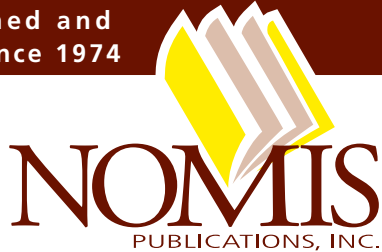


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# FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY

# NEWS

APRIL  
2009

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"This year's contest drew 22 entries from across the United States and abroad. Communications and marketing professionals from outside the cemetery and funeral service profession performed the judging."

See ICCFA announces "Keeping It Personal" Award Winners on Page A44



See Lomax Funeral Home holds Grand Opening on Page A14

## New Nicos C. Elias Funeral Home in Allentown



ALLENTOWN, PA— The new **Nicos C. Elias Funeral Home, Inc.** has opened at the site of the historic General Trexler Estate at 1227 Hamilton Street. The Victorian mansion had been home to the Marilyn Custom Dress Shop until the owners' retirement in April.

New owner **Nicos Elias** is a lifelong resident of Allentown, a graduate of Salisbury High School and Muhlenberg College in 1987. In 1999 he decided to pursue his lifelong interest in funeral service and attended *Northampton Community College*, graduating with a degree in Funeral Service Education.

Since then he has worked in several respected area funeral homes in the Lehigh Valley, and found the General Trexler property up for sale last winter. The building was almost too good to be true, having a layout almost ideal for a funeral service business. Inside, its grand entranceway, ornate original woodwork and leaded stained glass windows

are stunning and elegant, providing a refined setting for a celebration of one's life. On the market for less than a week, Mr. Elias made an offer and shortly thereafter was the new owner of the building. Remodeling began in May and was completed in October. The general contractor for the project, *CDL Construction*, did a wonderful job of restoring the building to its original grandeur. CDL owners

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A10**



"Elizabeth Haynes continues to further her education by attending seminars and training sessions. She received an achievement award from the *Georgia Funeral Directors Association* for 40 years of licensed professional service to the public."

See Elizabeth Haynes carries on Legacy on Page A4



"Memory Pendants® are handcrafted out of colorful dichroic glass and can be customized to securely hold memorial ashes, a precious lock of hair, or both."

See Memory Pendants® Keepsake Jewelry offers Timeless Way to remember Loved Ones on Page B9

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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.

### Endangered Missing

**YADIRA JASMIN COTA**

**WENDY NOEMY MORALES**



**Date of Birth:** 6/15/04  
**Age at Disappearance:** 2 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 4 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hisp  
**Height:** 3'0"  
**Weight:** 45 lbs  
**Hair:** Brown  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Date of Birth:** 8/2/97  
**Age at Disappearance:** 9 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 11 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hisp  
**Height:** 3'9"  
**Weight:** 50 lbs  
**Hair:** Brown  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Date Missing:** 10/13/06

**Missing From:** National City, CA

**Circumstances:** Yadira and Wendy may be in the company of their non-custodial mother. They are believed to be in Mexico.

### Endangered Missing

**DEBORAH KALAI FOURZAN**



**Date of Birth:** 7/18/94  
**Date Missing:** 2/2/09  
**Missing From:** Tecumseh, OK  
**Age at Disappearance:** 14 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 14 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White  
**Height:** 5'2"  
**Weight:** 120 lbs  
**Hair:** Blonde  
**Eyes:** Blue

**Companion**  
**JAMES JOSEPH REIMER**

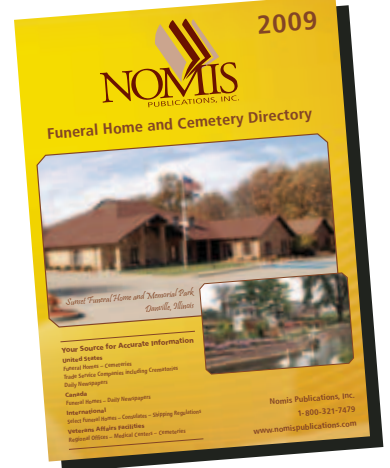
**Date of Birth:** 2/21/68  
**Age Now:** 41 Yrs  
**Sex:** Male  
**Race:** White  
**Height:** 5'10"  
**Weight:** 280 lbs  
**Hair:** Brown  
**Eyes:** Blue



**Circumstances:** Deborah was last seen on February 2, 2009. She is believed to be traveling to California with James Reimer. They may be traveling in a white 1994 Mercury Cougar with Oklahoma license plates VRW932. The vehicle has significant front end damage. A felony warrant is on file for James. Deborah's ears are pierced. She may dye her hair black. Deborah has a birthmark on the back of her arm. She may go by her middle name, Kalai. James may shave his beard. His nickname is Jim. CAUTION ADVISED - ARMED AND DANGEROUS.

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



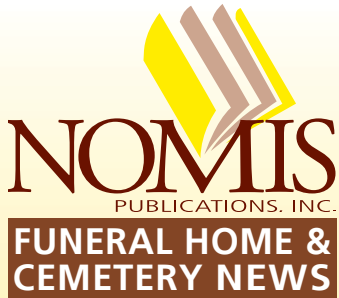
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Include your firm's name, address, phone number(s) and name of contact person on your company letterhead, along with your photograph or line drawing. Include a short description of your facility.

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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](mailto:info@nomispublications.com).

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## National Museum of Funeral History announces its 15th Annual Golf Classic to be held in May

HOUSTON, TX— The National Museum of Funeral History announced its annual *Golf Classic Fund Raiser* will be held at Kingwood Country Club in Kingwood, TX, on Monday, May 18, 2009.

The Golf Classic, now in its 15th year, will begin with a shotgun start at 9:00 am. The tournament format is a 5-man scramble. "The NMFH Golf Classic has become the most prestigious golf tournament in the funeral industry. With play on three courses, the 2009 Classic promises to be the best ever," said Museum President **Robert Boetticher, Sr.**

Special events include putting, longest drive and closest to the pin contests. Awards will be presented for first, second and third place. "Not only do we have fantastic prizes this year, but the camaraderie the tournament provides is exceptional. Participants reconnect with old friends, meet new ones, conduct business and, most importantly, support the heritage of funeral service while enjoying the great

game of golf," Boetticher added.

Participants are invited to a kick-off sponsor's cocktail reception on Sunday, May 17, 2009 from 6 to 8 pm at the National Museum of Funeral History, located at 415 Barren Springs Drive in Houston.

The entry fee is \$250 per player. Entry fees include the sponsors reception, greens fees, 1/2 cart, gift bag, lunch, course refreshments and after-tournament awards dinner. Festivities include a live auction and raffle. All proceeds support the National Museum of Funeral Service in procuring, restoring and displaying historical funerary artifacts. The Museum enjoys a working relationship with the Smithsonian and is regarded worldwide as the permanent repository of funeral heritage and memorabilia. As such, it has received substantial media coverage of its newest exhibit, Celebrating the Lives and Deaths of the Popes, which opened to the public in November 2008 with Vatican approval.

Registration: Register online at [www.nmfh.org](http://www.nmfh.org) or by fax to NMFH at 281-876-4403. Registration includes the kick off sponsor's cocktail reception, golf and the awards dinner. Early reservations are recommended to guarantee participation in this popular and worthwhile event.

Travel and Lodging: Discount travel and lodging rates have been negotiated for Classic participants. To take advantage of these discounts contact: Continental Airlines at 1-800-468-7022, reference number/event D93ZHS; American Airlines, 1-800-433-1790, reference number/event #A3859AS; Avis Car Rental, 1-800-331-1600, reference number/event # D757484; Houston Marriott Hotel North, 281-875-4000, reserve by April 20, 2009.

Additional Information: Entrants are advised to consult their tax advisor for specific details on charitable deductions. Contact **Genevieve Keeney** at 281-876-3063 or **Bob Boetticher** at 713-525-9081 for more information.

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## Elizabeth Haynes carries on Legacy

WARRENTON, GA— Mrs. Elizabeth Haynes of Warrenton, has continued a strong legacy and a commitment to the funeral service profession. She has continued the legacy begun by her late father-in-law, G.L. Haynes. Alexander Haynes, one of G.L. Haynes' sons, moved from New York City to Warrenton, to help him in the funeral service profession at the Haynes Funeral Home. During his life and after his death, his wife Elizabeth has helped and continues with the business with commitment, determination and hard work. While putting God first in her life, she knows anything is possible.



Elizabeth Haynes

In 1968, Elizabeth received her funeral directors license and continues to further her education by attending seminars and training sessions. She received an achievement award from the Georgia Funeral Directors Association for 40 years of licensed professional service to the public.

For many years, she and her husband served the citizens of Warrenton by using the funeral home's ambulance for the conveyance of the sick and wounded. This experience helped her to complete 98 hours of instructional service in emergency training from Augusta Technical evening school, where she received a certification in the profession. She would help transport people day and night to medical care services in Thomson, Washington, and Augusta, GA.

Before moving to Georgia, Mrs. Haynes worked in the costume millinery profession. She received a diploma from the Academy of Millinery Design in Little Falls, NJ and also completed a millinery course at the Empire Trade School in New York City, designing and copying hats.

In 1977, Elizabeth Haynes helped organize the Warren County Senior Citizens group, whose meetings were first held in the offices of Haynes Funeral Home, until the County Commission and others founded a permanent place. She also taught the ladies how to make crafts and other items. Mrs. Elizabeth Haynes is a member of the New Salem Baptist Church, and a former member of the New Salem Church choir.

## TreasureLine Urns



## 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 sun shine; 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 ser-

vices 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

## Safford Funeral Home purchased by the Hollands



Safford Funeral Home

SAFFORD, AZ— Robert and Joanna Holland have announced the purchase of the Safford Funeral Home on February 13, 2009. Robert is a graduate of *Mid-America College of Funeral Service* and won the NFDA award in 2007. Joanna has worked at the Board of Health in Hammond for 23 Years and they have a 7 month old daughter, Taylor. Future plans at this family owned and operated facility include remodeling to accommodate a social room and children's play area.

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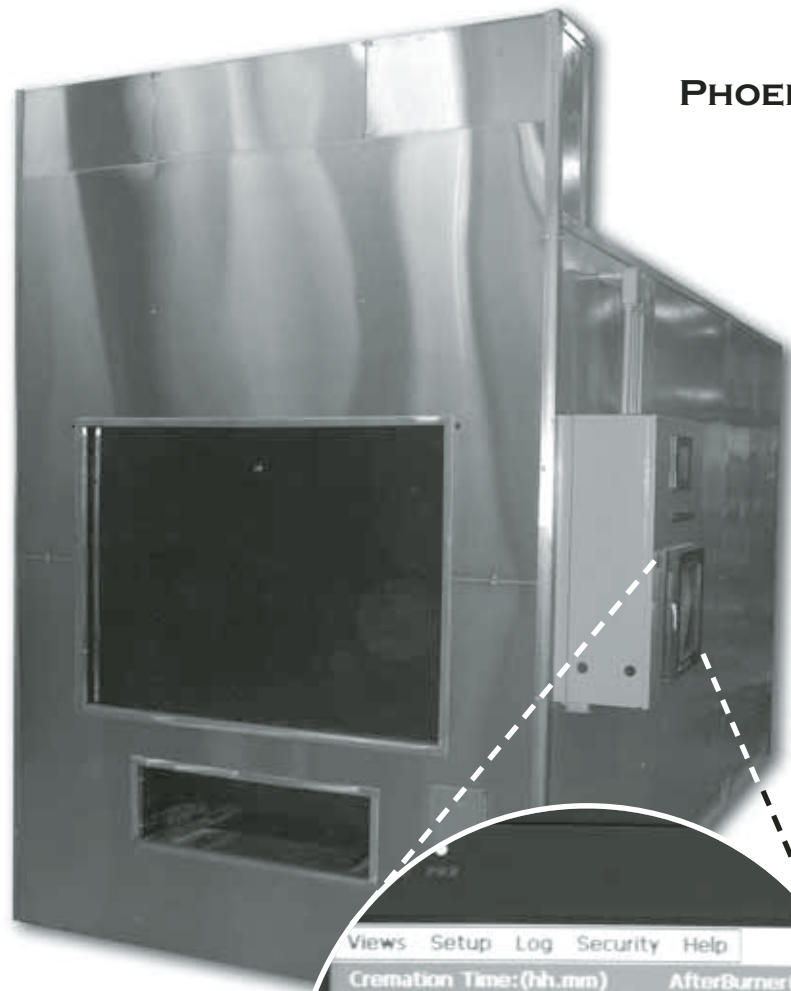
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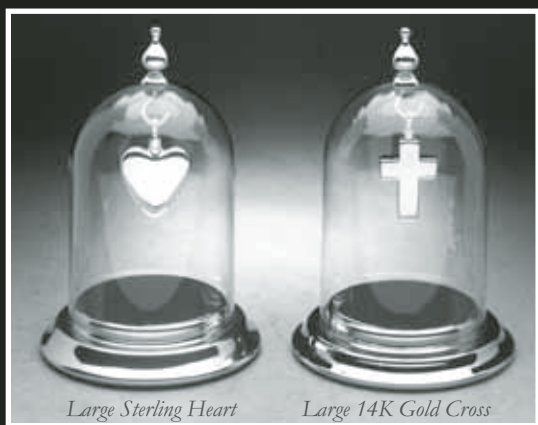
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## Wilbert Foundation and Wilbert Licensees present \$53,475 in grants to U.S. Children's Hospitals

**BROADVIEW, IL**— The Wilbert Foundation and several Wilbert licensees recently presented a total of \$53,475 in grants to seven U.S. children's hospitals. The funds will be used to benefit various programs supporting bereaved children and their families.

In addition to the grants, the Wilbert Foundation sent 25 teddy bears to each of 17 different children's hospitals that applied for but did not receive a grant.

"The Wilbert Foundation is diligently continuing its efforts to provide pediatric

chaplains with the tools and resources needed to support children coping with the trauma of grief and death," said Wilbert Executive Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer **Terry Whitlock**.

The foundation's seven recent grant distributions included:

- \$10,000 to the Children's Hospital Foundation in Aurora, CO (presented January 2 by **Lance Ray**, regional vice president of **Suhor Industries Funeral Services** of Denver);
- \$4,500 to Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha, NE (presented January 5 by **Jason Elmore**, president of **Omaha Wilbert Vaults, Inc.** of Omaha);
- \$8,000 to Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago (presented January 8 by **David Reichle**, vice president of **American Wilbert Vault Corp.** of Forest Park, IL);
- \$8,475 to Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit (presented January 13 by **Detroit Wilbert Vault Corp.** President **Graham MacLeod** and Sales Representative **Shannon Gordon**);
- \$7,500 to SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY (presented January 15 by **Robert Atkinson**, president of **Sunnycrest Wilbert** of Auburn, NY);
- \$10,000 to Arnold Palmer Hospital in Orlando, FL (presented January 27 by **Florida Wilbert Inc.**

[Jacksonville] Vice President and Chief Operating Officer **Keith Lodge** and Territory Sales Representative **Christine N. Clementz Elrod** and **Quality Vaults, Inc.** [Ocoee] President **Jim Tramonte**); and

- \$5,000 to Texas Children's Hospital in Houston (presented January 29 by **Brett Henery**, director of business development, **Wilbert Vaults of Houston, L.L.P.**).

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

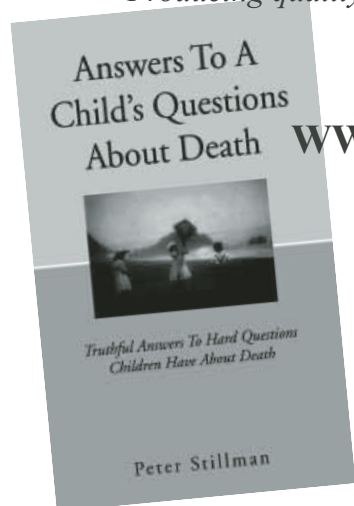
Since its inception, the foundation has distributed over \$500,000 in grants and funded the curriculum for the country's most comprehensive training program for pediatric chaplains. The Wilbert Foundation remains diligent in its journey to build an endowment fund of \$1,000,000.

To learn more about the Wilbert Foundation, please call Terry Whitlock at 1-888-WILBERT.

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## A Proactive Approach to Advance Funeral Planning

By Christopher Kuhnen

### Pre-Need Lead Generation in a Down Economy

Pre-need sales have never been more exciting or challenging. With our national economy in recession, some pre-need sales professionals report they are having a difficult time generating sales leads. Although the economy may have a negligible few shying away from what we offer, there are still plenty of people out there who need or want to make their funeral prearrangements. As a funeral pre-planning professional it is more important than ever for you to be at the top of your game to reach these people. Relying on walk-in or call-in pre-need business just won't get the job done anymore.

Here are some tips that will help you get in front of more people to tell your story and share the good news about planning ahead.

**Stay positive.** Pre-need sales leads do exist and will be there for you, if you will just hang in there for the long haul and maintain your ability to keep moving forward. Prospect daily for sales leads. A day without prospecting is a day without sales.

**Get your name out there** any way that you can. Make telephone calls, send letters, send e-mails, write articles for local publications, start a newsletter, send out a press release and attend any events where you can reach out to others. Get visible now!

**Networking leads to referrals.** Join a networking group. Attend a minimum of at least one community networking event each week. Become a networking professional.

**Don't cut back on your marketing efforts.** Now is the time to drive home your pre-need message and offer a pre-need value proposition that will resonate with consumers. Direct Mail is not all used up. It still works very effectively in all the markets The Outlook Group operates in across America. It will work for you!

**Do community speaking engagements.** There are plenty of local groups, clubs, associations, organizations, church who are always searching for speakers to come speak at their meetings. Get the word out that you are available to speak to them about funeral preplanning.

**Increase your prospecting activity by 25%.** Make ten extra telephone contacts per day. Go outside your "normal" prospecting methods. Stretch your comfort zone and tap into new ways of reaching prospects. Arrive at work an hour earlier and stay an hour later. Use this time for prospecting purposes. Prospecting, prospecting, prospecting will be your key to success in 2009.

**Re-train yourself,** not only in presenting, but in your funeral homes services and merchandise. How well do you know your firm's history, services, staff and merchandise? Brush up on your appointment setting, presentation and closing skills by attending a specialized training course.

**Ask for referrals** from existing happy clients. Referrals are earned from those satisfied families you have served. They will be happy to help you (in as much as you were so helpful to them) if you will only ask. Call them on the telephone and see how they are doing. Rekindle the rela-

tionship and when the feeling is right seek referrals from them. When they give you referrals, say thank you, by sending the person giving you the referral a hand written note or postcard. This will spur additional referrals.

This year presents many with new challenges. You can adapt and overcome. Prospects are plentiful but you must step up your game and make adjustments that oftentimes are not comfortable, but necessary. Don't be afraid! You can step out of your comfort zone and succeed, if you will only try. If you expect to be prosperous you will live a life of abundance, especially if you stay focused on presenting and reinforcing the intangibles of planning ahead.

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](mailto:ckuhnen@theoutlookgroup.com).



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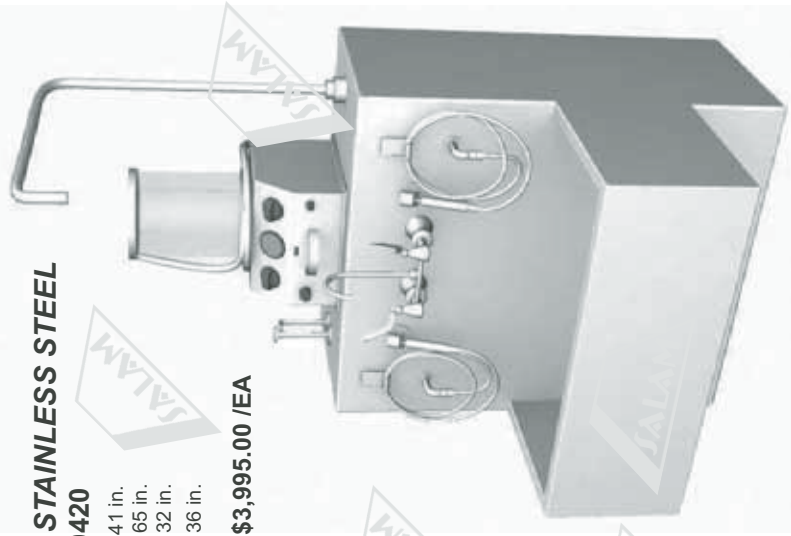
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**Service Corporation International announces Fourth Quarter 2008 Financial Results**

HOUSTON, TX— **Service Corporation International** (NYSE: SCI), a leading provider of deathcare products and services, has reported results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year 2008

and provided its comments on its outlook for fiscal year 2009.

**Tom Ryan**, the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer, commented on the fourth quarter of 2008: "The negative consumer sentiment which impacted pre-need cemetery sales coupled with the extraordinary decline in the financial markets had a significant negative effect on our cemetery operating results. On the bright side, our funeral operations delivered solid operating results as we would have expected as they are less sensitive to economic conditions and the financial markets."

Commenting on the Company's 2009 outlook is Tom Ryan, the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer: "It is clear 2009 will be a challenging year for both SCI and the entire global economy. Comparable funeral services performed in January and February of 2009 were significantly lower as compared to the prior year. Additionally, we continue to see a difficult economic environment for the consumer and uncertain financial markets which will reduce anticipated earnings in 2009 compared to 2008. However, due to the stability of our core funeral business and our intention to diligently manage our costs and capital spending in 2009 we

believe we can still generate a healthy amount of free cash flow. With approximately \$150 million in cash, no significant near term debt maturities, and the predictable nature of our funeral operations, we are confident we have the financial strength, resources and people to address the task of successfully operating in a contracting market and position our Company to benefit from the market's eventual recovery."

Service Corporation International (NYSE: SCI), headquartered in Houston, TX, is North America's leading provider of deathcare products and services. At December 31, 2008, the company owned and operated more than 1,300 funeral homes and 350 cemeteries (of which over 200 are combination locations) in 43 states, eight Canadian provinces, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through their businesses, they market the **Dignity Memorial**® brand which offers assurance of quality, value, caring service, and exceptional customer satisfaction. For more information about Service Corporation International, please visit their website at www.sci-corp.com. For more information about Dignity Memorial®, please visit www.dignitymemorial.com.

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**For Keep Sakes**

By Adrienne Kalmes

**Missed Opportunities**

My column has a particularly personal perspective this month. My 46 year old brother is dying of bladder cancer—a highly aggressive form of the disease that has likely been caused by exposure to an unknown environmental toxin. He has battled for two years with every possible tool in the oncology arsenal, but the cancer has had the upper hand throughout. He leaves behind an adoring wife and four-year-old twin boys, nine siblings, countless neighbors and friends, and a tight-knit workplace community. We will all miss him sorely.

As is typical in many large families, there are diverse talents and skills, the sum total of which makes most things run smoothly. Each of us has his or her strengths, talents and networks, and there is generally a designated person to whom we turn with specific questions. Needless to say I am the point per-

son on matters related to funerals. And so the task has fallen to me to help my sister-in-law plan his wake and funeral. I gathered information from several funeral homes within a five-mile radius of his home, visiting each one. The decision was ultimately made based on proximity to the church and my brother's workplace, the size of the parking lot, and the recommendation of the church that the funeral home was "good to work with."

The selection of the "rental casket" for the wake and funeral mass and the urn for his cremated remains were simple. There was only one casket and an extremely limited choice of tasteful urns. We were shown a book with rather standard looking flowers and told we could submit 30 pictures for a video tribute. We could not bring in our own video. Next we viewed an incredibly dated assortment of holy cards and program covers from which to choose. The same assortment that was available 30 years ago. They were so bad that we had to tell them that we would create our own. There was also no credit given for materials that we declined. That was it. There were no other options presented.

The sad part of it is that my sister-in-law was prepared to make selections of a number of keepsake items. She had hoped to find something for the boys, the siblings, and the pall bearers; she had thought she might do something to preserve the flowers from the casket spray. She had even toyed with the idea of having a diamond made from lockets of his hair. She asked about other kinds of keepsake jewelry and candles. The funeral home offered nothing. Unfortunately, she had

budgeted \$2,000 for these gifts and walked away from the arrangement without having spent a cent of it.

I left shaking my head. Even through my tears and the anxiety of the moment, I was disappointed by the industry in which I work. There were so many missed opportunities that could have brought comfort to us and ultimately could have benefitted the funeral home. It is sad, very sad.

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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Mr. Elias is an accomplished church organist and piano player, and is pleased to offer live music of one's choice performed on a grand piano. He has served as organist at his home church of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Bethlehem since 1980. He also has volunteered with the Western Salisbury Fire Company for 17 years.

Concerned about the well established funeral homes in the area, Mr. Elias offers several unique features apart from the historic building itself. In addition to the live music, a variety of "Green" and Eco-Friendly funeral plans to appeal to those wishing to preserve the environment are



offered. A "Green" funeral generally consists of holding the deceased without embalming (fewer toxic

chemicals in the ground); the use of a biodegradable casket designed to return to the elements of the

earth, along with a meaningful celebration of life with shorter viewing periods. **CONTINUED ON PAGE A15**



## Legal Speak

By Atty. Harvey I. Lapin

### California Appeals Court Extends Law and Allows Emotional Distress Damages for Negligent Wrongful Burial

The Court of Appeals for the Fourth District, Division 3 in California recently issued its opinion in the case of *Binns v. Westminster Memorial Park* ("Binns"), 2009 WL 470116 (2009) dealing with a claim for emotional distress damages when a cemetery negligently interred a stranger in the family burial space intended for Binns. The factual situation that caused the dispute was as follows:

According to the Court, in 1977, Binns' mother purchased a burial plot for Binns deceased father in Westminster Memorial Park ("Westminster"). A few months later, the mother purchased three additional plots adjacent to the plot in which the father was interred, intended for herself, Binns, and Binns' wife or, if Binns did not marry, his brother. As part of the transaction, the mother executed a purchase agreement with Westminster. The mother died in 1986 and was interred in the plot next to Binns' father.

On Easter 2005, Binns visited his parent's graves and discovered a stranger, buried in the plot immediately adjacent to his mother, which had been reserved for Binns. Binns immediately brought the situation to the attention of a family services counselor ("counselor") at Westminster, who reviewed some records and promised to obtain further information. The following day, the counselor

contacted Binns confirmed the stranger had been buried in Binns' plot, and promised to rectify the problem. A few days later, the counselor again contacted Binns to inform him the cemetery had removed the stranger from Binns' plot and reinterred the remains in another location. Westminster had not notified Binns it would disturb the stranger's remains to rectify the situation. Westminster apparently resold Binns' plot to the stranger's family because it incorrectly recorded the sale of Binns' family plots in its files that were maintained by hand.

Binns sued defendant for breach of contract and negligent infliction of emotional distress. Westminster moved for judgment on the pleadings, which the trial court denied. The case proceeded as a bench trial. At the close of Binns' case, Westminster moved for nonsuit, which the court again denied. After trial concluded, the court awarded Binns judgment of \$4,440 for emotional distress. Westminster appealed the judgment.

The Appeals Court affirmed the trial court and in the process extended previous decisions of California courts applicable to funeral directors that intentionally mishandled the remains of customers to a situation where a cemetery acted in a negligent manner due to bad recordkeeping. The Appeals Court noted in the decision that there was no analogous case to guide them and the parties had not provided them with any California cases with similar facts. Despite that conclusion the court held that a cemetery operator, upon interment of the remains of one family member, undertakes a duty not to bury a stranger in one of these plots. The Court indicated the holding was intended to be narrow. However one of the judges of the court that did not agree with the majority decision wrote a biting dissent and stated the following about the future of the decision:

"But I am not prepared to expand California tort liability by imposing a special duty that would expose cemeteries to amorphous emotional distress damages for every mistake. My colleagues have not done that; they have announced a rule that opens the door to negligence liability only slightly. And they have done so in a reasonable way in an admittedly close case that we all have struggled with. But because I cannot see anything in their opinion that would enable future courts to block that door—or future litigants to define how far it will open before someone does find a way to block

it—I must dissent."

While this case deals with California law, the law in many states is similar. Accordingly, there may now be a precedent for extending the law in other states in a similar fashion. It also should be noted that the Appeals Court stated that the problem was caused by the recordkeeping practices of Westminster and that it hoped the decision would cause Westminster and other cemeteries to update their practices with a computer-based system.

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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## Gloria Walker Vessels elected president of South Carolina Board

ANDERSON, SC— On October 23, 2008, **Gloria Walker Vessels**, a member of the *South Carolina Morticians Association*, 3rd District, was elected President of the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Services. The Board regulates and prescribes standards for funeral service including the issuing of licenses for embalmers and funeral directors and permits for funeral homes. The Board also maintains a file of any public complaints concerning licensees and disposition of complaints.

Ms. Walker-Vessels, daughter of **Rev. and Mrs. D. B. Walker**, was appointed by Governor Mark Sanford to the State Board of Funeral Services in April 2007, and will serve until August 2009. She served as Secretary and Vice President before being elected President.

Ms. Walker-Vessels is the President of the **D. B. Walker & Co. Funeral Services**, Anderson, SC and Manager of **Robinson-Walker Funeral Service**, Ware Shoals, SC. From 1997 until 2004, she served as the coordinator of the Funeral Services Program at *Piedmont Technical College*, Greenwood, SC, where she developed

the funeral services program and was instrumental in the program receiving its national accreditation from the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). Presently, she serves on the Scholarship and Curriculum Com-



Gloria Walker Vessels

mittees of the ABFSE. Ms. Walker-Vessels is a member of the *National Funeral Director & Morticians Association* (NFD&MA) and Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity.

Ms. Walker-Vessels is a graduate of the University of District Columbia Mortuary Science Program and is a National Board Certified Mortician. She also holds a Master's Degree in Human Resource Development from Webster's University.

## Observations

By Steven Palmer



### Escort to Tragedy?

*"Folks, please when you encounter a funeral procession—especially on the freeway—do not attempt to cut into the line. First off it is very disrespectful. Secondly, it presents a danger to you, as well as the people in the procession, as well as the officers escorting."*

—hou eric on the Houston.metblogs.com

When new accountants see the item line entry of "escorts" on a funeral home's expense sheet it will usually raise an eyebrow or a lame joke. Escorts have gone from a funeral directors friend to possible litigant.

Traffic escorts for processions attempting to stay together safely to get from one destination to another have always faced danger, respect and scorn.

When prominent politicians have a procession from the airport to their speaking engagement people understand, sometimes salute, sometimes protest and sometimes grumble.

When our fallen from Iraq and Afghanistan are brought back for final honors, escorts meet with utmost cooperation as groups such as the Patriot Guard Riders escort the hearse with assist of police and fire officers along the way.

The everyday person's cortege being escorted is fraught with danger and is under increasing scrutiny from public officials.

In the span of a few hours and a few miles, Houston, Texas recently experienced two separate serious accidents involving funeral escorts.

Houston Metro officer T.J. Barnes, a five year veteran, was on a funeral procession escort. A driver of a Chevy Tahoe failed to yield at a stop sign, struck his vehicle and threw him into a grassy area of the median. His injuries have been reported as non life threatening.

The second incident happened when a driver failed to yield to the escorting officer's command. His injuries include two broken legs, a broken arm and head trauma.

Houston Police Sgt. L. Leffer told the Houston Chronicle, "It is very out of the ordinary."

Is it? Many processions, admittedly few proportional accidents, but is the liability worth it?

In Hemet, California, a private company escort officer was seriously injured when a motorist who was not part of the procession took a left turn in front of the motorcycle, throwing the officer over the vehicle. A lawsuit from the severely injured escort employee against the escort service resulted in a suit from the escort service to the funeral home (claiming the funeral home did not order enough escorts for the size of the procession) resulted in heavy settlements all the way around.

The issue of "motorcade" escorts was brought to the national attention when a police officer in Seattle, Washington escorting the Hillary Clinton campaign last year was killed. He was not the first Washington escort officer to suffer from this task. A fire captain was hit by a car escorting a funeral procession in 2002. Retired Seattle firefighter Richard Friedt was killed in 2004 when a car in a funeral procession clipped his motorcycle and sent him into oncoming traffic. These tragedies caused the Seattle police chief to withdraw permits for funeral escort companies to protect processions.

Escorts are either local police doing this as a civic service, doing it for a fee or, more commonly, a private company employing escorts with official looking motorcycles or off duty officers.

In Pearland, Texas, 20 minutes from Houston, they have sprung into action and the city council passed an ordinance that stops funeral escorts from stopping cars in incoming lanes.

In Allen, Texas, an escort officer with DFW Motorcade Safety was arrested for impersonating a police officer. It seems their uniforms closely resemble police officers uniforms and vehicles causing identity confusion to the public. Maricopa County (the Phoenix area), Arizona recently passed a law that uniforms of escort companies had to be approved by the Maricopa Sheriff's Office so as not to confuse them with public safety officials.

In a blog to the San Francisco Citizen, the question was asked, "So you're all set to motor on the streets of San Francisco with your high performance vehicle and then DISASTER! Some funeral procession is blocking you even though you have a green light. It's just like Critical Mass, except those car parades can show up at any time. Do you really have to listen to those "funeral cops" when they try to block your vehicle's path?"

The answer given was "we recommend that motorists observe the directions of such an escort not only out of respect, but also out of danger to themselves and those in the procession."

The National Funeral Directors Association came up with a proposed statute which is on their website. It describes in legalese what a funeral procession is, what funeral escorts are, what equipment they should display and how the public should be directed to respond to such a motorcade.

Poynter Institute's Poynter Online's AI's Morning Meeting recently commented, "What is your city's or county's policy? What does the law require other drivers to do when a funeral procession approaches? Whatever happened to the tradition of pulling over to allow funeral processions pass?"

"Why not travel with a funeral escort and see why the job is so dangerous?"

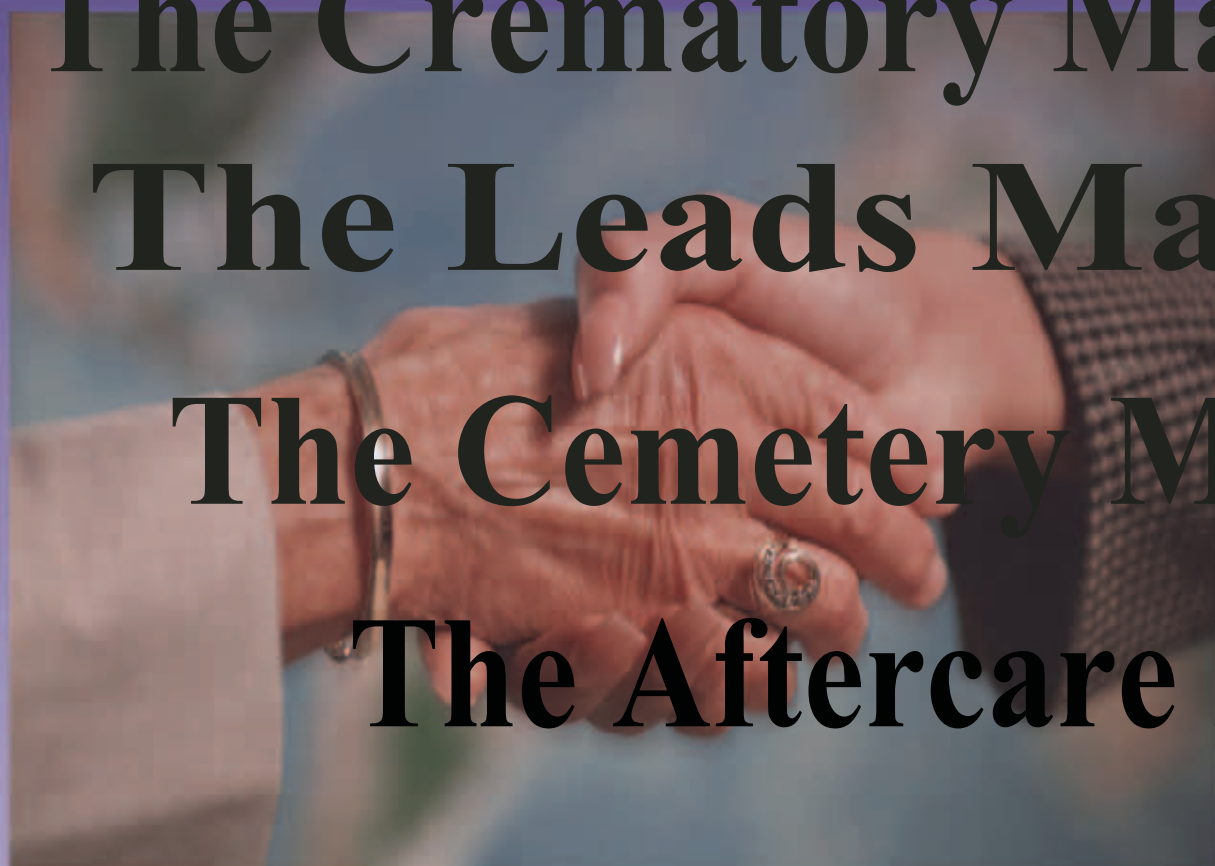
Good questions for all to consider. Public safety officials and funeral directors must come up with an answer that all can, literally, live with.

*"Such professional funeral service aides generally display compassion, skill, and a first-class knowledge of what is required to keep a funeral procession together and moving safely through the dense traffic of a metropolitan area."*

—Shirley Ann Parker, Ez@articles (SF, California)

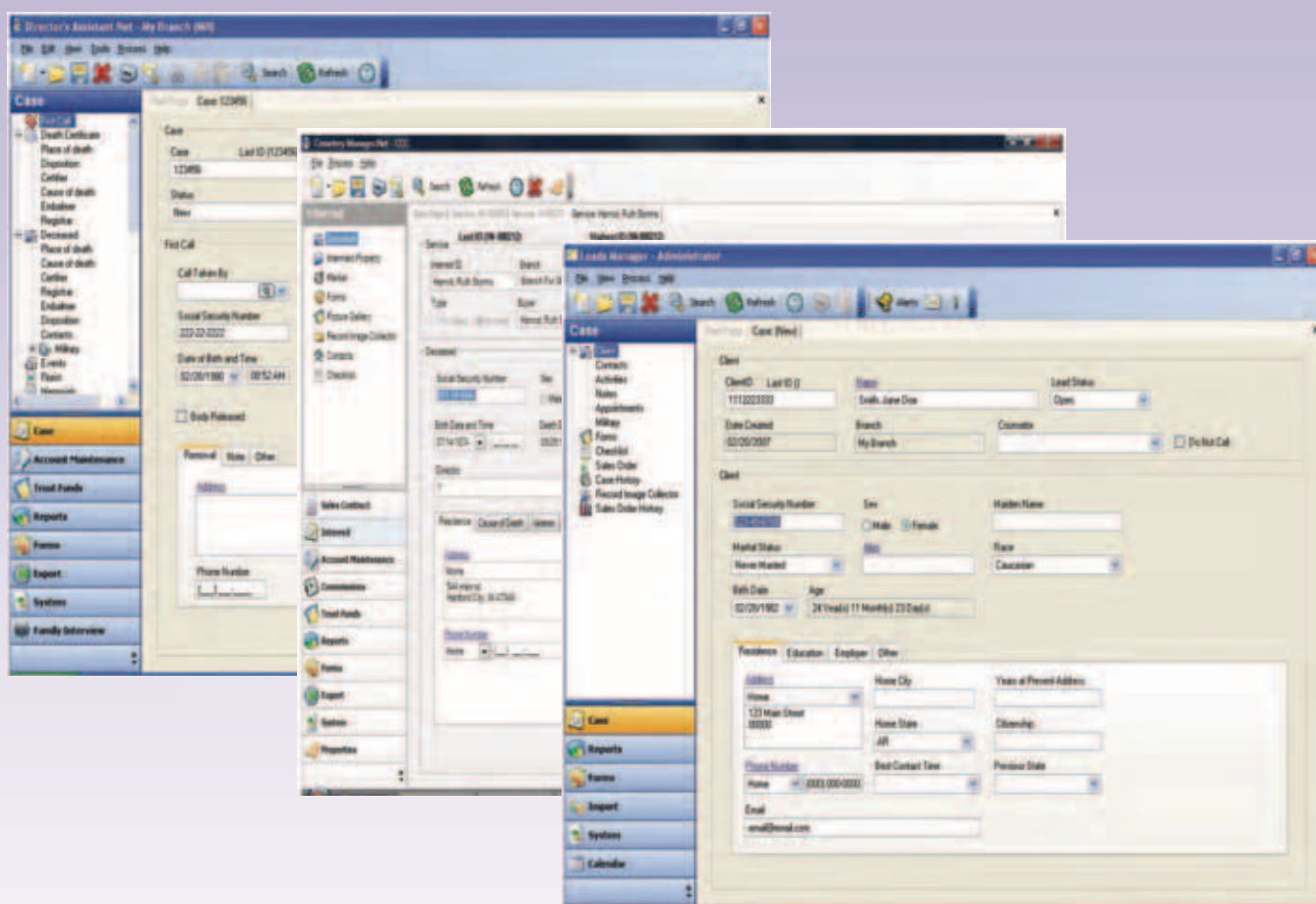
Steven Palmer entered funeral service in 1971. He is an honors graduate of the New England Institute of Applied Arts & Sciences. Licensed on both coasts, he owns the Westcott Funeral Homes of Cottonwood and Camp Verde, AZ. Steve offers his observations on current funeral service issues. He may be reached 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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## Lomax Funeral Home holds Grand Opening



The new Lomax Funeral Home



DALLAS, TX— Rev. Oliver and Linda Lomax celebrated the relocation of the **Lomax Funeral Home** from Scyene Road to 2703 Hatcher Street, Dallas. The Grand Opening Ceremony was held

on Sunday, February 22, 2009. The guest speaker for the event was **Hall Davis, IV**, National President of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*.

Rev. Lomax is currently



Rev. Oliver Lomax

the President of the *Dallas Funeral Directors Association*, Chaplain of the NFD&MA, and Chap-

lain of the Dallas Police Department as well as Treasurer of the *Indepen-*

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A24**



## OSHA Compliance

By Gary Finch

### *New recommendations on handling Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Cases from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

It isn't often that the CDC offers special advice for our industry. This time, they have, and it is good advice. I am advising you to type this link into your Internet browser. You should open the document and print it out. You should then keep it in your preparation room and let all embalmers know about it. They will then be able to access it if they are asked to handle this type of case. [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/cjd/funeral\\_directors.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/cjd/funeral_directors.htm)

For those not able to do that, I will summarize the article. Keep in mind that these are recommendations from the CDC. The World Health Organization (WHO) and Compliance Plus both have recommendations that vary from those offered by the CDC.

#### *Summary of Recommendations from CDC*

- Bag to transport the deceased. Use absorbent materials to reduce moisture. If fluids are still present, then double bag.

- Routine embalming is permitted as long as you dispose of the instruments.
- Embalming an autopsied case is permitted but the deceased is not to come into contact with the table or any work surface. Place a water proof sheet between the deceased and the table. Dispose of the sheet once the body is removed.
- Wear puncture resistant gloves when suturing.
- Wash body with bleach before dressing the deceased.
- Viewing is permitted. In autopsied cases, advise viewers to refrain from superficial contact, kissing, etc.
- Disinfect work surface with undiluted bleach.

Depending on the source, you may see recommendations that are decidedly different than the CDC's. If you, as an employee, do not feel it is safe, you have a right to refuse. Under OSHA, no employee can be forced to do a job that he or she feels is unsafe. I would defend that decision.

*Note:* Do not try to disinfect instruments used on a CJD case with an autoclave. The type of autoclave recommended by the WHO is a special unit that is only found in a few well equipped pathology labs. Normal autoclaves are not effective.

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](http://www.kisscompliance.net). Contact Gary by phone at (800) 950-1101 or by e-mail at [gfinch@kisscompliance.net](mailto:gfinch@kisscompliance.net).

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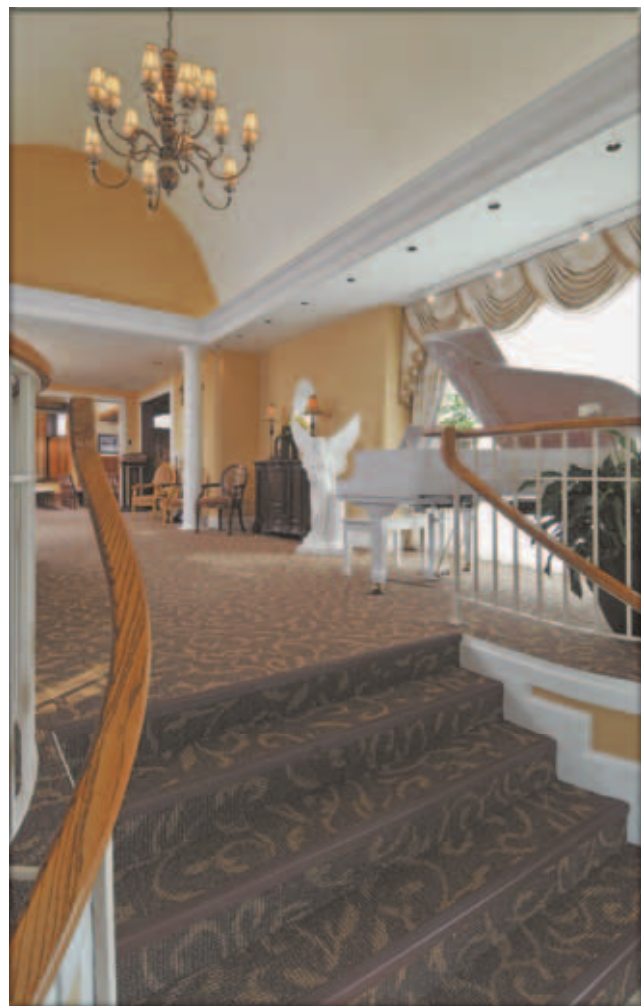
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# New Nicos C. Elias Funeral Home in Allentown

Continued from Page A10



owners of the Marilyn Shop who built a tasteful addition to the property, in keeping with its original character. There was some talk of demolishing the building, but

local residents and neighborhood groups rallied to save it from destruction.

Mr. Elias has spent a lot of resources to improve the property both inside and

out, and it is hoped that the building is appreciated and utilized by the residents of the Lehigh Valley. Its primary purpose is to serve as a place where grieving

people of all faiths can hold their funeral services and be comforted with genuine compassion and empathy, with service provided by the owner himself.

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ods. These plans will not appeal to everyone, but they are offered in the hopes that we can begin to make an impact and improve our relationship with the earth.

Also available is a classic 1963 Cadillac hearse, available for the funerals of antique or classic automobile enthusiasts. This car was arguably one of the finest funeral cars available in its day and remains remarkably well preserved despite years of service in upstate New York.

As for the building itself, the General Trexler Mansion is a showcase along what was once known as "Millionaire's Row" in Allentown. Originally built for George Ormrod in the waning years of the 19th century, it was later sold to General Trexler and was his residence until his death in the 1930s. His wife occupied it until her death a few years later, when it became the offices of the Trexler Estate, the group of prominent citizens who administer the General's will.

In the early 1990s the building was sold to the

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## Stewart Enterprises, Inc. changes its Organizational Structure

NEW ORLEANS, LA—**Stewart Enterprises, Inc.** (Nasdaq:STEL) reported that the Company is eliminating the positions of Eastern and Western division presidents from its organizational structure in order to maximize the benefits of its Best in Class initiative, improve efficiencies and provide more focus on the development of new revenue opportunities.

According to President and Chief Executive Officer **Thomas J. Crawford**, the decision to change the Company's organizational structure is based on the investments made to improve processes and the belief that a leaner, more focused organization produces stronger results. "Reducing management levels streamlines our business and enables us to tighten

and improve lines of communication. In fact, this change is a progression from four years ago when the Company's four divisions were streamlined to two for similar reasons. Additionally, this change allows us to focus more time and attention on new invention activities with the intent of generating new revenue streams into the Company's existing base," stated Crawford.

The Company's nine operating regions will report to Senior Vice President of Operations **Jerry Myers**. The sales organization will report to former Western Division President **G. Kenneth Stephens, Jr.** in his new role as senior vice president of sales. **Larry Merington** continues in his role as senior vice president of marketing with ad-

ditional focus on new revenue opportunities.

Stephens joined the Company in 1993 and has more than 23 years of industry experience. Eastern Division President **Brent F. Heffron** is retiring from the Company on April 30, 2009, following 36 years in the death care industry including nearly 17 with Stewart.

"I want to express the Company's appreciation to both Ken and Brent for their leadership as division presidents," states Crawford, who also says he is confident in Stephens' ability to lead the Company's sales organization. "Ken is excited to focus his efforts on improving the quality and performance of our sales team, and I know his knowledge and experience will serve him well in this

endeavor."

Crawford also recognized Heffron's years of service. "Brent has a proven record of accomplishment in the industry and with Stewart. We value these contributions and wish him the best in his retirement."

Founded in 1910, Stewart Enterprises is the second largest provider of products and services in the death care industry in the United States. The Company currently owns and operates 220 funeral homes and 140 cemeteries in the United States and Puerto Rico. Through its subsidiaries, the Company provides a complete range of funeral merchandise and services, along with cemetery property, merchandise and services, both at the time of need and on a preneed basis.

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The following two stunning facts, reinforced by a quote from one of our industry's best minds, should change the way we think about winning business.

- 68% of US online shoppers agree that they will distrust a Web site that doesn't have a professional appearance. (eMarketer, 2006)
- 75% of Web users admit making judgments about the credibility of an organization based on the design of its Web site (Fogg, B.J., Stanford Guidelines for Web Credibility, Persuasive Technology Lab. Stanford Univ. 2002, revised November 2003)

Is it any wonder that one of death-care's leading analysts, Alan Creedy, says "the majority of families today receive their first impression of your business from your Web site?"

Sure, you might be among the minority that serves families in geographic areas where that is not quite true, yet. But for the rest, has it sunk in that at least 51% of the families you serve receive their first impression of your professionalism and your ability to serve them from your Web site?

It is easy to read those stats and think, "O.K., I've got to make sure my site looks professional." Yes, 68% of the families who shopped the Web before deciding to call you wouldn't have considered you if they didn't find your Web site's appearance professional enough – unless there were no up-to-date professional-options, or they received a trusted referral.

However, the bigger number to consider is the 75% who make judgments about your *credibility* based on the *design* of your Web site.

Design is about so much more than looks. The abil-

ity to navigate easily, find information quickly and *do things*, these are the elements determined by design. In this context, design is all about *what* your Web site is *created to achieve*, and how well it does that.

If your Web site looks professionally attractive, then you're off to a positive start. You are not *hurting* your chances to win trust and business from families shopping online.

But if all your Web site does is offer pages of static text wrapped in pretty static graphics, it doesn't *do* very much and therefore is likely not achieving nearly as much as it could. So, for the seventy-five percent of the public making judgments about your credibility, at least in terms of how credible your claims are regarding your quality, value and ability to exceed their expectations, how impressive is what you are *doing* for them online?

Keep in mind, *doing* now includes more than e-commerce programs, forms and obituaries. How targeted, well placed and engaging are your messages for the various types of visitors that come to your Web site? Do you have some multi-media or interactive messaging tools on key pages that save visitors the effort of having to hunt for the answers they seek? The answer has much to do with how much your Web site is *doing* for your bottom line.

As you look for ways to increase your business and market share, don't forget the exceeding importance of your "first impression" tool. More than anything else, it is shaping the way families perceive your capacities and professionalism. If it looks, feels and performs in fantastic fashion, the "judgments" made about your business

won't ever be inaccurate assumptions, but rather fact-based findings that generate expectant phone calls that you can much more easily convert into service calls.

Brian Young is the Marketing Director at FuneralNet, the original and largest provider of custom Web sites to the deathcare industry. Brian received his Bachelors degree in Mass Communications from the University of Central Oklahoma. He has worked both nationally and internationally in public relations, marketing and sales roles. Before coming to FuneralNet, Brian was a leading health insurance representative for a national subsidiary of HealthMarkets®. Since coming to the industry, Brian has focused on helping death-care businesses recognize and leverage their Web sites as multi-function business tools. He has written and delivered Web-related presentations and articles for such organizations as the ICCFA, CFDA, IFDA, WSCA, and several trade publications.



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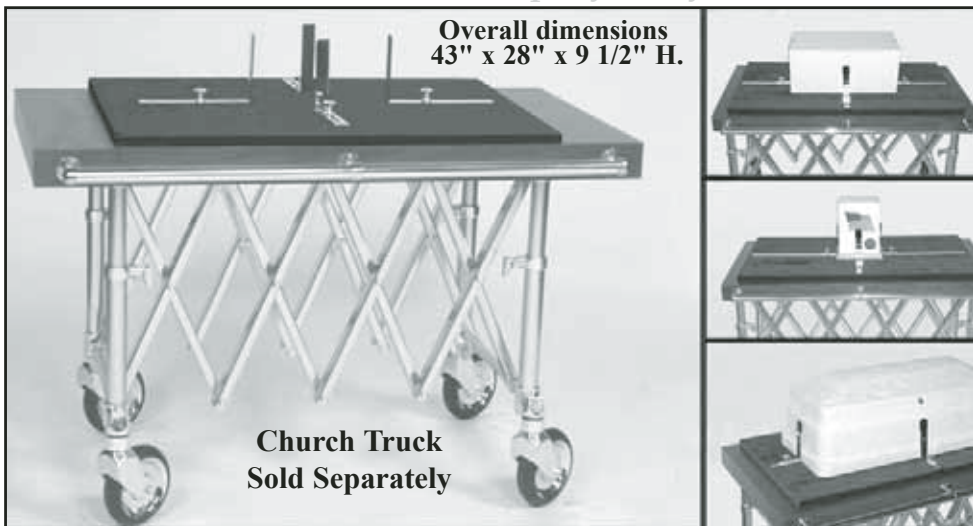


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CONTINUED ON PAGE A20



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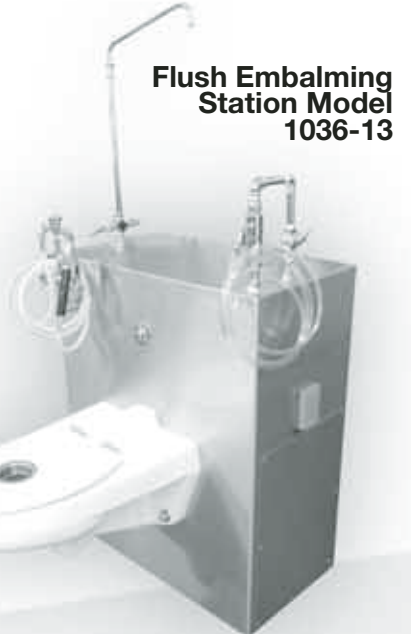
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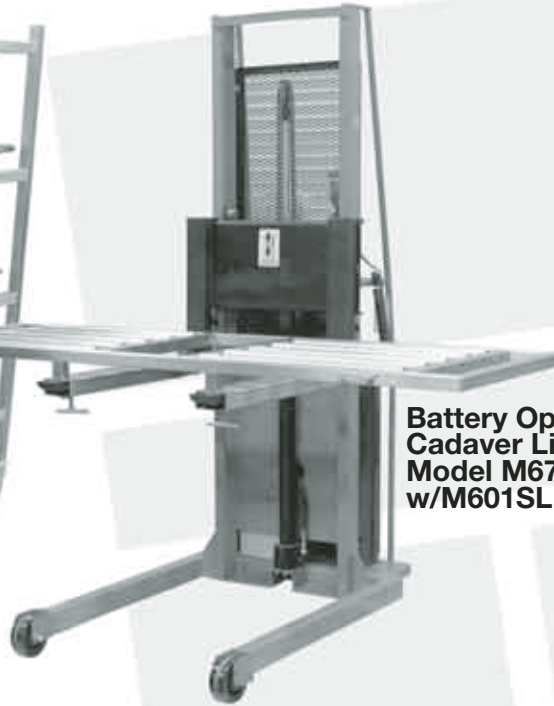
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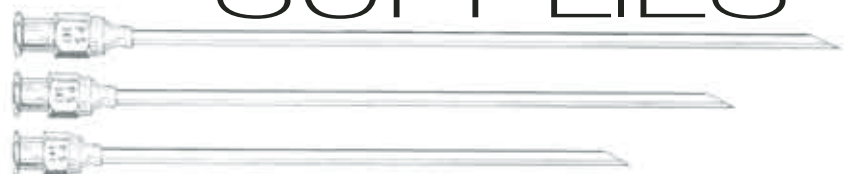
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## Miller Funeral Home purchases new Superior Coach



WASHINGTON, MO— Robert Miller of Miller Funeral Home in Washington, MO, receives the keys of his Superior Cadillac Statesman Coach from Joe Molina of Royal Coachworks, Inc., St. Louis, MO.

## Carriage Services announces Fourth Quarter and Year End Results

HOUSTON, TX— Carriage Services, Inc. (NYSE: CSV) has announced results for the fourth quarter and year ended December 31, 2008.

Melvin C. Payne, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "Ad-

justed diluted earnings per share in the fourth quarter of 2008, which excludes a one-time charge for a litigation settlement and an increase in our effective tax rate for 2008, both

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A22**

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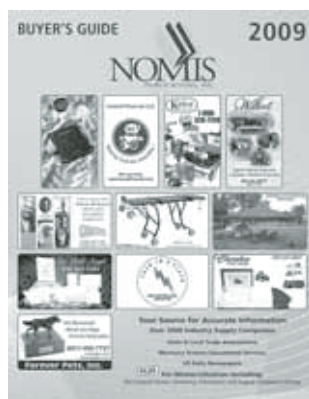
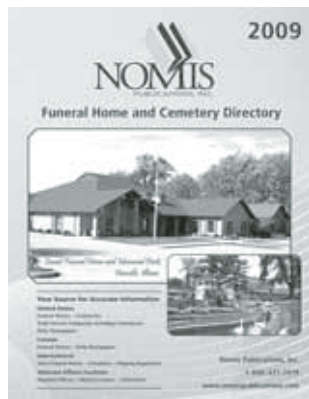
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## Carriage Services announces Fourth Quarter and Year End Results

Continued from Page A21

of which were recorded in the fourth quarter, was \$0.04 per diluted share. Adjusted Consolidated EBITDA Margin was 20.2% in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared to 24.9% in the

fourth quarter of 2007 and 22.1% for the year 2008 compared to 24.8% for the year 2007, largely due to weak results in our cemetery segment. We have continued our focus to lower our costs

company-wide and improve the leadership and sales staff at several of our larger cemeteries to drive good quality sales and profit margins.

“This past year and especially the last quarter were challenging to say the least, but we finished with a strong December primarily because of our funeral operations. We have positioned our company for improved performance in 2009 on the strength of our funeral operations and the repositioning of our trust fund portfolio during the fourth quarter and early 2009. We do not expect to repeat the large amount of special charges that impacted our 2008 performance, and notwithstanding the extraordinarily difficult economic environment, we expect modestly improved cemetery performance in 2009. All in all, we believe we are in position to not only survive this unusual period, but to thrive and exploit any opportunities that come our way.”

Joe R. Davis and Gary L. Forbes resigned their positions as Class I and Class II directors, respectively, effective February 25, 2009, in order to focus their time and energy on other matters during the current environment. The Board of Directors

accepted the recommendation of the Corporate Governance Committee and appointed **Richard W. Scott** as a Class I director of the Company and **L. William Heiligbrodt** as a Class II director of the Company, effective as of February 25, 2009.

Mr. Scott is a seasoned financial services executive with over thirty years of capital markets experience. He is currently Vice President and Chief Investment Officer of Loews Corporation and formerly Chief Investment Officer, Insurance Portfolio Management, with AIG Investments.

Mr. Heiligbrodt is a private investor and managing partner in a family business, and also serves on the Board of Directors of BJ Services. He served in various management positions with **Service Corporation International** (“SCI”) beginning in February 1990, including President and Chief Operating Officer until February 1999. Prior to joining SCI, Mr. Heiligbrodt served as Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Wedge Group, Inc. for five years, which he joined in 1983 after a long career in banking with Texas Commerce Bank including as Pres-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A23**

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## Cremation Issues and Answers

By Ronald Salvatore  
**Matthews**  
INTERNATIONAL  
CREMATION DIVISION

### Causes of Upset Conditions (Part 7) Preventative Maintenance Inspection (PMI)

Last month we finished causes of upset conditions by explaining that the fuel/air mixture recalibration should be part of your routine preventative maintenance inspection. Here is a checklist you can use to help maintain your equipment. Check with your equipment manufacturer as some of these items may not be applicable to your equipment or there may be additional items that should be included.

Follow proper Lock-Out/Tag-Out procedures prior to performing any maintenance or inspection. Engage loading door safety locks or equivalent when performing any primary chamber inspections. Consult your equipment manufacturer for any other requirements.

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

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

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

### A publication of Matthews Cremation Division Suggested Maintenance Checklist

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Performed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Legend: (W) = Weekly (M) = Monthly (Q) = Quarterly (S) = Semi-annually

- \_\_\_\_\_ (W) Clean both opacity lenses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (W) Adjust opacity monitoring equipment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (M) Clean spark plugs and set gaps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (M) Check condition of spark plugs, wires and connectors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (M) Clean both flame detectors (usually two flame detectors).
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Door component inspection and lubrication.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Inspect exhaust stack for rust or hot spots.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Is there a minimum of 6" clearance from the exhaust stack to combustible material?
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) What is the closest clearance between the exhaust stack and any combustible materials surrounding the exhaust stack below its penetration through the roof?
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Are all combustible materials protected from the heat of the exhaust vent with a noncombustible liner?
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Inspect the inner refractory lining of refractory-lined stacks to be sure the refractory is not falling away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Q) Check that the entrance of fresh air into the cremation equipment room is not blocked.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Clean fan blades.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Lubricate fan motor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Check that burner flames appear normal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Inspect primary (cremation) chamber refractories.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Inspect secondary (afterchamber) refractories.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Inspect draft inducer equipment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Check that all lights, switches and timers operate properly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Check all linkage arms for tightness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Check that cremation equipment is level within 1/8" side to side and front to back.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S) Inspect temperature controller thermocouple or protection well for breakage.

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

\* These procedures should be verified with the manufacturer of your cremation equipment.

## Vermeulen Funeral Homes hosts Employee Seminar with Matt Smith of Frigid Fluid



(L to R) Owner Jim Vermeulen, Embalmers Matt and Dan along with Frigid Fluid Company Consultant Matt Smith.

WESTLAND, MI— Jim Vermeulen, owner of Vermeulen Funeral Homes in Plymouth and Westland, MI and Perry Funeral Home in Detroit, MI, invited Matt Smith of Frigid Fluid Co. to conduct a three-hour Power Point seminar on “Embalm- ing the Severe Edema Case and Creating the Smile.”

Mr. Vermeulen is very proactive in continuing education and the training of his employees. Matt’s new and never before seen feature setting technique allows the embalmer to present a natural and pleasant expression to the deceased. Matt travels the country sharing his vast knowledge on embalming difficult cases and

creating the natural expression (getting rid of the “frown”). He wishes to share his information with everyone everywhere.

If you have any questions concerning Matt’s seminars or would like to invite him to your funeral home please contact him at 866-774-4746 or email msmith@frigidfluidco.com.

## Carriage Services announces Fourth Quarter and Year End Results

*Continued from Page A22*

ident and Chief Credit Officer.

“I want to thank Joe Davis and Gary Forbes for their service on Carriage’s Board of Directors and welcome Richard Scott and Bill Heiligbrodt, who bring substantial deathcare operational and financial experience and expertise to our board as we expect to be faced with substantial opportunity over the next five years,” said Payne.

Carriage Services is a leading provider of death care services and merchandise in the United States. As of December 31, 2008 Carriage operates 136 funeral homes in 25 states and 32 cemeteries in 11 states. Shares of Carriage’s Common Stock are publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange where its symbol is CSV. For the full quarterly report or for more information visit [www.carriageservices.com](http://www.carriageservices.com).

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## Lomax Funeral Home holds Grand Opening

*Continued from Page A14*

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### Prelude to the Science of Embalming (Part 44)

By John A. Chew

Over the course of a hundred years of formal education very little has changed in funeral service. I still find individuals using crocks of 100 percent (40:60 mixtures of formaldehyde and water—formalin) as an injection chemical. Preparation rooms are still unventilated, poorly lighted, dirty and poorly equipped.

These antiquated ideas and methods are compounded by old attitudes about how to manage the dead. Continued instinctive uncertainties as to the infectious nature of the dead body still plague funeral service today.

Those who are given the task to manage and care for the dead are not always schooled in the basics and could be the potential risk factors. Transmission of an infection requires the presence of an infectious agent, exposure to these agents, and a susceptible host.

We know the human body is the host to many organisms, only some are pathogenic while others may be opportunistic. When a person dies, the environment in which micro-organisms live can no longer sustain them. Total secession of cellular death does not occur immediately. It is during this time that transmission of infectious agents from the dead to a living person may occur.

A potential hazard for embalmers who routinely handle bodies is that they are usually not aware of the cause of death which may include tuberculosis, gastroenteritis, group A streptococcal infection, transmissible spongiform enceph-

alopathies (such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease), hepatitis A and C, HIV infection (AIDS) and meningococcal meningitis.

Individuals dying following accidents or natural disasters usually succumb to traumatic injuries and are unlikely to have acute or "epidemic-causing" infections. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule. This indicates that the risks which dead bodies pose for the general public are limited.

However, persons associated with the death care industry and who are involved with close contact with the dead, funeral service persons, may be exposed to chronic infectious hazards including hepatitis, HIV and mycobacterium tuberculosis to mention a few.

Ongoing training in personal hygiene, washing hands prior to gloving, using disposable sheeting, wearing protective garments such as nitrile gloves, face shields, coveralls, face masks, shoe covers or booties is of utmost importance.

Removal equipment should be cleaned and sanitized after each removal. The cot should be re-equipped with a disposable disaster pouch, disposable head block sheeting and all additional protective garments. A red disposable plastic bag should be provided for disposal of bio-hazardous materials.

The major concern is the leakage of body fluids and potential bloodborne pathogens. Everything centers around communication, continuing education and maintaining a clean working environment.

Prelude Forty-Five will continue to review ongoing concerns of the practice of funeralization and control of the final disposition of the body.

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

## Northcutt & Son takes delivery of New Hearse



MOREHEAD, KY— Northcutt & Son Funeral Home in Morehead, KY, took the keys of their new Federal Coach Lincoln Stratford Hearse from Darrell Simmons of Muster Associates of Calhoun, KY. Pictured are Denny Northcutt (Left) and John Northcutt. The Limousine Style window was one of many options on the Lincoln Stratford Hearse.

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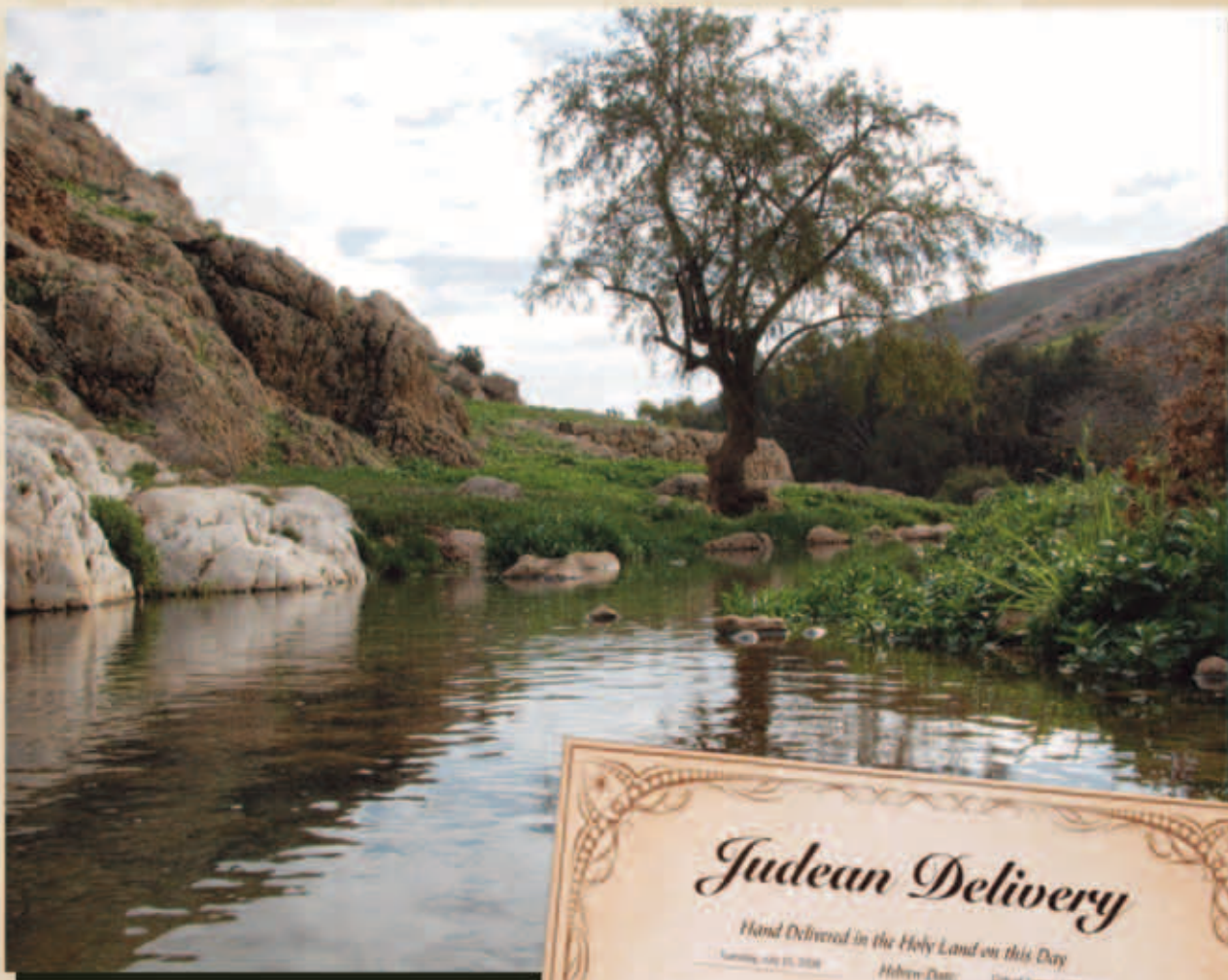
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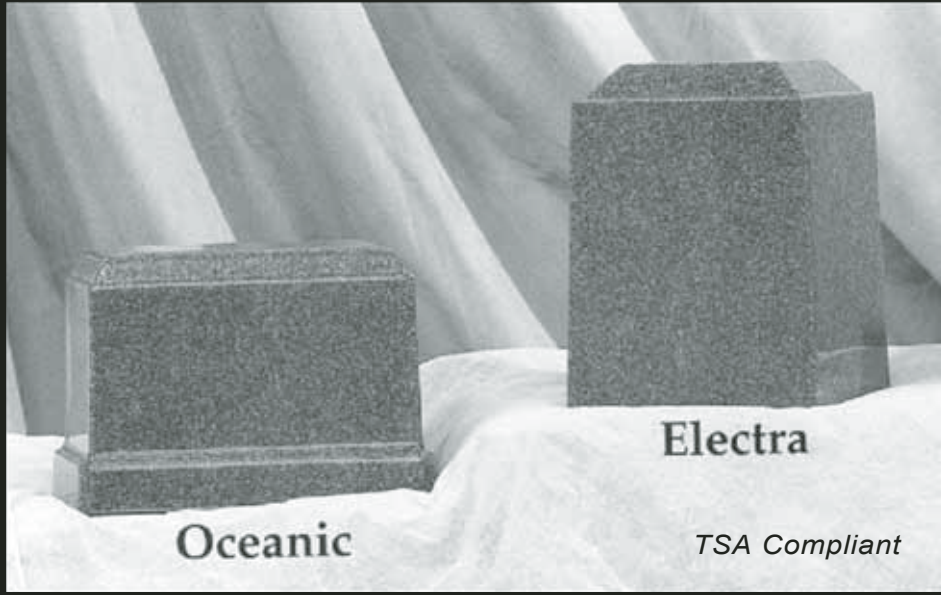
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## It was Only a Matter of Time

By Todd W. Van Beck



Todd W. Van Beck

Some time ago a very fine young funeral director ran into my office with a copy of Mr. Barry Yeoman's AARP article entitled "R.I.P. Off." My young associate being almost out of breath asked "Have you read this?" I replied that I indeed had read the article. Then he asked "Well what do you think?" "This is horrible the article makes us out to be a bunch the thugs and crooks!"

Approximately one week before I had this conversation I was in another conversation with a long time funeral friend of mine who I did my apprenticeship with in 1968. He and I were discussing the status of the funeral profession as we have been consistently doing now for 40 years! In the discussion I remember saying "You know Bill there hasn't been an article attacking funeral service or someone in funeral service for some time now." Bill responded "It is only a matter of time Todd - just wait." Sure enough Bill was right!

this article.

The present article by Mr. Yeoman has almost a textbook table of contents concerning the written word about corruption in the funeral and cemetery field. Most articles follow this format: First the consumer horror story, second a vivid description of the most vile and crooked human being involved with funeral/cemetery work possible, third a few more consumer horror stories just for good measure, and these articles end with a plea to humanity to read the fine print of the contract, shop around, and be really, really careful of "those people" meaning the likes of you and I.

For 40 years I have read the anti-funeral stuff starting out with the "Queen of the Muckrakers" Miss Jessica Mitford herself. Forty years ago when I read her book "The American Way of Death" I broke into tears. Of course over time I have toughened up a tad and the Yeoman work, well between you and I it bored me to tears. I did however feel great sympathy for the innocent people who had been wronged, and I was disgusted with some of the funeral/cemetery people (some of whom I know). Although I suspect that to be fair the ultimate conclusion of this psycho/horror will be concluded in a court of law and maybe the state penitentiary.

I was also particularly interested in the timing of the article. Coming literally a few weeks after "Frontline" and Tom Lynch had done such a marvelous job in showing the American public the real, the kind, the compassionate world which the vast, and I mean the vast majority of funeral and cemetery people work in.

In preparing to write this article I got into my files. I have kept a file entitled "Anti-Funeral" for years and I thought I would share a little of its contents and in so doing return to Yeoman's use of the unoriginal title "R.I.P. Off." Here are some of the titles: "Ripped Off: Living off the American Dead" (1977), "Death's Money Woes - Rip Off" (1973), "Prepaid Funerals: Not the Way to Go" (1986), "Betraying A Trust" (1991) "Rest in Pieces" (1983), "Bake and Shake" (1980), "The

CONTINUED ON PAGE A27



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**It was Only a Matter of Time**

*Continued from Page A26*

Ecological Cost of Dying" (1992) – now get this it was published in the magazine *Garbage*, "R.I.P. Off" (2000) does this title sound familiar? It was published by *Modern Maturity*, which in 2000 was the official publication of the American Association of Retired Persons! Might Mr. Yeoman have a ghost writer? Anyway that is a partial list of anti-funeral stuff and trust me folks every article basically says the same things over and over and over and over again.

It appears that the professional associations have all weighed in with responses, which basically is their duty. However, in the process of defending the funeral profession I want to take the risk of including people usually seen and portrayed as victims – the consumers themselves, who honestly have responsibilities also for getting and understanding funeral information. Now before I get assassinated for this position let me clearly state that the highly questionable activities of the Clay-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A28**

**Whitsell purchases new Federal Hearse**



**MORGANFIELD, KY—** John Whitsell (Right) accepts delivery of his 2009 Federal Coach Cadillac Hearse from John Muster at Muster Coaches in Calhoun, KY. Whitsell Funeral Home has locations in Western Kentucky at Morganfield and Sturgis.

**Moll Funeral Home takes delivery of New Coach**



**MASCOUTAH, IL—** Robert Moll of Moll Funeral Home takes delivery of their new Superior Cadillac Statesman Funeral Coach from Joe Molina, Royal Coachworks, Inc., St. Louis, MO. Robert's brother, Steven Moll, looks on. The Moll Funeral Home has branches in Mascoutah and St. Libory, IL.

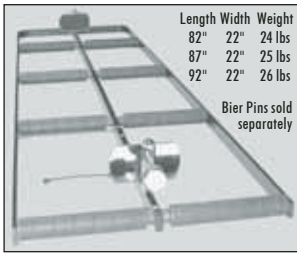

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### It was Only a Matter of Time

Continued from Page A27

ton Smart's in the funeral and cemetery worlds are deplorable, reprehensible, unforgivable and everything should be done to insure that fair justice prevails, that state rules are tightened up and that consumer protection procedures be implemented – we all should follow New York State's example. How can consumers make informed decisions if they are lied to, and/or if somebody changes the rules mid-stream? It is a sad fact that in the real world of daily reality every vocation will unfortunately have their Clayton Smart's – the church has them, day care centers have them, pharmacies have them, schools have them, etc. and these strange and odd people make the news every evening. So to write about and alert the public to the bad guys seems right and good and to that extent I applaud Mr. Yeoman.

OK fine and good, but his article indicts almost everyone involved in death care (that includes me, and that captures my attention.). Mr. Yeoman and others quoted in the article included some sweeping comments which deserve exploration. So let's explore and raise some of our own pertinent questions.

Why is it that 40 years ago funeral directors were getting fingers pointed at them because they DID NOT endorse or encourage preneed? My boss thought preneed was evil and refused to even give it the time of day. The anti-funeral people accused us of hiding something. Today funeral directors are getting anti-funeral

fingers pointed at them because they do endorse and encourage preneed!

How can it be that hundreds of people who have attended my seminars over the years tell me that they basically spend more time selecting their hairdresser and/or barber than their funeral director or cemeterian? How can this be? If the funeral directors encourage people to even visit the funeral home the anti-funeral people rant and rave that we are setting them up for the sale. Is it not the partial responsibility of Archie and Edith Bunker in every community to seek out the funeral director who they can know and trust?

How is it that funeral directors have been rated in the top ten list of the Gallup polls most trusted and honored profession list for years and the anti-funeral people seem to be obli-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A30**

### 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.

### Linda Elaine Swanson and Althea Bishop Pringle

#### Linda E. Swanson: Woman of Excellence

**Linda E. Swanson** is Executive Vice-President of **Swanson Funeral Homes, Inc.**, one of Detroit's premier funeral service providers with locations in Detroit, Pontiac and Flint, MI. Involved in numerous religious, business, community and social organizations throughout the metropolitan Detroit area, Linda is also a member of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church and a life member of the NAACP.

Having been educated at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Farmington and the historic Fisk University in Nashville, TN. Linda is an advocate for educational and cultural excellence. Through the Swanson Foundation, Linda and her family promote their belief in our young people by providing scholarships to deserving students throughout the community. A highly requested public speaker, Linda has addressed many diverse audiences.

Linda is the daughter of **Dr. O'Neil Swanson** and **Doris Elaine Swanson**. She is the sister to her beloved siblings, **O'Neil D. Swanson, II** and the beautiful **Kimberly Swanson-Thomas**. The Swanson Family is committed to continuing the 50 year legacy of their family business founded by her father.

Linda Swanson exemplifies the stature, poise and grace that characterizes the essence of womanhood, all while maintaining the delicate balance of filling the role of helpmate, aunt, sister, teacher career woman and community activist. She is a designing woman with driving forces in our politics and financial institutions, the backbone of our religious and educational arenas and champion of our economic empowerment and diversity.



Linda Elaine Swanson

She is a brilliant, yet amazing woman whose achievements and contributions to her community and family funeral business alike have had a tremendous impact on all who have encountered her. She is a woman who has answered a calling and dared to do what many are afraid to do, and that is to dare to do the unthinkable, venture into the unimaginable and believe in the impossible.



Althea Bishop Pringle

#### Althea Bishop Pringle: NFD&MA's longest held elected position as Clerk of the House

**Althea Bishop Pringle** has been a member of the *National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association* for about 25 years. She has been an elected officer as Clerk of the House for 18 years, the longest held elected position. She is such a welcome sight at the annual national conventions because as officers come and go, Althea Pringle is still one of the most familiar and recognized faces of the NFD&MA.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A29**

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## Women of Distinction: Linda Elaine Swanson and Althea Bishop Pringle

Continued from Page A28

Althea was educated in Catholic elementary schools and public schools in Meridian, MS. She received a BS degree in Speech Pathology & Audiology with a minor in Special Education from Hampton Institute (University) in Hampton, VA, and holds a MS degree in Speech/Language Pathology from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL. She later attended *East Mississippi Community College* in Scooba, MS and received an AA degree in Mortuary Science. She is currently employed in the Meridian Public School District. She is also the funeral home manager for **Enterprise Funeral Home** in Meridian, MS.

Althea and her husband have owned a lounge and community center for over 15 years. They have hosted Rap and R & B artists, as well as Gospel headliners over the years.

Other activities and organizations she holds membership in are: *100 Black Women of Funeral Service*,

*Mississippi Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*, where she held positions of Executive Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Executive Secretary, and *Quad-State Funeral Directors & Morticians Association*, where she is currently the Clerk of the House. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a guest lecturer and board member of the Craft Committee for the Mortuary Science Department at East Mississippi Community College, and a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church and the church choir. She is also department chairman of special education at T. J. Harris Elementary school in Meridian, MS.

She has been married to her soulmate **Nathaniel L. Pringle, Jr.** for 24 years. She has six step-children, four grandchildren and two adorable godchildren.

She states, "I am truly humbled for being selected as an honoree for the "2008 Women of Distinction" for the state of Mississippi."

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*It was Only a Matter of Time*

*Continued from Page A28*

ous to that fact? When I bring this fact up at anti-funeral meetings the attendees just look at me like I am out of my mind and then start chanting Jessica Mitford verses.

Here is a good one. Why do Hospice people in my seminars when I ask the question "How many of you think since the death rate is 100% and death creates predictable problems that it is the mature and sensible thing to do to pre plan your funeral and share this valuable information with others?" Every hand goes up in the air with great conviction and they all nod their heads in absolute support. Then I ask "How many of

you have actually prearranged your funeral?" A few hands go up, but the vast majority of the people just stare off into space and these are Hospice professionals who work with death and dying on an hourly basis.

For 40 years we have contended with the self-appointed funeral critics. Jessica Mitford, Karen Leonard, Lisa Carlson, Father Henry Wasielewski to name a few. We need to keep in mind Arturo Toscanini's (the famous conductor of the New York Philharmonic) quote about music critics, he said "Critics are the ones that write about music but can't play a note." I have always liked that sentiment. There are good reasons for us in funeral service to be wary and suspicious of the "critics."

Remember the good Father Henry Wasielewski's quote, "In my experience with morticians, they're ALL bad apples." Karen Leonard also chimed in a big way while being interviewed with this thought, "...and the funeral homes, my they all look like banks or churches and the really, really nice people." There is a glaring contradiction with a group being labeled "ALL bad apples" and the same group making the Top 10 Gallup Poll for respect and trust. According to the funeral critics if the funeral home is too nice that's bad, if it is too plain that is also bad. If the funeral people are really nice that's bad, and if they are too aloof and distant that's bad too.

So what is going on here?

As a person who loves funeral service I want to offer a perspective which

has nothing basically to do with politics, journalism, associations, professional territories and the like. My perspective is focused on the continuous fact that death in American is not a popular subject. Even the most eloquent funeral critic who will declare at the top of their lungs what is wrong with funeral service would not dream in a million years of performing the daily work of the typical funeral director. It is fine and dandy to keep the realities of death at arms length with a pen, typewriter or computer, but can you imagine for one second any of the funeral critics getting up at 3:00 a.m. and responding to a SIDS death?

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A31**



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*It was Only a Matter of Time*

*Continued from Page A30*

The anti-funeral articles too often cloak themselves in consumer advocacy and tell horror stories, the worst possible scenario stories of people's experiences in dealing with contracts, agreements and legal issues, but behind the sterility and safety of contracts, agreements and legal issues lurks the subject of physical death, and I mean the funeral critics own physical death.

The American culture's emphasis on life, youth and beauty makes death and old age subjects that we deal with at arm's length. I believe this is precisely what the anti-funeral people do and because others are also

uncomfortable with the subject an instant audience is created. The funeral critics seem fascinated by the subject of funerals but can only get close enough to it to make fun of it or attempt to ride into town on a white horse to save the world from the undertakers. Our efforts to segregate the aging in retirement communities is matched only by our efforts to place the ENTIRE responsibility for dealing with the dead in the hands of funeral directors across this county. It is good to remember that in most places the consumer is

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A32**

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\*Hasson, J., Schneiderman, H., News Notes. Arch Path Lab Med. 1995

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### It was Only a Matter of Time

Continued from Page A31

not under any obligation to engage a funeral director when someone dies. Never in my career have I been told of an instance when someone died and the family decided to call a funeral critic to help them take care of the dead body. Never!

Dr. Margaretta Bowers once said, "When I have a patient who has a severe fear of death, they almost always express enmity toward the funeral director." Might the funeral critics have a morbid and severe fear of death which stimulates them to lash out and express enmity, to ridicule the funeral profession in the safe arena of the written word? In their den or study they do not have to honestly confront death themselves. Certainly the life story of Jessica Mitford would lead one to accept this proposition.

If this fear of death motivates attacks upon the funeral profession overall then Mr. Yeoman and others he quotes may well be frightened to death of death.

Certainly more anti-preneed, anti-embalming, anti-funeral articles are laying in wait, it is just the nature of the topic of death, and there are at times good solid advice and criticisms which we need to look at seriously in order to improve our professional standards and service to our community. However, as people who are devoted to funeral service we always need, I think, to keep our eye on the mission of the funeral home, and while the Clayton Smart's of the world do make our jobs much more difficult, it is also wise not to paint the corruption picture with too broad of a brush stroke as the good Father Wasielewski tended to do. Not ALL funeral directors are "Bad apples."

The strength of the funeral profession has little to do with national movements and the like. I believe firmly that the true strength of the funeral profession is what happens in the big or small town funeral homes, which make up the vast majority of funeral providers across this country. The strength of funeral service is the warm handshake that the funeral director extends at the Rotary meeting or the kind compassionate attention given to a widow whose husband has just died. Funeral services strength lies not in preneed, legislation or regulation – it lies in community relationship building, which is something the anti-funeral people are not particularly good at doing, but funeral directors are!

Here is a shocker – I don't worry about the future of funeral service at all, because I believe in the heart and soul of the funeral directors in this world. For 40 years we all have been subjected to prophecies of doom and gloom. Yes, to be sure, over 40 years things have changed, but some have remained constant – such as a funeral director's belief in what they are doing. I believe that is the greatest asset any funeral director can possess.

Finally concerning the Yeoman AARP article let me make one final assessment which I know in my heart is absolutely true. I firmly believe that thousands of people from Tiny Rock, Maine to Big Rock, California when they read Mr. Yeoman's "R.I.P. Off" looked at each other while watching TV or eating breakfast and said in the privacy of their own home, "Well Rhoda that story might be true of some other undertaker in some other town but it is not true about our Ralph, our undertaker who buried Mom and Dad and Grandpa and Grandma."

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# Educational NEWS

## University of Central Oklahoma Sigma Phi Sigma Fraternity Activities

EDMOND, OK— In Spring of 2009, Sigma Phi Sigma is off to a great start at the **University of Central Oklahoma**, Department of Funeral Service Education. The group has elected new officers and has begun planning for a fun-filled semester

with many activities to carry out. To start, they are giving back to the community by offering their caring side to the Edmond Senior Citizens Center. They have planned a Senior Evening where the funeral service students visit the center

for fun and interesting activities.

In addition, the group has planned a trip to broaden their horizons at **Restland Funeral Home** in Dallas, TX. This will be an interesting experience for those students who are used to small, hometown funeral homes. Furthermore, Sigma Phi Sigma will be attending the *Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association Annual Convention* in Tulsa.

New officers were elected for the organization. **Jenna Berg**, the Sigma Phi Sigma Secretary, is 20 years old and a native of South Dakota. Currently working at **Francisco's Oklaho-**

**ma Mortuary Service**, she plans to graduate in Fall 2009. **Jillian Means**, who is the Public Relations officer for Sigma Phi Sigma, is 22 years old from Poteau, OK. She is involved in the Transfer Leadership Council scholarship organization at UCO. Jillian works at **Ford Funeral Service** in Midwest City, OK and plans to graduate in Fall 2009. **Megan McMurphy**, the Sigma Phi Sigma Treasurer, is 20 years old from Sharon, OK. Megan works at **Vondel L. Smith and Sons**, located in Oklahoma City, OK and plans to graduate this May.

## University of Central Oklahoma announces Graduates

EDMOND, OK— The Funeral Service Education Department at the **University of Central Oklahoma** announces the following students have recently completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Degree. They include **Kyla Betche**, Cordell, OK; **Shannon Christians**, Lindsborg, KS; **Recil Dudley**, Lawton, OK; **Bradly Norman**, Wewoka, OK; **Francine Romito**, Austintown, OH; **Chanda Rooney**, Bushton, KS; and **Kevin Scego**, Owensville, MO. In addition, **Kacey Ferguson** of Waynoka, OK completed requirements for Funeral Service Certificate.

## FINE Mortuary College announces Dean's List for the Winter 2008 Term

NORWOOD, MA— **FINE Mortuary College, LLC**: A Private Two Year College, located at 150 Kerry Place in Norwood, MA is proud to announce the Dean's List for the Winter 2008 Term.

**Fred Gifford, Gail Graham, Paul Remick** and **Mark Robinson** earned High Honors as full time students. **Lindsey Ballard, Susan Burke, Katelyn Estes, Amanda Foss, Brandon Frazer, John Gentile, Kelsey Grover, Amanda Nolan, Megan Pilling, Jeffrey Remick, Andrew Sweeney** and **Christopher Sylvester** all earned Honors as full time students.

Part-time students who made High Honors are: **Brian Folsom, Rose Kelly, Amy Lyons, Linda Plonowski-Bollea** and **Karen Stevenson**. Part-time students who made Honors are: **Sara Alden, Bethany Antunes, Tara Berrault, Sean Bowen, Wilberto Diaz, Marguerite Gustafson, Tammy Hill, David Kelleher, Richard LaFave, Ashley Lima, Joey Lovell, Thomas Mayo, Thomas McNamara, Christine Miller, Angelo Nardolillo, Diana Petit, Jonathan Spagnolo, Joseph Stevens** and **Daniel Thompson**.

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## West Virginia Funeral Directors to hold All Hazards Management Symposium

**HUNTINGTON, WV**— The Eighth Annual **All Hazards Management Symposium** will be held April 21-23, 2009 at the *Tri-State Fire Academy* in Huntington. This program has been designed to meet the needs of all persons and agencies involved with multiple death disaster planning and management. The focus of the program will be learning through the shared experiences of our peers during disaster operations. The interdisciplinary nature of disaster management and planning is reflected in a program which supports cross fertilization and topical in depth discussions among all responsible organizations: coroners/medical examiners, funeral directors, fire/EMS, law enforcement, health care and other voluntary and governmental

organizations and agencies. Speakers will include actual disaster incident commanders, and the practical aspects of disaster management are emphasized.

The in-depth studies will also include Continuing Education Credit. CEUs have been applied for from West Virginia Board of Funeral Service Examiners, Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors, Kentucky Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors, and Maryland Board of Morticians and Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice.

The interdisciplinary symposium is sponsored by *West Virginia Funeral Directors Association*, *Tri-State Fire Academy*, *West Virginia Medical Examiner*, *West Virginia Board of Funeral Service Examiners*, *Cabell-Huntington Hospital Education Department*, *West Virginia Association of County Health Departments* and *West Virginia Sheriffs' Association*. For registration information, contact *Tri-State Fire Academy* at (304)522-2006, **Robert D. Carpenter** at (304)525-8121, or **John D. Reed** at (304)847-2454

## Academy sets Record Attendance

**FRANKLIN, OH**— The **Academy** has set a new first quarter attendance and graduation record. Since its inception in 1995, the Academy at **The Outlook Group, Inc.**, has been offering quality funeral service solutions and pre-need training to students from across North America. Over 75 people have attended and graduated from Academy training courses in the first quarter of 2009, which breaks the old record of 50 set back in 2005. Increased promotion of all courses has contributed to the increase.

The Academy is also debuting a brand new course. *Leadership Lessons for 2009* will be conducted April 1-2, 2009 at the *Hilton Columbus* at Easton, 3900 Chargin Dr. in Columbus, OH. Course training times are April 1, 9am-4:30pm and April 2, 9am-12:00pm. This course has been specially designed for funeral home owners, managers, funeral directors and other who lead and manage others. Good people deserve strong effective leadership. Yesterday's best won't do today. Success can breed complacency—and in today's changing market, that can lead to decreased profit margins. You owe it to yourself, the professionals you lead and the families you serve to invest a little time in updating your leadership skills.

The course will explore four key business concepts that will help you help your people make the most of our changing market. Training modules include: *Define Your Reality*, *Inspire Accountability*, *Coach Change* and *The Power of Praise*. Attendees will go home with everything needed to get started today.

For more information on *Leadership Lessons for 2009* or any of the Academy training courses contact *Temeika Love* at (800) 331-6270 or visit *The Academy on-line* at [www.theoutlookgroup.com](http://www.theoutlookgroup.com).



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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 CONTINUED

## Horus Club in Louisiana conducts Funeral Service Community Project

By Francine Ross-Roden

**NEW ORLEANS, LA—** Members of the **Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity Iota Chapter's** Horus Club and *Delgado Community College's* Funeral Service Education Program's History course hosted a cemetery cleanup project at **Holt Cemetery**, Saturday February 28, 2009. *Save our Cemeteries*, as well as the Bellechase Navy Base will be working with the students to improve the conditions of the historic cemetery. Holt Cemetery is located next to Delgado Community College at 635 City Park Ave.

The students took on the project by doing general yard work, erecting headstones and painting projects. This event allowed the students the opportunity to demonstrate the concept of reverence for the dead. Delgado Community College Funeral Service History Instructor, **Bobbiann Lewis**, coordinated the historic preservation event. Soror Lewis also serves as the Vice-President of the Iota Chapter of Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc. where Brother **Terry Porter** serves as the chapter president. All work was on a volunteer basis as well as recognized and supported by both the Save our Cemeteries Foundation and Holt Cemetery.

Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc. is a non-profit service organization for members of the mortuary profession. Its purpose is to create good will



Students from Delgado Community College and Horus Club of Iota Chapter. Their instructor, Soror Bobbiann Lewis is pictured in the front row, far left.

and cooperation within the profession as well as raise its standards and foster leadership for the profession and the community nationally, where its members reside.

The Horus Clubs of Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity Inc. is sponsored locally by the Fraternity chapters. These clubs consists of mortuary science students

that have completed one year of mortuary school and operate as study groups as well as dedicate themselves to science and service of the mortuary profession.

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# Association NEWS

## NFDA offers suggestions for helping children cope with Grief

**BROOKFIELD,WI**— The death of a loved one can be a painful experience for anyone, but for a child, it can be especially difficult. The death of a loved one can have a significant impact on a child, so it's important that adults provide an environment that promotes healing. The **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** offers suggestions on how to talk to children about death and strategies to help them cope with loss. As difficult as it may be to inform a child about

whether children should be allowed to attend funerals. Grief experts agree that it is healthy for children to attend the funerals of their loved ones. Prior to the funeral, parents should discuss with their child what will happen at the visitation, funeral or memorial service. Be honest and clear – children can take things very literally, so avoid being vague in your descriptions.

If a child feels comfortable, it may even be appropriate to involve him or her in the funeral. Let them read a poem or letter, or sing or play a song during the service. A funeral director can help parents discuss what will happen at the funeral and find ways for the child

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A39**

### Honesty is the Best Policy When Addressing Death with Children

the death of a loved one, honesty is the best policy. Telling a white lie can be confusing and unsettling for a child once they learn the truth. Although it's important to maintain discretion when explaining death, avoid using euphemisms, such as "Grandma is sleeping" or "Uncle John went on a long trip." For younger children, be straightforward and explain death in simple phrases, such as "...the person's body has stopped working and won't work anymore." For older children, more detailed information may be appropriate.

Many often wonder

### New NFDA Website connects Funeral Professionals, Suppliers

**BROOKFIELD,WI**— The **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** has launched the *NFDA Business Exchange*, [www.nfdabizexchange.org](http://www.nfdabizexchange.org), a Website that offers a forum for two-way dialogue between funeral service professionals and suppliers.

NFDA Business Exchange is a funeral service professional's source for the most comprehensive information on vendors, products and services and the latest supplier news and events. The site features a discussion board on which they can share information and ideas on virtually any funeral service-related topic with other funeral professionals and suppliers. Visitors to the site can also create or join a wide variety of networking groups to connect with peers who have similar interests.

For funeral service suppliers, NFDA Business Exchange allows them to connect directly with funeral professionals 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Suppliers can share information about how their products and services can help solve a funeral professional's most pressing business challenges. Suppliers can also exchange information with funeral professionals on the discussion

board and can create and join networking groups.

"We created the NFDA Business Exchange as an engaging, interactive forum for funeral directors, cemeterians, cremationists and other funeral service professionals to connect with suppliers, and for suppliers to connect with professionals," said NFDA Senior Vice President of Professional Development **Connie Smith**. "This new tool complements NFDA's offline tools, such as our annual Convention and Expo and The Director magazine, and offers a dynamic platform for funeral directors to discover products, services and ideas that will help them save money, make money and better serve families."

Funeral service suppliers that would like more information about how they can advertise their products or services within NFDA Business Exchange Supplier Directory or increase their exposure throughout the site with banner ads should contact a member of the NFDA Business Development team at 800-228-6332. More information can also be found at [www.nfdabizexchange.org](http://www.nfdabizexchange.org) (click on the "Advertise with NFDA" link on the left navigational menu).

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## NFDA offers suggestions for helping children cope with Grief

Continued from Page A38

to participate in the service. Even though, years from now, the child may not remember the specifics of the funeral he or she attended, they will feel solace knowing they played an active role in celebrating the life of their loved one.

Children are known to have great resilience, but just like adults, the death of a loved one is something a child will likely not just "get over." In addition to having a confidant who will provide continuous love and assurance, there are several other ways children can find comfort when coping with their grief. **Victor M. Parachin**, a grief educator and minister, provides these helpful tips:

1. *Be a role model for good grief:* Children often imitate what they see. They will look to their parents or other significant adults for cues about grieving. It's important for a child to realize that it's okay to cry, to feel angry and to grieve.
2. *Find peer support:* For many people who are grieving, identifying with peers going through a similar experience can be uplifting. For children and teens, this is no exception. The camaraderie and exchange of information can prove a powerful healing tool.

3. *Incorporate ritual:* Whether it's lighting a candle, participating in the scattering of cremated remains or taking part in an activity that was special to the deceased, utilizing ritual can help a child focus on the memory of their loved one.

4. *Use the arts:* A child's grief can be difficult to assess because they have neither the vocabulary nor life experience to easily express feelings and needs. The arts can be an outlet for children and teens to express their emotions. Writing, painting, poetry, clay, theater, music and crafts are all examples of art forms that can help children express what is happening to them.

Everyone grieves differently, but children are remarkably adaptive – they need to know they are loved and are surrounded by compassionate people who are there to guide them through the grief process. If you would like more information on talking to a child about death and ways to help them through their grief, contact your local NFDA-member funeral home. Visit [www.nfda.org](http://www.nfda.org) or call 800-228-6332 to find an NFDA funeral home near you.

One of NFDA's goals is to be a "powerful advocate that shapes public... opinion regarding the value of

all facets of funeral service and NFDA members." In 2009, one of the ways NFDA will accomplish this is by issuing regular consumer-oriented news releases which communicate positive messages about the value of funerals and other issues related to the profession. These news releases will be sent to consumer-oriented media outlets such as daily or weekly newspapers, magazine, television and radio stations and Web-based publications. This is the first consumer-oriented news release of the year.

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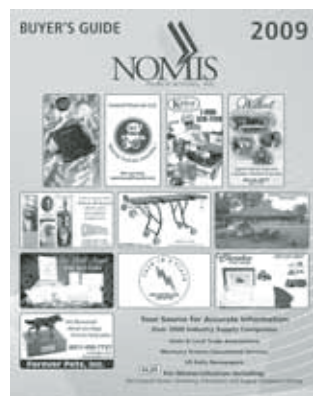
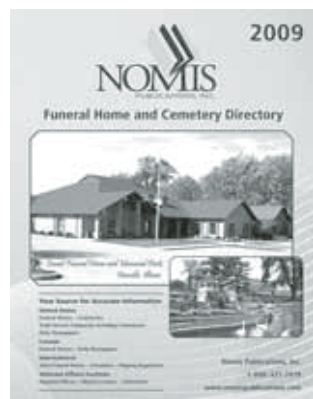
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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## NFDA joins Relay For Life National Team Program

**BROOKFIELD,WI**— As an extension of its long-standing partnership, the **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** is participating in the *American Cancer Society (ACS) Relay For Life National Team Program*. Relay For Life, ACS' signature fundraising program, brings communities together to celebrate those who have claimed victory over cancer, remember those who lost the battle and fight back to put an end to the disease.

As part of the Relay For Life National Team Program, NFDA has pledged to

recruit at least 50 teams nationwide to participate in local Relay events. Relay teams will gather at a local high school, park or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or designated path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event, which can last up to 24 hours. Other ways to get involved include sponsoring the costs associated with hosting a Relay event or volunteering time to help out at an event.

### NFDA recruits teams to fight back against cancer

Funeral homes that form teams and join NFDA's National Team will: have access

to a customizable ad slick and news release that will demonstrate their commitment to the community and the fight against cancer; raise money for a worthy cause; and be part of a positive national story about funeral service. Designated team captains will have access to a host of tools and information to help recruit team members and fundraise. Special recognition will be given to the NFDA-member funeral home and individual who raises the most money through their Relay fundraising efforts.

"We all know someone or some family that has been affected by cancer. As a funeral director, I see the impact firsthand. Participating in our local Relay For Life is part of our funeral home's community outreach efforts and it helps to unite

CONTINUED ON PAGE A41

## Edward O'Sullivan to serve on NFDA Committee

**BROOKFIELD,WI**— **Edward O'Sullivan**, CFSP, of **Evergreen Mortuary, Cemetery & Crematory** in Tucson, AZ, has committed to serve as a member of the **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** Member Resources Advisory Group for 2008-09. O'Sullivan's role within NFDA will have a significant impact on the association, its members and the funeral service profession at-large.

"Edward was appointed to serve on the Member Resources Advisory Group because he has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the goals of NFDA," said

NFDA Chief Executive Offices **Christine Pepper**, CAE. "Edward's efforts will uphold NFDA's mission of informing, educating and advocating to help members enhance the quality of service they provide to families."

Representatives of NFDA's Member Resources Advisory Group will be called upon to assist NFDA in a variety of ways, such as evaluating existing member benefits; recommending new programs; reviewing and providing feedback on new resources; testing new marketing messages; and assisting with the recruitment and retention of members.



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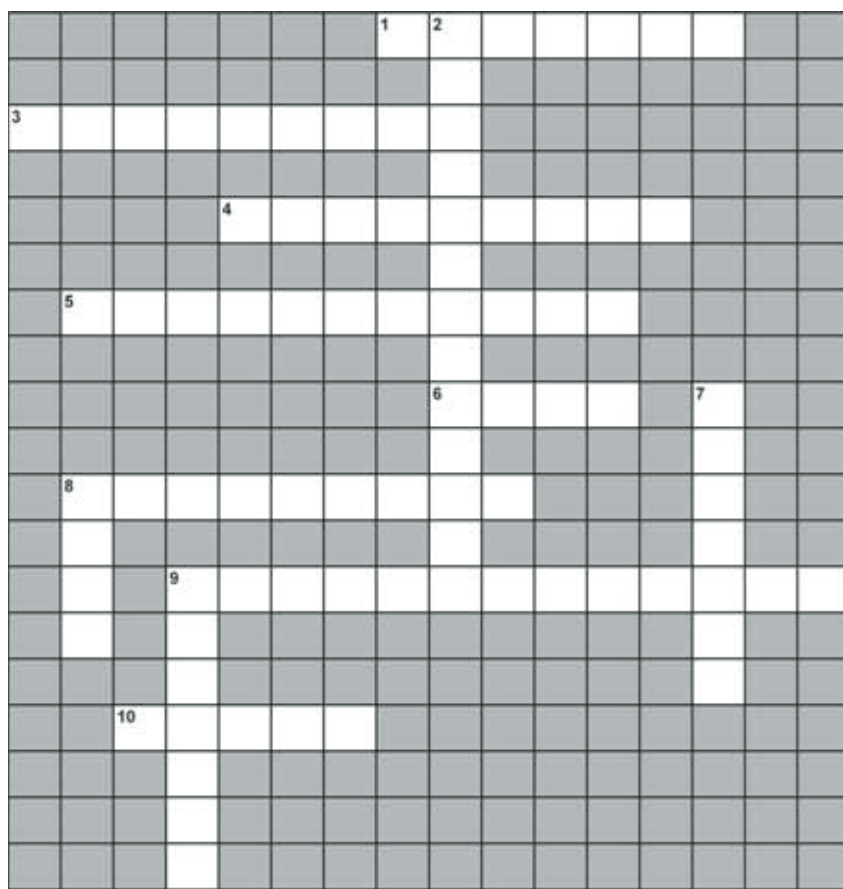
By Ralph L. Klicker, Ph.D.

### ACROSS

- Jewish prayers for the dead
- Attending skills
- Female settling estate
- Trait of Church Truck
- To touch or contact
- Preoccupation with suicide
- Exchange of information
- Straight line multiple

### DOWN

- Clumping of blood elements
- Directions in prayer books
- A wooden casket
- Inflammation of colon



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](mailto:Thanosinst@aol.com).

ANSWERS ON PAGE A44

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Arizona Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association to hold Annual Convention

**TUCSON, AZ**—The Arizona Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association will be having its Annual Convention May 28, 29, 30, 2009 at Chaparral Suites Resort, 5001 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, AZ. The meeting will have programs and information for funeral directors, cemeterians and cremationists. Suppliers will have the opportunity to display and talk about new products available to the industry.

**Jim DeCastro**, Executive Director of the Dio-

cese of Tucson Catholic Cemeteries and Convention Chairman said, "We are expecting a great turnout due to changing times and the challenges facing our industry. The meeting provides an opportunity to have a forum for all interested parties to come together in service."

For Convention Information and Registration call **Wendy Wolfenden**, ACCFA Program Coordinator at (480) 945-5440 or [w.wolfendenwn@juno.com](mailto:w.wolfendenwn@juno.com).

## ICCFA Web Site offers new venue for sharing, extensive library of Industry Resources

**STERLING, VA**—The International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association has revamped its Web site at [www.iccfa.com](http://www.iccfa.com). In addition to an updated appearance and improved navigation, the site now offers a section dedicated to extensive information sharing. The "ICCFA Cafe" includes five new offerings:

- ICCFA Forums—bulletin boards on a variety of topics, including the "Network Forum" where visitors can post questions and answers to current management, sales and operational challenges.
- Reading Room—an extensive collection of searchable informational articles archived in the ICCFA library, from Convention sessions and magazine articles printed in the late 1800s up through recent articles from ICCFA Magazine.
- Screening Room—educational videos and audio files from ICCFA Conventions, conferences and other sources spanning back through the 1940s.
- Blog Corner—where visitors to the site can create their own articles and commentary and comment on others' entries; includes "Industry News," a collection of news articles posted by the media throughout the world in the past several years.
- ICCFA Wiki—a collaborative project in which visitors can create and modify a continually growing list of cemetery, cremation and funeral service terms and practices, as part of an effort to develop a common knowledge base and understanding within the industry.

## NFDA joins Relay For Life National Team Program

our staff," said **Patrick T. Lanigan**, of **Patrick T. Lanigan Funeral Homes** in Turtle Creek and East Pittsburgh, PA, who has participated in Relay For Life for the past three years. "Most importantly, our involvement in Relay through the NFDA National Team helps those affected by cancer. At the same time, it raises the profile of the funeral service profession's commitment to combating the disease."

Funeral homes that would like to register a team for the NFDA National Relay For Life Program can sign up online by following these simple instructions: visit the NFDA Relay For Life Team page at [www.events.cancer.org/rfl/NFDA](http://www.events.cancer.org/rfl/NFDA); click on the "Find a Relay Near You" link; enter ZIP code; choose the preferred Relay event; click on the "Sign Up" button, then

*Continued from Page A40*

"Start a Team" button; and fill out the registration information, making sure to choose NFDA in the "Team Company/Organization" drop-down menu.

For questions related to NFDA's Relay For Life National Team, contact **Jessica Koth** ([jkoth@nfda.org](mailto:jkoth@nfda.org)) or **Emilee High** ([ehigh@nfda.org](mailto:ehigh@nfda.org)) at 800-228-6332.

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](http://www.nfda.org).

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CONTINUED ON PAGE A44

# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Michael Turkiewicz to discuss call and revenue increasing Web Sites at ICCFA

PORTLAND, OR— Michael Turkiewicz will discuss inexpensive Web features and programs that increase calls and generate revenue streams during his presentation at the 2009 *International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association* convention in Las Vegas on April 23.

Turkiewicz, president and founder of **Funer-**

alNet, the first company to develop Web sites exclusively for death-care businesses, selected the topic in an effort to help the majority of death-care businesses catch up with the “few companies that are leveraging this knowledge with amazing results, benefitting their families and community as well as themselves,” he said.

Turkiewicz’s presentation will examine the types of audiences visiting death-care Web sites and how to connect with them. “Understanding each of the four audience types is key to properly developing Web site features that engage each audience, increasing your chances to win their business or referral,” he said.

FuneralNet’s president will also examine revenue generating opportunities via ecommerce programs and forms. “So many fu-

neral home owners still view their Web site as an information source, rather than a call and revenue generating tool. Then there are the tech savvy firms whose web sites essentially grab more market share each year while actually paying for themselves via ecommerce with a sizeable profit left over,” Turkiewicz said.

FuneralNet is said to be the largest provider of custom Web sites in the death-care industry, having developed thousands of Web sites for death-care businesses in the United States and Canada since its beginning in 1996. FuneralNet has invented or made common many of the programs and functions now considered industry standards, such as online obituaries, online forms, flower programs, and complete arrangement cremation Web sites.

## ICCFA announces “Keeping It Personal” Award Winners

STERLING, VA— The **International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association** is pleased to announce its 2008 KIP (Keeping It Personal) Awards winners, recognizing the best in personalization in the cemetery and funeral service profession.

Created by the ICCFA Personalization Committee, the KIP program honors recipients in four categories: Best Practices/Personal Touch; Innovative Personalized Product (Supplier); Most Personalized Service or Memorial; and Events.

This year’s contest drew 22 entries from across the United States and abroad. Communications and marketing professionals from outside the cemetery and funeral service profession performed the judging.

Information on the winners is available on the ICCFA Web site at [www.iccfa.com/certifications-awards](http://www.iccfa.com/certifications-awards). Applications for the 2009 KIP Awards will be available from the ICCFA in April. The ICCFA congratulates the winners and all who entered the 2008 KIP Awards.

The winners are as follows:

CONTINUED ON PAGE A44

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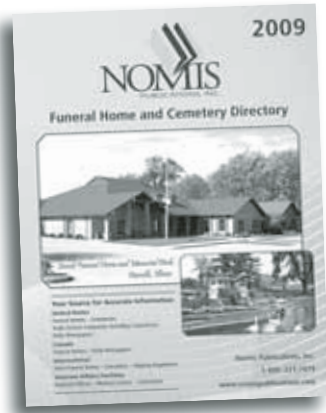


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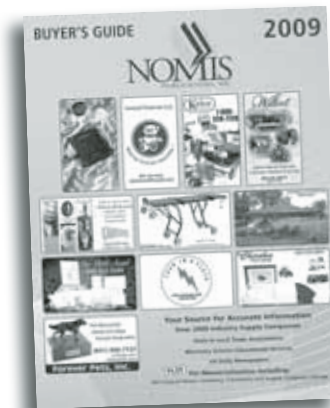
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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## ICCFA announces "Keeping It Personal" Award Winners

*Continued from Page A44*

Known as "the life of the party," David Byerly wanted to go out in style. Olinger Highland Mortuary & Cemetery helped his family arrange a service that included music from Phantom of the Opera, Kid Rock and Motley Crue, along with cigars, Denver Broncos paraphernalia, huge floral displays, skiing and golf equipment and guitars. Byerly's final resting place is a handpainted martini glass that serves as an urn.

*Honorable Mention*

**Busch Funeral & Crematory Services**  
Cleveland, Ohio

Capt. Michael Medders was killed while serving in the U.S. Army in Iraq. The funeral home arranged for video footage to be taken of the processional route to and from the airport and through the town where his father was chief of police. Local news covered the events. The two-hour funeral mass was broadcast via the Internet to Capt. Medders' fellow troops in Iraq and at the Army base where he was stationed in Fort Hood, TX. More than 3,000 attended his visitation at a local high school while more than 1,500 attended his mass. Over 80 agencies, organizations and communities assisted the funeral home in their efforts.

*Honorable Mention*

**Miller-Jones Mortuary and  
Menifee Valley Memorial Park**  
Hemet, California

Veronica Calderon was a member of an equestrian group and an avid horse rider. Following a chapel memorial service, her equestrian troupe presented a "Spanish Walk" march in parade formation, carrying flags and accompanied by a "banda" style brass band and an elaborately dressed vocalist. Charro attire was worn by performers. Her horse performed a "piaffe" dance to say goodbye. Family and friends returned to the reception house and memorial park to enjoy traditional Spanish foods.

### INNOVATIVE/PERSONALIZED PRODUCT (SUPPLIERS)

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Tributes.com provides a single national resource for online obituaries and memorial tributes that allows families to easily share information about the funeral/memorial services as well as the person's life.

Grand prize winner Mount Calvary Cemetery Group receives a free registration to the ICCFA 2009 Annual Convention & Exposition, April 20-23 at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino in Las Vegas, NV.

All first-place and honorable mention winners will be recognized at the Convention and in ICCFA Magazine and are being provided promotional news releases to submit to their local media.

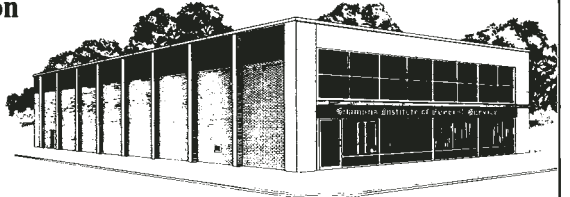
Founded in 1887, the ICCFA is the only international trade association representing all segments of the cemetery, cremation, funeral and memorialization profession. Its membership is composed of more than 7,200 cemeteries, funeral homes, crematories, memorial designers and related businesses worldwide.



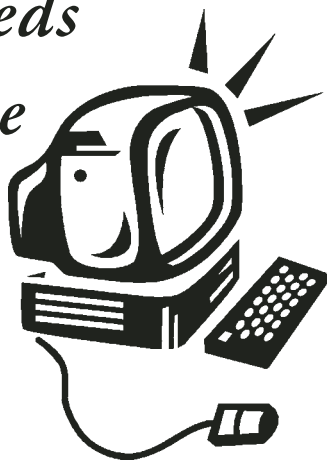
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**LARRY L. SHERIDAN** of Thornville, OH died February 27, 2009 at the age of 63. A graduate of *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science*, he worked at **Adams Funeral Home** in Akron, OH, **Clyde E. Thompson Funeral Home** in Duncan Falls, OH, **Botkins Funeral Home** in Bellaire, OH, and **Sheridan Funeral Home** in Lancaster, OH. In 1985 he became owner of **Boring-Sheridan Funeral Homes** with locations in Baltimore, Bremen, Hebron and Thornville, OH, for nearly 25 years.

**GEORGE W. DOUGLAS** of Pittsburgh, PA died February 11, 2009 at the age of 84. He was the owner of **George W. Douglas Funeral Home** in Homewood, PA. He graduated from *Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science* in 1948, opening his funeral home in 1956.

**J.B. RHODES, SR.** of Goldsboro, NC died January 27, 2009 at the age of 82. He was the founder of **Rhodes Funeral Home, Inc.**, established in 1951. He owned and operated locations in Goldsboro, Fremont, Mt. Olive, Selma, and Warsaw, NC over the past 50 years. A 1947 graduate of *Gupton Jones College of Funeral Service* in Nashville, TN, he was a member of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*, *North Carolina Funeral Directors and Morticians Association* and *North Carolina Embalmers Association*.



**CHARLES V. RUFFENACH** of Berwyn, PA died February 23, 2009 at the age of 80. A graduate of Eckels College of Mortuary Science in Philadelphia, he worked for his father's funeral home before establishing **Charles V. Ruffenach Funeral Home** in Berwyn in 1967.

**KARL K. LUSK, SR.** of Paris, KY died March 2, 2009 at the age of 94. A graduate of Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, he ran **Lusk Funeral Home** in Paris, along with his son, for many years. The two also owned **Pruitt Funeral Home** in Millersburg, KY for several years. He continued to work in the profession after the businesses were sold in 1990, retiring in 2005.

**DWAYNE KENT JORDAN** of Middletown, OH died February 21, 2009 at the age of 49. He was associated with **Thompson, Hall and Jordan Funeral Home** in Middletown, which founded by his father in 1953. He also founded **P & D Removal Service** in the early 2000s.

**TERRENCE P. "TERRY" BURNS** of Valparaiso, and formerly of Gary, IN, died February 22, 2009 at the age of 69. He was president and third-generation co-owner of **Burns Funeral Homes** in Crown Point and Hobart, IN, which marked its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008. Mr. Burns was a graduate of *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*.

**LOUIE FAY PETTIGREW** of Sacramento, CA died February 22, 2009 at the age of 91. In 1938 he began working at **Capitol City Casket Company** in Sacramento. In February 1940 he and two partners started **Sutter Casket Company**. Fay parted ways with Sutter Casket Company in 1960, and on September 29th of that same year he started **Pettigrew & Sons Casket Company**, also in Sacramento. In November of 1963 he moved to 6151 Power Inn Road where the business remains today.  
Courtesy Casket & Funeral Supply Association, Lake Bluff, IL.

**HILLMAN C. CROWELL** of Columbia, MO died February 13, 2009 at the age of 85. In the 1940s and 1950s, he worked for **Memorial Park Cemetery and Funeral Home** in Columbia, and later went on to own and operate **Hawthorn Memorial Gardens** in Jefferson City, MO, **Greenmore Memorial Gardens** in Barnett, MO, **Mistwood Memorial Gardens** at Lake of the Ozarks, MO, **Valley View Cemetery and Funeral Home** in Edwardsville, IL and **Mount Hope Cemetery and Funeral Home** in Belleville, IL. A licensed funeral director, he was a member and past president of the *Associated Cemeteries of Missouri* and a member of the *National Association of Cemeteries*.

**GEORGE KILLEEN** of Clinton Township, MI died February 14, 2009 at the age of 88. He held a degree in Mortuary Science from *Wayne State University*, and opened **Killeen Funeral Home** in Detroit, MI in the early 1950s. He opened a second location in Clinton Township in 1977.

**JOHN W. DEAN, III** of Largo, FL and formerly of Philadelphia, PA died February 12, 2009 at the age of 80. He was the fourth-generation owner of **John W. Dean Funeral Director**, founded in 1883 in Philadelphia. The firm was sold in the mid-1980s and is now **Dean Geitner Givnish Funeral Homes**. He graduated from Dolan Mortuary School in Philadelphia in 1949, and was also a practicing attorney, returning to the family funeral business in 1969.



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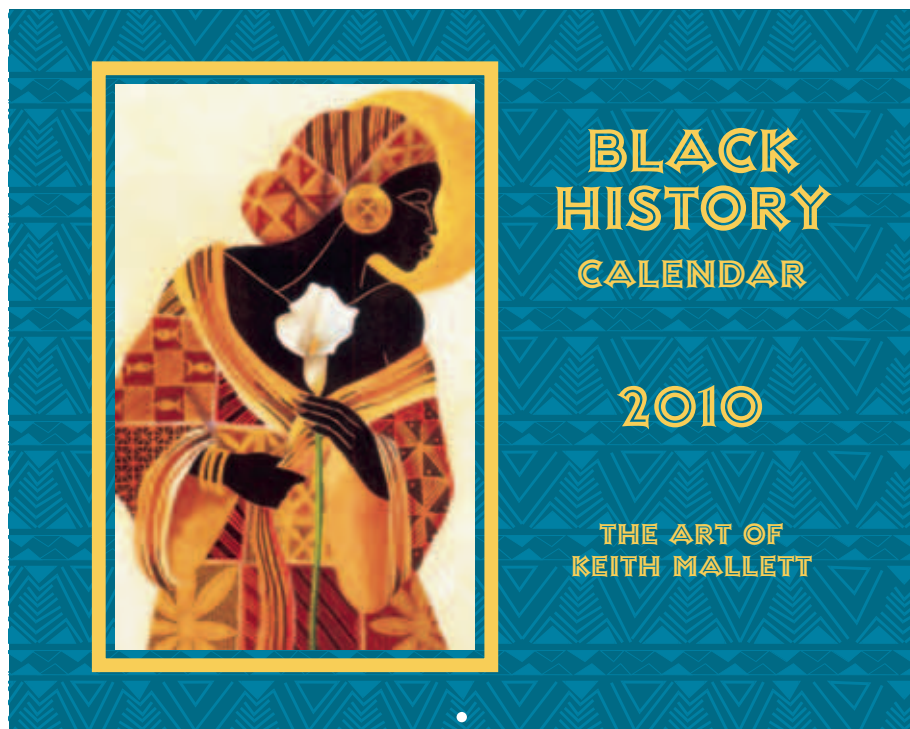
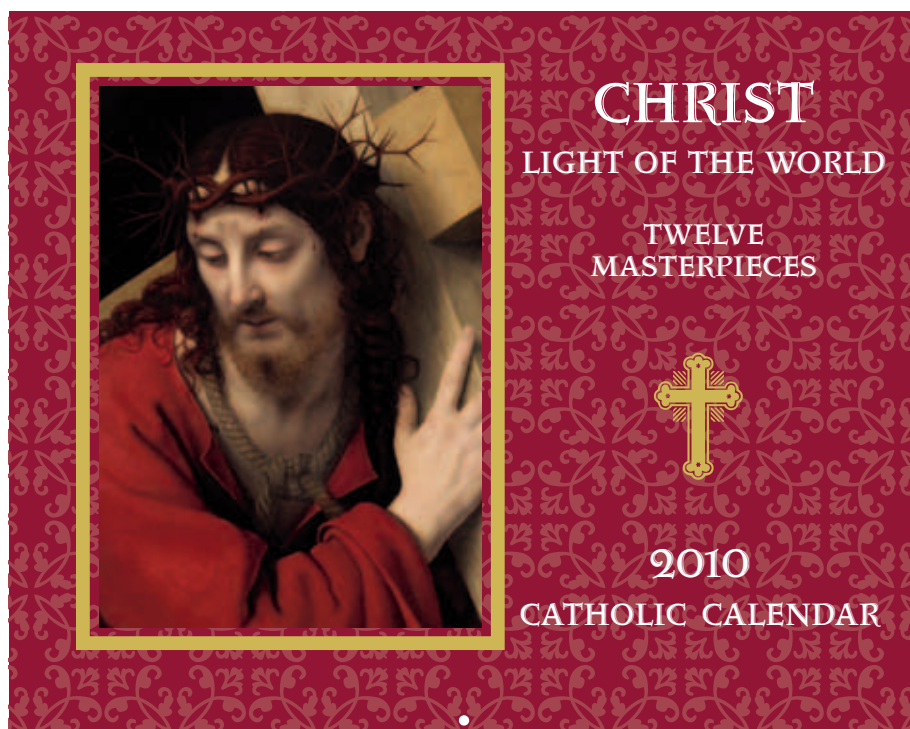
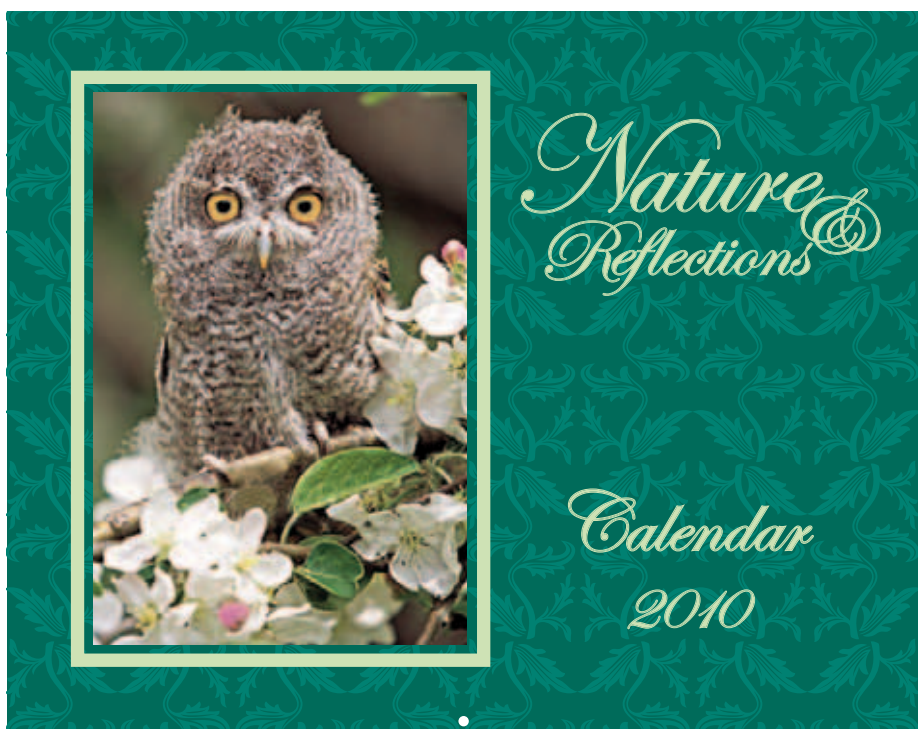
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