest.

tee. "We thank everyone who held a writing contest or in any way helped spread the word about the importance of family."

"NFAM offered Zwick & Jahn a tremendous opportunity to positively impact the younger people in our community," said Jonathan Zwick. "We are very happy to have Mary represent our firm and our community."

"For the past three years, Aurora has been proud to sponsor OGR's commitment to honoring family appreciation," added **Jason Barrott**, corporate secretary/director of marketing development for Aurora Casket Company. "Once again, it's been our privilege to honor a deserving student in the quest to define what family appreciation means. Aurora is also very fortunate to recognize the efforts of the OGR member firm that provided such a wonderful platform in its community to promote NFAM. Each essay truly captures the creative spirit that is embedded in all who participate. Congratulations to the winning student and member funeral home on a job well done!"

Members were provided with PR tools to help them promote NFAM, including press releases, letters to the editor, display ads, posters, and mayoral/gubernatorial proclamation request templates, made possible by continued support from the **Funeral Service Foundation**. For questions about NFAM, contact **Janet Protzel**, director of communications, (800) 637-8030, x108; jprotzel@ogr.org, or visit www.ogr.org.

As one of the world's largest professional associations of local, family owned funeral homes, OGR is committed to making independent funeral homes exceptional. OGR members are dedicated to offering reliability, fair pricing, and dignified, caring service "by the Golden Rule."



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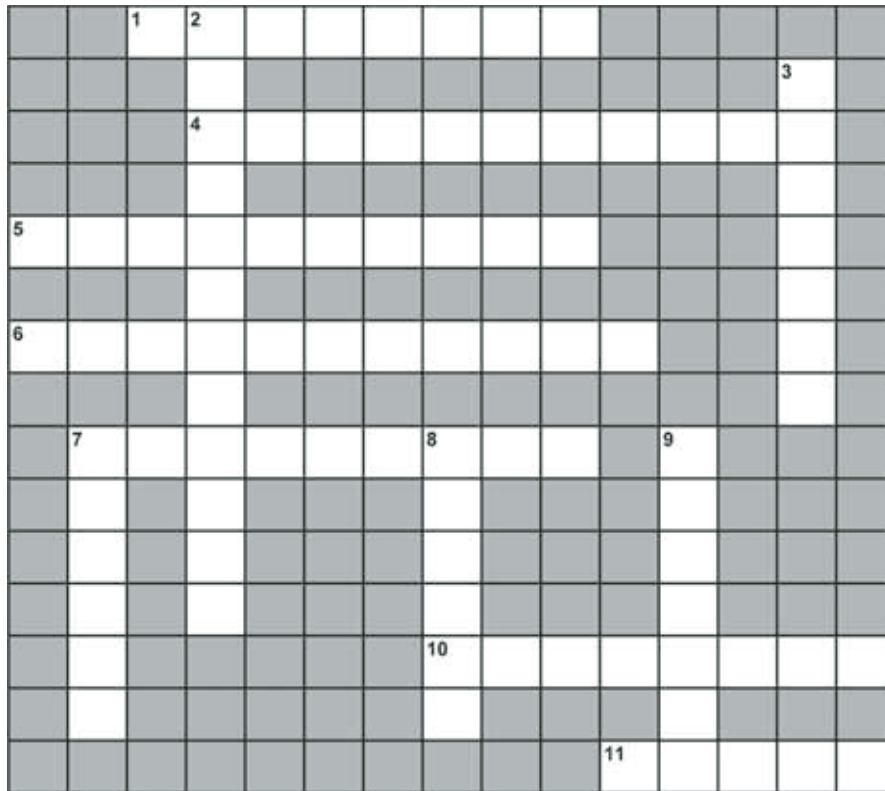
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11. Order on a bank

DOWN

2. Damages to cover amount of loss
3. Copper casket
7. Feelings and expressions
8. Witness execution of a will
9. Jewish burial



Ralph L. Klicker, Ph.D., has authored the books *A Student Dies*, *A School Mourns...Are You Prepared?* and *Kolie and the Funeral*. He has also written the textbooks *Funeral Directing & Funeral Service Management and Ethics in Funeral Service*, and his newest textbook *Restorative Art & Science*.

Dr. Klicker is founder and president of *Thanos Institute*, which offers funeral directors home study courses approved throughout the United States and Canada for continuing education credit for their license renewals.

For information, contact him at *Thanos Institute*, PO Box 1928, Buffalo, NY 14321, (800)742-8257 or send an e-mail to *Thanosinst@aol.com*.

ANSWERS ON PAGE A44

Alliance of Illinois Cemeterians develops Disaster Agreement

SPRINGFIELD, IL— The **Alliance of Illinois Cemeterians** realizes that mutual assistance would be needed if a pandemic or disaster would strike. Therefore after careful study and diligent planning the Board of Directors has developed a reciprocal agreement for all AIC members to consider. By so signing and submitting this agreement members are afforded the opportunity to pledge assistance to fellow members. It does not commit assistance at the time of signing. Rather if an emergency of any type were to arise, participants would determine at that time if their manpower and circumstances would enable them to come to the aid of a fellow cemeterian.

By banding together this allows AIC members to strengthen their preparedness in the event of a pandemic or disaster. This mutual aid agreement could provide member cemeteries with resources including but not limited to personnel, equipment, supplies and/or services in the event of an emergency. This plan also adopts procedures for communication, exercises, training and other necessary functions consistent with the plans established by the Alliance of Illinois Cemeterians in order to further the objective of providing mutual aid and assistance to participating members when a pandemic or disaster strikes.

This nine-page AIC agreement addresses logistical and legal issues. Each member cemetery is provided an opportunity to examine the document and present it to the appropriate authority within their organization for signature. Signed and submitted agreements could have financial benefits if/when a response is made to a pandemic or disaster. If FEMA were involved in the disaster relief all overtime hours worked could be reimbursable by this federal agency.

This reciprocal agreement is a major step by the Alliance of Illinois Cemeterians to unify its members in the event of a pandemic or disaster. For additional information call (217)789-2340.

Association NEWS CONTINUED

NFDA Partners with Federated to deliver cost-effective Insurance Solutions

BROOKFIELD, WI— To help **National Funeral Directors Association** (NFDA) member-firms gain control of business insurance expenses, the association announced a new endorsed provider agreement with **Federated Insurance**.

Federated Insurance offers a wide variety of business insurance and financial protection products, including specialized commercial property and casualty programs; life and disability income insurance; risk management services; and business succession and estate planning assistance.

Unique to Federated's relationship with NFDA is a national property and liability dividend program, which will provide potential dividend payments to pool participants when the pool has favorable experience.

"Choosing a business insurance provider is one of the most important decisions you can make," said NFDA CEO **Christine Pepper**. "Federated Insurance has extensive experience in funeral service – the company writes insurance for more than 1,100 funeral homes and is endorsed by 29 state associations – and has an A+ rating by A.M. Best Company. Their experience, financial strength, the wide range of products and services they offer and the new national dividend program make Federated the best partner for NFDA and its members."

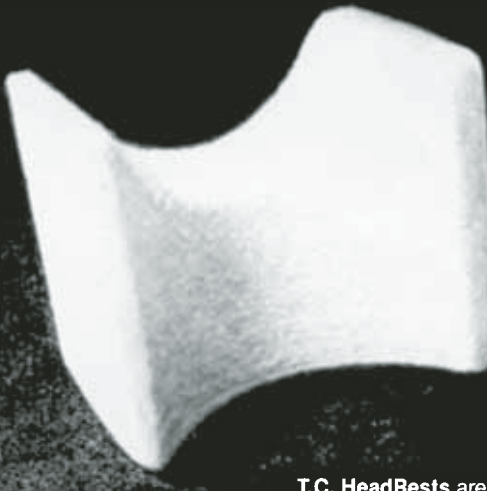
Unique national dividend program could put cash back in pockets of NFDA members

NFDA At-large Representative **Robert T. "Bob" Rosson Jr.**, CFSP, CPC, recently switched to Federated Insurance. Rosson met with his local Federated marketing representative and received a free "Right Report," which included an assessment of his insurance needs, a description of the coverage that would meet those needs and a premium quote. Rosson signed-on when his longtime local insurance agent said he could not match the type of coverage and rates offered by Federated.

"NFDA's partnership with Federated is one I personally stand behind," said Rosson. "I was impressed with the personal interest that my Federated marketing representative took getting to know my funeral home and its insurance needs. Like NFDA, Federated is committed to positively affecting my bottom line – I am receiving top-notch insurance products at affordable rates. With Federated's safety and risk management programs, I will be able to reduce my losses and insurance costs. I strongly recommend the next time you review your company's insurance policies, that you include Federated in that review."


NFDA-member firms interested in learning more about the wide range of products and services available or receiving a free initial consultation and "Right Report" should contact Federated's **Mike Russell** at 800-533-0472 or mdrussell@fedins.com.

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Association NEWS CONTINUED

NFDA Professional Women's Conference proves "Everything's Bigger in Texas"

BROOKFIELD,WI— The **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** has opened registration for its 2009 **Professional Women's Conference**. Hosted in Austin, Texas, at the Sheraton Austin Hotel, April 17-19, the Professional Women's Conference promises to give attendees bigger ideas, more captivating conversations and greater networking opportunities with other women in the profession – proving everything really is bigger in Texas.

"NFDA's Professional Women's Conference is truly addicting. It hits the hottest topics in funeral service and gives me a chance to brainstorm with funeral professionals," said **Sheri Stahl, CFSP**, of **The Island Funeral Home and Crematory** in Hilton Head, SC. "Some of the very best ideas I have implemented in our funeral home have come from this event."

Alan Creedy, of Creedy & Company Business Advisors, will kick off the conference with "Adaptive Strategies of Successful Funeral Homes," a thought-provoking workshop that will explore how today's consumers and

changes in deathcare affect funeral directors and their businesses.

In addition to the ever-popular Round Table Discussions, attendees can look forward to "Contemporary Mortuary Cosmetology" presented by **Darla Tripoli of The Dodge Company**. Intended to look at the big picture of cosmetology, this workshop will challenge long-held theories of mortuary cosmetology and provide information for achieving a more life-like appearance.

Additional workshops offered at this year's conference include:

- "Suicide: What You Need to Know" – In this informative session, attendees will learn the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide, and how to respond to those who are dealing with death from suicide.
- "Social Media: How the Newest Communication Fad... Isn't" – Participants will learn about social media sites and how they can be applied to their funeral home as a tool to engage customers and advance business goals.

To benefit other women in funeral service and begin the networking festivities, April 17 is Funeral Service Foundation Fund Day. Attendees will visit three of Texas' finest microbreweries and savor delectable BBQ. Registration for this optional event is \$120. A portion of net proceeds from this event are tax-deductible and support the Women in Funeral Service Fund and the Professional Women's Conference Scholarship Fund. Visit www.funeralservicefoundation.org for more information on scholarship opportunities for this year's conference.

Registration fees increase \$50 after March 20. All conference registrations must be made by April 8.

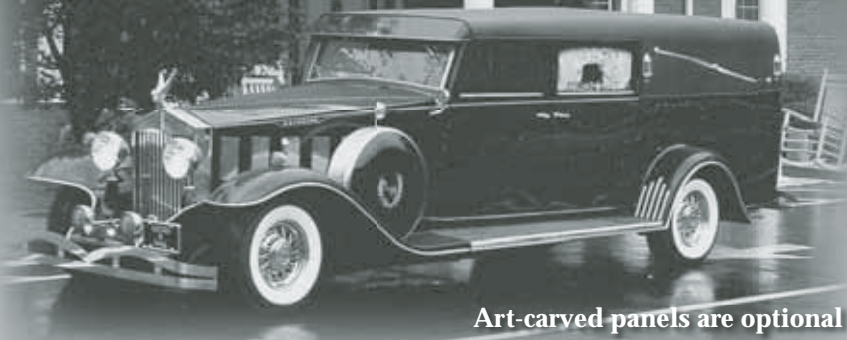
NFDA has arranged for a special room rate of \$159 (plus tax) at the Sheraton Austin Hotel. To secure the special room rate, ask for the NFDA Professional Women's Conference room block. Attendees should call 800-325-3535 or visit www.nfda.org/page.php?pID=1042 (click on "Hotel Reservations") to make their reservations. All hotel reservations must be made by March 2.

The 2009 Professional Women's Conference is generously supported by **Nomis Publications, Trigard, Homesteaders Life Company, The Dodge Company, Wilbert and Messenger**.

NFDA is the world's leading funeral service association, serving 19,000 individual members who represent more than 10,200 funeral homes in the United States and internationally. From its headquarters in Brookfield, WI, and its Advocacy office in Washington, DC, NFDA informs, educates and advocates to help members enhance the quality of service they provide to families. For more information, visit www.nfda.org.

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Association NEWS CONTINUED

NFDA Conference Offers Survival Tactics for Family Funeral Homes

BROOKFIELD,WI— Registration is now open for the **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** 2009 Family Business Conference, April 6-7 at the Thunderbird School of Global Management in Phoenix, AZ. Those looking to ensure the success of their family-owned funeral home, such as owners, next-generation staff members, CEOs and managers, are encouraged to attend this executive-level conference.

During this interactive two-day conference, attendees will examine best practices for business continuity and growth; competitive advantages inherent in the resources and challenges unique to family businesses; unconventional practices that build lasting family business legacies; and strategies to help prepare the next generation for future leadership roles.

"[The Family Business Conference is] a good seminar that blends theory and practice to develop future business leaders who will continue the family business for generations to come," said **Dan Eckhoff** of **Christy-Smith Funeral Home** in Sioux City, IA.

For the fourth consecutive year, NFDA's Family Business Conference will be led by internationally-recognized family business expert **Ernesto J. Poza**, graduate of Yale University and Sloan School of Management at MIT. Professor of Global Family Enterprise at the Thunderbird School of Global Management, and president of E.J. Poza Associates, Inc., Poza is a top-rated speaker, author and consultant to family-owned businesses. His work has been featured by CNN, NBC, NPR and in publications such as Business Week, Family Business magazine, Forbes and Fortune.

Those who register on or before March 4 can deduct \$50 from the registration fee. All conference registrations must be made by March 20. Additional information and registration forms can be obtained by visiting www.nfda.org/familybusiness.php or calling your personal NFDA member services representative at 800-228-6332.

NFDA releases Green Funeral Service Q&A

BROOKFIELD,WI— The **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** has released "Green Funeral Service Questions and Answers," an informative document designed to enhance the understanding of funeral directors about what it means to be "green" in funeral service.

NFDA's "Green Funeral Service Questions and Answers" offers definitions of a green funeral home, a green funeral, green burial and a green cemetery. It also addresses issues such as how a funeral director can facilitate a natural burial if there are no green cemeteries in his or her community; formaldehyde-free methods of preserving a body for viewing; ways to discuss green funeral options with consumers; and strategies for creating a green funeral home.

"Every week, reporters from newspapers, television and radio stations, and online news sources are writing about green funerals," said **James Olson**, CPC, chair of the NFDA work group that developed the document. "Media coverage is driving con-

sumer interest in green funeral and burial options. NFDA developed 'Green Funeral Service Questions and Answers' so that funeral directors can begin to understand this new frontier of funeral service. This document will help them answer consumer questions and determine how they may begin to offer 'green' services to the families they serve."

According to the document, there are many "shades of green" possible when planning a green funeral, based on the consumer's preferences, funeral home and cemetery capabilities, and local laws and regulations. The document reads, "As with the concept of 'green' in general, green in funeral service means practicing environmental consciousness and being eco-friendly. It encompasses green funeral homes, green funerals and natural or green burial. Any funeral home can be 'green' in practice. You have the opportunity to adopt green practices to meet the needs of the families you serve and to improve your business operations."

CONTINUED ON PAGE A44

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LOTTIE S. STRISH of Larksville, PA died January 9, 2009. She owned and operated the **Andrew Strish Funeral Home** in Larksville until her retirement.

CARL WALKER BREWITT of Exeter and Hampton Beach, NH died February 3, 2009 at the age of 85. He was a graduate of *New England Institute* and had been a funeral director at **Brewitt Funeral Service, Inc.** since 1948. He was a longtime co-owner of the business along with his brother **Richard Brewitt** at the three locations in Exeter, Epping and Raymond.

WILLIE SAUNDERS WATKINS, III of Richmond, VA died January 23, 2009 at the age of 67. He was president, manager and co-owner with his sister of **W.S. Watkins & Son Funeral Home** in Richmond, which was founded by his grandfather. He was a former president of the *Virginia Morticians Association*, and served as chairman of the Education Commission of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*. He wrote for textbooks, lab manuals, science and trade journals and periodicals. He also edited the Virginia Morticians Association Bulletin for seven years. He held bachelors and masters degrees in Biology from Howard University, and attended American University and the Medical College of Virginia. He completed his mortuary training at *John Tyler Community College*, and taught at both Howard and Clark Atlanta University Center.



JOHN DAVID "JACK" TROUT of Ponca City, OK died January 23, 2009 at the age of 87. Along with his father and brothers he founded the **E.M. Trout & Sons Funeral Home** in Ponca City in 1936, which they owned and operated for 41 years. He was also a member of the *Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association*.

ROBERT J. BLAKE of Collingswood, NJ died January 12, 2009 at the age of 96. He grew up working in the Camden, NJ funeral business of his grandfather. A graduate of *Dolan's School of Mortuary Science* in Philadelphia, he opened the **Robert J. Blake Funeral Home** in Camden in 1947. He opened another location in Collingswood eight years later, closing the Camden location in the 1970s, and retired in 1987. In addition, he was Camden County Coroner for 12 years.

BEVERLY J. SHEPHERD of Richmond, IN died January 20, 2009 at the age of 74. She was former owner of **Bev's Threads**, which was sold in 1999, and is now part of **Tiedemann-Bev's Industries**.
Courtesy Casket & Funl Supply Assoc of America, Lake Bluff, IL.

SILVIA MAYER of Ladue, MO died January 17, 2009 at the age of 91. She was co-owner of the **Mayer Funeral Home** in St. Louis, MO, where she was also a funeral director for 30 years.

JESSIE WALKER RODGERS of Pittsboro, NC died January 18, 2009 at the age of 92. He worked for **Griffin Funeral Home** in Pittsboro for 65 years and had been a North Carolina licensed funeral director since 1958.

JOHN J. LEE of Windsor Locks, CT died January 15, 2009 at the age of 66. He served for 46 years as funeral director of the **Windsor Locks Funeral Home**, part of the **Leete-Stevens Funeral Homes** network. A 1961 graduate of *Simmons School of Embalming and Mortuary Science* in Syracuse, NY, he was past president of the *Connecticut Funeral Directors Association*, the *Hartford County Funeral Directors*, and a member of the *National Funeral Directors Association*.

HAROLD J. "RED" MCKINLEY JR. of Newaygo, MI died January 9, 2009 at the age of 85. He was funeral director and owner of **McKinley Funeral Homes** of Grant and Newaygo until 1983. A licensed funeral director for more than 60 years, he joined his father in the family business in 1947.

ROY EUGENE GAUNCE, JR. of Carlisle, KY died January 24, 2009 at the age of 69. A 1964 graduate of the *Kentucky School of Mortuary Science*. He had previously worked for funeral homes in Paris, Owingsville, Salt Lick and Mt. Sterling, KY and had been a partner in **Mathers-Gaunce Funeral Home** since 1979. He served as Nicholas County Coroner and Deputy Coroner for 28 years.

HARRY R. NETHERS of Newark, OH, formerly of Dayton, OH died February 4, 2009 at the age of 66. A 1967 graduate of Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, he became an Ohio licensed funeral director and embalmer in 1968. He began his career with **Brucker-Kishler Funeral Home** in Newark and ended his career in Dayton as owner/operator of **Nethers-Hedricks Funeral Homes**. He was a member of the *Ohio Funeral Directors Association* and the *National Funeral Directors Association*.

HARRY C. SWARTZ of Grand Blanc, MI died January 13, 2009 at the age of 66. He founded **Swartz Funeral Home** in Mundy Township, MI in 1985 and turned it into one of the largest family-owned funeral homes in the area before selling it in 2005. He continued as the president of **Swartz Ambulance Company**, which he founded in 1975, after the sale of his funeral home. A 1965 graduate of *Wayne State University* with a Degree in Mortuary Science, he was a member of the *Michigan Funeral Directors Association* and *National Funeral Directors Association*.

CHESTER L. HAGER of Lexington, KY died January 17, 2009 at the age of 83. He was a funeral director with **Whitehall Funeral Chapel** in Lexington, which he opened in 1957, until 2006. A graduate of the *Kentucky School of Mortuary Science*, he was also Fayette County Coroner for 32 years, retiring in 1989.

SEYMOUR A. EWING of Carlisle, PA died January 2, 2009 at the age of 82. A 1947 graduate of *Eckels College of Mortuary Science*, he earned his funeral directors license in 1949 and, with his brother, became part of the fourth generation of **Ewing Funeral Home**, now **Ewing Brothers Funeral Home** in Carlisle. He was a member of the *National, Pennsylvania, and Capital City Funeral Directors Associations*.

OREN R. "SHORTY" SMITH, SR. of Sanford, FL died January 8, 2009 at the age of 97. He worked for **Brisson Funeral Home** in Sanford for 67 years, retiring last year.

ROBERT B. NEELY of Shaler, PA died January 28, 2009 at the age of 88. He was the founder of **Neely Funeral Home**, Glenshaw, PA.
Courtesy Clem's Livery Service, Pittsburgh, PA.

WILLIAM M. DOWNS, JR. of Superior, WI died January 11, 2009 at the age of 76. He was a third-generation owner and operator of the **Downs-LeSage and Lenroot-Maetzoki Funeral Homes** and was a licensed funeral director in Wisconsin for over 50 years.

ALFRED LEONARD SAN-NIPOLI of Temecula, CA died January 27, 2009 at the age of 81. He was the founder of **Sannipoli Vault Company** in Romoland, CA. He and his family have served cemeteries throughout the state since 1958.

Courtesy Miller-Jones Funeral Home, Hemet, CA.



ELIZABETH J. RODGERS of Irwin, PA died January 19, 2009 at the age of 98. She was a funeral director at **Rodgers Funeral Home** in Irwin for 68 years.
Courtesy Clem's Livery Service, Pittsburgh, PA.

LOWELL W. HOOPER of Inverness, FL died January 10, 2009 at the age of 78. He was the owner of **Hooper Funeral Homes, Inc.** and a licensed funeral director for 57 years, holding active licenses in Kentucky, Indiana and Florida. He was past president of the *Florida Funeral Directors Association*, past president elect of the *National Funeral Directors Association*, member of the *Order of the Golden Rule*, and a 25-year member of the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice. A 1951 graduate of *Indiana College of Mortuary Science*, he also received an associate degree in Mortuary Science in 1967 from *Miami-Dade University*.



DOROTHY GILMORE of Madison, GA died February 3, 2009 at the age of 84. Mrs. Gilmore retired from teaching in 1982 to help carry on the family business, **Mapp Funeral Home**, after her parents became ill. She was a life member of the 7th District and *Georgia Funeral Service Practitioners Association, Inc.* She was a life member of *100 Black Women of Funeral Service*.

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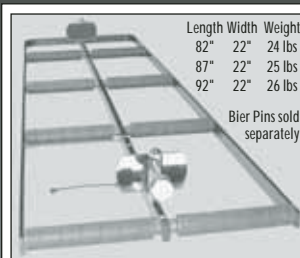
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July 17-22 2009



Manning



Stansbury

I have been a funeral director/embalmer for 13 years and have attended numerous continuing education classes and conferences, and not one has been as exciting, informative and productive as this one. I am so excited about everything I learned.

—Amey Stuart-Garza
 Laurel Oaks Memorial Park & Funeral Home
 Mesquite, Texas

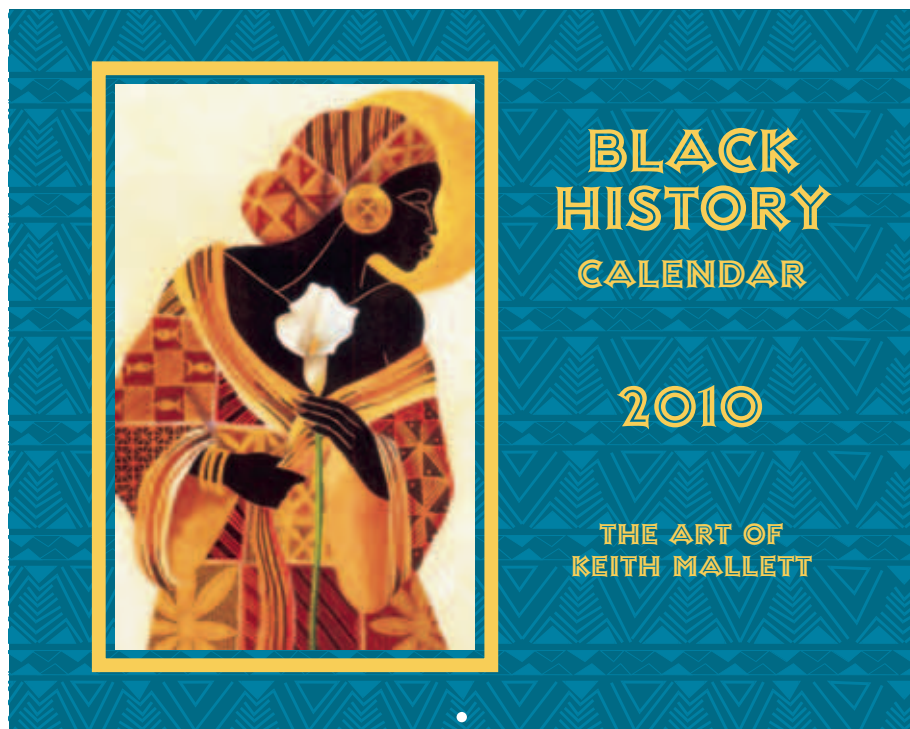
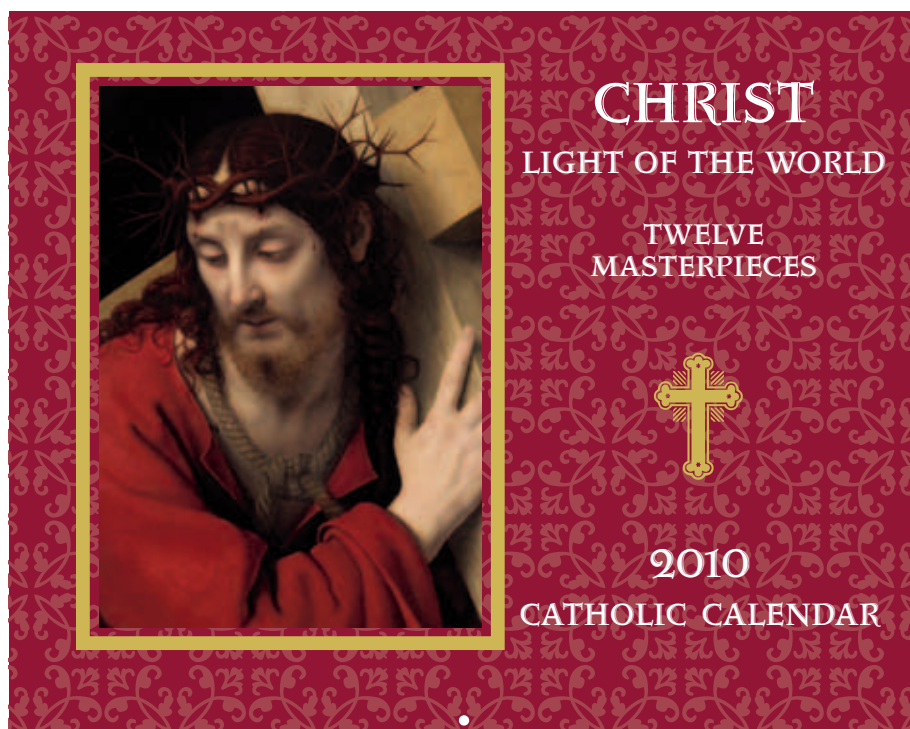
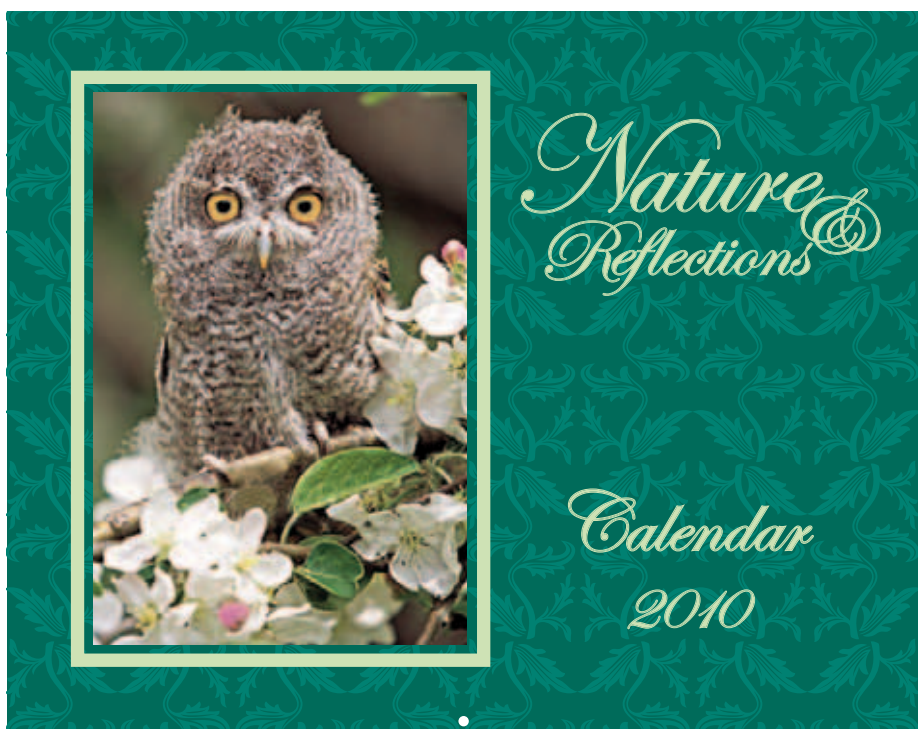
What a unique opportunity to be surrounded by a wealth of knowledge in all aspects of our profession.

—Kim Kojan
 Miller-Jones Mortuary & Crematory
 Sun City, California



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