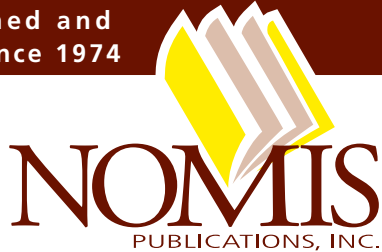


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# NEWS

AUGUST  
2009

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Previously Published as the YB News • Still the Place for Your News!

## Technology meets the Industry...

“The Internet has changed the way we grieve forever. People are actively embracing this alchemy of digital technology, mourning and remembrance. Funeral homes that take advantage of the Internet to provide such services will build better relationships with their customer families and improve their competitive advantage.”

See “How Technology Is Changing the Face of Grief” by Louise Zweben on Page A10

“What does it take for a company to survive in this industry? What are some key things you should look for in a start-up company before working with them? New products may be made available in the funeral home, but getting the funeral director to embrace the product and sell it can be a very tough battle for the company, a battle that they must be prepared to embrace. If not, then a slow start and poor sales will quickly lead to their downfall.”

See “Innovation In The Funeral Industry: Should You Avoid Start-Up Companies?” by Ryan Thogmartin on Page A18

## Tradition meets Technology...



“The company’s state-of-the-art online “shopping solution” allows participating funeral homes to instantly offer memorial products by simply adding a link to their website.”

See “Patchwork Memorials to offer Memorial Quilts” on Page A18

## Holy Redeemer Cemetery dedicates new section for local Eastern Catholic Churches



Resurrection Mosaic by Pickel Studio



(L to R) Deacon Tom Phelan, Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted and Bishop Gerald N. Dino at the Blessing and Dedication of Resurrection Garden. —Andrew Junker/CATHOLIC SUN

PHOENIX, AZ— Most Reverend *Thomas J. Olmsted*, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, said the Church showed its universal nature with the blessing and dedication of *Resurrection Garden*, an area of **Holy Redeemer Cemetery** that was dedicated on May 30. The garden was developed through the joint efforts of the **Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Ceme-**

CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

## Watkins Brothers Memorial Chapel celebrates its 100 Year Anniversary



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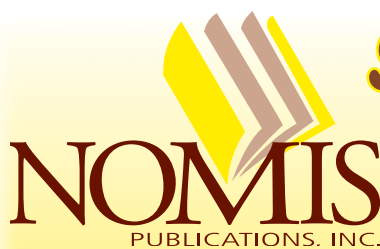
CONTINUED ON PAGE A20

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NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPO  
Boston, Massachusetts • October 25-28, 2009 • Booth #325

# HAVE YOU SEEN THESE CHILDREN?

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

## Family Abduction

### ALISSON FLORES



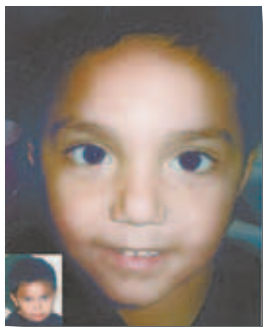
**Date of Birth:** 4/21/2005  
**Age at Disappearance:** 2 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 4 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hispanic  
**Height:** 2'0"  
**Weight:** 28 lbs  
**Hair:** Black  
**Eyes:** Blue

### JENNIFER FLORES ARTEAGA



**Date of Birth:** 11/9/2000  
**Age at Disappearance:** 6 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 8 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hispanic  
**Height:** 3'10"  
**Weight:** 42 lbs  
**Hair:** Lt. Brown  
**Eyes:** Brown

### OSCAR FLORES ARTEAGA



**Date of Birth:** 2/7/2003  
**Age at Disappearance:** 5 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 7 Yrs  
**Sex:** Male  
**Race:** White/Hispanic  
**Height:** 2'5"  
**Weight:** 35 lbs  
**Hair:** Black  
**Eyes:** Brown

### Abductor OSCAR SAUL FLORES



**Date of Birth:** 8/3/1974  
**Age Now:** 35 Yrs  
**Sex:** Male  
**Race:** White/Hispanic  
**Height:** 5'10"  
**Weight:** 160 lbs  
**Hair:** Black  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Date Missing:** 8/16/2007  
**Missing From:** Temple, Pennsylvania

**Circumstances:** Alisson, Jennifer, and Oscar were allegedly abducted by their father, Oscar Flores. A felony warrant for Kidnapping was issued for Oscar on August 28, 2008. They may travel to California, Texas, or Mexico. Alisson may go by the last name Flores Arteaga. Oscar has several tattoos. He may wear contact lenses..

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



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**Founder:** Chester E. Simon  
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### NOTICE

The FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERY NEWS is now sent in two parts. Section A, which includes pages A1-A56 and Section B, which contains the Classified Advertising and consists of pages B1-B20. If you do not receive both sections please call 1-800-321-7479 or email info@nomispublications.com.

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## Preneed Perspective publishes Annual Ratings Issue

PHOENIX, AZ— Once again, **Preneed Perspective** has analyzed all of the preneed insurance companies and arrived at its annual ratings. While other publications and rating agencies rate preneed insurance companies as well as other life insurance companies, Preneed Perspective is the only publication that analyzes preneed insurance companies exclusively. "Reviewing a preneed insurer is more complex than rating a traditional insurance company. If you use the tools and techniques that you would apply to an ordinary life insurance company to a preneed insurer, it will give you false results," said **Daniel M. Isard**, the publisher of the subscription newsletter. "When a funeral home elects to trust one insurance carrier with their future, they are electing to have one company pay for more than 30% of their gross revenue, seven to ten years from now. This is a huge risk. It is a risk that takes a very specific analysis," Isard added.

Preneed Perspective's July issue covers many stories, but the feature on annual ratings is the one that every preneed insurance company president waits for, to see how their company is reviewed. Companies that were reviewed well in the past may not be reviewed well at this time due to the changes in their investments, assets and liabilities. "We used numerous financial tests including asset analysis and profitability analysis," said **Beth Norton** who helped work on this annual project. "Our analysis was done without regard to the company name, so that we would not be prejudiced in favor of any one carrier,"

The results are going to surprise many this year. It turns out that in the simple A, B, C, D and E ratings used by Preneed Perspective, no company earned an A rating. In the past, several companies were rated as A, but this year no company came away with that rating. While A.M. Best rated 21 of the 54 preneed companies as A or better and 15 as B, Preneed Perspective disagreed with that conclusion. Only 12 received a B rating from Preneed Perspective. "I think it is impossible in any group of insurance companies for 39% of the companies to be rated as A and another 30% as B by Best. If that were the case, this industry would be in great shape. It isn't. We have companies with decreasing Capital and Surplus, and some of those have more than 100% of their surplus at risk. Funeral home owners must learn the message, or they will be faced with lower profits," Isard demonstrated. "We are trying to get all preneed insurance companies to live up to their highest standard so there will be no failures in the future as we have seen this year."

Those interested in gaining either a free copy of this month's subscription or an annual subscription should contact Anita at **The Foresight Companies** by calling 800-426-0165 or by e-mail at AnitaA@f4sight.com, or log on to the website at [www.preneedperspective.com](http://www.preneedperspective.com).

## Holy Redeemer Cemetery dedicates new section for local Eastern Catholic Churches

*Continued from Front Page*

**teries & Mortuaries** and clergy and laity of Eastern Catholic parishes in the metropolitan Phoenix area.

"The dedication of Resurrection Garden is a beautiful expression of our unity as members of the Catholic Church" the Bishop stated at the dedication. "This section, and its mosaic icon depicting the resurrection of Christ, will not only be a great area of spirituality, and calming for our Eastern families, but an area where the entire community can come and find comfort through meditation and prayer.

Most Reverend *Gerald N. Dino*, Bishop, Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Van Nuys, was also on hand for the blessing and dedication. Clergy and laity from the Valley Eastern Catholic Churches also participated in the service that included a Panachida liturgy. The liturgy remembers and prays for the dead. After the Panachida service that featured prayers and hymns in a number of languages associated with the various churches region of origin, the two Bishops formally blessed the feature and section, sprinkling the ground and feature with holy water.

**Gary L. Brown**, Executive Director/President of Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Cemeteries & Mortuaries, expressed his appreciation and thanks for everyone who made the development of this section possible. He especially noted the work of Reverend *Peter Boutros*, Pastor, St. John of the Desert Melkite Catholic Church, for his leadership and work on this project. According to Fr. Peter and other members, to their knowledge this is first section of a Roman Catholic cemetery dedicated to the Eastern Churches and is a positive statement of our unified belief in Catholicism.

The section consists of 2,000 double depth burials spaces and a nine-foot granite and mosaic icon. The granite was supplied by **Cold Spring Granite** and Resurrection mosaic by **Pickel Studio**. The granite includes the inscription, "Christ is risen from the dead! By death He trampled Death; And to those in the tombs He granted life."

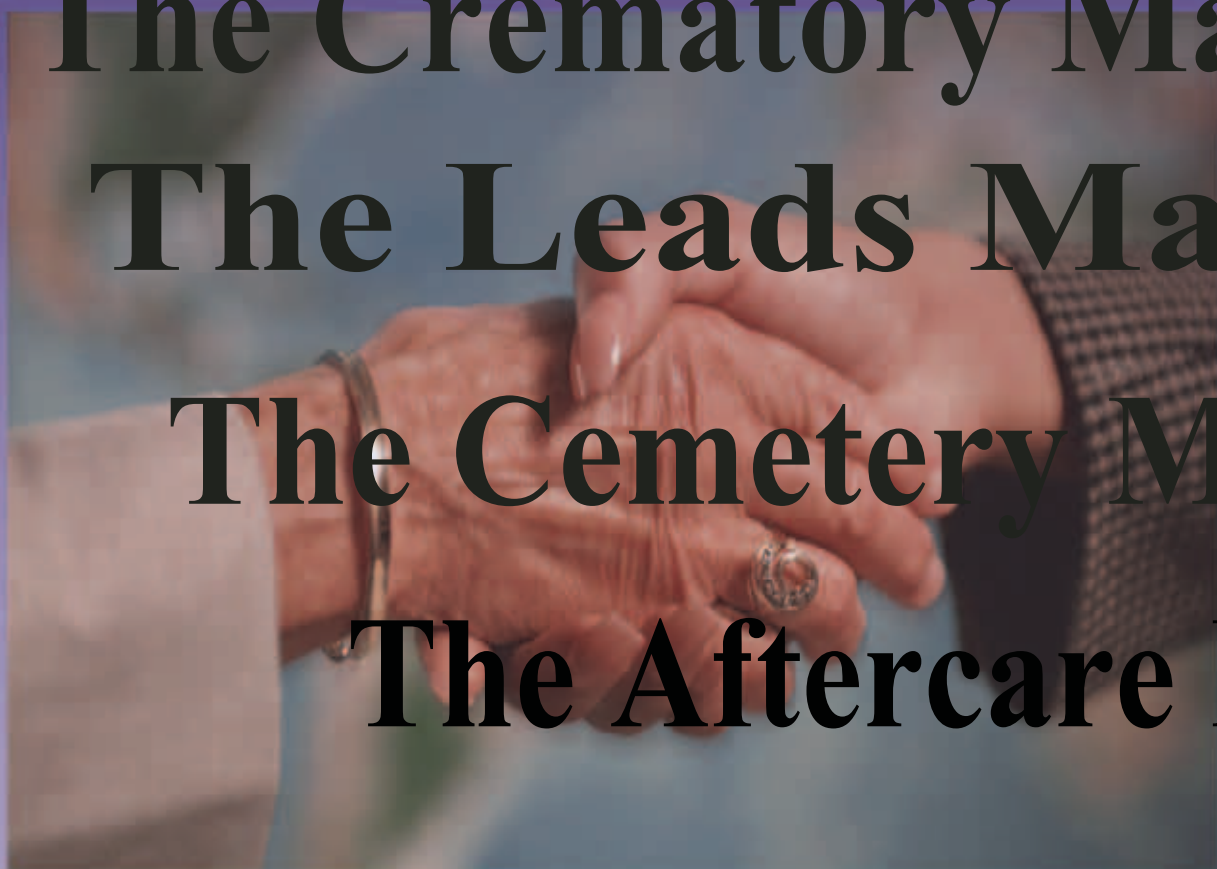
## Correction



The committal service shelter at Iowa Veterans Cemetery with the administration building in the background.

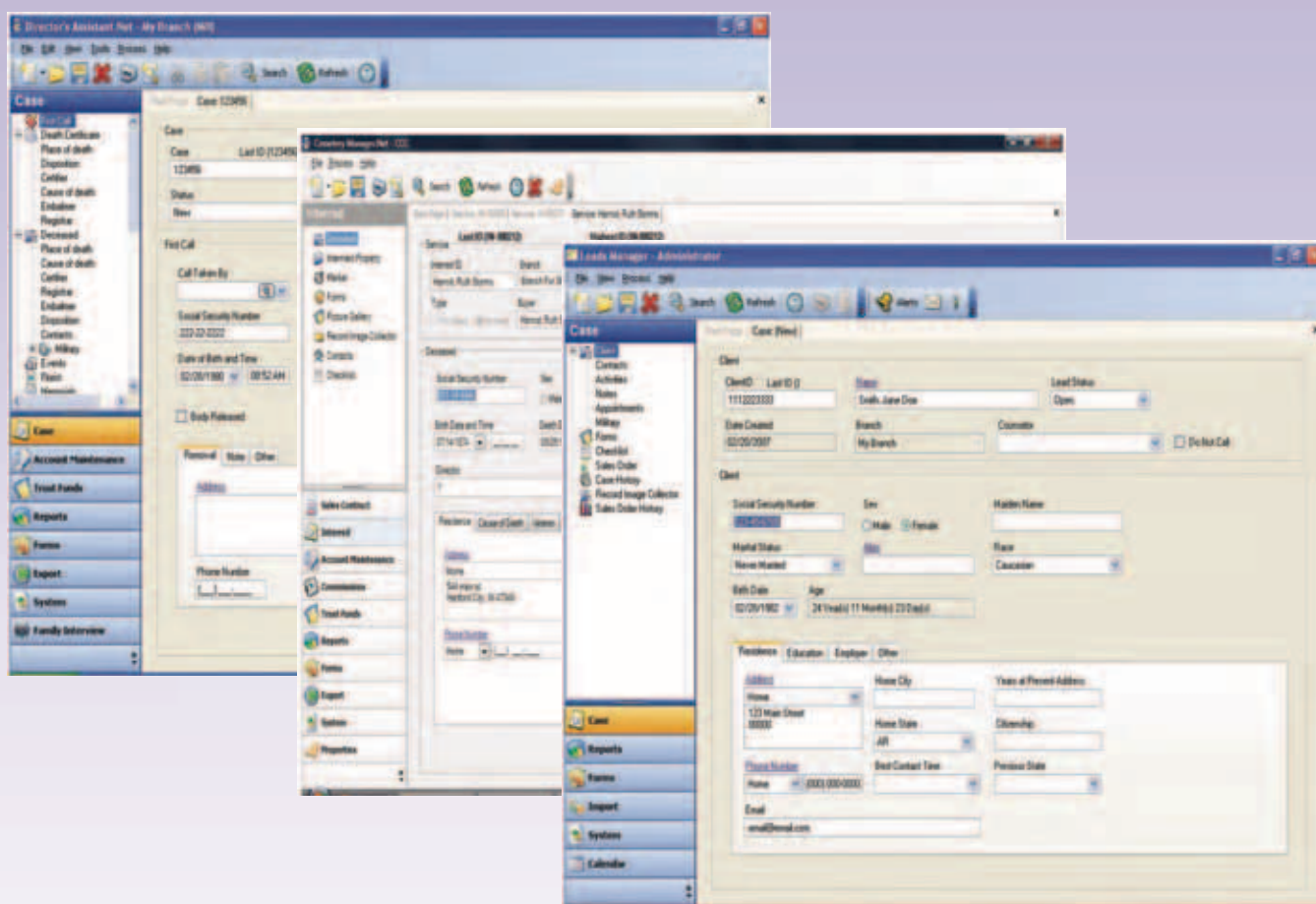
The July 2009 Front Page article "Iowa Veteran Cemetery—Honoring Those Who Served" began with an incorrect dateline. The Iowa Veterans Cemetery is located in Van Meter, Iowa.

# The Director's Assistant The Crematory Manager The Leads Manager The Cemetery Manager The Aftercare Manager



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# McKay's Family Mortuaries holds Vigil Service

By Shannan Guillory

LOMA LINDA, CA— Although death is inevitable, it is important to remember those loved ones we have lost in our lifetimes. Love is one of the most prominent emotions in the human psyche and it runs far too deep to be ignored. It must be nurtured and expressed in a healthy manner in an environment that is conducive to the harbored emotions. It is also vital to make sure that those who are grieving know that they are not alone in the feelings that they may be experiencing.

On Saturday June 6, 2009, **McKay's Family Mortuaries** showed their appreciation for the community that surrounds them once again.



Photo by Mark McKay

A candle-lighting vigil and Celebration of Life event was held at the Campus Hill Church in Loma Linda, CA. Members of many different religious denominations showed their support of this event including but not limited to: Presbyterian, Greek Orthodox, Seventh-day Adventist, and

Lutheran. Many of the diversified families that McKay's had assisted were in attendance to remember and pay tribute to their lost loved ones.

Many of those in attendance gave testimonies and shared memories of their loved ones, including members of the McKay family.

For each loved one lost, a candle was lit in their memory. The evening was a wondrous myriad of beauty complete with stimulating poetry, relaxing music, and scriptures from the Bible that touched the hearts of every person in the church.

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## The Gift of Aftercare

By Sherry L. Williams

Last month our country celebrated its 133rd Birthday. The fourth of July is a time that we honor independence and freedom. It is a time that we reflect on our history and the price that many have paid so that we all have freedom. It is a time we honor heroes and celebrate pride in our nation. Today, as I sit to write this article, I am reflecting on what it means to be a hero. A hero is any person admired for courage, nobility, qualities, achievements, and regarded as ideal or model. A hero is a person having outstanding qualities.

In the chaos and fiscal turmoil we are experiencing as a nation, I am reminded how important it is that we have heroes. We need people we can look up to, people we can trust and people that make us proud.

This month is also my 25th year working with funeral directors. It was 25 years ago that I came in contact with people that I truly believe are unsung heroes. I can think of no other profession that reaches out to people and helps in times of disaster and trauma to stabilize the lives of those impacted without receiving any type of recognition or award. You reach out to your communities without being asked because it is the right thing to do.

So, today, I lift up praises and acclamation to you

the funeral director. You are one of my heroes. I have witnessed the many hours you have helped in what are horrific conditions with the identification of bodies. I have seen the many times you have donated caskets for families and communities when a disaster has touched their lives. I have seen many instances that you have buried infants at little or no cost for families who have not been able to see their dreams for the future realized. I have witnessed and many times been a part of the public service seminars and memorial programs that you provide for grieving people in your communities. I've seen flag poles and monuments dedicated to fallen military in your communities, visited the libraries you have set up in your businesses to help families you serve and your communities, and been privy to many new and exciting kinds of support groups that you conduct for those who grieve.

Over the years, I have witnessed the many firms that have received awards from your national association for excellence in service, but never have I seen you recognized by the public for the outstanding service and the humanitarian work that you do. If I could, I would give you recognition nationwide for demonstrating and living out the one thing that I hear all funeral directors say and that is, "Funerals are for the Living". You live that and you demonstrate that daily when you do everything you can to personalize a funeral for a family and find ways to help them tell the story of their loved one's life.

You truly are my hero and the hero of the hundreds of thousands of people you help every year. I want you to remember however, the people you serve are grieving and it really takes an effort on their part to send you

a thank you note or acknowledge the excellence of service that they received. So, for every card or letter you have received, treasure them, it took a lot of energy for a grieving person to send that thank you.

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you for all you do. You are truly the unknown hero – but not valued and not loved. Be proud of what you do. Be proud of your profession. I am and I am very proud to have had the honor to work with and get to know many of you over the last twenty-five years.

Sherry L. Williams, RN, BA, GMS, GRS, is the president and founder of New Leaf Resources a division of Sherry Williams Enterprises, Inc. She was the co-founder of Accord Inc. and has been involved in grief and bereavement training and services for the past twenty-two years. She has an Associate Degree in Nursing from the University of Kentucky Extension Program and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Bellarmine College in Louisville, KY. Sherry is a nationally certified Grief Management Specialist and has advanced certification as a Bereavement Facilitator from the American Academy of Bereavement and is certified by the Grief Recovery Institute as a Grief Recovery Specialist.

She has been a featured speaker for numerous organizations including the National Funeral Directors Association and the Association for Death Education.

She can be reached by email at sherry@newleaf-resources.com. Visit New Leaf Resources and Sherry Williams Enterprises, Inc. at www.newleaf-resources.com

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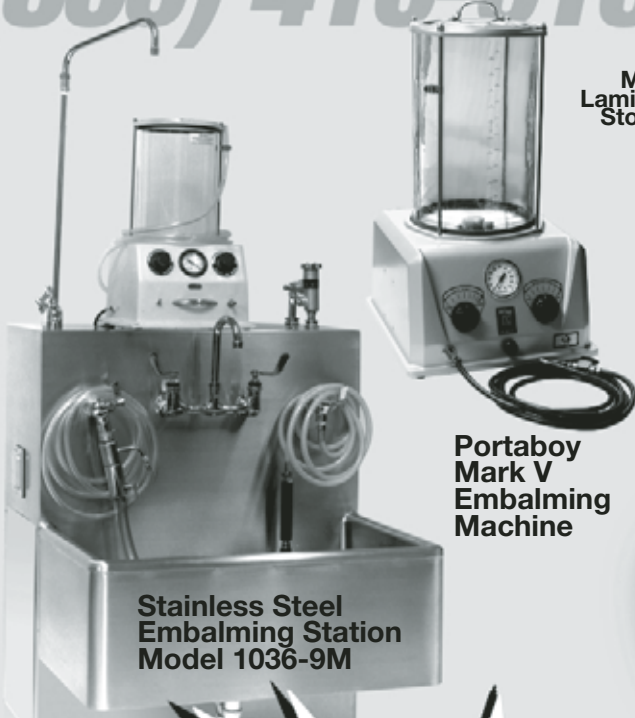
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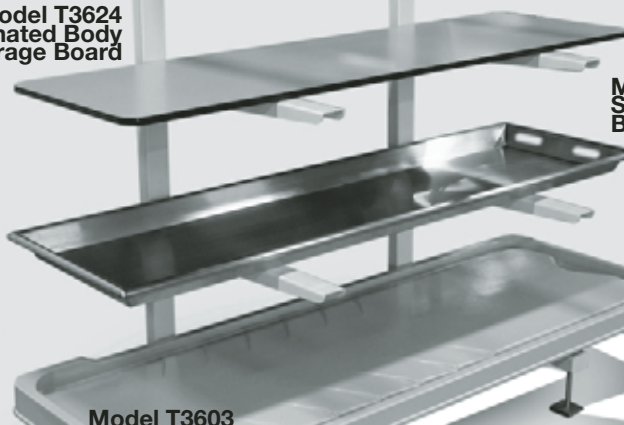
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## Fourth Annual Funeral Service Business Plan Conference to be held in Florida

**CLEARWATER BEACH, FL—** Funeral professionals nationwide are already making plans to join some of the most innovative thinkers in funeral service November 19-20 at the Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort where they will discover ways to boost profits and better serve families.

The fourth annual **Funeral Service Business Plan** conference, which is organized by **Kates-Boylston Publications**, will continue its tradition of helping funeral professionals develop a strategic business plan that's actionable, concise and achievable. Attendees will learn how to bolster their preneed programs, how to hone their service models and how to make more profits while improving service.

### **CANA and Matthews Cremation Division to Present Workshop as Prelude**

The **Cremation Association of North America** and **Matthews Cremation Division** will hold a special, redesigned Crematory Operators Certification Workshop on November 18.

The Crematory Operators Certification Program has been completely redesigned just for this conference, and it will include more information than ever for owners, managers, funeral directors and operators. With litigation issues becoming more important by the day, there will also be a bevy of information on what you need to do to avoid lawsuits and protect the well being of your firm. A section devoted

to cremation startup and return on investment has also been added and is exclusive to this conference.

"In this economy, it's more important than ever for funeral service professionals to find new ways to improve their businesses and not just hold onto profits but grow them," said **Thomas A. Parmelee**, executive editor of **Kates-Boylston** and the moderator of the conference. "Our all-star lineup of speakers will help you implement strategies that will have a direct effect on your bottom line, and you won't be disappointed. If you are, we'll refund 100 percent of your registration fee."

Speakers at the conference include: **Edith Churchman**, a licensed funeral director and embalmer. She is the only fourth-generation funeral director who owns and operates an African-American funeral home in Essex County, New Jersey. **Alan Creedy**, former owner of a group of funeral homes and cemeteries and current president of **Trust 100**, a network of funeral homes committed to increasing public awareness of the choices and options available for preplanning. **Robin Hoppell**, a licensed funeral director, helps funeral homes develop and improve business process solutions. He regularly holds webinars, blogs and facilitates conversations among funeral home operators to promote best practices. **Dan Isard** is one of the profession's top-ranked speakers. During the past three decades, he has developed close relationships with funeral directors, cemeterians and combination operators throughout the United States, establishing his reputation as a trusted adviser to business owners and their families. **Bill McQueen**, second-generation funeral director and certified public accountant with a law degree. Serving as president of his firm, he is an officer for the **Cremation Association of North America**. **John McQueen**, second-generation funeral director grew up in funeral service, and upon the untimely death of his father, he assumed a leadership role in the firm at the young

age of 23. Since then, John and his siblings have grown the family business from a single location in 1987 to the largest family-owned funeral establishment in the Tampa Bay area. **Nectar Ramirez** is general manager for **Options, Batesville's** cremation business. Nectar and her team focus solely on the cremation market, and she works hard on developing new products, researching markets and training funeral directors. **Dean Lambert** is vice president of marketing for **Homesteaders Life Company**. His connection to funeral service began in 1993 after he signed his first funeral home client and gained a passion for the funeral service mission.

See firsthand how **Anderson-McQueen** converted an existing location at their NE St. Petersburg location so that it became a state-of-the-art facility that dazzles families. Witness how the **McQueens' Legacy Café** helps put families at ease, how the firm integrates audiovisual capabilities to provide top-notch service and how its **Life Celebration Reception Centers, Training Facility and Personalization Room** separates their firm from the competition.

If you need more to convince you to attend this profit-building event, then we have it: You'll be networking in style at a beautiful beach resort with the amenities that make learning and studying a pleasure. Having just undergone a \$26 million dollar refurbishment, the **Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort** is popular spanning 10 acres along the Gulf of Mexico. It has been transformed top to bottom into the ideal setting for a relaxed business meeting.

Those who register for the **Funeral Service Business Plan Conference** are entitled to an early bird discount if they sign up before September 30, and subscribers to any **Kates-Boylston** publication are entitled to an even deeper discount. Visit <http://www.katesboylston.com/bizplan> to learn more about the conference and register. Call 800-260-1545 for faster service and to reserve your seat now.

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## **A Proactive Approach to Advance Funeral Planning**

By Christopher Kuhnen

### **To Guarantee or Not to Guarantee? That Is the Question**

Written by Guest Columnist Mr. Kris Seale

The title of this month's column says it all. After undertaking a nationwide search for an all-inclusive, fair and balanced viewpoint on the subject I came across a series of white papers written by **Mr. Kris Seale** the President & Chief Executive Officer of **Funeral Directors Life Insurance Company (FDLIC)**. Mr. Seale is a Certified Public Accountant and a graduate of **Baylor University** with a Bachelor's degree in **Business Administration**. I personally feel that what Kris shares with us in this column should be carefully and thoughtfully considered by funeral home owners. If you'd like to share your thoughts with Kris he can be reached at **FDLIC**; his e-mail address is [kseale@dig-inc.net](mailto:kseale@dig-inc.net).

With the demise of National Prearranged Services, the quandary of the Illinois Funeral Directors Association Master Trust, and the poor investment performance of a number of preneed funeral insurers and trust funds, it seems that our profession's focus should be less on the guaranteed funeral issue and more on the integrity, financial stability, and investment strategies of the entities (trust or insurance) that funeral homes choose to trust with their future at need business (because a preneed sold today will become an at need in about ten years). However, I am thankful that the issue of guaranteeing versus not guaranteeing funerals has become a hot issue because it will cause funeral home owners to focus on the long-term effects of selling preneed funerals and, ultimately, on the quality of the entity chosen to invest their preneed funeral funds.

Really, the debate over whether or not to guarantee preneed funerals is more of an issue about "shortfalls." Shortfalls by current definition occur when a preneed becomes at need and the death benefit of the trust account or insurance policy is less than the current retail funeral prices of the funeral home for the pre-selected merchandise and services. Interestingly, we found that shortfalls not only occur when a preneed becomes at need, but also when at need funerals are performed and no preneed funeral exists. Hopefully, the debate on "shortfalls" will be expanded to cause funeral home owners to assess their policies and procedures for selling both preneed and at need funerals.

One thing is certain – the shortfall subject is very complex, often influenced by state law or funeral home circumstances, and does not lend itself to the same conclusion for every funeral home. We believe that it is crucial for a funeral home to consider the following questions:

- How does your firm compute "shortfalls"?
- What is the "value" of one extra funeral that your preneed program captures?
- What is the commitment of the preneed funeral insurance company to the profession and what is the company's financial condition?
- What type of product do you have?
- Are you actively marketing to and reaching new families?
- What is the true cause of preneed shortfalls for your funeral home?

To read more on this subject, please visit [www.funeraldirectorslife.com](http://www.funeraldirectorslife.com).

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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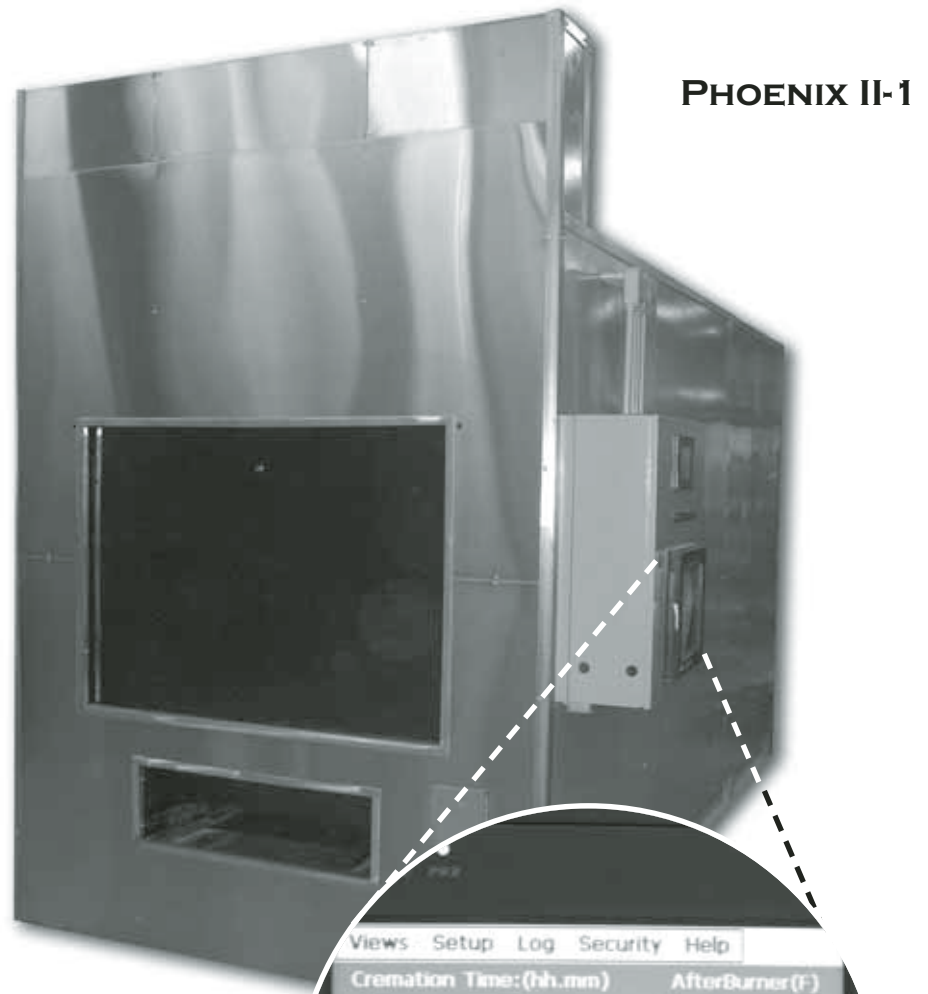
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## Milton elected to Green Burial Council Board

INDIANAPOLIS, IN—**Barbara Milton**, Certified Celebrant and Vice President for Community Relations for **Buchanan Group**, Indianapolis, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the **Green Burial Council**, a national nonprofit organization

working to encourage environmentally sustainable death care and the use of burial as a means of protecting natural areas. **Flanner and Buchanan Funeral Centers**, with 14 locations, and **Washington Park Cemetery Association** (WPCA), com-

prising seven locations, are the largest privately held cemetery-and-funeral complex with a natural site in Indiana. Both Flanner and Buchanan and WPCA are certified by the Green Burial Council.

“Barb is the kind of leader we hope to see more of in this field,” said **Joe Sehee**, Executive Director of the GBC. “She’s completely committed to making funeral service better meet the needs of families as well as the planet.”

Milton is involved in a variety of “green” programs for Buchanan Group, including the conducting of seminars about Kessler Woods at Washington Park North Funeral Center and Cemetery, 2702 Kessler Boulevard, West Drive, Indianapolis. Kessler Woods, opened in 2009, offers green burials in wooded or grassy settings.

Kessler Woods represents one of many green programs offered by Flanner and Buchanan and WPCA. “This new green burial site goes along with the conservation and natural preservation efforts we have been involved in for years with such groups as Keep Indianapolis Beautiful and Indianapolis Downtown Inc., in the tree-planting efforts of the city and state, as well as our own Gift of



Barbara Milton

Life program, where Flanner and Buchanan plants a seedling in the Hoosier National Forest in memory of every person whose funeral is handled by the firm,” Milton said.

“We have already planted hundreds of trees in our cemeteries,” she added. “Our motto for a long time has been ‘Community, Commitment, and Compassion.’ The natural burials embrace our belief in conservation and preservation. Much like we facilitated cremation for our Indiana consumers in 1904, Flanner and Buchanan is poised to facilitate natural burial for our environmentally committed Indiana families from today forward.”

For more information, call (317) 387-7000, visit <http://www.flanner-buchanan.com/green/index.htm> or email [bmilton@buchanangroup.org](mailto:bmilton@buchanangroup.org).

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**For Keep Sakes**

By **Adrienne Kalmes**

In this, my final column, I should like to sign off by giving you some concrete ideas for a keepsake strategy that can help both your families and your business.

So how can keepsakes help? The answer is simple: *One family at a time*. But living with this answer may require some work on your part.

Your keepsake strategy starts with a mindset that says: I want to ease the grief of the family who have entrusted their loved one to me. Exemplary service and strong listening skills go a long way in validating a family's trust; a good aftercare program extends that service. But keepsakes provide a *lingering* sense of trust and care—one that stays with a family and potentially keeps you in contact with them for months, even years after your direct service to them.

With the right mindset, you are now ready to set a goal. Rather than a dollar target, you may be better served with the *objective* of providing every family or every second or third family with some form of keepsake. Budgets can come later, if at all.

The first two steps will not bring sales if you do not have the right keepsakes to offer your families. A good approach is to lay out every keepsake piece you offer on a table. (If they don't fit on a table, you have too many.) Now answer a series of questions: Are we carrying a good mix for both traditional burial and cremation families? Are there items for the range of people we serve? Consider age, sex, connection to the deceased, ethnicity, and interests. Is there a range of price points? Are there any items that might be suitable to work into a “package” of services and goods? Are there local services that we might list and recommend to families (perhaps for a finder's fee or for bartering purposes), things like shadow box creators or photographers who specialize in collages? Now consider upfront expenses for displays and inventory, and assess how you have (or have not) positioned or presented any item on the table. Ask your staff to participate in your evaluation. Be honest.

The staff person who takes the greatest interest in keepsakes may be the right person to become your “Keepsake Coordinator.” If it becomes an additional responsibility, having someone who is genuinely interested in this assignment can lessen the burden of the additional responsibility. If your keepsake mix was lacking, charge this person with finding new items, becoming knowledgeable about everything you offer, training your directors, tracking the sales, and following up with families. Maybe “Keepsake Czar” is a better description!

Key to whatever you do is consistency. If your keepsake offerings are not consistently presented or highlighted in some obvious way, it's pretty hard to build them. The timing of presenting them may vary by funeral director; it may even vary by family. Planting the seeds at the arrangement, providing them with the materials they need to make a decision, and promising to follow up may be the best approach.

But then you have to do the follow-up! Your efforts with keepsakes will help families deal with their grief and leave them feeling that all of your services were of value. Over time this can translate into loyalty. Done right, additional revenues will follow.

As you know from my bio, I work for Meadow Hill, the Thumbies people. As a company we are committed to doing keepsakes right from the quality of our products, to our service, and to our unconditional satisfaction guarantee. If Thumbies are not already part of your keepsake mix, just call or email me. I am always happy to talk keepsakes with you.

---

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](mailto:adrienne@thumbies.com). Her mailing address is PO Box 274, Fox River Grove, IL 60021.

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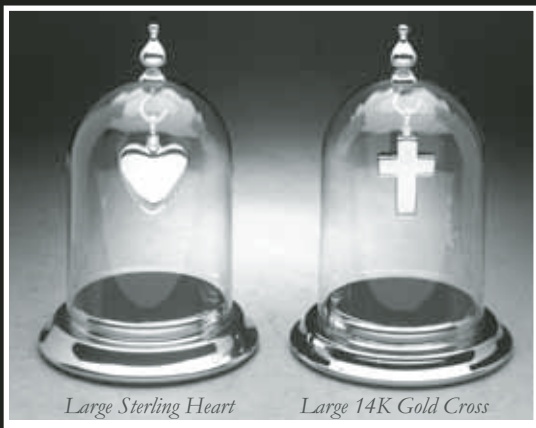
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## How Technology Is Changing the Face of Grief

By Louise Zweben

The pervasiveness of today's Internet is impacting people at every level and changing our perceptions about how we connect with each other. Using the Internet, you can order a movie, buy groceries, video conference with friends and establish relationships with people that were never before possible. While funeral directors, vendors, service providers and consultants have long been using certain technologies – online guest books, websites and online forums and support groups have been around for over a decade – new technology solutions and trends are creating greater opportunity to connect with and support their customers.

According to the National Funeral Directors Association, the cremation rate in the United States is expected to increase sharply from 34.8 percent in 2007 to 39 percent in 2010, and will exceed 58 percent by 2025. This is causing margin pressure on all funeral homes, despite the expected increase in death rates, as

baby boomers die off in growing numbers – from eight people per thousand in 2007 to 9.3 people per thousand in 2020 and 10.9 people per thousand in 2040. As a result of the margin squeeze, funeral home directors are looking to leverage new technology offerings to sell higher margin products and services.

Traditionally, the funeral home staff walks a family through a showroom filled with a small selection of caskets and urns. Today a family can do all of this on the Internet, sitting in a comfortable and soothing environment at the funeral home and choose a casket, along with any custom touches they desire. In order to bring such technology to their environment, funeral homes are investing in Internet access and large LCD screens in their conference rooms.

Since people are spread across the country and often across the world, attending funerals of family and friends is difficult. This provides an opportunity for the funeral homes to provide another high margin service to customers – by streaming webcasts of a live funeral, family and friends unable to attend the funeral in person are able to remotely participate in the ceremony and honor the departed one.

In addition, the Internet is driving another trend – instead of turning to their local newspapers, people are accessing a funeral home's information, as well as obituaries and information on funerals, online. As a result, funeral homes are feeling the pressure to make their websites more dynamic and provide extended information about upcoming memorial events, including maps and additional items to notify families and friends.

In the Internet era, perceptions and traditions around grief are changing as more people embrace technology to share their feelings and remember their

CONTINUED ON PAGE A25

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## Legal Speak

By Atty. Harvey I. Lapin

### Are You Dealing with a Legally Authorized Customer?

Everyone knows that the economy is bad. Hopefully, it will get better in the near future. However, one of the unfortunate implications of a bad economy is that some people begin looking for situations where they can file complaints or even lawsuits against businesses to obtain what they believe is easy money from a quick settlement.

Almost every service provided by cemeteries, funeral homes and crematories ("Industry Member") requires a written authorization from a person or persons that are legally empowered to sign the authorization. Often there is more than one person that can authorize a service. When this occurs it is important to make sure that all of the authorized parties sign a written authorization or if someone is not available that the signing parties provide the Industry Member with a release, indemnification and hold harmless agreement against any claim from any third party who indicates the authorization was not signed by everyone. Actually, it is prudent to always obtain a release, indemnification and hold harmless agreement against any claim from any third party in connection with any type of authorization because customers often provide inaccurate information to avoid being required to contact someone they do not have an active relationship with anymore.

One problem is some state laws do not clearly provide at one location the priority status of the persons authorized to arrange for the disposition of human remains. Unfortunately, Industry Members in those states are required to check in various locations to determine if someone is legally authorized. In addition, in some states the law is unclear and an Industry Member may not know if the person they are dealing with is legally authorized. Of course, it is common knowledge that some Industry Members sometimes assume that a person paying for their services is legally authorized and they are not concerned about the details. Under those circumstances it is even more important that the Industry Member obtains a release, indemnification and hold harmless agreement from that person against claims from third parties that may in fact be the legally authorized parties.

Industry Members that are located in Illinois and a few other states are fortunate because their state legislatures have enacted laws that clearly set out the procedures to follow for authorizing an agent to handle the disposition of a person's remains and the priority of those authorized to do so if no agent is appointed. The Illinois law is known as the Disposition of Remains Act ("DORA") and it became effective on January 1, 2006. Prior to the effective date it was necessary for Industry Members in Illinois to check the law in several places to determine the party or parties legally authorized to sign a disposition of remains authorization. Now it is only necessary to refer to Section 5 of DORA to determine whether someone is legally authorized and in what priority.

Since Industry Members are dealing with the issue of proper authorization on a daily basis it is recommended that each Member keep a copy of the priorities in their state where they or their employees can easily refer to it. In addition, having the applicable law available can quickly neutralize the person that makes an improper claim. If this information is not readily available contact your state trade association and suggest that the priority information be determined and distributed to all members.

Remember that when there is any doubt about legal authorization, the best response is usually to do nothing until the disputing parties resolve the dispute or obtain a court order.

Generally, most parties will attempt to resolve a dispute rather than incurring legal expenses to obtain a court order. It also is a good idea to avoid taking sides when there is a dispute. Staying neutral is usually the best course of action for an Industry Member when there is a dispute between family members.

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 writes articles for CB Legal Publishing Corporation. CB Legal Publishing Corporation also publishes the Release Form Kit, which was prepared by the author. This Kit 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 also are Release Kits for Crematories, Cemeteries and Combination Funeral Home Cemetery Operations. The author is in the process of updating and revising all of the Release Kits. It is expected that the new Release Kits will be available on or about September 1, 2009. Call Cheryl Lapin at the number below and she will send you an order form.

The author also writes more extensive articles on subjects of interest to the industry in the newsletter Cemetery & Funeral Business and Legal Guide published by CB Legal Publishing Corporation. Subscriptions to the combined 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, at the address of CB Legal Publishing Corporation, P.O. Box 1327, Northbrook, Illinois 60065-1327, and fax to (847) 509-1027 or call (847) 509-0501. Please ask about new subscriber rates.

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## Serenity Funerals and Crematory sparks Redevelopment of E. Admiral Place in Tulsa



Serenity Funerals and Crematory

**TULSA, OK**— There's rebuilding and new development occurring along E. Admiral Place between Yale and Harvard. This busy corridor in Midtown Tulsa is resurging with large new construction projects and facelifts of familiar businesses. The arterial road is conveniently adjacent to I-244, Tulsa's Crosstown expressway and MLK Expressway.

Among the newcomers is **Serenity Funerals and Crematory**, located at 4170 E. Admiral Place. The owner **Luke Wright** relocated to Tulsa after having operated similar homes in central California and the Seattle, WA area. "I grew up in McAlester and wanted to return to my Okla-

homa roots." He wanted a midtown location rather than a suburban location for his business, citing a need for a full service enterprise in the central area. His facility offers a state of the art crematory on site, and additionally has a spacious 185+ seat chapel and a beautiful reception hall with kitchen. "This hall sets us apart from most other funeral homes. We felt that since Tulsa has few facilities that offer reception halls we wanted one on-site to accommodate our families. That way, families and friends can congregate after a service and they don't have to leave to go somewhere else for food and fellowship," said Wright.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A30**

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## Observations

By Steven Palmer

### Ultimate Sacrifice

"We are expected to put the utmost energy, of every power that we have, into the service of our fellow men, never sparing ourselves, not condescending to think of what is going to happen to ourselves, but ready, if need be, to go to the utter length of self-sacrifice."  
—Woodrow Wilson

Madeleine Tavares, a leadership and training consultant, has one vivid picture of her tour of Dover Air Force Base's Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs.

"A stack of body armor vest and helmets caught my eye. Rodriguez (a medical Examiner at the Center) told us they belonged to military personnel killed in Iraq and Afghanistan."

"The stack of vests—each one representing a young life snuffed out in seconds—made the personal loss powerful and real," she wrote in *USA Today*.

Since 2001, all soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan have an autopsy. In previous wars, autopsies were not routinely performed and CT (Computerized Tomography) scans were rarely or never done.

These procedures have given the medical teams serving our military a lot of information on injuries and how to treat them. These procedures have also given the manufacturers of soldiers protective armor a detailed look on how to design more effective gear and equipment.

Army Reserve radiologist Col. Howard T. Harcke told

the New York Times that he studied the CT scans and realized a shortfall in the emergency medical treatment of a collapsed lung.

Due to the physical fitness of the soldiers and their thick chest walls, the current catheters used weren't long enough to properly re-inflate a lung. The longer tubes are now in medical kits used by combat medics.

Information showing upper torso and shoulder injuries has led to improvement of body armor.

Kathy Hardy writes in *Radiology Today*, that using CT scans post mortem allows a higher use of radiation giving a more detailed picture to medical personnel. Bone, spine and cranial injuries are easier to see than with a basic autopsy. It almost becomes a virtual autopsy.

Autopsies are still done on all of these soldiers though. Each family of a fallen soldier is given a fact sheet explaining to them what will be done and why. It isn't always an easy sell. Counseling is sometimes needed to explain the value of the post mortem. If the family has a religious objection, a clergy member of that faith can speak to the family and even be present at the autopsy.

Captain Craig T. Mallak, Chief of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System, told National Public Radio's *Fresh Air* that many times the family can't view their lost soldier due to the severity of the injuries. They have questions. Is it really them? How were they injured? Did they suffer? Sometimes other medical conditions are discovered that may be of use to surviving family.

A full report and photographs are available to family and are only supplied if the family absolutely insists. Captain Mallak and his staff warn families not to read these reports alone, as they are very graphic.

Over 3,000 autopsies have been performed and a library of combat wounds, from dissection to multi dimensional images will assist all who seek to improve the care and protection of our soldiers.

The most important aspect of those who care for our fallen soldiers is the respect accorded to them.

"We view these young men and women as the very best the United States has. They have volunteered their service in the defense of all of us and they deserve to be treated, alive or dead, to the best care possible. The families deserve our best to receive the answers they deserve. That is what drives us every day," Mallak told NPR's *Fresh Air*.

The Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs at Dover can process up to 85 decedents a day. Sergeants Tracey Taylor and Christine Devers are two reservists who work at the Center.

"It's an honor to work and prepare their remains with dignity and respect and get them home as quickly as possible to their families," Sergeant Devera stated in an article on the Air Force Reserve Command website.

Sergeant Taylor observed, "I get emotional at the send offs, which is when we stand in formation and salute the fallen service member as they are transported to a plane or vehicle for their trip home."

"These service members gave their life to protect me and you," Sgt. Taylor reflected, "I do what I can to give back to them and their families."

It is the least we can do for their sacrifice on and after their service on the battlefield.

"The first thing I do when I unzip the bag is put my hand in, rest it on their shoulder and say 'Welcome home.'"

—Penny Rodriguez, medical examiner with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System

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](mailto:westcott@commspeed.net) or through his website at [www.westcottfuneralhome.com](http://www.westcottfuneralhome.com).

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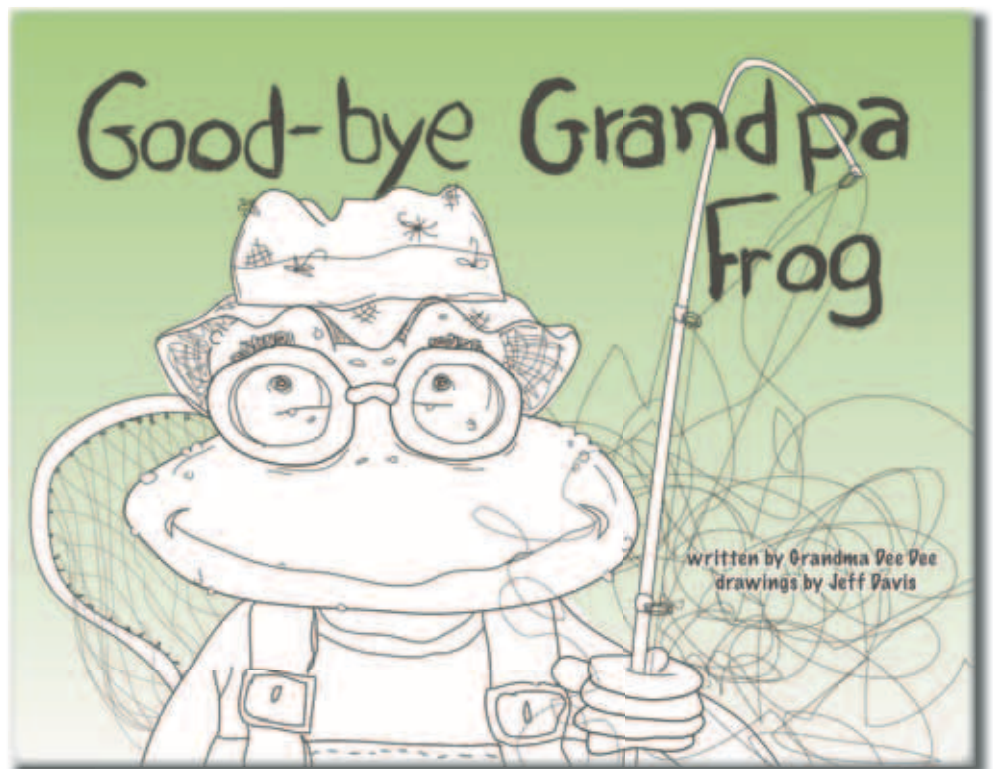
Funeral Director Employment Statistic – US Dept of Labor, May 2008

## "Good-bye Grandpa Frog" helps Children Understand Funerals

NEW ALBANY, IN— F.R.O.G. Stories, Inc. announces the availability of its latest offering, "Good-bye Grandpa Frog". The 12-page storybook with coloring pages facilitates a dialogue between children and grown-ups about funerals. It is the third in the company's series written to reach out to children under the age of 10 in crises. Under the pen name Grandma Dee Dee, **Doris Davis** explains what happens during a funeral through the eyes of The Jumpy Lumpy Grumpy Frog, the child-friendly character in her books.

A former elementary school teacher, Davis wrote her first book, "The Jumpy Lumpy Grumpy Frog, Communicating Cancer to Children", for her grandchildren after she was diagnosed with cancer in 2004. Three years later, Doris' son, a professional artist, illustrated the story and a dozen books were printed by a local office supply store. Doris and her husband **Bob** showed the books to a cancer center in Sebring, FL, and the response was so positive that the Davises called on other centers along their route home. Upon arriving home they decided on publishing the books themselves to keep them affordable. They established F.R.O.G. Stories Inc., using the acronym for Fully Relying On God.

The following year, a hospice in Atlanta suggested Doris write a similar book about dying, so "The Jumpy Lumpy Grumpy Frog, Helping Children Through Grief" was soon published. Naturally, Bob and Doris also presented the grief book to funeral homes. Only one year after their first sale to a funeral home, the frog books have found their way into over a hundred funeral home locations in ten states.



Doris "Grandma Dee Dee" Davis

F.R.O.G. Stories is a family corporation without paid employees. No one involved with the company draws a salary or other compensation. Writing, illustrating, sales, packaging, shipping, bookkeeping, accounting, and office location are all provided by the Davis family. Twenty percent of every sale is divided equally among the following organizations: [www.phibetapsi.org](http://www.phibetapsi.org) at the local and national levels for funding cancer research; [www.cjsbus.com](http://www.cjsbus.com) which provides a safe haven for children involved in a disaster; and [www.myrocktoday.org](http://www.myrocktoday.org) Reclaiming Our Culture Kentuckiana. It is their policy to only have one funeral home customer in towns or communities with a population of less than 20,000 residents. All of their funeral home customers are independent and are usually family owned.

The Davises are proud to be able to help children through their storybooks and welcome this new chapter in their lives. Bob Davis tells the story best, "One year after her retirement, Doris and I have found ourselves in the center of an endeavor we never planned, nor expected. We can honestly say the responses of funeral homes across the country have convinced us, what began as a simple frog story centered upon our campsite by the lake, now has no limitations."

For more information on the Jumpy, Lumpy, Grumpy Frog series, visit [www.frogstoriesinc.net](http://www.frogstoriesinc.net), phone (812) 283-1937 or email [frogstories@att.net](mailto:frogstories@att.net).



## OSHA Compliance

By Gary Finch

### My \$20 Million Blunder: How I Beat the 800 Pound Gorilla

It took me the better part of fifteen years to learn that eliminating OSHA fines would never become the better mouse trap that had the industry beating a path to my door. I was attacking the wrong cancer.

Funeral homes pay approximately \$50,000 a year in OSHA fines. They spend upwards of \$20 million a year on compliance. This is the 800 pound gorilla in our industry. This is precisely where compliance experts should focus. Regrettably, most are adding to their customer's compliance cost rather than reducing it.

Here are some examples of unnecessary compliance expenses that are common in our industry:

- Respirators (should take exemption if under PEL and not provide them)
- Monitoring (take periodic monitoring exemption if under the action level)
- Annual on-site renewal training (train online or with a CDs – more convenient too)
- Sending employees to seminars, having to pay travel and losing their production (use CD training)

- Waste disposal transport service (use alternative treatments such as chemical disinfection for a few dollars a year.)

Compliance Plus resolved a few years ago to focus on this area. We now have 47 narrated "Plug and Play" presentations and we are still building our library. We certainly didn't pioneer digital training. Virtually every government entity, including OSHA, uses it. It is effective, convenient, and affordable. In a side by side comparison to live training, most of our customers prefer our digital training.

It is fair to blame me for being slow to grasp the problem. Having done so, my company is four years into developing solutions that help our customers beat the 800 pound gorilla. It is the funeral industry that is making the \$20 million blunder. The correction process is slow, usually one funeral home at a time. Whether you act as your own safety administrator or use a professional service, be clear that this is your cancer. You basically own it. You can either beat the gorilla or let it beat you. The choice is yours.

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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## Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Cemeteries and Mortuaries Management Team serves lunch at St. Vincent De Paul



(L to R) Mike Crahan, Director of Sales & Marketing; Jim Jones, Manager, St. Francis Cemetery; Dean Briggs, Associate Director; Frank Aragon, Manager, Buildings & Grounds; Sr. Teresa McIntier, Bereavement Counselor; Maria Aldewereld, Family Service Location Manager, Holy Redeemer Cemetery; Patricia Goodman, Manager, Queen of Heaven Cemetery; and Debra Reed, Bereavement Resource Coordinator.

**PHOENIX, AZ**— The Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Cemeteries and Mortuaries (DOPCCM) Management Team served lunch to 800 homeless at the St. Vincent De Paul Dining Room, Phoenix, AZ, on May 19, 2009. The Management Team decided to do the charitable work as part of its team development program. The idea grew out of the staff's decision to collect donations on behalf of the Cemeteries and Mortuaries' Executive Director this past Christmas.

The St. Vincent De Paul Society is a lay ministry of the church started in 1833 by Blessed Fredrick Ozanam. The Society, which operates in parishes and dioceses throughout the world, has as its mission to provide charitable works of mercy to the poor through thousands of conferences and special works program, such as the Phoenix Dining Room. The Phoenix Dining Room was founded by a group of

local Vincentians and has not missed a meal in over 57 years.

**Debra Reed**, DOPCCM Bereavement Resource Coordinator, organized the activity and participated in the day's event. Debra commented "Helping to serve at St. Vincent De Paul was an experience in gratitude: gratitude from those served and gratitude that we were able to participate in the mission of St. Vincent De Paul."

The staff is looking forward to participating in similar activities in the future and encourages other cemeteries to participate in similar programs in their area. "This is truly one of the greatest activities our Management Team has participated in since my appointment as Executive Director," stated **Gary L. Brown**. "With the difficult economic times many of our communities are facing during the current financial climate, it felt good to give a little of our time to those in need."




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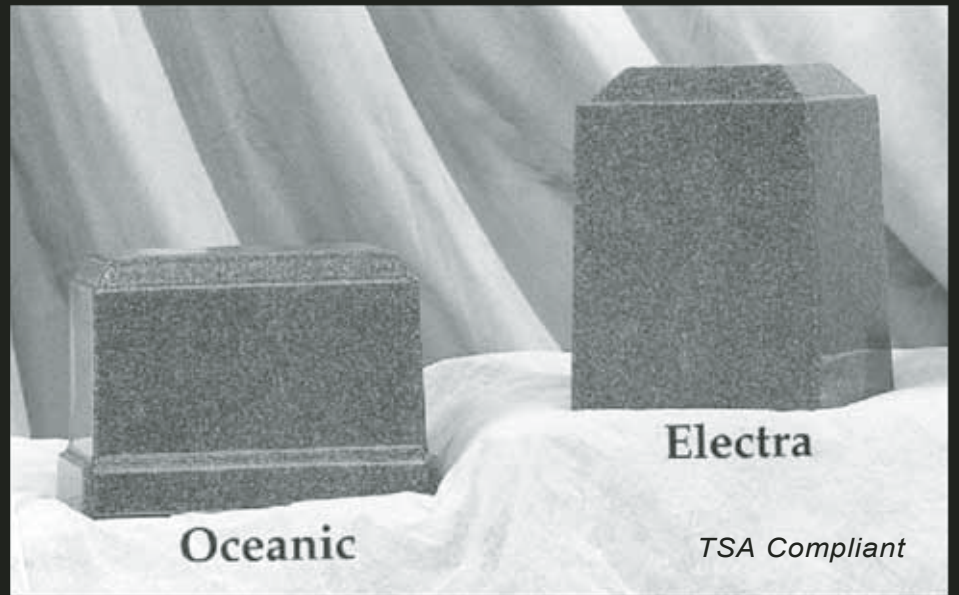
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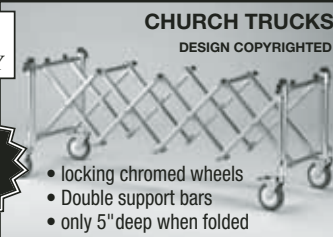
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**Innovation In The Funeral Industry: Should You Avoid Start-Up Companies?**

By Ryan Thogmartin

Are funeral industry start-ups beginning to scare you? Historically they have been few and far between but, as our industry continues to change and progress, more start-up companies are venturing into the funeral industry. Let's face it, funeral directors are not the most open-minded people when it comes to using a new product, technology, or company. What does it take for a company to survive in this industry? What are some key things you should look for in a start-up company before working with them?

Many companies coming into the funeral industry strive to offer that "wow" product the funeral director would like to provide to his client families. Many of these companies have a product that is technology-based (online or computer related), which is what the consumer wants but is hard for the funeral director to embrace.

Technology is not something that has been heavily tied to this industry. In the past, funeral directors have never had to deal with families requesting or even open to



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Ryan Thogmartin

purchasing these types of products. Those of us who know this industry understand the lag time for these products to catch on. Some funeral homes still do not have a website or email address. These new products may be made available in the funeral home, but getting the funeral director to embrace the product and sell it can be a very tough battle for the company, a battle that they must be prepared to embrace. If not, then a slow start and poor sales will quickly lead to their downfall.

I want to talk about two different funeral industry start-ups, one company provides a service to funeral directors, **Eagle's Wings Air**, the other is a start up that was providing an online product to the funeral director to sell to families, **EternalSpace**. As most of you may know, EternalSpace folded just 30 days after their official launch at the 2009 IC-CFA Convention. I want to look at both companies and compare what is making Eagle's Wings Air successful and what caused EternalSpace to fall so fast. I also will provide guidelines on what you should consider when thinking about working with a new industry company.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A33

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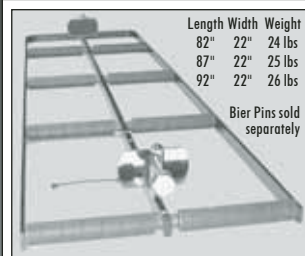
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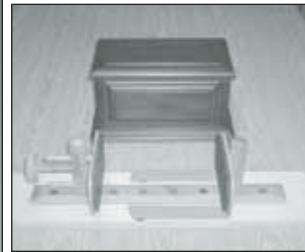
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**Watkins Brothers Memorial Chapel celebrates its 100 Year Anniversary**

*Continued from Front Page*

of the city's burgeoning black community, there was a black funeral parlor operating at 1729 Lydia. The business was founded in the spring of 1909 by brothers **Theron "T.B."** and **John "J.T." Watkins. Watkins Brothers Undertakers and Embalmers** was one among thirty or so funeral homes established in the black community during the early 1900s. They distinguished themselves from the beginning and while none of those other establishments are in business today, Watkins Brothers remains a thriving African-American owned firm because a smart entrepreneurial pair offered dignified funeral services primarily to people of color

and they have maintained that high quality service for the Greater Kansas City community for 100 years.

Unfortunately, John died early on and Theron desiring to honor his brother J.T., redoubled his efforts to develop a sound, solid, successful business. Through his hard work, dedication and business acumen, along with Theron's active participation in community and social causes and with the able assistance from his wife, **Olivia Hughes Watkins**, the business thrived.

Theron was very active in the entire greater Kansas City community. He was passionate about neighborhood development and he par-

ticipated in several business clubs and ventures. He was a Mason and was one of the founders and an ardent booster of the Monarchs, Kansas City's Negro League Baseball Team. During the Depression, T.B. would fill one of his funeral cars with coal and deliver it to needy families, this is just one example of his community concern and outreach. Another one of Theron's early commitments was to provide safe, sound and sanitary housing for his customers and all Kansas Citians. To reward his efforts, the Kansas City Housing Authority named one of its most important housing projects in T.B.'s honor. The two brothers built a deep and solid foundation for Watkins Brothers Memorial Chapel while developing a legacy of positive community and social involvement.

The next generation of the Watkins family ownership built a new funeral home at 18th Street and Benton Boulevard. Under the leadership of **Warren R. Watkins, Sr., Lavern Watkins Thomas** and **Bruce R. Watkins, Sr.** the memorial chapel continued to grow vigorously. In addition to being a nationally recognized restorative art expert and master embalmer, Bruce Sr. was extremely active

in organizing and empowering black political representation in Kansas City. He along with Leon Jordan, Fred Curls, Leonard Hughes, Sr., Howard Maupin, Dr. Charles Moore and Marion Foote co-founded the political club, Freedom, Inc. Bruce Sr. made great strides in this area and was elected as the first black city councilman and was the first black Jackson County Clerk. Even in the early years of the movement, he challenged Richard Berkley for the office of mayor of Kansas City, Missouri. Without question, government jobs and political strength for African-American was greatly enhanced because of Bruce Sr.'s endeavors. Bruce Watkins, Sr. died while still a young man but his wonderful legacy in regional politics as well as in the mortuary and funeral industry will be long-lasting. Warren R. Watkins, Sr., with full credentials, focused primarily on the business growth and was the backbone of the operations during the second generation. He encouraged Bruce Sr. in his political activities and provided wise counsel and advice. Lavern Watkins Thomas, also a licensed funeral director, was in charge of, the all important, admin-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A27**

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**Let's Chat**

By Kristan Dean

With September around the corner I got to thinking about the fun I had the first time I went with my godchild to choose school clothes. How I loved where her sense of fashion was going and how amazed I was by the care she took to get the absolute most from each dollar. Lauren's understanding of fashion, budget, and value is astounding.

It makes me wonder: in today's economy, how many children in your community need you to say, "I can help?" You will have clothes for back to school. The question is: where to get the clothes? Are there things in your closet and/or your family's closets that you know could help the children, teens, and young adults in your community? Do you know people whose closets are overrun that would love an excuse to organize and recycle some of their items by giving them to children in need? Fantastic! Now you just need to get the clothes together and choose where to donate them.

A quick call to your local shelter, food bank, department of children's services, religious organization, school, and/or police station and your clothes will find their way to a person in need.

Want to do more? Yay! Consider following the lead of the Arkansas retailer's "Give and You Shall Receive" Food Drive Campaign featured in *Gift Beat Magazine*. Let their willingness to reach out to over 2000 of their customers, to enlist the help of Whole Foods, to ask the community to step up and get involved, and to give each person who donated over four goods a discount at their shop, inspire you to create and organize your community's Back to School Clothing Drive.

Looking for suggestions on how to organize your clothing drive? A quick trip to Ask.com with the question: "How to organize a clothing drive" brings pages of answers including the step by step guides I found at howto.com and charityguide.com:

1. Decide if you want to do a multi day/week drive or if you want to host a clothing collection event.
2. Determine where you will donate the items and ask them what their donation wish/need list is.
3. Secure prizes—such as area business discount/gift certificates—that can help motivate clothing and shoe donations.
4. Ask the owners and managers of your local clothing shops if they will donate an outfit or two to the drive or event.
5. Enlist your local print and television media, making sure to mention your sponsors.
6. Have fun advertising your collection drive with signs and unique displays. Reach out and ask everyone in your community to get involved and make a difference.
7. Publicize a donation valuation guide for tax deduction purposes.

Thank you so much, for considering helping the children in your area dress for their success this coming school year. I look forward to your thoughts. Please give me a ring at 781-331-5308 or, if you prefer, email me at kristan@mooneytunco.com.

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

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

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

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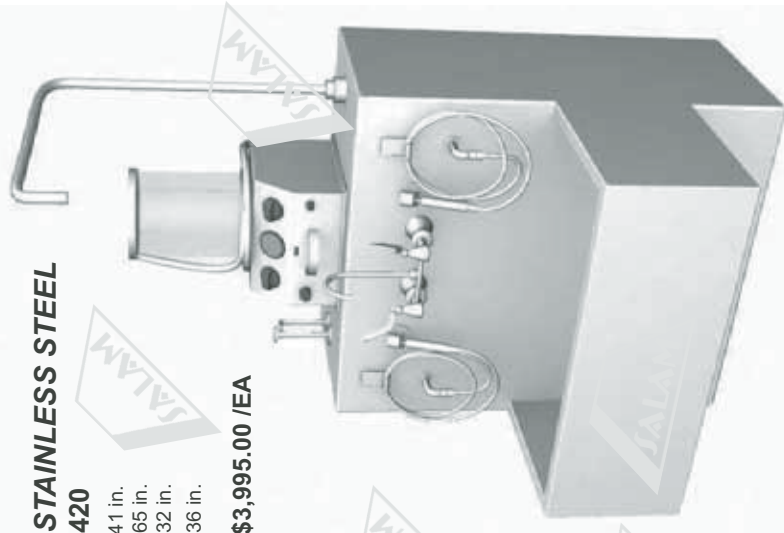


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**Dealing with the Bigger People**

By Keith Davis

Preparing a service using an oversize casket will challenge your skills and perseverance. The problems are many and are hidden. With some good planning and well-placed questions, you will be able to give the family a unique celebration of life with honor and dignity.

There are three types of Funeral Directors: 1. Those who have dealt with a large body; 2. Those who will deal with a large body; and 3. Those who wish they hadn't.

According to the Center for Disease Control, in 1990, ten states had a prevalence of obesity less than 10%; in 2007, thirty states had a prevalence of obesity equal to or greater than 25%. Obesity is having a very high amount of body fat in relation to lean body mass (BMI) of 30 or higher. OK! You know people are getting bigger, but what do you need to know?

**WHAT'S AN OVERSIZE CASSET?**

Caskets have never been categorized according to width and depth. Many funeral directors are familiar with the terms "one x, two x, three x," but what does that mean? It seems that there is no uniform definition of oversize.

Standard caskets are between 24 and 27 inches wide at the hardware panel, and 80 to 88 inches long. An oversize casket is anything larger than a standard casket. Most of the major casket manufacturers carry a line of oversize caskets.

Here are a few questions you may want to ask your distributor.

1. What sizes do you carry in stock and in what color?
2. How deep is the casket box, and how much belly clearance is there when I close the lid?
3. How long will it take to receive an oversize casket?
4. What is the maximum weight this casket is rated?
5. Is there a vault available?

The best thing to do at this point is to begin a file folder of resources for oversize caskets and vaults.

**THE PAIN – THE PAIN**

The easiest way to handle an obese funeral is to refer the family to your competitor, but that rarely works, especially if you picked up the body strapped to two hospital mattresses, (oh – the pain!) There is nothing standard about an obese body. Everything you do from here on out will be different. Preparation for the oversize funeral must include everything. Do not assume anything. Here is an outline of things you will want to consider before committing to the funeral service.

**A. Get an accurate body measurement.**

1. Measure the shoulders, elbows, hips, length
2. Measure body thickness. Try to do this on the embalming table or a flat, hard surface. Do not try to do this from the hospital bed.

**B. Moving the body. Here, you will need to think "outside the box" (bad pun). Here are a few suggestions.**

1. You may enlist the aid of the fire department.
2. Some funeral homes have used a small tractor with a hydraulic front end loader.
3. A standard engine hoist works well.
4. Check the load rating on your body lift. Many are only rated at a maximum of 400 pounds.
5. You may need body strap extensions. I recommend you use extra straps.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A35

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CREMATION SUPPLIES

**Cremation Issues and Answers**



By Ronald Salvatore  
**Matthews INTERNATIONAL**  
 CREMATION DIVISION

**After Start-up of the Cremation Equipment: Key Points to Remember (Part 2)**

Another common call to technicians is about cases that are not cremating properly. Often it's the cremation of a relatively small body in a minimal container that is taking longer to complete compared to "normal" sized cases. This is not unusual as very small cases have little fuel to add to the process. Remember that the time to complete a cremation is dependent upon many factors including the weight of the deceased, type of container, as well as the design of the cremator and the amount of stored heat in the refractory lining. There may also be some correlation to cremation time and cause of death and type of treatment.

In these instances, it may be necessary to reposition the body to allow air access to the remaining tissue. If your cremator has hearth air controls, it is important that it be on during this stage. You may also need to run the main burner longer to complete the cremation process. When repositioning the case or performing any other function, operators must always wear proper protective equipment.

Calls regarding the cremation of metal, fiberglass and plastic caskets are also common. Whether to accept metal caskets or not is your decision. Most crematories do not accept metal caskets, but if it is your policy to accept them, make certain your authorization forms fully explain that the casket is not consumed during the process and must be disposed of after the cremation. Moreover, as with any casket, some parts of may be removed prior to cremation.

The easiest way to cremate a metal casket in a top-fired cremator is to remove the lid and place it next to the casket. For front-fired units, it is necessary to cut a hole in the head of the casket to allow the flame of the main burner to reach the case. Again, this should be noted on the authorization form.

Fiberglass, plastic, or Styrofoam caskets are not suitable for cremation, and must be refused.

When in doubt on how to cremate a particular case, consult your equipment manufacturer. Part of the services they provide is guidance on how to cremate special cases in their equipment.

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

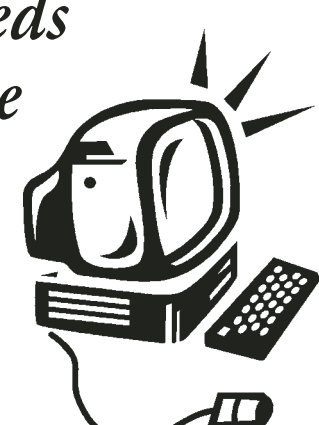
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Ron has been with the Matthews Cremation Division, consisting of Industrial Equipment & Engineering (IEE) and ALL Crematory (ALL) for 20 years.


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.

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## "They Shall be Comforted" is a Grief Recovery Easy-Reading book for the Broken Hearted

**HUBBARD, OH**— A new book written by a funeral home chaplain, "can be a powerful tool for funeral directors," says author, **Phil Roland**, MA PPC. Every family has what he calls one or two "problem griever."

For these special people and other family members Phil's book offers comfort, inspiration, encouragement and hope. Funeral directors who offer clients his book are saying to the broken hearted, "We care about you." Phil's book offers insights from his own grief journey. The first half of the book is a narrative about his calling as a professional comforter. The last half of the book is made up of more than forty grief stories related to him in more than twenty years of individual, family and group counseling.

Phil wrote his book knowing that initial grief clouds the reading comprehension abilities of those suffering loss. His material is easy to read for those with average reading skills. He wrote the initial manuscript eight years ago and noticed when he gave copies to grieving clients, they were encouraged. Every grieving person has

a grief story. They begin to verbalize their unique and individual stories soon after their loss. Grievers begin telling interested listeners at their calling hours and/or viewing services of their loved ones. Some of their stories are captivating. Some will break your heart, but all will encourage the broken hearted on their journey of healing.

In 1991 **Dennis Robb**, Director and Owner of **Kelley-Robb Funeral Home** in Hubbard, OH, invited Phil to become a staff member applying interdenominational Pastoral Counseling to the after care of the funeral home. For more than eighteen years Phil has offered emotional and spiritual care and support to the funeral home's clients. Dennis offers this contemporary and vital service to all community and regional griever who ask for it.

Order this book online at <http://www.lulu.com/content/5766180>. Send it to a grieving friend or family member. Locally, contact author Phil Roland at [philrol7@verizon.net](mailto:philrol7@verizon.net). Or, contact Dennis Robb at Kelley-Robb Funeral Home at [KELLEYROBBFH@aol.com](mailto:KELLEYROBBFH@aol.com).

## Stewart Enterprises refinances Senior Secured Credit Facility

**NEW ORLEANS, LA**— **Stewart Enterprises, Inc.** (Nasdaq:STEI) announced that it has refinanced its existing credit facility with a new \$95.0 million senior secured three-year revolving credit facility. Prior to the transaction, the Company's credit facility was undrawn and scheduled to mature in November 2009. The credit facility also includes an increase option whereby the Company can request an increase in commitments of up to \$30.0 million.

**Thomas Crawford**, President and Chief Executive Officer commented, "We are pleased with the new credit facility and with the stronger than anticipated response from lenders. With the flexible terms and conditions and borrowing availability in this new agreement, combined with \$71.8 million cash on hand as of our most recent quar-

ter ended April 30, 2009, we believe we are well positioned to execute our long-term strategic objectives."

Additional information regarding the refinancing is contained in the Company's Form 8-K dated June 2, 2009, which was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

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 219 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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## Carriage Services updates Company & Investment Profile

HOUSTON, TX— Carriage Services, Inc. (NYSE: CSV) has announced that it has updated its "Company & Investment Profile", which can be found on Carriage's website at <http://www.carriageservices.com>.

Carriage's updated Company & Investment Profile includes updated discussions of Carriage's business, operating and growth strategies, historical financial information, financial outlook and more.

The Company & Investment Profile is being published and updated by Carriage in continuation of its stated goal to provide more disclosure and transparency to the investment community regarding

Carriage's operations, goals, industry dynamics and conditions. It is Carriage's intent to continue to be proactive in communicating with investors. Investors and interested parties are encouraged to visit the website, <http://www.carriageservices.com> to read or download the Company and Investment Profile.

Carriage Services is a leading provider of death care services and products. Carriage operates 134 funeral homes in 25 states and 32 cemeteries in 11 states. A copy of the company's Form 10-K, and other Carriage Services information and news releases, are available at <http://www.carriageservices.com>.

## Stewart declares Quarterly Dividend

JEFFERSON, LA— Stewart Enterprises, Inc. (Nasdaq:STEL) reported that its Board of Directors has declared a quarterly cash dividend of \$0.025 per share. The dividend was payable on July 29, 2009 to holders of record of Class A and Class B Common Stock as of the close of business on July 15, 2009.

Founded in 1910, Stewart Enterprises, Inc. is the second largest provider of products and services in the death care industry in the United States, currently owning and operating 219 funeral homes and 140 cemeteries. 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.

## Veterans & Family Memorial Care Providers sponsor "The Wall"

SANIBEL, FL— Veterans & Family Memorial Care is proud to announce that it is partnering with American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) to bring "The Wall" exhibit to the communities of VFMC Providers wishing to sponsor the event.

AVTT travels the USA each year participating in sponsored events with a mission to honor, respect and remember those who have served as well as those who are serving. Our veterans represent freedom and its cost. They are our national heroes and warriors. The cost of freedom is not purchased in one lump sum, it is paid in installments by veterans. We must always separate the War from the Warrior and be never failing in our support for our men and women of the Armed Forces. AVTT pays tribute with several exhibits and memorials.

The Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall is an 80% size replica visual presentation standing over 8 feet tall @ apex, and over 370 feet long. The Cost of Freedom displays are 9 large memorials represented in gold dog tags under glass to remember and honor all who have died in service since Vietnam, including 9/11. A large art display: Vietnam Remembered and a Walk of Heroes display also accompanies AVTT.

"Making AVTT available to our nearly 700 Exclusive VFMC Providers in 44 states enhances our portfolio of community outreach and public relations programs," said Mark Davis, President and CEO of Valmark Memorial Group, the parent company of Veterans & Family Memorial Care.

Exclusive VFMC Providers participate in numerous activities geared to stimulate activity and increase exposure, including: Cell Phones for Soldiers, Old Glory Collection Centers and the VFMC Christmas Stockings for Soldiers Initiative. "The idea is to get the community walking through the front doors of our Providers for reasons other than attending a funeral service or visitation" said Mark Davis.

VFMC is a nationwide network of family owned funeral homes that are growing their market share and increasing at-need call volume by paying tribute to, and honoring our veterans. "Veterans reach out to companies that reach out to them" said Mark Davis. "This is true of all industries, not specifically the funeral industry." To find out more about becoming the Exclusive Certified VFMC Provider for your County, visit: [www.VeteransFuneralHomes.com](http://www.VeteransFuneralHomes.com) or call toll free (866) 770-6791.



## Prelude to the Science of Temporary Preservation (Part 48)

By John A. Chew

Containment methodology for temporary preservation is based on the creation of synthesis (the union of elements). The changing of the PH balance produces alterations in catalytic actions. The reactions affected by the digestive enzymes are chiefly autolytic decompositions of a hydrolytic nature which must be neutralized.

Each hydrolytic enzyme is named in accordance to the substance upon which it acts with the addition of the suffix -ase. Enzymes are specific in their action and will only act upon a certain group of closely related chemical substances. Each enzyme has an optimum temperature and PH at which it acts with greatest efficiency. Each is influenced by the reaction of the medium of the body chemical composition on which it acts.

Control of temperature and retention of a non-reactive moisture base controls the breakdown of the tissue allowing a controlled time frame for visitation without a negative disruption environment.

Continuous injection and drainage has been the most commonly used method of body preparation advocated for use in funeral homes because it was fast and provided shell preservation. Concurrent injection and drainage has also been the least effective and scientifically correct. Practitioners find the method to be fast and do not realize its influence on the success of the overall

treatment and it should be regarded a disadvantage which leads to many embalming complications.

During the injection as much as fifty to sixty percent of the formulated formalin based solutions are lost to drainage. It is questionable as to its effect on the environment. There are instances where concurrent injection is necessary to control edema or neutralize ammonia while reducing liquid content from tissue at the cellular level.

A triple base non-reactive moisture conditioner may be required to maintain a moisture balance during final injections. This provides a natural base for external cosmetic application. Such conditioners should be added during final injection or injections.

Modern embalming should be based on water (solvent) controlled pre-injection of the vascular network to retain a moisture balance and a PH adjustment to living tissue (7.4 slightly alkaline). This allows for distribution and saturation at the arteriovenous level. The key to success is internal pressure. The average 100 pound body can retain seven gallons of formulated embalming solution

Prelude Forty-Nine will deal with some twenty-first century concerns of the art and science of embalming

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

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## Hathaway & Clark Funeral Home purchases Hearses and Limousine



LOUISVILLE, KY— Hathaway & Clark Funeral Home of Louisville, accepts delivery of a new Federal Coach, Lincoln Hearse, and Lincoln Eaton Six Door Limousine. The fleet was delivered by **John Muster** of **Muster Coaches**, Calhoun, KY.

## How Technology Is Changing the Face of Grief

*Continued from Page A10*

loved ones. People are turning to online memorial websites to build and share memories of the deceased. These websites range from offering an easy way to post an online tribute to highly customizable websites with stories, poems, photos, videos and more. Unlike traditional, static online obituaries, the collection of stories and pictures of the deceased in the online memorial continues to grow, becoming a living memory and reflection that is easily shared with future generations. These rich online memorials also enable friends and family to grieve and take baby steps to recover and heal from their loss. Funeral homes are partnering with such online memorial companies to offer their clients the option to create a rich memorial as a complementary, branded service. This provides a very convenient all-inclusive package for families who do not have the time or are not emotionally ready to take on such a project, but want to build an online memorial.

Since online memorials can be accessed from a funeral home's website, offering such services through a partnership with an online memorial company drives more traffic to their website and improves visibility within the community. Funeral homes do not need to invest in developing such capabilities into their websites themselves. In addition, by partnering with online memorial companies, the funeral homes get a great opportunity to provide another level of comfort to grieving families and build a stronger relationship with their customers.

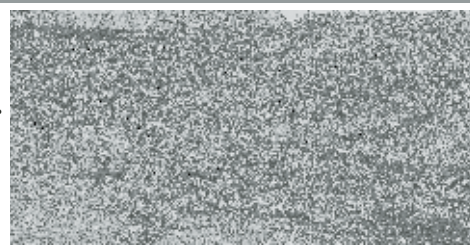
The Internet has changed the way we grieve forever. People are actively embracing this alchemy of digital technology, mourning and remembrance. When someone loses a loved one, they can share, grieve and honor the person they lost, no matter where they are. As families move across the state or country or even the globe, the Internet enables them to still be a

part of the grieving and mourning community. Funeral homes that take advantage of the Internet to provide such services will build better relationships with their customer families and improve their competitive advantage.

Louise Zweben is the CEO of SympathyTree, an online memorial site [www.sympathytree.com](http://www.sympathytree.com). Louise first had the idea for SympathyTree.com from her personal experiences in dealing with the death of a close family friend.

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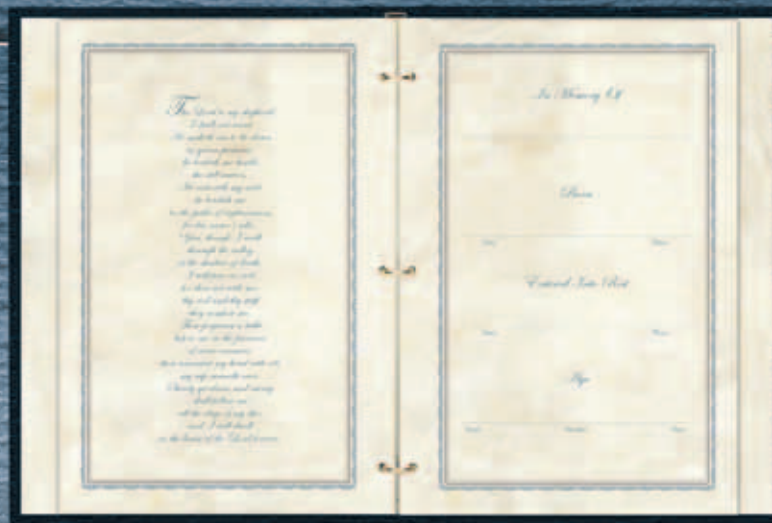
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— David Luginbuel, Luginbuel Funeral Home

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## Henri Leblond retires from Dyer-Lake Funeral Home

ATTLEBORO FALLS, MA— **Henri Leblond** of Pawtucket, RI has recently retired from the **Dyer-Lake Funeral Home**, in the Attleboro Falls section of North Attleboro, following almost three years of loyal and dedicated service.

Mr. Leblond started his employment with Dyer-Lake in October 2006 as the firm's courier being responsible for obtaining documentation and filing paperwork with local municipalities and organizations.

Previously, Mr. Leblond was employed as a courier for **Salter, McGowan, Sylvia and Leonard** in Providence for six years. His first retirement was from education having been employed as a school teacher for the City of East Providence at the Riverside Junior High School from 1958 until 1996.

An active member of the LeFoyer Club in Pawtucket, he served as the editor of the monthly newsletter and treasurer of the organization's educational loan trust from 1969 – 2006.



Henri E. Leblond

According to director, Timothy R. Nay, "Henri will be sorely missed by all

of his friends at the funeral home and even more importantly by the individuals at the offices he frequented. We are glad Henri has finally taken the time to enjoy life, spend cherished moments with his family and pursue his lifelong dream of publishing a book."

Leblond thanked his colleagues for the opportunities provided to him and said the "staff is the finest with whom he has ever worked and the work was his life's most enjoyable and leaves heavy hearted with mixed emotions."

## St. Louis Cremation purchases Lincoln Coach and Six Door Limousine



ST. LOUIS, MO— **Oliver King** of **St. Louis Cremation**, St. Louis, MO, takes delivery and receives the keys to his Lincoln Coach and matching Six Door Limousine from **Joe Molina** or **Royal Coachworks, Inc.**, St. Louis.

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Dan Isard



Curt Rostad



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# Watkins Brothers Memorial Chapel celebrates its 100 Year Anniversary

*Continued from Page A20*

istrative and office management duties. She and her brothers made a wonderful team, and with hard work and cooperation the business prospered. In 1967, the firm built a modern state of the art chapel on a five acre parcel located at 4000 Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd. where they currently provide clients and the community with contemporary facilities and first-rate services.

"I learned the soul of the business and the importance of giving back to the community by watching my father and uncle," says **Warren R. Watkins, Jr.**, a third generation licensed funeral director and embalmer. "Their examples of commitment and caring for clients and the community and their fairness and concern regarding employees and vendors spoke louder than any words to me" Warren continued. Community service and empowerment are active missions of WBMC, and one of the secrets of its longevity. "I am committed to carry on the family heritage and tradition of dignity, quality and respect for clients and community" said **Marion Watkins**, licensed funeral director and third generation owner along with her brother Warren.

Both Marion and Warren are involved in many community, civic, and professional boards, associations and organizations. Marion's emphasis has been Missouri state professional boards, the Mutual Musicians Foundation, the 18th & Vine streets restoration, the Urban League and the NLB Museum. Being concerned with positive youth development, she is involved in Boy's & Girls' Club activities and the inter-city aquatic team and swim clubs. Warren Jr. is involved in housing, community and economic development opportunities and African-American historic preservation. Several years ago **Bruce R. Watkins, Jr.** decided to relinquish his interest in the family business to follow in this father's footsteps, as a political consultant and a member of Freedom Inc. He provides political assistance to several political firms both locally and regionally.

The fourth and fifth generations of Watkins family members are working in the firm, and they are learning the various aspects of the business, getting credentials and licenses and being groomed to assume management and ownership status. Each youngster understands the importance of heavy participation in community, civic, business and economic development activities throughout their market area.

The Watkins Brothers Philosophy - "to serve humanity, persons of all faiths, under all circumstances, with dignity, respect and understanding,

with attention to the needs and desires of each family, is the goal of our business and our family. WBMC where the finest cost no more!"

To celebrate its Centennial Anniversary, Watkins Brothers Memorial Chapel is planning a series of empowering, uplifting and encouraging events throughout the year. The first event was a Rededication Ceremony with remarks by Dr. Julius Garvey, son of the Honorable Marcus M. Garvey, on June 13th held at the Bruce R. Watkins Culture Center located at 3700 Blue Parkway. Immediately following the Rededication, a reception was held. Many Kansas Citians who knew the founders Theron & John Watkins personally were in attendance as well as local persons involved in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, the organization founded by Marcus Garvey in 1914.

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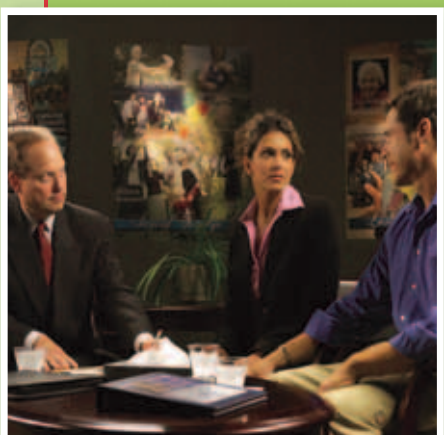
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## The Family Care Group takes delivery of Lincoln Livery Fleet at Ohio FDA Convention

ASHTABULA, OH— The Family Care Group of Ashtabula took delivery at the *Ohio Funeral Directors Association* Convention of their Lincoln livery fleet built by Federal Coach and delivered by **Muster Coaches** of Calhoun, KY. This group operates a funeral livery serving the northeast Ohio area. Family Care Group consists of **Marcy Funeral Home**, Conneaut, OH, **Fleming & Billman Funeral Directors**, Ashtabula, Geneva, and Jefferson, OH, **Baumgardner Funeral Home**, Kinsman and Andover, OH and **Raisian Funeral Home**, Conneaut, OH.



Family Care Group takes delivery from Muster Coaches at the OFDA Convention. (L to R) Robert Billman, Joan Billman, John Muster, Sanford Baumgardner, and Thomas Fleming.

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## 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](http://www.100Blackwomenoffuneralservice.com) or email [Hundredbwfs@aol.com](mailto:Hundredbwfs@aol.com).



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

### Belverleeann D. Madison

Van Hoose and Steele Funeral Home & SDJ Vault and Monument Company, Tuscaloosa, AL

You can count a few individuals who are natural-born mentors in the funeral industry. Something in their personal DNA has made them comfortable and effective advisors. They easily embrace others in this age-old funeral profession where they are totally committed. **Belverleeann D. Madison** possesses this special capacity and others feel so comfortable around her and easily feed off her. Her knowledge, expertise in

**She's bold, graceful, caring and upfront and often shatters a few glass doors.**

many areas, her hands on skills, and her love for all aspects of funeral service make you want to communicate with her. She

resonates love and concern in every situation regardless of what is going on in her life. She is what funeral service is all about—with a little southern hospitality blended in the middle for spice and excitement.

Belverleeann D. Madison is the Operational Manager for the **VanHoose and Steele Funeral Home** located in Tuscaloosa, AL. She has been affiliated with them since 1981. Belverleeann also is the owner/founder of **SDJ Vault and Monument Company** in the same town where it serves as an extension of finalizing the funeral plans of the clients she serves. She works with many firms in the Tuscaloosa area and loves the network she has developed over the years through the vault and monument services she provides.



Beverly Ann Madison

I was wondering why she looked so good in her red dress as a 2008 Woman of Distinction and then I recalled she was a 1978 graduate of the University of Alabama: home of the Crimson Tide. I've seen them in our Gator face but it's a special rivalry that warms our soul.

Belverleeann is a role model and truly believes that if others look up to you and put their trust in you, you must give them something back. Belverleeann says often, "It's important to lend support and good advice and open doors from time to time for others as needed. I like the challenge of making a difference in a young person's life. It's not often they trust an adult and when they do, you've got to grab that opportunity and make the best of it."

Belverleeann likes to challenge friends, co-workers and funeral service colleagues to make contributions to the future of others. She likes to see others involved and challenged to give back their special gifts. She uses her life experiences, superior knowledge and education, and funeral service experience to help improve the lives of those she comes in contact with. Just ask her four loving and devoted kids, LeRoy, Stephanie, Dominique and Jeremy and they will agree 100%. She has kept them on an even path and most of their friends also. The word "no" is not in her vocabulary and she is always ready, willing and happy to help others.

If I had to sum up this very special sister of funeral service as I see her, it goes like this:

CONTINUED ON PAGE A30

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# John Watson is the 2008 Muster Coaches Run for the Roses Winner



John Muster (Center) welcomes John Watson and his son, Matt Watson to the 135th Running of the Kentucky Derby.

LOUISVILLE, KY— John Muster with Muster Coaches of Calhoun, KY welcomes John Watson and his son, Matt Watson to the 135th Running of the Kentucky Derby on May 2, 2009 at historic Churchill Downs in Louisville. The Kentucky Derby is held on the first Saturday of May and is "The Most Watched Two Minutes in Sports."

John Watson, with Watson Mortuary Services of Jersey City, NJ was the winner of Muster Coaches Annual Run for the Roses contest at the 2008 National Funeral Directors Convention. John and Matt Watson cheered on long shot winner, Mine That Bird as the 135th Winner of the Kentucky Derby, stayed at the Downtown Louisville Hyatt Regency

and enjoyed a Derby dinner at Captains Quarters on the Ohio River in Louisville.

Muster Coaches annual drawing gives each funeral home, livery service or mortuary service one free entry into the Run for the Roses contest for each new vehicle purchased from Musters during the year. The yearly winner receives two reserved seat tickets

to the Kentucky Derby and lodging in Louisville for the Derby. The annual drawing is held on the convention floor on the final day of the National Funeral Directors Convention.

Please feel free to contact Muster Coaches for more information on our annual Run for the Roses Contest at 800 274-3619. We hope to see you at the 2010 Kentucky Derby.

## C.D. White and Son Funeral Home purchases Hearses and Limousine



COLUMBUS, OH— Bennie White, manager of C.D. White and Son Funeral Home, Columbus, accepts delivery of a new Federal Coach Cadillac Renaissance Hearse, and Cadillac Ambassador Six Door Limousine. The fleet was delivered by John Muster of Muster Coaches, Calhoun, KY.



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## David Kelly completes Funeral Service Program with Honors



David Kelly, CFSP

DECATUR, GA— David Kelly, CFSP has successfully completed the academic requirements for *Stratford Career Institute's* funeral service education program with highest honors. The licensed funeral director and embalmer graduated May 29, 2009 with a grade average of 94 percent.

Kelly has an associate of science degree in funeral service and holds the designation of funeral service technician from *National Academy of Mortuary Science*. He is also a mortuary disaster coordinator for the state of Georgia. He is a member of *The Funeral Ethics Association, British Institute of Embalmers, American Society of Embalmers, The Academy of Graduate Embalmers of Georgia, and Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity.*

## Serenity Funerals and Crematory sparks Redevelopment of E. Admiral Place in Tulsa

*Continued from Page A12*

Mr. Wright's investment in midtown is estimated at over \$1.3 million and the Serenity complex of buildings exceeds 20,000 square feet. The buildings all have a distinctive copper roof. The renovations are a welcome sight to an aging neighborhood.

Serenity offers pre-planning services which are touted as giving individuals more control over their specific funeral plans and wishes. "Pre-planning is the wise thing to do, since people can lock in future services at today's prices," states Mr. Wright. Serenity offers a variety of funeral packages and services tailored to every budget. Inquiries about funeral arrangements ranging from direct cremation to full service chapel are al-

ways handled in an atmosphere of empathy and decorum.

"No high pressure sales of products or services will ever happen at Serenity Funerals and Crematory. This is my own business," said Mr. Wright, "and I conduct business the way I like to be treated, in a trusting and caring atmosphere."

The staff which complements Mr. Wright is committed to serving the public capably at a most difficult time. "We offer tours of our facility at any time. You can call 918-292-8411 and arrange a time for a tour," states office manager **Tammy**. We want the public to see how beautiful our chapel and reception hall are. Our prices are as attractive as our facilities."

## Women of Distinction: Belverleeann D. Madison

*Continued from Page A28*

- She sets high standards
- She invests time and effort
- She can orchestrate any event
- She's career-orientated and loves the funeral profession
- She sets a standard for others to follow
- She's comfortable with people from all walks of life
- She brings out the best in you
- She take responsibilities seriously and finishes everything before her
- She is highly successful as a task master
- She's a wonderful colleague and sister of the profession

Belverleeann is involved all around the state of Alabama; in the Fifth District of the NFDMA, as well as the National Association. The 100 BWFS recognized her leadership through the 2008 Trailblazer Award. Through these organizations, she has built a strong network of women who are becoming some of the 21st century leaders in funeral service hailing from the state of Alabama. We are proud to call Belverleeann our sister in funeral service and we applaud all she is doing around the great state of Alabama. She represents the state well.

### Correction

**Sulee Stinson**, the 1935 co-founder of **Stinson Funeral Home**, Detroit, Michigan, was the first African American woman to serve on the Michigan Funeral Board. The July 2009 article "Women of Distinction: June R. Williams" erroneously stated that this distinction belonged to June Williams.

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## Holy Cross Cemetery Manager Recognized for Service



Lee Garrett

AVONDALE, AZ—Lee Garrett, Manager, Holy Cross Cemetery, Avondale, AZ, was recently awarded the Simon Cyrene Award for service provided to low income families in need of burial services by Catholic Charities Phoenix Regional Board. The award specifically

recognized Lee Garrett for his leadership in providing services to immigrating families who had no financial resources as part of the Catholic Charities' Refugee Resettlement Program.

In accepting the award, Garrett thanked Catholic Charities for the recognition but emphasized the works of all the Catholic Cemeteries that provide assistance to those in need on a regular basis. Garrett went on to state, "I am blessed to have a talented and caring group of counselors who approach their job as a ministry to the Church and service to our families. Without their support, we would not be able to provide this important ministry responsibility."

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## Veterans Funeral Care welcomes New Providers

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As members of Veterans Funeral Care, these funeral homes will offer value packaged cremation and burial services to veterans and their spouses.

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

To find out how you can become an exclusive Veterans Funeral Care licensee, contact Russ Cable at 1-800-467-7850 or visit [www.VeteransFuneralCare.com](http://www.VeteransFuneralCare.com)

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## Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre purchases new Eagle Fleet including Matched Eagle Echelons



MADISON, IN— Butler Coach Company of Carbon, IN, would like to thank the **Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre** of Madison for their purchase of this new Eagle Fleet, consisting of a Chrysler Town & Country Eagle Conversion, a Cadillac Eagle Echelon-L limousine and a Cadillac Eagle Echelon Funeral Coach, as well as their new Cadillac DTS sedan. Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre has taken delivery of the first set of matched Eagle Echelons in the state of Indiana. Pictured with their new fleet from left to right are **Morgan Nay, Eric Simpson and Rodney Nay**, all of Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre. **George Morgan** was unavailable for this photo.

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## Art and Janice Pagel deliver a Horse Drawn Hearse to Savannah, Georgia



SAUKVILLE, WI— Last summer, in the hottest month of August, **Art and Janice Pagel** made a trip to Savannah, Georgia to deliver a new, white horse drawn hearse to **Larry Nicola**, who is affiliated with a number of cemeteries in Savannah. The hearse was very well received by all including the mayor and television stations there to cover the event.



The hearse was harnessed to two beautiful white horses and driven through the cemetery for some gorgeous photos. Mr. Nicola has used the hearse for a number of funerals since then.

"We enjoyed visiting Savannah – even though it was hot!" said Art Pagel. "It is a beautiful city, with Spanish moss on the trees, elegant old homes, with great southern hospitality extended to us northerners!"

Anyone wishing to join the large number of funeral directors who have a horse drawn hearse to use for elegant funerals, contact Art Pagel for information on antique hearses and new reproductions. Write or call: 5287 Highway Y, Saukville, WI 53080, phone 262-675-6471 or 262-339-9300.

(L to R) Larry Nicola takes delivery from Art Pagel

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John Hudson - Marketing Director

## Innovation In The Funeral Industry: Should You Avoid Start-Up Companies?

### Start-up #1: Eagle's Wings Air

Six years ago, Frank Kaiser was tasked with forming a human remains airline-based transportation program much like Delta Airline's "Delta Cares" or American Airline's "Jim Wilson Desk." Through this experience Frank was able to become intimately familiar with the needs of funeral homes and shipping services across the country (from the airlines perspective). It was also through this experience that Frank began to build a relationship with one of his (now) clients, Dave McComb, co-owner of D.O. McComb & Sons, Fort Wayne, IN.

This client-customer interaction resulted in a business and personal relationship that exists today. Both Frank and Dave saw a desperate need and seized the opportunity to introduce innovation to the shipping segment and forever change the way funeral directors and the death care community interact with the airline industry.

Frank and Dave worked diligently on the business planning process for fourteen months before ever handling their first client transaction. Both Frank's and Dave's separate areas of expertise and industry contacts played vital roles in the development of the EWA service model.

Operational in March 2008, EWA introduced its complimentary service model in a strategic and targeted fashion. Leveraging Dave's death care industry contacts across the country, Frank and Dave convinced leaders of independent funeral homes to join the launch and help refine the service model. Regional shipping services also slowly began to support the launch, especially Florida Mortuary Services, a leader in Florida shipping since 1967, who was an early adopter and innovator in this portion of the business.

The 2008 NFDA Convention was EWA's official launch after seven months of operational experience. At the convention EWA also announced a strategic partnership with Wilbert Funeral Service, the foremost leader in burial vaults. The response from funeral directors was phenomenal and, since their launch, EWA has expanded their operation and staff to meet the needs of their clients. EWA now embraces a rapidly expanding nationwide customer base of funeral homes and shipping services.

As EWA continues to grow and evolve they have introduced a new service model within the shipping segment and have a number of strategic initiatives underway. Frank Kaiser has been traveling the country forming genuine

personal relationships that serve as the foundation for a successful and growing business.

### Start-up #2: EternalSpace

Another start-up company made its debut at the 2008 NFDA Convention - EternalSpace, the most innovative online memorial solution our industry has experienced to date. With panoramic scrolling landscapes and graphics that seemed as though they were plucked directly from a Hollywood production set, ES created a tremendous amount of buzz... enough buzz that they even won best of show. Their booth alone was unbelievable: flat screen TV's, white carpet, retro couches, and even a gentleman pouring champagne to attendees during the opening reception. It was easy to see that money was flowing into this company from somewhere. Problem?

ES didn't have a working product when they started in 2008, just a breath-taking demo that got everyone talking and anticipating what would come next. What came next was six months of creating and refining a (what appeared to be high-dollar) online memorial site that encompassed videos, pictures,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A40**

Continued from Page A18

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## Dealing with the Bigger People

*Continued from Page A22*

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**C. Hearse:**

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2. Here are a few suggestions for alternative vehicles:

- a. Dodge Villager van: up to 40" wide
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**D. Doorways, Hallways, and Elevators:**

1. One of the biggest problems I hear about is doorways. Check the width of all doors that will be used. You may need to remove the door, or finally get around to installing those new double doors you've been wanting.

2. Check the hallway for enough room to turn the casket 90 degrees. Remember, the casket actually becomes longer when you turn to go around a corner or through a doorway. You may need to move that beautiful antique grandfather clock that contains the ashes of the original owner. Just make sure you can get past all the furniture.

3. Service elevators were not designed for oversize caskets. You may be able to get the casket into the elevator, but will it clear the floor opening as it descends into the abyss. The best rule-of-thumb is to make sure the casket is not wider than the elevator floor.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A39**

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## A Journey With Wings offers scattering on Catalina Island

FULLERTON, CA— A Journey With Wings has announced a new partnership with the Catalina Island Conservancy to offer scattering of cremated remains over the beautiful Island of Catalina.

Until now, the only way you could be laid to rest on Catalina was to be a "local," meaning born, raised or currently living on the island. Now, thanks to the partnership between the Catalina Island Conservancy and A Journey with Wings, cremated remains can be scattered over the island.

A Journey With Wings is a business specializing in scattering cremated remains by airplane. It is the only company of its kind that scatters on Catalina Island. Additionally it releases cremated remains over some of the most beautiful places such as State Parks, National Parks, and Conservancies.

A Journey With Wings is based at the Fullerton Municipal Airport. The business is owned by Jamie Tanabe, who along with Robert, her co-pilot and father, has scattered

the cremated remains of more than 600 people and pets. For Jamie it is about freedom, "Freedom to choose, freedom to fly, and freedom from the earth," she said. "We are releasing them instead of confining them to a plot or an urn."

Many different services are offered. The scattering can be viewed from the ground or from the air. Families wishing to release the cremated remains themselves can ride along in the specially equipped Piper Aztec and pull the lever that sends their loved one on their final journey.

Catalina Island is the most accessible of the Channel Island chain. It hosts more than one million guests per year. A little more than 3,500 people call this island home. It is also home to unique wildlife like the Catalina Island Fox, a species only found on this island and no place else in the world. The island is roughly 75 square miles. The Catalina Island Conservancy owns 88% of these lands.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A38

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# Phaneuf Funeral Homes and Crematorium launches Virtual Tour of the Firm

MANCHESTER, NH— Arthur O. “Buddy” Phaneuf, President of Phaneuf Funeral Homes and Crematorium, is pleased to announce a new online service for individuals and families who may have a need to visit the funeral home. Thanks to state of the art technology,

virtual tour capability is now available online at phaneuf.net.

This easy to use service guides visitors through the funeral home with the help of an interactive map component. With the click of an arrow, visitors can take themselves on a self-guided tour of

Phaneuf’s entrance and lobby area, two chapels, display rooms, viewing areas and even the crematory. The tour is also available in AutoDrive allowing visitors to sit back and watch the tour take place before their eyes.

“Visiting a funeral home for the first time can be intimidating for some. Be it those who are looking to pre-plan or those who are at a time of immediate need, we invite customers to visit our website to get a feel for our environment,” said Buddy Phaneuf.

One of New Hampshire’s oldest family-owned and operated funeral homes, Phaneuf takes substantial pride in the comfort of its customers and patrons. “Our number one priority is to put our customers and their guests at ease. We are pleased to offer an advance look inside our facility to customers and out of town guests who are not otherwise familiar with our interior layout,” Phaneuf added.

The self-guided tour has 360-degree capability and allows the visitor to see where areas of interest to them are lo-

cated in relation to the front entrance. Access to the virtual tour can be gained from the homepage and from the Locations section of the site.

Phaneuf.net boasts many other convenient features such as a human host, Buddy Phaneuf himself, offering a greeting and quick overview of the website’s other useful tools and information, as well as a blog, event information, newsletter/e-newsletter sign up, RSS feed and more.

Phaneuf Funeral Homes and Crematorium have been serving the public since 1906 and is one of the oldest continuously family-owned funeral homes in New Hampshire. The Funeral Home is the largest funeral and cremation service provider in the state, with three full-service funeral homes, two crematories, three non-denominational chapels, and a cremation society. Named NH Magazine’s Best of NH Friendliest Funeral Home in 2008, the firm recently added a new location in Boscawen. For more information, visit [www.phaneuf.net](http://www.phaneuf.net) or call 625-5777.

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A public service message from the U.S. General Services Administration.

## A Journey With Wings offers scattering on Catalina Island

*Continued from Page A36*

When a loved one is scattered on the island, the family will receive a one-year membership (Friend’s Level) to the Catalina Island Conservancy in the name of the deceased. The Catalina Island Conservancy stewards the island’s wild lands through a balance of conservation, education, and recreation. Rest assured that the island’s beautiful interior will be preserved and protected for generations to come. As a member at the Friend’s Level, the family will receive a free subscription to the *Conservancy Times*, opportunities to participate on special Island Conservation projects, an annual “Freewheeler” Bike Pass and 50% off Conservancy campground fees.

For photos and more information about A Journey With Wings please visit: [www.aJourneyWithWings.com](http://www.aJourneyWithWings.com) or call (800) 407-6401.

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## Dealing with the Bigger People

Continued from Page A35

### E. Placing the body into the casket.

Ok, I've made it to the prep room; I even have the casket in the room, now, how do I get this 800 pound man/woman into the casket?

1. Using a Standard Body Lift:
  - a. Check the load rating of your body lift with the boom fully extended. (You will need the extra length.)
  - b. Wrap the hydraulic cylinder with padding to prevent scratching the front of the casket. The typical body lift boom is not long enough to reach to the center of many oversize caskets. When attempting to center the body, the hydraulic cylinder will make contact with the front side of the casket and cause damage.
  - c. Use extra straps on your body lift if possible. This will help prevent fluid leakage. The extra straps will help distribute the weight more evenly, and is much safer. Oversize bodies tend to be top heavy, so you may need to do a couple of trial lifts and adjust the strap placement accordingly. This is the most dangerous part of the process, so be careful and have plenty of help.
2. Using a Ceiling Hoist: A ceiling hoist makes this job much easier.
  - a. Check the load rating of your body hoist. Many of them are rated at 2000 pounds.
  - b. Use extra straps
  - c. Make sure the lifting cables do not make contact with the open lids. This can be dangerous, and cause damage and injury.
3. Using an Engine Hoist: If you do not have a ceiling hoist, I recommend renting an engine hoist. They work great! Just use it the same way you would use your standard body lift.
  - a. Attach the body lift bar to the engine hoist.
  - b. Use extra straps if possible.
  - c. Make sure the base legs of the engine hoist will roll under your prep table and up to the cart or church truck without obstruction.
  - d. Watch that the body bar does not contact with the open lids. This can easily happen.
4. The Four Sheet Method: When all else fails, you get as many people from the fire department as possible and lift the body with about four bed sheets. This method will only work if you can safely remove the lids from the casket.

### F. Carts and Biers:

1. Most casket carts (or church trucks) are of the "accordion" type. They have four swivel wheels, and are about 20" wide and 5 feet long. This is fine for a standard casket, but becomes dangerous with an oversize casket greater than 40" wide.
  - a. Place two accordion carts side-by-side with one cart ahead of the second cart by about eight inches. The reason you offset the carts is so the swivel wheels will clear each other.
  - b. Fasten the two carts together with duct tape or rope. This will insure that the carts will not separate as you go through a door threshold, or over a bump when loading the casket. It also helps reduce pucker factor, and high blood pressure.
2. Casket biers are designed for standard caskets. If you have a casket greater than 36" wide, I recommend you leave the casket on the carts. If you need to use a bier, check the load bearing capacity. Most biers have very small wheels. It may be difficult to roll the bier with a loaded casket. The combination of the casket and biers will be top heavy and may become unstable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A55

## G.C. Williams Funeral Home takes delivery of Hearse and Limousine



LOUISVILLE, KY— The ladies of G.C. Williams Funeral Home of Louisville, (Left to Right) Catina Smith, Pearl Claybrooks, Carolyn Chandler and Cynthia Baker, hold the keys to their new Federal Coach Cadillac Renaissance Hearse and Cadillac Ambassador Six Door Limousine. The fleet was delivered by John Muster of Muster Coaches, Calhoun, KY.

## Service Corporation International declares Quarterly Cash Dividend

HOUSTON, TX— Service Corporation International (NYSE: SCI), has announced that its Board of Directors has approved a quarterly cash dividend of four cents per share of common stock. The quarterly cash dividend announced is payable on July 31, 2009 to shareholders of record at the close of business on July 15, 2009. While the Company intends to pay regular quarterly cash dividends for the foreseeable future, all subsequent dividends, and the establishment of record and payment dates, are subject to final determination by the Board of Directors each quarter after its review of the Company's financial performance.

Service Corporation International (NYSE: SCI), headquartered in Houston, is North America's leading provider of deathcare products and services. At March 31, 2009, we owned and operated 1,286 funeral homes and 365 cemeteries (of which 207 are combination locations) in 43 states, eight Canadian provinces, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through our businesses, we 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 our website at [www.sci-corp.com](http://www.sci-corp.com). For more information about Dignity Memorial®, please visit [www.dignitymemorial.com](http://www.dignitymemorial.com).



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## Have a blast while giving back at the 2009 FSF Golf Classic!

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# Innovation In The Funeral Industry: Should You Avoid Start-Up Companies?

Continued from Page A33

social networking features, and even an ongoing revenue stream for funeral professionals through tribute gifts, an industry first.

Leading up to the ICCFA Convention in April 2009, ES had tested their almost-finished product with a few funeral homes in preparation to their official launch at ICCFA. When the convention arrived in April, the buzz created around the ES launch was huge. Every newspaper covering the ICCFA convention did an article about ES; they even landed a "featured article" on the CNN.com homepage. The chatter from funeral directors was noteworthy as well, but more funeral directors were concerned with the complexity of the product.

Following the ICCFA Convention, ES and its investors expected the product to take off like hotcakes but, as those of us "in" the industry know, it takes time for funeral directors to embrace new product. So, like most new technologies in the funeral industry, the product did not take off as fast

as expected. Families and funeral directors who did sign up experienced numerous bugs on the site, and ES was spending an excessive amount of money to deal with the problems. Thirty days after the official launch ES was forced to shut down by the investors. The investors (who were also entrepreneurs themselves) expected to see immediate returns on their investments. When that did not happen they did what good entrepreneurs do...they cut their losses and consequently all funding to EternalSpace.

EternalSpace had an amazing product that pioneered a new road in the funeral industry. They brought new technology and a new business model, through tribute gifts, not seen before in the industry. They also had leaders and funding sources who were not "industry insiders" or familiar with the progression speed of the industry. In the end this seems to be the deciding factor that shut down the company.

Eagle's Wings Air and EternalSpace are two industry start-ups that took two totally different approaches to introducing their products and services to the funeral industry:

- EWA started with partners who each know a specific side of the business. Frank Kaiser is experienced in the airline sector, and David McComb brings experience and expertise from the funeral industry side.
- EWA was patient and tested their service for 7 months before officially launching it to funeral directors.
- EWA formed genuine personal relationships with funeral directors serving as a foundation for a strong business.

On the contrary:

- ES was built around great business leaders, but not around leaders who knew the funeral industry.
- They quickly created a lot of hype and buzz without having a working product.

- They had a niche product that required technical skill, and they didn't have the time necessary to help funeral directors embrace the new technology.

With the speedy rise and fall of EternalSpace, some funeral directors have become apprehensive about working with start-up companies. To help ease your fears and rebuild your confidence in industry start-ups, I would like to provide you with a guideline of things to evaluate when considering whether to work with a new start-up company:

- Are the leaders of the company "industry insiders," and do they have a good sense of where the funeral industry is and where it is heading?
- Will the leaders of the company and their sales people take the time to help you embrace their product and fully understand it?
- Is the product something that fills a niche or void?
- Is the product innovative but not too advanced for your client families?
- Is the product relative to your market place? (What sells in Los Angeles, California might not sell in Small Town, Indiana)
- Will the company provide you with the necessary tools to effectively market the product?
- How will working with this company benefit you, your firm, and your client families?

Start-up companies are good for our industry. Their existence shows that funeral directors and the funeral industry are progressing and evolving. By using the guidelines above you will be able to choose a company and product that is right for your market and will help you better serve you client families.

This article was not written to promote Eagle's Wings Air or to criticize the leaders and product of EternalSpace. It was written to provide an example of two different start-up companies, one that was able to sustain and grow and the other that wasn't, and to provide funeral directors with a guideline of what to look for when deciding to work with a start-up company. As the funeral industry continues to progress, more start-up companies like Eagle's Wings Air and EternalSpace will debut at industry trade shows. Some will succeed and others may not, but funeral directors should not be afraid to work with start-up companies. After all, at one time Batesville Casket and Wilbert Burial Vaults were small start-up companies!

Ryan Thogmartin is the Founder and CEO of ConnectingDirectors.com. ConnectingDirectors.com provides the only online gathering space where funeral professionals can visit to read daily articles, funeral industry news and ideas shared through a funeral industry discussion board. In addition, Mr. Thogmartin works in sales for his family's burial vault company, Hupp Stiverson Wilbert Vault Inc.

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By Ralph L. Klicker, Ph.D.

Ralph L. Klicker, Ph.D., has authored the books *A Student Dies*, *A School Mourns...Are You Prepared?* and *Kolie and the Funeral*. He has also written the textbooks *Funeral Directing & Funeral Service Management and Ethics in Funeral Service*, and his newest textbook *Restorative Art & Science*. Dr. Klicker is founder and president of Thanos Institute, which offers funeral directors home study courses approved throughout the United States and Canada for continuing education credit for their license renewals.  
For information, contact him at Thanos Institute, PO Box 1928, Buffalo, NY 14321, (800)742-8257 or send an e-mail to Thanosinst@aol.com.

**ANSWERS ON PAGE A44**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____ : Fear of projectiles, i.e. bullets</li> <li>2. _____ : Container without ornamentation</li> <li>3. _____ : Unable to attain purpose</li> <li>4. _____ : Present oneself sincerely</li> <li>5. _____ : FTC Rule</li> <li>6. _____ : Imitation gas</li> <li>7. _____ : Direct disposition</li> <li>8. _____ : Superimposed layers</li> <li>9. _____ : HR</li> <li>10. _____ : Centering on a person's needs</li> <li>11. _____ : Seven days of mourning</li> <li>12. _____ : Sits with Jewish body</li> </ol>	<p>a j e t p m l x r n o i t a r t s u r f g e n u i n e n e s s i z y q j x g w x i t e m i z a t i o n x z l g l j t x d g b y m m f f w p t q x v h a v i h s p p a q t b x g s f n o w j j i m a c e i s s l n e z c f j u h l s z c z s r m b h g e t d u z s r w a k w w p w s m a r d v n t e a m b q n z g r v f o e l c a m l s i a r p h h m u q i l n d l y g v g k p v s n n c x z r y i n i i t l j t v o h x u u i a g l w w e a s f l f c e f s h u i q c m t q y l t t f c p b k x v u x b x d e o a i g e o n w t l b e i u h o g q x z e f l v p x g h j a n l g r v b u p q w n u r h e l c o k u r p h e m s o q y k k g o d q c s v z y y r n m t y s x b u k b e j w v b x q w w w l o g a e y p h i f i d y x o c k r k y r h q f t b e a z w t c j p o i m g d w t s o x h p y g t b t l a i c i f i t r a</p>
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# Educational NEWS

## Professional Fashion at Worsham College of Mortuary Science



The Models from Worsham with Darlene Levine

**WHEELING, IL**— In early June, **Worsham College of Mortuary Science** put on an extraordinary program for all students with the theme Dressing Professionally – A Guide for Funeral Service Professionals. The Women's Fashions program was presented by *Darlene Levine*, Fashion Specialist, Northbrook, IL and *Ricki Zabrin* Make-up and Skin-Care from *Chanel*. Darlene presented everything from outer and under clothing, shoes, accessories to nails and hair. Bringing many samples for students to view and accessorize. She also presented a women's fashion show with selected models from Worsham. Included were **Jami Atkins**, **Lexie Landry** and **Bethany Skillman** of the September Class 2008-2009 along with **Lindsey Maxwell** and **Stacey**



Fashion Specialist Darlene Levine



Make up application by Ricki Zabrin

ing styles and colors. From matching shoes to belts, socks to pants, cuffed pants when pleated or the use of suspenders there was a full array of fashion for men.

There were many questions raised by both the men and ladies. "The students enjoyed the opportunity to participate and have the ability to see and touch products from these unique classes. This is another approach for Worsham to create 'The Practical Experience' for our students," stated **Stephanie Kann**, president.

**Schwager** of the March Class 2009-2010. During Ricki's presentation she applied make-up and gave advice to two students.

The Professional Dress for Men was presented by *Brian Koltun*, manager and *Freddy Rodriguez* both representing *Men's Warehouse*. Students learned about functional wardrobe components based on a two week wardrobe. They viewed suits, ties, shoes and other various accessories. The presentation was based on basics for the funeral profession and includ-

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## PIMS Students tour Donatelli Crematory



(L to R) PIMS Class 139 president Tim Schoonover of Philippi, WV and Fred Donatelli.

**PITTSBURGH, PA**— Students from **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS) Class 139** recently toured the **Donatelli Monument Company, Pittsburgh Cremation Service, and Oak Crest Pet Crematory**. As part of their Professional Seminar Series, the class was invited to tour the facilities by **Fred Donatelli** and his family, who operate all three entities. Mr. Donatelli presented a program on cremation marketing, statistics, legalities, and formalities. In addition to touring the crematory, the students had the opportunity to visit and tour the monument company and pet cremation services. The Donatelli family also provided lunch for the students at the conclusion of the program.

Additionally, Mr. Donatelli presented PIMS with a check to be applied toward a scholarship that he established for PIMS. The Fred Donatelli Scholarship is available to PIMS students who wish to continue their education and earn the Associate in Specialized Business Degree in Funeral Service Management.

The Donatellis have hosted every PIMS class for over 30 years. PIMS, its students, and faculty are appreciative for their hospitality and interest in funeral service education. Mr. Donatelli is also a member of PIMS Board of Trustees.

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## American Academy McAllister Institute announces Dean's and President's Lists

NEW YORK, NY— American Academy McAllister Institute is pleased to recognize the following students for their academic success in the Spring 2009 Semester.

To be named to the President's List one must maintain a semester grade point average of 3.80 to 4.0. **Andrew Anastasio** of Middle Village, NY; **Sean McCafferty** of Brooklyn, NY; **Brook Pesola** of Staten Island, NY; **Andrew Skidd** of Norwalk, CT; **Jonathan Bender** of Nutley, NJ; **Julia Cavallo** of Westwood, NJ; **Donald Cymbor** of Hoboken,

NJ; **Samantha Gonzalez** of Richmond Hill, NY and **Alexandria Perri** of Poughquag, NY were named to the President's List.

To be named to the Dean's List one must maintain a semester grade point average of 3.50 to 3.79. **Tara Burrowes** of Barbados, WI; **Gregg Schreiberstein** of Bronx, NY; **Justin Arnoldy** of Brooklyn, NY; **Daniel Buzzetta** of New York, NY; **Sara Fleszar** of Jamaica, NY and **Cedric Swinton** of Charleston, SC were named to the Dean's List.

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## Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc. Eta Chapter to present "A Monster Mash"

By Francine Ross-Roden, CFSP

NEW YORK, NY— The Eta chapter of **Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc.** is planning their second fundraiser, *Monster Mash*, which will take place on Friday, October 30, 2009 at the Robert Ross Johnson Family Life Center from 9pm until 1am. Proceeds from this fundraising event will assist to fund new scholarships that the chapter will have available to Mortuary Science students. Tickets for this BYOB event will be available at the Summer Board Meeting. The Robert Ross Johnson Family Life Center is located at 172-17 Linden Blvd, off Merrick Blvd, St. Albans (Queens), New York 11412. For ticket purchase, please contact Eta Chapter at etachapterend@gmail.com.

## END Theta Chapter is on the Move Again

MONROE, LA— **Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity**, Theta Chapter recently held a meeting at Piccadilly Cafeteria Restaurant in Monroe, LA. The meeting was called to order by President **Rodney McFarland Sr.**, and invocation was given by Vice-President, **Brother Jimmy Mack Jr.** Some of the highlights of this momentous meeting included a presentation of a plaque to two of the historical twenty-four fraternity members who contributed to the birth of this fraternity. The plaques were presented to **Brother John Arthur Sims** and **Soror Elizabeth Brannun-Trass**. The plaque quoted their continued dedication and vision to the longevity of this fraternity. Theta



John Arthur Sims

Chapter also announced that it will host an annual embalming seminar each fall named in honor of Soror Brannun-Trass and Brother Sims; therefore being named The Elizabeth Brannun-Trass/John A. Sims Embalming Seminar. The first seminar is projected to be held in October 2009.



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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## Rob-Win Press hosts Day of Continuing Education



**ALLENTOWN, PA—** Rob-Win Press hosted over 150 Pennsylvania funeral directors, their family members and mortuary science students on April 27 at the Lehigh Valley Heritage Museum, to a free continuing education seminar on child grief. In addition, attendees enjoyed a number of fascinating historical exhibits and an outstanding buffet luncheon. Rob-Win, located in Allentown, PA, has supplied the funeral industry since 1938 with an extensive line of the highest quality funeral supplies, including register books, service folders, acknowledgment cards, portfolio bags and many related products.

Rob-Win President, **Robin Cook**, noted "The continuing support of our customers has allowed Rob-Win to proudly serve the funeral directors of Pennsylvania for over 70 years. Hosting this event, combining continuing education and interesting attractions, is our small way of thanking them for all they've done to make our Company a success."

The focus of the day's activities were morning and afternoon continuing education seminars titled "GRIEF: The Impact of Loss on Children," presented by **Nancy Bollman**, a nationally renowned speaker, counselor and trainer on this important subject. Nancy's 2 CEU presentation explored children's grief reaction from birth through teen years, their understanding of grief and helpful responses to their grief. Nancy and her husband Alan, Rob-Win's Texas Sales Representative, made the long trip from Houston to make the day's primary event a success.

Guests were served a full buffet luncheon in the Museum's beautiful atrium, with many taking advantage of outdoor seating on a bright, sunny day.

In addition, a number of fascinating historical exhibits and attractions were made available to guests throughout the

day. One of the most popular was "Reflections: The American Funeral Tour" ([www.goMRA.com](http://www.goMRA.com)) a 1,000 square foot mobile exhibit which traces the history of American funeral and mourning customs, funeral art and practices. This included an authentic replica of Abraham Lincoln's burial coffin while tracing his nearly 3-week national funeral, ob-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A45**

## Shugar's awards Scholarship

**DETROIT, MI—** Shugar's, publishers of the *Purple Directory*, has made its biennial contribution toward a funeral service scholarship. This scholarship is awarded in memory of Editor-in-Chief **Miriam Pipes'** relatives.

Shugar's has awarded the 2009-10 Pipes' Memorial Scholarship to **Tyrone D. Burley**, a Mortuary Science student at *Wayne State University*, Detroit, MI.



Tyrone D. Burley

Shugar's will publish its 2010-11, Ninth Edition of the *Purple Directory*, in December, 2009. The directory is a nation-wide listing of

over 2,700 African-American funeral firms, by state. For more information visit [www.purpuredirectory.com](http://www.purpuredirectory.com).

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service select Fourteen Funeral Students to receive Scholarships at Leadership Breakfast



Cheryl Busby



Karen Y. People



Adilah Shamid-Deen



Eric A. Wilson, II



Kathy A. Baril



Ronnetta C. McDowell

**LONGWOOD, FL— 100 Black Women of Funeral Service** Founder **Elleanor Davis-Starks**, CFSP and President **Dottie Hector**, CFSP-CPC along with the 2009 Scholarship Selection Committee will award scholarships at the Rebecca Barksdale Academy Awards Leadership Breakfast, held at the 72<sup>nd</sup> NFDMA Annual Convention in Detroit. The scholarships will be awarded to fourteen deserving, hardworking and focused students from mortuary schools around the nation.

“Having received over 50 applications, we are proud of the caliber of students we have selected for the 2009 scholarships. We will be working with our students, matching them with

professional mentors and tracking their progress through internships and then licensing,” states Elleanor Starks.

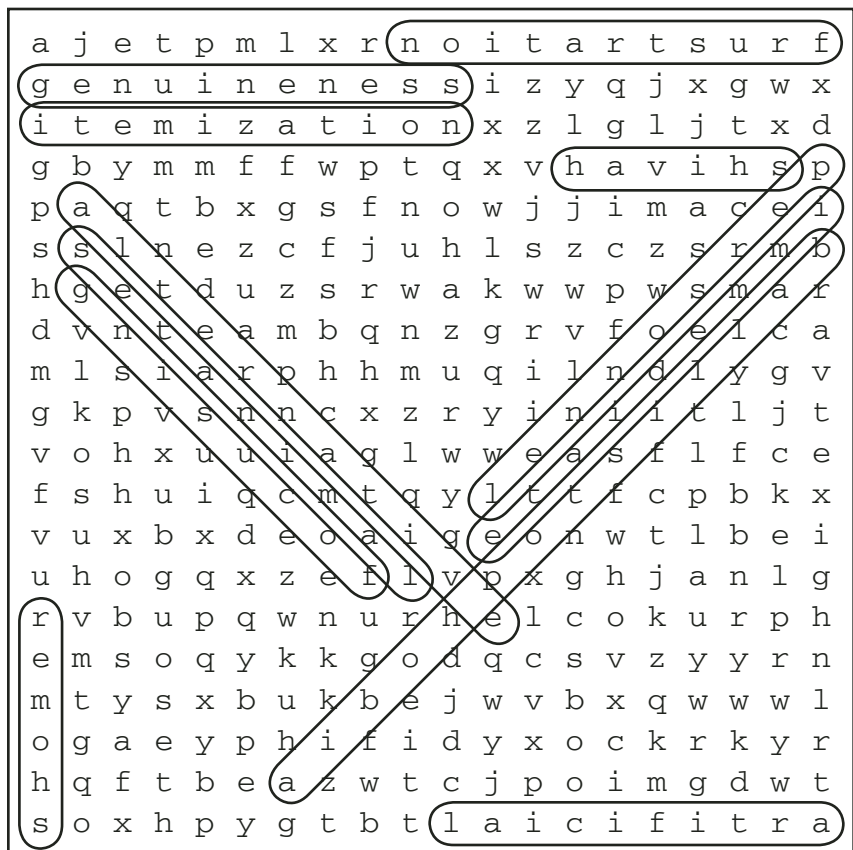
“We thank the mortuary school advisors and directors who played a major role in making sure they sent their most impressive students and hardest working students to us and impressed us with their final scholarship phone interview,” says, Dottie Hector. “My hat goes off to **Christie Redmond** of *Dallas Institute* who put forth a 150% effort on behalf of her mortuary program to show the caliber of future funeral service caregivers being produced in the state of Texas.”

The goal of the 100 BWFS is to guide and mentor scholar-

ship students and open a few closed doors that might deter them along the way. The Lottie K. Weldon Mentoring Program continues to help students make that adjustment to the professional world, and we applaud **Lottie Weldon** for being a trailblazer for our students entering the profession. Along with Ms. Weldon and several male licensed professionals, the 100 BWFS will be working with the *100 Black Men of Funeral Service Mentoring Project 2009* to match male professionals with our male scholarship students. Each male will be assigned to one of the nation’s accredited mortuary programs. They urge male professionals to go to

### Answers to Klicker’s Crossword Puzzle on Page A40

- |   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. BALLISTOPHOBIA : Fear of projectiles, i.e. bullets | 5. ITEMIZATION : FTC Rule          | 9. PERSONNEL : HR                            |
| 2. ALTERNATIVE : Container without ornamentation      | 6. ARTIFICIAL : Imitation gas      | 10. FOCUSING : Centering on a person’s needs |
| 3. FRUSTRATION : Unable to attain purpose             | 7. IMMEDIATE : Direct disposition  | 11. SHIVAH : Seven days of mourning          |
| 4. GENUINENESS : Present oneself sincerely            | 8. LAMINATES : Superimposed layers | 12. SHOMER : Sits with Jewish body           |



Jay R. Didericksen



Morgan G. Ledyard



Shondelle Pink



Kimberly D. Caldwell



Latoya M. Logan



Namya A. Shepard

www.100blackmenoffuneralservice.com and become a funeral service mentor today.

The 100 BWFS proudly announce the names of the fourteen scholarship students: **Cheryl Busby** (our first deaf scholarship honoree) of *Dallas Institute*; **Karen Y. People** of *Florida Community College*; **Adilah Shamid-Deen** of *Dallas Institute*; **Eric A. Wilson, II**, of *Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service*; **Kathy A. Baril** of *Wayne State University*; **Ronnetta C. McDowell** of *Dallas Institute*; **Shondelle Pink** of *American Academy McAllister Institute*; **Jay R. Didericksen** of *Arapahoe Community College*; **Morgan G. Ledyard** of



DaiDrian T. Brown

*Dallas Institute*; **Namya A. Shepard** of *Cypress College*; **Kimberly D. Caldwell** of *Dallas Institute*; **Latoya M. Logan** of *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*; **Elizabeth R. Andrews** of *Wayne State University* and **DaiDrian T. Brown** of *Dallas Institute*.

“We applaud the finest group of scholarship students for 2009,” states Elleanor Starks. “We chose the Best because we expect the Best.” For scholarship information go to [www.100blackwomenoffuneralservice.com](http://www.100blackwomenoffuneralservice.com) or email [Hundredbwfs@aol.com](mailto:Hundredbwfs@aol.com).



Elizabeth R. Andrews

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## Mercer County Community College Funeral Service Class of 2009

WEST WINDSOR, NJ— Mercer County Community College (MCCC) in West Windsor held its annual commencement on May 21, 2009.

The following were Funeral Service Honors recipients: **Maria Brenna** (Trenton NJ), **Adam Diabelko** (Pennel PA), **David Lawyer** (Mullica Hill NJ), **Marc**

**Mastapeter** (Bayville NJ), **Ryan Moran** (South Amboy NJ) and **Christopher Nolan** (Wall NJ). Funeral Service High Honors recognition was awarded to **Jill Summers** (Ringoes NJ). The following received Funeral Service Highest Honors: **Robert Jedziniak** (Bayonne NJ), **Seth Goldstein** (Huntingdon Valley, PA),

**Tiffany Virginio** (West Paterson NJ) and **Kaitlin Wooster** (Clementon NJ).

Recognition for Academic Achievement in the Funeral Service Preparatory program was awarded to Jill Summers (Ringoes NJ). Recognition for Academic Achievement and Highest Honors in the Funeral Service Certificate program was awarded to

Tiffany Virginio (West Paterson NJ). Recognition for outstanding achievement in the Funeral Service AAS Degree program was awarded to Robert Jedziniak (Bayonne NJ).

The Silvio J. Failla Memorial Achievement Award was presented to Ryan Moran (South Amboy NJ) and the Frank Reiman Memo-



MCCC 2009 Graduates

## Rob-Win Press hosts Day of Continuing Education

*Continued from Page A43*



served by millions. President John F. Kennedy's rider-less horse funeral and empty boots reversed in the saddle were also displayed. **Joseph Garrera**, Executive Director of the Museum, supplied additional details surrounding the death and funeral of Abraham Lincoln during his lunchtime lecture. Mr. Garrera noted that Lincoln's railroad funeral procession had passed close by the Museum. Adding to the event's historical perspective of the American funeral a lo-

cal company, Horse Drawn Funerals, provided a beautiful display of antique and reproduction horse drawn hearses.

While noting his pleasure at providing his customers with both an educational and enjoyable event, Cook also mentioned how impressed he was by his employees' major contribution to the day's success. "Employees from every department of our Company pitched in to make today possible, emphasizing their total customer commitment."

rial Award was presented to Adam Diabelko (Pennel PA). Mark Mastapeter (Bayville NJ) was the recipient of the Peter P. Horvath

Achievement Award and the MCCC 2009 JN Nolte Scholar Award nominee was Seth Goldstein (Huntingdon Valley PA).

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# Association NEWS

## Florida Morticians Association, Inc. holds 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention



Florida Morticians Association Convention Participants

## 100 Black Women of Funeral Service hosts "Reflections"



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Rev. Henry L. Postell, II

**TALLAHASSEE, FL**— Florida Morticians Association, Inc. held its 85<sup>th</sup> annual convention in the state's beautiful capitol, Tallahassee, at the Ramada Inn Conference Center.

The highlights of the four days of events included  
**CONTINUED ON PAGE A47**

**DETROIT, MI**— What do a President's rider-less horse saddle, Rosa Park's quiet act of defiance, and Abraham Lincoln's casket have in common? They're all part of an exhibit that is drawing crowds with its historical review of funeral customs and commemoration of veterans and others who serve our country in a 53' mobile museum.

*Reflections: The American Funeral* is spread out across 1,000 sq. ft. of thoughtful display areas:

- "Arlington National Cemetery" honors our country's veterans and the more than three million Americans buried in our national cemeteries.
- "Glory, Glory Hallelujah" showcases President John F. Kennedy's rider-

### Mobile Museum Honors Veterans, Public Safety Officers, Presidents, Historical Figures

less horse – empty boots reversed in the saddle – trotting briskly in his funeral procession and civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks, who was the first woman to lie in state at the Capitol Rotunda.

- "The Lord is My Shepherd" is a poignant tribute to fallen public safety officers killed in the line of duty.

Other moving exhibits include a display on Abraham Lincoln featuring a reproduction of his casket and tracing the near three-

week funeral procession and "The Final Curtain," which pays homage to celebrities, including Marilyn Monroe, Dale Earnhardt, and Elvis.

Reflections will be co-hosted by **100 Black Women of Funeral Service** and the History Committee of the **National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association (NFDMA)**. It will appear at the NFDMA's 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Convention and Exposition on August 4-5 in Wayne Hall at COBO Center.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A48**

## Empire State FDA hosts First District Meeting

By Vicki Thompson-Simmons and Francine Ross-Roden, CFSP



Vicki Thompson-Simmons and Mayor John Delfino

**WHITE PLAINS, NY**— District 1 of the **National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association** held its annual conference on June 13-14, 2009 in White Plains. Hosted by the **Empire State Funeral Directors Association** of New York, members were busy with continuing education credits, community involvement, remembering the past in music and dealing with the present business of the District.

On Saturday June 13, continuing education credits were provided for NY, NJ and PA members in the morning. After lunch, the members took part in the annual Juneteenth parade held in historic White Plains. The evening began with a presentation to the Mayor of White Plains from the Empire State Funeral Directors Association. Mayor *John Delfino* was presented with a "Casket Key from Gotham City" in appreciation of his continuous support of the association and its members over the years. A mag-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A49**

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Pennington named Texas Funeral Director of Year

AUSTIN, TX— William C. “Bill” Pennington Sr. has been named Funeral Director of the Year by the Texas Funeral Directors Association. The award was presented during the TFDA’s “Night of a Thousand Stars” Gala at the Hyatt Regency in Austin.

Owner and president of

Pennington Memorial Corporation and Pennington Funeral Home in San Marcos, as well as McCurdy Funeral Home in Lockhart and Memory Lawn Memorial Park, Pennington has been associated with the family-owned funeral business since 1961. He has also

been active in the Texas Funeral Directors Association for many years and has served as president of TFDA Services, Inc. since 2004.

He is a former member of the TFDA Services, Inc. Board of Directors and the Texas Funeral Directors Association, and Board of

Directors and past president of the South Central Texas Funeral Directors Association.

Bill shares duties at Pennington Memorial Corp. with his wife, Linda, and their daughter, Kristin Wingard, who represents the family’s third generation of funeral directors.

## Christopher Kuhnen Earns CPC Certification

FRANKLIN, OH— The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) has renewed the nationally recognized Certified

Preplanning Consultant (CPC) designation to Christopher Kuhnen, Vice President of Corporate Communications and Promotion for The Outlook Group, Inc., Franklin.

The CPC certification program is considered the standard of excellence in funeral service for individuals who help families plan funerals in advance. In order to become a Certified Preplanning Consultant, candidates must meet specific and rigorous program requirements and pass an examination based on a standards manual. CPCs must demon-

strate their ongoing professional commitment by fulfilling specific continuing education requirements as they renew their certification every four years.

Kuhnen resides in Edgewood, KY with his wife, Paula. He has been actively involved in funeral service since 1986 and is a licensed Funeral Director, Life Insurance Agent and Certified Funeral Celebrant as designated by the Insight Institute in Oklahoma City, OK.

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Christopher Kuhnen

owned and operated funeral homes since 1985. For more information about the company visit them on-line at [www.theoutlookgroup.com](http://www.theoutlookgroup.com).

## Florida Morticians Association, Inc. holds 85th Annual Convention

Continued from Page A46

ed educational workshops for continuing education hours, Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon, family outing and the Mortician of the Year Annual Banquet. Attorney Willie E. Gary of Stuart, FL was the banquet speaker. This year the association honored Mrs. Gwen S. Long, L.F.D. and owner of People’s Funeral Home, Marianna, FL as their mortician of the year.

At the close of the convention the New Officers were installed by the president of the National Funeral Directors and Mortician Association, Hall Davis, IV, CFSP. The new State officers installed: Reverend Henry L. Postell, II, Orlando, FL, as State President; Ronald Sabb, Bartow, FL as Chairman of the Board; and Darrell Lawrence, Tallahassee, FL, as Executive Secretary. Reverend Postell has been an active member of the Florida Morticians Association for over 30 years. Congratulations to the president and officers as they continue “To serve as we would be served-with integrity, fairness, and compassion.”



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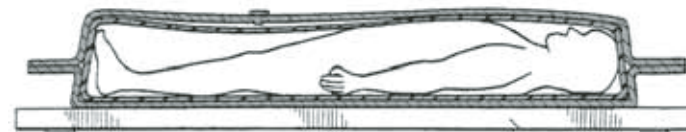
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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Pennsylvania Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Association to hold Super Expo in Mid-November in Philadelphia

HARRISBURG, PA— Pennsylvania Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Association will hold a Super Expo November 18-19, 2009 at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, PA. Exhibit hours are 10 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. both days. The association is offering free admission for all PC-CFA members and their employees, as well as all guests of suppliers. Other-

wise, a \$50 admission fee will apply.

The event offers 6 free continuing education credits over the two-day period. This is the full amount of ConEd hours required for bi-annual license renewal for the state. Exhibitors with an approved ConEd course are invited to provide programs at the expo. Use of rooms for these programs is available free of charge,

however, presentation times are limited.

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convenient location. For more information about exhibiting at the Super Expo, or to register to at-

tend, contact **Bob Stewart** by email at [bstewart-pcfa@comcast.net](mailto:bstewart-pcfa@comcast.net) or phone (717)236-9970.

## 100 Black Women of Funeral Service hosts "Reflections"

*Continued from Page A46*

"Reflections will bring a whole new experience to this year's convention," says **Elleanor Davis Starks**, CFSP, Executive Director and Founder of 100 Black Women of Funeral Service. "Both veteran morticians and those new to funeral service will be taken by the thoughtful exhibit that helps educate people about our profession, its history, and the compassionate understanding provided by funeral practitioners." A visit to Reflections is approved for .1 (one hour) of continuing education credit by the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice (APFSP) and some state boards. Licensed funeral service professionals should check with their state licensing board beforehand regarding credit.

From the cross-country funeral procession for Abraham Lincoln to the national outpouring of grief for Elvis Presley, America has a rich history of mourning the dead. Reflections: The American Funeral explores these traditions, beginning with Native American burial mounds and ending with the diverse rituals practiced across the country today. Produced by Michigan-based MRA, it's earning high praise from everyone who experiences it. "Awesome!" "Great educational tool!" "Amazing! Brings out a lot of things we don't think about." "Very, very moving."

"There are intriguing stories of funeral practices throughout the centuries and this exhibit educates people on those stories and enables them to connect to the universal human experience of death," says Harry Kurtz, President of MRA, a leading mobile exhibit and event producer. "The dis-

plays on Arlington and fallen public safety officers move people to tears."

Reflections: The American Funeral has been touring across the United States since Summer 2008, stopping at state capitols, universities, veteran events, and mortuary schools, funeral homes and industry conventions. During January 2009 Inauguration celebrations, both Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C., and Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore, MD, hosted it.

Reflections receives support from the *Federated Funeral Directors of America* (FFDA); *National Funeral Directors Association* (NFDA); the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE); Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice (APFSP); and **Kates-Boylston Publications**, the parent company of *American Funeral Director* magazine, a leading independent trade magazine for funeral directors and other funeral service professionals. Kates-Boylston Publications has been helping funeral professionals succeed and serve for over 130 years.

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association elects New Officers

HARRISBURG, PA— The Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association (PFDA) elected new leadership during its Annual Convention & Exhibition on June 16. The officers for 2009-2010 are: President **Dr. Clifford DeBaptiste**; President

Elect **William Schleifer**; Secretary/Treasurer **Janice Mannal** and Immediate Past President **Donald Deaner**.

The District Governors are: District I – **Michael Pandolph**; District II – **Paul Urban**; District III – **Jo Ann Pavlic**; District IV – **William Harris**; District V – **John Morris**; District VI – **Deborah Ashton-Chase**; District VII – **Norman Shropshire**; District VIII – **Janice Mannal**; District IX – **Warren Miller**; District X – **James Higgins**; and Quaker State FDA – **Norman Johnson**.

Also elected to serve in 2009-2010 was NFDA Policy Board Member **Thomas Kukuchka**.

The Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association was established in 1881 and represents approximately 1100 Pennsylvania licensed funeral homes with over 3,000 licensed funeral directors statewide. It is one of the largest state associations of its kind in the nation.

## Empire State FDA hosts First District Meeting

*Continued from Page A46*

ic presentation by **Ted "The Mortician" Lee**, followed by a salute to Motown was given by the members of Empire State. Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Marvin Gaye, Tina and Ike Turner and the Turnettes, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Aretha Franklin, Little Stevie Wonder and the Temptations were some of the musical acts that were portrayed. Lots of dancing and fun was had by all. Kudos to Empire State for a job well done!

Sunday, June 14, 2009 began with a memorial service, led by **Rev. Kenneth DuPree** of Pennsylvania, remembering First District Members as well as any family members that passed away since our last meeting. District 1 Governor **Lisa Branch-Tucker** welcomed everyone from the areas of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania to the meeting and after hearing the state reports, thanked everyone for their continuous hard work. NFDMA Vice-President **Gregory Burrell** gave a report on the status of affairs in the National office,

including an update of the building of the national headquarters. Before the closing of the meeting, **Rev. Kenneth DuPree** was announced as the new

District Governor. **Rev. DuPree** informed the body of his concerns for the district as well as his agenda during his tenure as District Governor.



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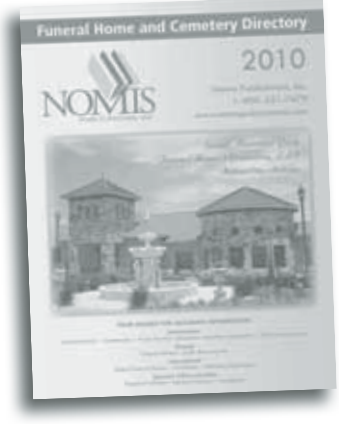
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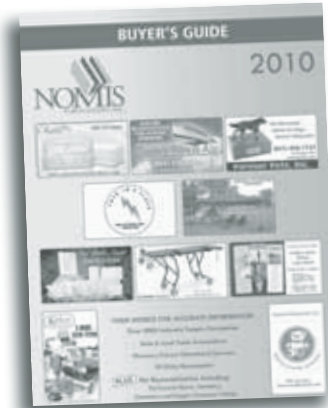
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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Ley awarded ICCFA University Scholarship



Joey Ley

**HEMET, CA**— **Joey Ley**, CFSP, Manager of **Miller-Jones Mortuary** in Hemet and San Jacinto and **McWane Family Funeral Home** in Hemet, CA was recently awarded the *International Cemetery, Crematory and Funeral Association* Educational Foundation Scholarship. The scholarship was used during the 2009 ICCFA University July 17-July 22 in Tunica, MS.

Joey began his career with Miller-Jones in April of 1995 and is a graduate of the *San Francisco College of Mortuary Science*. He is a licensed embalmer, funeral director, crematory manager and life agent.

As a Hemet native, Joey is very active in his community and serves on the board of directors for the San Jacinto Police Activities League, is Past-President of the Hemet/San Jacinto Valley Exchange Club, member of the Hemet Elk's Lodge #1740 and the San Jacinto Masonic Lodge #338 F&AM.

"I've heard many great things about the ICCFA University and look forward to learning new ideas and being able to bring valuable information back to my co-workers," says Joey.

ICCFA University is the only school of its kind for cemetery, cremation, and funeral service professionals, bringing together practitioners from throughout the nation for intensive instruction by top experts in five disciplines: cemetery administration and management, funeral home management, cremation services, land operations and grounds management, and sales and marketing. The ICCFA University scholarship covers Ley's full costs for registration, housing and meals.

## CANA announces the Commonwealth of Virginia will require Crematory Operator Certification

**CHICAGO, IL**— The **Cremation Association of North America (CANA)** is pleased to announce that its Crematory Operator Certification Program has been selected by the Virginia State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers for its newly-mandated training requirements. Effective July 8, 2009, all crematory managers and operators within the Commonwealth of Virginia must be certified within one year. CANA's certification program chairman **Mike Nicodemus**, a Virginia licensed funeral director, embalmer and crematory operator with 30 years of experience, is pleased by

the adoption of these new regulations. "CANA has a proven track record of putting on an outstanding program. The fact that we are able to provide this program within the Commonwealth will make it more convenient for the operators to attend and less expensive than traveling out of state. I applaud the state board for being proactive, and a trendsetter when it comes to cremation regulations."

CANA was the only association selected by the New York State Department of State's Division of Cemeteries to provide mandatory operator training when the law requiring certifi-

cation became effective in October 2007. The state of Mississippi chose CANA to provide this program for its operators in 2008. CANA was also recently selected to provide training as part of the curriculum at *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*

in Wheeling, IL.

CANA will be providing dates and regional locations shortly. "We will have absolutely no problem getting operators certified with a quality education and within the specified time," Nicodemus said.

Please visit CANA's Web site, [www.cremationassociation.org](http://www.cremationassociation.org) or call CANA Headquarters at (312) 245-1077 for updates. The Cremation Association of North America can also be found on Facebook – become a fan today!

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Selected Independent Funeral Homes Updates its "Code of Good Practice"

DEERFIELD, IL— Selected Independent Funeral Homes has announced an update to its "Code of Good Practice," the long-standing ethical principles to which members of the worldwide professional association adhere in providing funeral information and services to the public. Members voted overwhelmingly in favor of the update that includes new language to better communicate their responsibilities and commitment regarding cremation and pre-need contracts. The "Code of Good Practice" traces

its roots to standards developed by the association as early as 1925. It was formalized in 1965 and remains a definitive example of self-regulation within the profession. After 44 years, the Code continues to embody the ethical principles by which members of Selected Independent Funeral Homes are measured. "The Code of Good Practice" assures families that there is a standard by which our members measure themselves—a mandated level of acceptable service provided to everyone who calls upon us,"

said **Glenn Taylor**, 2009 president of Selected and president of **Glenn Funeral Home**, Owensboro, KY. "It gives consumers notice of our commitment, both individually and as a worldwide network of funeral service providers through Selected Independent Funeral Homes. Any code of standards must be applicable to the current environment. When it was developed in 1965, there was no such thing as pre-need, and cremation represented an almost infinitesimal percentage of the total deaths. But today, these issues are inextricably woven within funeral service, and a revamping of our Code was vital to maintaining the public's trust."

"Considerable thought and effort went into updating this important document, and I feel we were able to enhance and perfect it for the time," said **Michael Meierhoffer**, 2009 secretary-treasurer of Selected and president of **Meierhoffer Funeral Home & Crematory**, St. Joseph, MO. "The Code has been a cornerstone of this association for many years. With today's increased awareness of consumer rights and heightened scrutiny of our profession, I think it is very important for us to state clearly who we are and what we stand for as members of Selected Independent Funeral Homes."

The updated Code took effect July 1. It can be viewed on Selected's website at [www.selectedfuneralhomes.org/about/code.html](http://www.selectedfuneralhomes.org/about/code.html). For more additional information about the "Code of Good Practice", please contact Selected Independent Funeral Homes at 1-800-323-4219 or [info@selectedfuneralhomes.org](mailto:info@selectedfuneralhomes.org).

Selected Independent Funeral Homes was founded in 1917 and is the world's oldest and largest association of independently owned funeral homes. The association actively promotes the use of best practices by its members in providing consumers with reliable information and the finest care available.

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Asia Conference attracts Funeral Professionals and Consumers; NFDA commits to Co-hosting Annual Asia Funeral Expo & Conference through 2012

**BROOKFIELD, WI**— On June 2, shortly after co-hosting its second **Asia Funeral Expo & Conference (AFE)**, the members of the **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** Executive Board voted to co-host the event for the next three years. AFE provides an opportunity for funeral professionals from every walk of life to share their customs, culture and information with their professional peers worldwide. In addition, it offers an invaluable opportunity for suppliers to showcase their products, innovations and ideas for an international audience of funeral professionals and buyers.

### AFE 2009 Attracts 4,000 Attendees

The 2009 AFE took place May 13-15 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre in Hong Kong. Approximately 2,000 funeral professionals representing 46 countries, territories and regions attended this year's event.

AFE also offered a new concurrent funeral exposition specifically for consumers, which was held separately from the exposition for funeral professionals. In addition to examining a wide array of memorial and keepsake items, individuals could attend workshops on a variety of consumer-focused, funeral service-related topics. Approximately 2,000 people attended the consumer exposition section of AFE 2009.

NFDA's 2009 AFE Expo provided a global showcase of leading funerary products and services for an international audience of funeral professionals and buyers, including caskets and urns made from a variety of materials; tombstones, monuments and other gravemarkers; equipment and machinery used in cemetery, mortuary and crematory operations; embalming chemicals and equipment; keepsake and memorial products; computer- and Internet-based technologies; advance funeral planning solutions; repatriation sources; and many other business-building ideas. A total of 150 companies from 13 countries exhibited at this year's event, making it the largest funeral product and service exhibition of its kind on the continent.

AFE offered attendees the opportunity to share their customs, culture and information with others while learning from funeral professionals from around the world through workshops, tours of funeral homes and cemeteries, and other social events. Among the workshops presented were: examinations of funeral customs in the United States, Taiwan, Malaysia and France; a panel discussion on how the global economic crisis is impacting funeral service; embalming techniques and cosmetology; cemetery design and management; repatriation; and green funerals.

### NFDA Commits to Co-hosting AFE Through 2012

Said NFDA President **John D. Reed Sr.**, CFSP, CPC, about the NFDA Executive Board's decision to commit to AFE for the next three years: "Times are changing, and in our highly mobile society, an increasing number of families bring their funeral rituals and traditions with

them. As funeral directors, it's our responsibility to accommodate these rituals and traditions, even if they are very different from the services we are used to providing. AFE is one way we can help our members learn to serve an increasingly diverse population, and that is one of many reasons we've committed to co-host this event for the next three years."

NFDA President-elect **William C. Wappner**, CFSP, added: "No matter where they practice funeral service, no matter how large or how small their business, funeral directors around the world all face similar challenges of serving people who may come from another country with vastly different funeral customs and traditions. NFDA is proud to take the bold step of co-hosting a conference outside of North America. As funeral service becomes a global enterprise, it's vital that NFDA continue to create unique opportunities for funeral directors around the world to come together and learn from one another, and to collaboratively find ways to improve service to grieving families."

NFDA will co-host the 2010 Asia Funeral Expo & Conference May 13-15 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre in Hong Kong. Funeral service professionals or vendors interested in participating should contact NFDA Director of International Relations **Deborah**

**Andres** at +1-262-789-1880 or [dandres@nfda.org](mailto:dandres@nfda.org).

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 Division 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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**G. FRANK PAGE, JR.** of North Philadelphia, PA died June 28, 2009 at the age of 81. He graduated from *Eckels Mortuary School* in 1947 and opened **G. Frank Page, Jr. Funeral Home** in 1953. He was a member of the *National Funeral Directors Association* and the *Quaker City Funeral Directors Association*.

**DENNIS H. SCHOEPP** of Columbia Falls, MT died June 11, 2009 at the age of 61. A 1979 graduate of *San Francisco College of Mortuary Science*, he and his wife owned and operated **Columbia Mortuary** in Columbia Falls for 29 years and later the **Austin Funeral Home** in Whitefish, MT. He was a member of the *Montana Funeral Directors Association*, serving twice as president, and the *National Funeral Directors Association*, serving on the policy board.

**THOMAS G. METZGER** of Hastings, MN died April 16, 2009 at the age of 74. He served as Secretary/Treasurer of the **Lakeside Cemetery Board** from 1969 until 2009, voluntarily running cemetery operations and maintaining the grounds.

**J. RUSSELL GILL** of Duncanville, TX died June 15, 2009. He was former owner of **Rogers/Gill Funeral Home**, Duncanville and former employee of **Hughes Funeral Home & American Mortuary Service**.  
Reprinted from The Dead Beat, Golden City, MO.

**JOSEPH A. CARNEY, SR.** of Jefferson Township, NJ died July 1, 2009 at the age of 71. In 2000 he founded **Joe Carney Funeral Supplies** and in 2007 he partnered with Irish-based **Print-A-Plate Company**. He began his career in funeral sales with **Hepburn-Superior Funeral Supplies**.



**JAN E. SHRADER** of New Albany, IN died May 27, 2009 at the age of 66. She was the fifth generation owner-operator and funeral director with the **Paul V. Shrader Funeral Home**, founded in 1848 by her family. She was also owner of **Affordable Cremations** in New Albany. A graduate of the *Kentucky School of Mortuary Science*, she was a member of the *Indiana Funeral Directors Association*.

**JAMES A. WOLF** of Port Clinton, OH died June 27, 2009 at the age of 85. From 1946 until 1964 he worked as a licensed funeral director and embalmer and became a partner in the **Gerner-Wolf Funeral Home** with his father and brother.

**ELBERT A. SHAW** of Bicknell, IN died June 27, 2009 at the age of 82. A funeral director for over 50 years, he was the former owner of **Wampler Funeral Home**. He was a 50-year member of the *Indiana Funeral Directors Association* and the *Illinois Funeral Directors Association*.

**JAMES "WAHOO" JARRETT** of Charleston, WV died June 4, 2009 at the age of 68. He was co-owner of **Preston Funeral Home**, Charleston. A graduate of *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science*, he completed his apprenticeship with his father-in-law, **Marrill H. Preston**, founder of the funeral home.

**ROBERT L. SCHULTZ** of Portage and South Haven, MI died July 5, 2009 at the age of 66. A graduate of *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science*, he was a licensed funeral director for **Langeland Family Funeral Homes** for several years.



**MILDRED DAWKINS WILLIAMS** of Augusta, GA died June 18, 2009. A licensed funeral director, she was owner of **Williams Funeral Home**, Augusta with her late husband, **"Bennie" B.A. Williams**. She was a member of the *Georgia Funeral Service Practitioners Association*, 8<sup>th</sup> District and the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*. She was also a founding member of the *100 Black Women of Funeral Service* and was honored in 2007 as a Funeral Service Legend by the 100BWFS.

**SEVERINO D. VERNA, JR.** of Philadelphia, PA died June 13, 2009 at the age of 78. He owned and operated **Verna Funeral Home** in Philadelphia for more than 50 years.

**JOHNNIE BETH "J.B." PITTS** of Brownwood, TX died June 9, 2009 at the age of 83. She was owner of **Eastlawn Memorial Park** in Early, TX and the widow of **Groner Pitts**, former partner in **Davis-Morris Funeral Home**.  
Reprinted from The Dead Beat, Golden City, MO.

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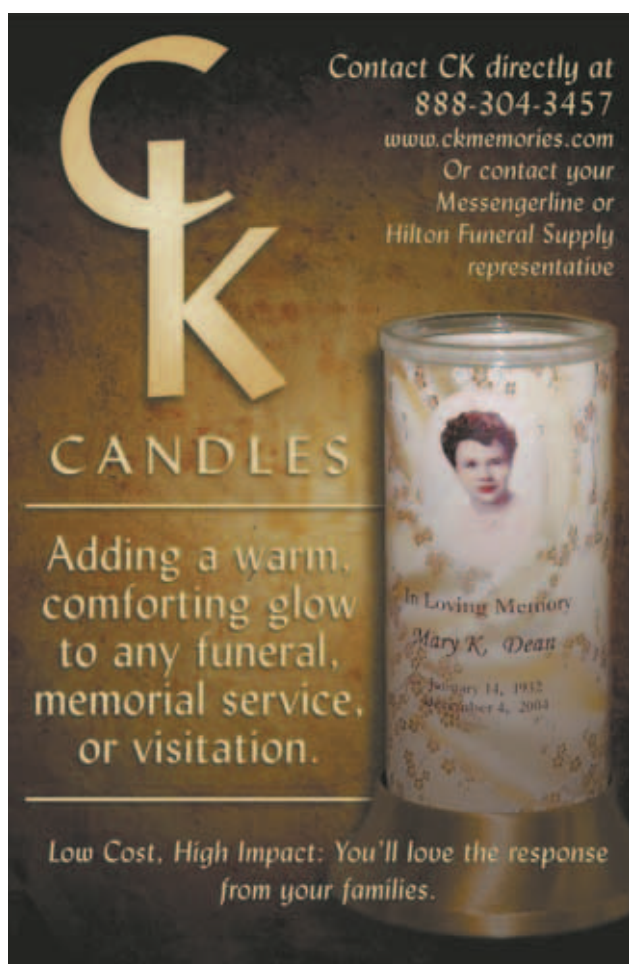
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**Dealing with the Bigger People** *Continued from Page A39*

**PLANNING – PLANNING – PLANNING!**

I was once told that solid bronze caskets made chiropractors and hernia doctors rich. I would like to add oversize caskets to this category. A 40" casket can accommodate a body weight between 600 and 800 pounds. If you want to pick this casket up, you better get the high school football team.

Moving the casket to the cemetery can be a bigger challenge than getting a casket. The casket and occupant can approach 1,000 pounds. Unless you have access to the local football team, it would be best to roll the casket on a stable pneumatic four-wheeled cart. Many local equipment rental stores have sturdy four-wheel carts that work well for this situation. Have your pallbearers walk alongside and stabilize the casket as it is being moved. Plan how the casket will egress through the chapel doors to the transportation vehicle. Plan how the casket will be loaded on to the transportation. Plan how it is to be off loaded and delivered to the gravesite.

The Cemetery: Do you have a headache yet? Well hang on! You must contact the cemetery and the burial service company as soon as possible. They are going to need to know the vault size. They are also going to need to check the grave plot to see if the casket and vault will fit. It is not uncommon for the family to buy two or even three grave plots for burial. Check to see if the gravesite is immediately off of a service road. The equipment required at the gravesite will be much larger than normal, and may not be able to navigate to the desired family burial site under the big oak tree. Try to get a good estimate for grave opening and closing costs. These costs will be much higher.

*OK – So We Will Cremate:*

Well – maybe. Many cremation units cannot receive an oversize body greater than 36" wide. Check with your service before making any commitments. Oversize crematoriums are available in some of the larger cities. As you might imagine, the cost does go up. Remember this one rule: "If I didn't check it, it will be a problem."

**DEALING WITH THE FAMILY:**

Ok, I have the casket, I found the vault, and I have the total cost. So how do I tell the family the casket won't go through the chapel doors? How do I tell them that they need to buy two grave plots? How do I tell them that we will need heavy equipment to set this 1,000 pound casket into the grave?

Remember, the family does not have a clue about all the herculean effort you have gone through to provide closure and a celebration of life. You will be dealing with the same emotions, hurts, and frustrations of any family. There is one big difference however. Your family will know that their loved one was big. They probably already understand that this is a special situation. They will understand why you had to have the service in the high school gym. They will understand that you will need a flat bed trailer to transport the casket. They will understand why there is a backhoe instead of a vault truck. What they will not understand is a surprise. They will not understand:

- a. Why the casket lids will not close.
- b. Why the body looks stuffed.
- c. Why the casket will not go through the doors...etc.

Walk through the entire process with the family. Explain how you are going to handle each unique situation. Let them know up front that the service will require special handling and creative problem solving.

The family may become so upset that they leave to go to another funeral home. Don't worry; they will be back. If you have done all the pre-planning; if you have ready answers to their concerns, and present them with dignity, they will think you a hero. The

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main thing is not to commit to something you have not verified.

Planning the oversize funeral will challenge your skills and perseverance. Check everything, and assume nothing. Remember, everything will take three to five times longer. Luke 12: 48 "To whom much is given, much is required."

Keith Davis is president of Goliath Casket, Inc, Lynn, IN. You can reach him at (877) 592-5966 or (765) 874-2380, fax (888) 676-7344 or email goliath@oversizecasket.com. To find out more about Goliath Casket Inc. visit their website at www.oversizecasket.com.

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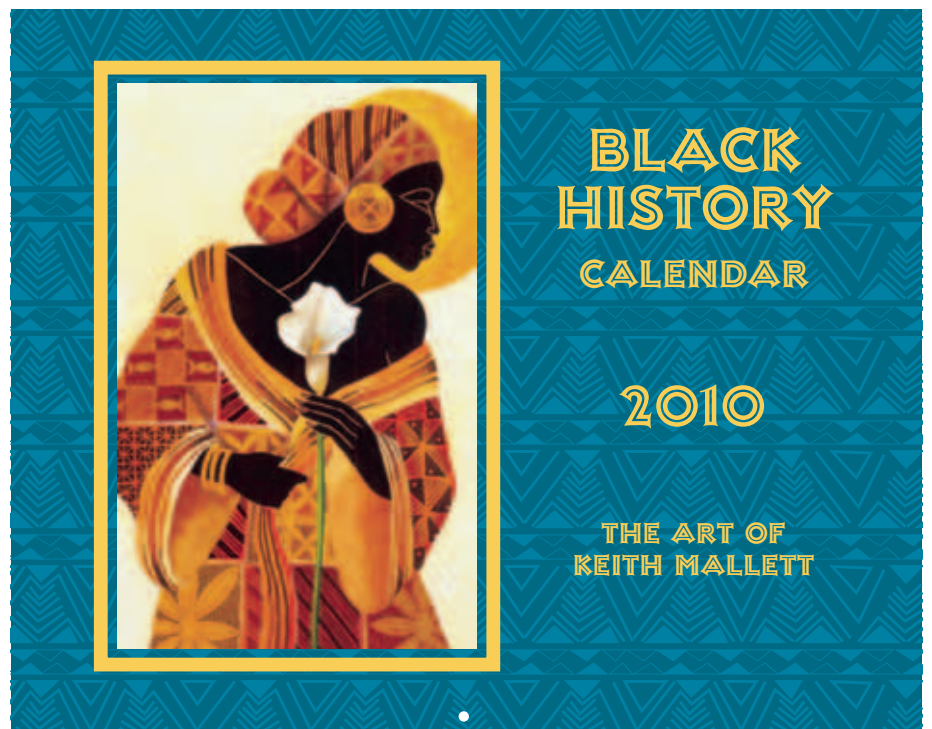
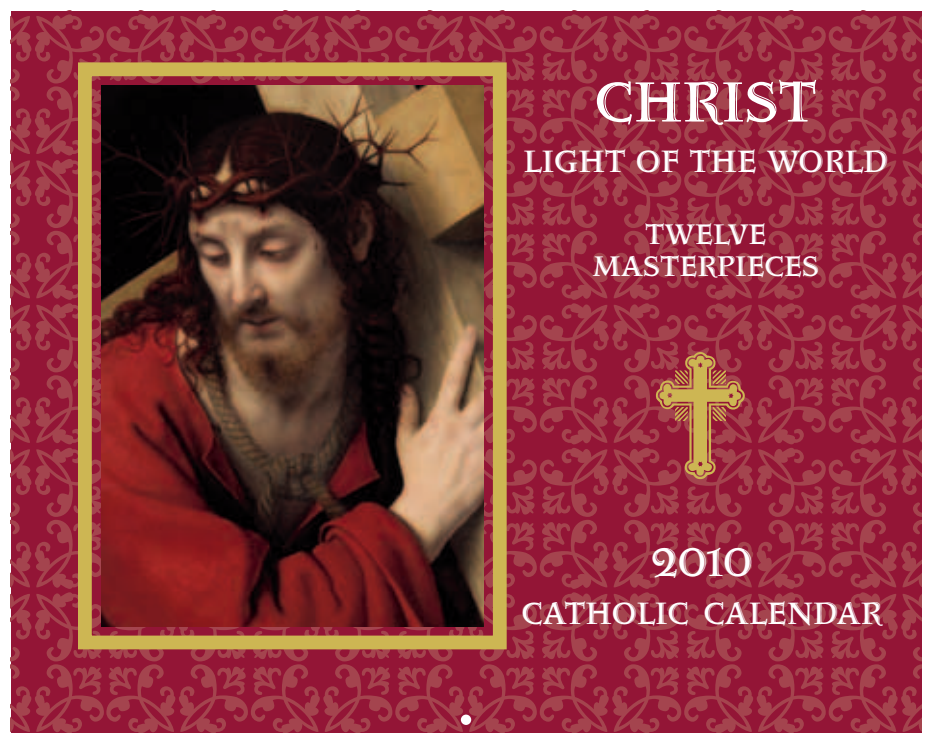
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