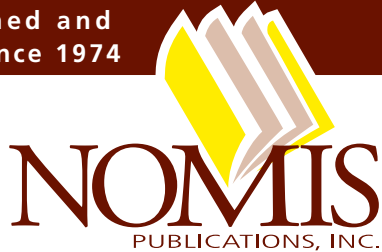


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# FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY

# NEWS

DECEMBER  
2009

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*Joe Veccia, funeral director and funeral home and cemetery owner, has introduced MobileHelp to provide families peace of mind and to provide preneed sales staff with an opportunity to build relationships within the community.*



See "MobileHelp Medical Alert System increases Pre Need Sales" on Page B1

## Memoires des choix des Jacque

(Memories of Jack's Recipes)

*Original Recipes from Dottie and Jack Frediani,  
shared by their daughter,  
Kate Frediani-Gorman, in their memory.*

See Page A42

## Basler Funeral Homes' New Facility has Family in the Details



Basler Funeral Home at 685 Center Drive in Ste. Genevieve, MO



Cozy seating areas off of the main entrance

**STE. GENEVIEVE, MO—** The Basler family has been operating **Basler Funeral Home** since 1898, so when the time came for a new facility to be built, they knew exactly what they wanted. Owners **Leo "Chipper"** and **Carolyn Basler** wanted a funeral home that was warm and inviting – more like a home than a place of business. They put their heads together with their sons, fourth generation funeral director **Eric** and architect **Shawn**, and the ideas came pouring out.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A24**



## CCMS Prepares Student for Service in the Middle East

*By Denise Pfahler*

**For the second of  
this three part series,  
see Page A8**

## William C. Wappner installed as President of the National Funeral Directors Association

**BROOKFIELD, WI—** On Tuesday October 27, **William C. Wappner**, CFSP, was elected president of the **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)**. Wappner, owner of **Wappner Funeral Directors** in Mansfield, OH, was installed as NFDA president during the President's Mardi Gras Ball on October 28, which marked the end of the 2009 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Boston, MA.

Additional members of the 2009-10 NFDA Executive Board who were elected and installed during the NFDA convention include: President-elect **Patrick E. Lynch**, **Lynch & Sons Funeral Directors**, Clawson, MI; Treasurer **Randall L. Earl**, CFSP, **Brintlinger and Earl Funeral Homes**, Decatur, IL; Secretary **Robert "Bob" T. Rosson Jr.**, CFSP, CPC, **Waller Funeral Home**, Oxford,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A36**



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# HAVE YOU SEEN THESE CHILDREN?

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

## Endangered Runaway KAYLA RIVERA



**Date of Birth:** 9/1/1992  
**Date Missing:** 11/19/2008  
**Missing From:** Cambridge, Massachusetts  
**Age at Disappearance:** 16 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 17 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hisp  
**Height:** 5'3"  
**Weight:** 130 lbs  
**Hair:** Brown  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Circumstances:** Both photos shown are of Kayla. She was last seen on November 19, 2008. A portion of her hair is dyed pink.

## Endangered Runaway ROSA CARMINA BETANCOURT-GONZALEZ



**Date of Birth:** 8/11/1989  
**Date Missing:** 2/3/2005  
**Missing From:** Wendell, North Carolina  
**Age at Disappearance:** 15 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 20 Yrs  
**Sex:** Female  
**Race:** White/Hisp  
**Height:** 5'6"  
**Weight:** 135 lbs  
**Hair:** Brown  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Circumstances:** Rosa may be traveling with an adult male companion. She may be traveling in a black 2000 Chevrolet S-10 pickup truck with North Carolina license plates SWW7597.

## Endangered Runaway WILLIAM CHRYSTAL

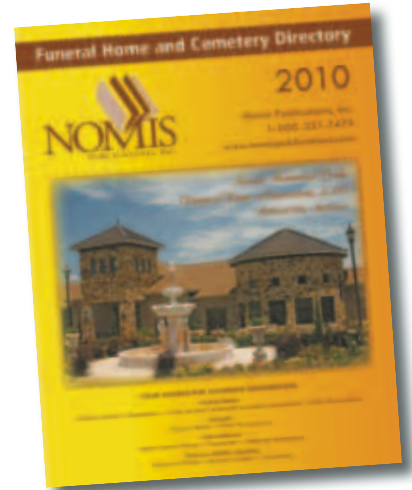


**Date of Birth:** 4/15/1993  
**Date Missing:** 1/22/2009  
**Missing From:** Country Club Hills, Illinois  
**Age at Disappearance:** 15 Yrs  
**Age Now:** 16 Yrs  
**Sex:** Male  
**Race:** Black  
**Height:** 5'6"  
**Weight:** 159 lbs  
**Hair:** Black  
**Eyes:** Brown

**Circumstances:** William was last seen on January 22, 2009. He has a tattoo on the right side of his neck.

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

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



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

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### NOTICE

The FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERY NEWS is now sent in two parts. Section A, which includes pages A1-A48 and Section B, which contains the Classified Advertising and consists of pages B1-B24. If you do not receive both sections please call 1-800-321-7479 or email [info@nomispublications.com](mailto:info@nomispublications.com).

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## Hass-Thielen Funeral Home holds Open House at New Facility



The Hass-Thielen Funeral Home



The Abraham Lincoln Casket Replica at the Open House

**BURLINGTON, IA—** Hass-Thielen Funeral Home of 3940 Division Street, Burlington, recently held their Open House of their new funeral home facility completed by **Keystone Funeral Home Design Build** of Waite Park, MN. Over 1,500 people attended the Open House. Featured at the Open House was a replica of Abraham Lincoln's casket, which was on display for the public to view.

**Adam and Theresa Thielen**, both licensed funeral directors, purchased the funeral home business from Adam's grandfather in 2004. They quickly outgrew the 3,740 square foot facility and built a new state of the art funeral home that can serve all aspects of the funeral service in the Burlington, IA area.

Adam and Theresa researched numerous "funeral home building companies" and selected **Russ Karasch** of Keystone Funeral Home Design Build based on their profes-

sionalism, value and past experience in the funeral industry.

The new facility's exterior features stucco, stone and hardy board exterior, 100 concrete off-street parking stalls. The interior features include a dividable visitation room for up to 300 people, community room with seating for 100, enclosed kitchenette and serving area, children's room, private arrangement room, business office, retail merchandising area, three stall garage, prep room with body lift and leading-edge audio-visual equipment throughout.

Keystone Funeral Home Design Build ([www.keystonedb.com](http://www.keystonedb.com)) was proud to have been selected to design and build the new facility for Adam and Theresa Thielen. Keystone provided assistance with site selection, financing, through construction with the use of local labor and material throughout the project.

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## Finally an Obituary Worth Reading!

By Ryan Thogmartin

If you are like me you spend valuable time every day going through the local newspaper obituary sections. You are browsing the names to see if any are familiar while at the same time checking to see what your competition is doing. Every so often there is a name we recognize, so we pause for a minute and being to read the obituary.

I usually don't make it past the top third of the obit. I just can't continue reading. Why? It puts me to sleep.

Obituaries seem to all be the same, the only thing different is the names. I mean, what do you really learn about the person from reading their obit – how many children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren they had? I never feel like I know who the person was after I finish reading (if I finish) their obituary.

The definition of obituary is “a notice of someone's death; usually includes a short biography.” It seems most have forgot to include the short biography part, the part that might actually get someone to finish reading the obituary.

The obituary should be one of the single most important responsibilities of a funeral director when meeting with a family. Think about it... what is the single greatest form of advertising you do for your funeral home?

If you said “sponsoring the local little league team” you are very wrong. If you said “obituaries” then, ding-ding you win! Your firm publishes obituaries, with your name in them, every day in your local newspaper that circulates to your primary market. Are you utilizing the obituary to help your firm stand out among your competition?

Last week I was emailed the most entertaining obituary I have ever read. It began like a typical biography, which immediately began to pull me in. I learn about how the

deceased loved children and would make baked goods in the summer for all the children playing in the neighborhood. I learned about her likes and dislikes. The obituary also shared some of the deceased's finer moments in life as well as some of her not-so-proud moments.

Before I knew it I had read an obituary that was laid out across two entire pages. When I was done I felt like I had known the deceased her whole life.

I sat back and thought to myself “Finally, an obituary that was worth reading!”

What if your firm began offering obituaries like this - a short biography of the deceased's life? Think of the response you would get from your community.

I am sure this obituary cost this family hundreds of dollars, but they did the very best they could in honoring their loved one's life. The deceased's daughters, who were both accomplished authors, wrote the obituary. Most families don't have access to professional authors, but what if your firm offered one for the family to use?

Thinking outside the box is what will put your firm above your competition. Don't be afraid to stand out for doing something different, especially when it only helps to

honor the life of your customer's loved ones.

I challenge you to begin to start offering obituaries that are “finally worth reading!”

Ryan Thogmartin is the Founder and CEO of ConnectingDirectors.com. ConnectingDirectors.com is a progressive online publication/networking site for funeral professionals. Through ConnectingDirectors.com funeral professionals receive daily funeral industry news, industry specific articles and podcasts, as well as share ideas through an industry discussion board. In addition, Mr. Thogmartin works in sales for his family's burial vault company, Hupp Stiverson Wilbert Vault Inc.



Ryan Thogmartin



## The Gift of Aftercare

By Sherry L. Williams

### How do you respond when people say they want cremation?

When people ask you about cremation, how do you respond? Are you reacting or responding? What I mean is, are you reacting by quickly saying we can do that and it will be blank dollars because you are handling their request as a request for “direct cremation” or are you responding to the question by asking what the family wants to do for the service?

Because cremation has historically been viewed as a threat to the traditional funeral and because as direct cremation, it has such an impact on the bottom line funeral directors have not embraced the fact that it is truly just another way to handle disposition of the body. It is really difficult to deal with an issue if you fear that it will affect your well-being and not only your profit margins, but the future of your business. But, remember the traditional funeral and cremation are not mutually exclusive.

Cremation as an option continues to grow in our industry and we just need to learn how to respond to families in a way that will continue to promote their psychological well-being, allow them to say goodbye, build memories and acknowledge not only in their heads that someone has died but be able to accept in their hearts that a loved one has died.

Very often cremation is chosen by the person who is dying because they think this will be easier for the family, not truly understanding that it is necessary for a grieving individual to get their heads and their hearts around the fact that the death of their loved one has truly occurred. For years now, I have had to work with families when direct cremation or cremation without any kind of service has been done, I have had to spend the first part of our relationship with one another just helping them accept the fact that what has happened is real. They know intellectually that the death has occurred but emotionally, they just can't seem to grasp the entirety of what has happened. They have not had an opportunity to say goodbye. They have not had the opportunity to gather the support of family and friends. They have not given family and friends the opportunity to say good-

bye themselves. Friends and family are emotionally supportive during the time of death but not if they aren't able to participate in some sort of ritual or service that allows them to say goodbye. It is necessary for there to be a “rite of passage” from this world to the next. Sharing in a memorial service at home or at a place of worship feed our spiritual needs and gives the opportunity to pay tribute to the significance of the life of the person who died to the family, to friends and to the community that embraced this person during their life.

When people are given the opportunity to share this “rite of passage”, it facilitates movement through the process of grief. In addition, it gives family and friends the opportunity to share stories about the person who died and add to the memory bank that will now become the basis for remembering that person—what they meant to you and people who knew them. The sharing of a service also allows us to learn things about the person who died that we may have never known. For instance, when my mother died, a young man came to her funeral and explained how my mother had been responsible for his getting through college. When I ask what he meant, he explained that my mother had sent him \$100.00 a month for all four years he was in college. (This young man worked in the florist as the delivery boy for my mother, she knew he was from a broken home and had very limited financial support.) He further explained that sometimes that \$100.00 was all he had to use for food for the month. I would never have been blessed with this story if we had not had an open funeral service and visitation.

People also need a place to go, to acknowledge that the death is real, and that is why it is important even if scattering is chosen, that there is a memorial cite. It can be a tree planted, or a photo with a memorial plaque, it can be a marker in a memorial garden or the garden in your own yard, but people need a place to reconnect on high emotional impact days like holidays, the anniversary of the death, or the birthday of the person who died. People want to feel connected again spiritually and a place where they can grieve publicly without being questioned provides that safe place to meditate and pray and even talk to the person who died. Once again, I witnessed the need for this first hand with my own family and not just with people I helped to facilitate their grief. My husband and I married three years after his wife of 27 years died suddenly. She was cremated and my husband had created a memorial with the urn on his fireplace. But after we married, that memorial was moved and his children found they had no place to go so they could just feel close to their mother on special days. We decided to get a marker and place it on the family lot in the cemetery. This has been such a blessing for his children. It has allowed them to move beyond the place they were and toward

a healthier place in their grief and to build a stronger relationship with me.

People want a place to show that they care and that the life of a loved one has mattered. We have witnessed this with many disasters that have occurred. With the Columbine shootings, kids from the school immediately made the football field a memorial haven, filling the links in the chain fence around the football field with mementos, letters, photos, and stuffed animals to show they cared and that the people who had died mattered. With the Value Jet Crash in the Everglades, people needed to see the items that were recovered, jewelry, wallets, pieces of clothing, briefcases or whatever was found because they could not believe that their loved one was really gone. We learned so much from the Value Jet Crash that when 9/11 occurred, each family member was given an urn that contained some earth from “ground zero” so they could embrace the fact that the death of their loved one had occurred and so that they could physically have something they could have for a ritual that would allow them to say goodbye.

You see, people really do need the opportunity to say goodbye, they need the option to tell the story of the life of the person who has died and when you as the funeral practitioner, react to a request for cremation, you are robbing yourself and the families you serve of an opportunity to hold on to ritual and ritual is what gives our lives meaning and structure. Healthy grieving encompasses traditional rituals to go along with cremation or burial and the families you serve deserve both.

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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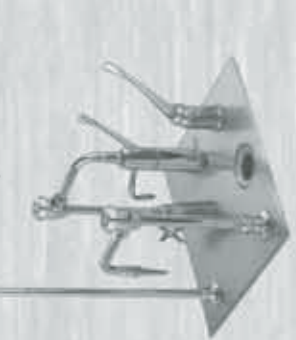
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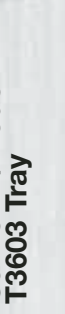
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## Funeral Advocate denounces Grave Desecration

**BOCA RATON, FL**— The reports continue to surface: Across the country, graves have been dug up and bodies moved to make room for new remains. More disturbing, according to **Bruce Jacobs**, founder and president of **Your Funeral Advocate, LLC** (<http://www.yourfuneraladvocate.com>) is that the desecration has occurred in Jewish cemeteries owned by a large corporation. Now Jacobs is speaking out about the desecration of Jewish graves and urging the Jewish community to take a stand against the conglomerate that owns the cemeteries.

"The recent desecration of graves in Jewish cemeteries clearly shows that the company charged with caretaking has no concern or respect for the Jewish dead," Jacobs explained. "Are rabbis and Jewish leaders condoning their congregants' support of funeral homes that are owned by a company that does not care about the Jewish religion

or the importance of its traditions? We cannot allow such practices to continue."

Jacobs believes Jewish-owned media and Jewish leaders have been reluctant to decry the ongoing grave desecrations by corporate cemetery owners publicly because of the significant advertising dollars those same companies spend in Jewish newspapers and the sizable donations they have been rumored to give to synagogues throughout the nation. But the willful desecration of Jewish graves, he says, is something that no amount of money can convince him to overlook.

"All rabbis, Jewish community leaders and Jewish media need to protest and condemn grave desecration and come out in opposition of certain corporate-owned funeral homes," Jacobs stated. "Rabbis, community leaders and Jewish publications cannot sit back and be silent on this issue! Anything less would be interpreted as indifference to or endorsement of the ongoing disrespect for Jewish tradition."

Jacobs, a licensed funeral director who has spent well over 40 years in the funeral industry, is passionate in his advocacy for families facing funeral arrangements and in his support for locally owned and operated funeral homes and cemeteries. He spends his time working on behalf of families to ensure they are treated fairly and with respect during the most difficult times of their lives — and he does it at no charge.

That passion drives Jacobs to take a public stand against the practices in which he says corporate-owned funeral homes are knowingly engaging for the sake of the bottom line. When graves are desecrated to make room for new bodies, he says, the families of the deceased must live with the pain of that violation for the rest of their lives, while a large corporation reaps the financial benefits.

So Jacobs is calling for the criminal prosecution of the officers of any corporation that has engaged in such practices. "I hope the Jewish community will stand with me," he concludes. He also calls for careful inspection of all non-Jewish cemeteries owned by the large corporation as desecrations may very well be occurring in those cemeteries as well.

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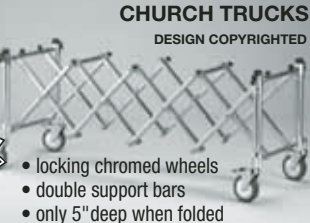
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## A Proactive Approach to Advance Funeral Planning

By Christopher Kuhnen

### How to Make a Good Professional Appearance (Part 2)

In part one of this special three part series we discussed men's suits and outlined all the suits today's professionally dressed man will have in his wardrobe. This month we'll incorporate shirts, ties, socks and other accessories.

**Button your jacket properly, especially during meetings and presentations.** For a four-button jacket, button only the top three buttons; for a three-button jacket, button the top two or the middle button only (never the third button); for a two-button jacket, button the top button only; and for double breasted styles, button all the buttons, all the time.

**Men should keep pant cuffs between 1.25" to 1.5".** Anything wider than 1.75" is too wide. More on cuffs: flat-front pants should not be cuffed, while pleated trousers should always be cuffed. Make sure your pants are long enough with at least a medium break, covering the point where the heel joins the upper shoe. Men's pants should touch the top front of the shoes.

While we're on the subject of pants, let's address a common problem with men.

**Dressing properly for our body shape is a way for men and women to shave pounds off their look.** For some reason, men carry a few extra pounds around the mid section and tend to wear their pants so low (below the bulge) in the front it does not look good. Most tailors will recommend that men wear their pants close to their natural waistline. This does not mean that men's pants must go up to their belly but-

ton, as this can create a bit of a Humpty Dumpty look, which is not a good thing. However, raising the waistline to cover some of the bulge will actually help these men to look thinner and in many cases give the illusion of height. Dressing in this manner will often require that a man go up a pant size, and this will work best when worn with braces or suspenders (non-slip only please!). The key is to find the right balance where the body looks in proportion. For some men that will mean wearing the pants at the natural waist and for others a bit below the natural waist. A quick check in a full length mirror will tell you if the look is proportionate. If the pants always need to be pulled up or the shirt has a tendency to blouse out, you can be sure that your pants need to be pulled up.

**Always wear dress shirts.** You should always be thinking about how you portray professionalism and a polished image and a long sleeve dress shirt is just the ticket. Even though dress shirts require a higher up-front investment, when maintained properly they should last longer and therefore cost less per wear. Men should have no fewer than 10 dress shirts. Try point-collared dress shirts. They make a more professional statement than do button down collars, especially with collar stays, which are worth the extra effort to keep your shirt crisp throughout the day.

During the summer months men should continue to wear long-sleeved shirts along with an undershirt to wick away perspiration. Men's chest and arm hair should always be covered. When it comes to dress shirt colors white and blue are standard. Many shades of blue dress shirts are available: light blue, French blue and banker's blue are the best colors for most men.

**A man's tie should graze the top of his belt buckle.** Ties come in two tie lengths: regular, which is 56-57 inches long, and tall, which is 60-61 inches long, on average. For men who could use a shorter tie length, find a skilled tailor who can shorten the back blade of the tie. The width of the tie should also be taken into consideration. Although thinner ties are in fashion now, the proportion of the tie in relation to the suit is more important than the "in" style.

**As a general rule of thumb, the tie should be the same width as the lapel, which on average is three and a half to three and three quarter inches.** A shorter man will look more proportionate in a narrower tie because the tie will match his narrower shoulders. By having a

tie width that follows the natural proportions of the man's body and the suit itself, the shorter man looks taller and more powerful.

**Wear thin dress socks only with suits.** Your socks must be long enough so that when you cross your legs, no skin is showing. Avoid patterned socks completely. Always wear black shoes, even when wearing navy suits. Avoid brown shoes completely.

**Are there areas of the United States where you can get away with one dress standard that you could not get away with in another area?** How do regional professional dress standards come into play when attempting to dress professionally? American business is now global and it is suggested that we all image up and dress more professionally. You may be doing business in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where dressy cowboy boots are perfectly acceptable to wear with your suit, but working with someone who grew up in Boston and the local style of dress might influence his/her perception. Keep to global standards to be safe.

Be sure and read part three of this exciting series next month.

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.

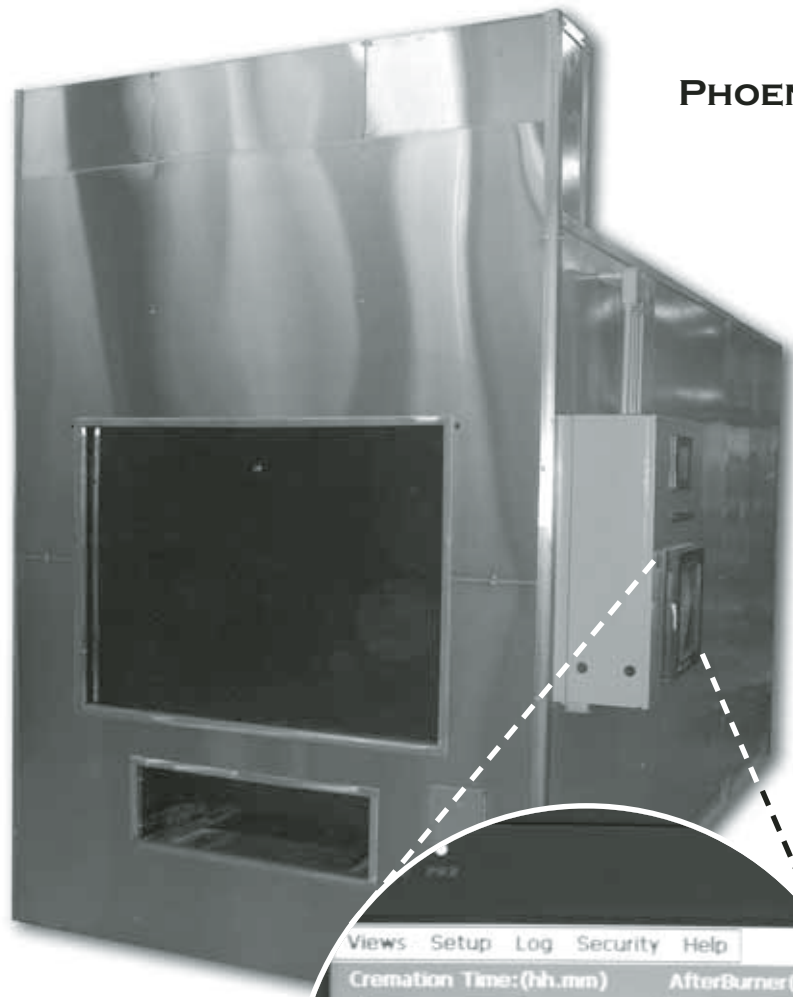
He is a Kentucky Licensed Funeral Director, Life Insurance Agent and member in good standing Funeral Directors Association of Kentucky. Additionally, Chris is a recognized Certified Preplanning Consultant (CPC) as bestowed by the Funeral Service Foundation and a recognized Certified Marketing Specialist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

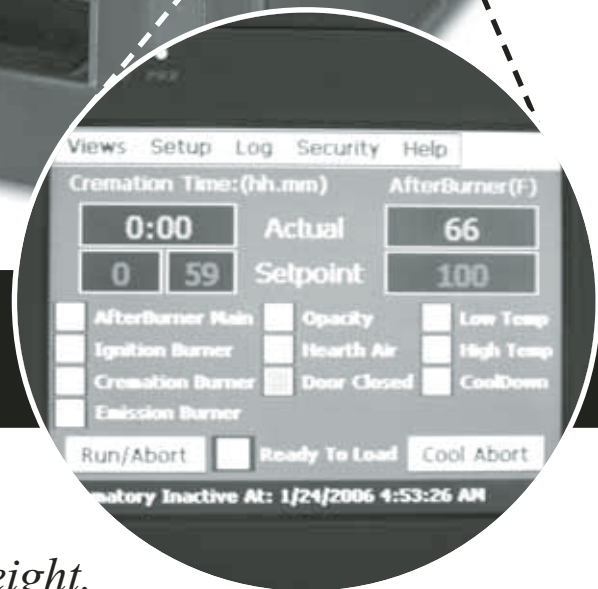
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## CCMS Prepares Student for Service in the Middle East

By Denise Pfahler

Denise Pfahler is a 23-year-old Staff Sergeant in the Air National Guard based in Columbus, OH, and a student at the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science. Her studies were interrupted recently when she was deployed to the Middle East. At the time, she didn't realize that she would carry the knowledge from her CCMS labs and coursework halfway around the world and use her mortuary skills for the good of the country.

Following is part two in a series reflecting her firsthand account of a soldier's life in a war zone.

When I arrived at my base, I was deployed into Off-Base Travel Primary Coordinator. My job was to ensure total accountability for people coming in to and leaving the base. Before long, my "highers" – Captain Paul Jefferson and Lt. Colonel Kimberly Boehm – learned that prior to being called up I had been pursuing a Bachelor of Mortuary Science degree at *Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science* and that I had been through Mortuary Search and Recovery Management. I was honored that they asked me to rebuild the base mortuary and to modify and create a mortuary continuity binder that would provide important information and helpful guidance to those serving in ongoing rotations.



Denise Pfahler

I was pleased that my mortuary training could be applied to such a vital mission. I accepted the opportunity for this task to prove to myself that I could do it and to leave my footprint.

I became the Mortuary Affairs Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) and was assisted by the Mortuary Office, Captain Jefferson. I continued to work my 13- to 15-hour days in my main job and focused on my newest responsibility in the mortuary during off-time. There was much to be done. Basically, we started from the ground and worked our way up. We

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A22**



## Changing Lives Through Laughter

By Nancy Weil

### Laughter: A Scientific Exploration

We laugh spontaneously when we experience something that amuses us. There is no thought to it, it just happens. However, there is a physiological response that naturally occurs every time we giggle and guffaw. Understanding this process and bringing it to the surface, allows you to access the incredible healing power of humor whenever you need a little stress relief (and who doesn't need a little stress relief now and then?)

Laughter can be produced from a response to something unexpected. The comedian sets up a story and suddenly switches up the expected ending triggering a response in our brain that spots the incongruity and tickles our proverbial funny bone. Certain letters are funnier than others. People find words with a "K" for instance funnier than a word than an "N." Laughter most often occurs when we are with other people. 80% of laughter is in response to a social situation, not because of a joke being told. Scientists now theorize that the sound we produce when we laugh is an evolutionary mechanism that comes from our shared ancestry with the apes. There are scientists who are conducting serious inquiries into this by tickling monkeys. Yes, your tax dollars are hard at work funding the monkey-tickling study. Scientists tickle the monkeys and then record the sounds they make. They then analyze the sound waves and have discovered that they are very similar to our laughter. To take this a step further, apes greet each

other with a social grunting that sounds like our laughter. This sound is to show a desire to be friendly and not aggressive. Go to any bar on a weekend night and you will hear many of the same sounds coming from singles looking to make friends.

Laughter can also be produced on demand. Right now you have the power to laugh. Go ahead, try it. It's great to release all of the day's tension with a good belly laugh. Laughter is simply a burst of air that repeats – ha,ha,ha, ha,ha. Your brain takes notice and begins to release chemicals to create that good feeling. Immediately endorphins release and cortisol levels drop. Oxygen is brought in as we breathe deeply and clear out all of the stale air stored in our lungs. Your immune system boosts and muscles relax (this is where the pee your pants syndrome comes from). Your brain wakes up and begins to use both lobes increasing the ability to creative problem solve. This is a boon when you are stuck on an issue that seems without a simple resolution.

Did you realize that when you laugh, the different sounds you use work different parts of the body? Giggle and feel your face engage. Try a hearty ha-ha and your chest rises and falls. Produce a deep Santa laugh of ho-ho-ho and your belly moves. You can get a total body workout just from laughing!

Not yet convinced of why laughter may be the best medicine? Consider this: with the wave of H1N1 creating anxiety in even the healthiest of people, previous studies have found that people who laugh regularly have fewer upper respiratory illnesses than those who don't. While Washington will continue to dispense flu shots to fight this pandemic, the idea of laughing yourself healthy falls under the "can't hurt, might help" category. So, wash your hands often, cough into your sleeve and follow all of the other preventative protocols, but add a little laughter into your daily schedule.

Norman Cousins healed from a "terminal" illness by putting laughter into his treatment plan. He theorized that if negative emotions could create illness, then positive emotions should be able to create health. In his book *Anatomy of an Illness*, Cousins tells of the many ways he incorporated humor into his day. He wrote, "I made the joyous discovery that ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect and would give me at least two hours

of pain-free sleep." Pain relief is yet another benefit of laughter. In nursing homes where regular laughter clubs are held, patients were found to need fewer analgesics than they did before.

In our industry, laughter may not be good for business, as it keeps people healthier longer, postponing their need for our services. Stress is reduced and stress induced illnesses drop. The immune system is enhanced and the body is better able to fight off disease. Blood vessels dilate, blood pressure decreases, oxygen intake improves and other benefits of exercise are gained. Not good for business at all. However, as I tell my clients, our cemetery has been in existence for 150 years and we are in no hurry for their arrival!

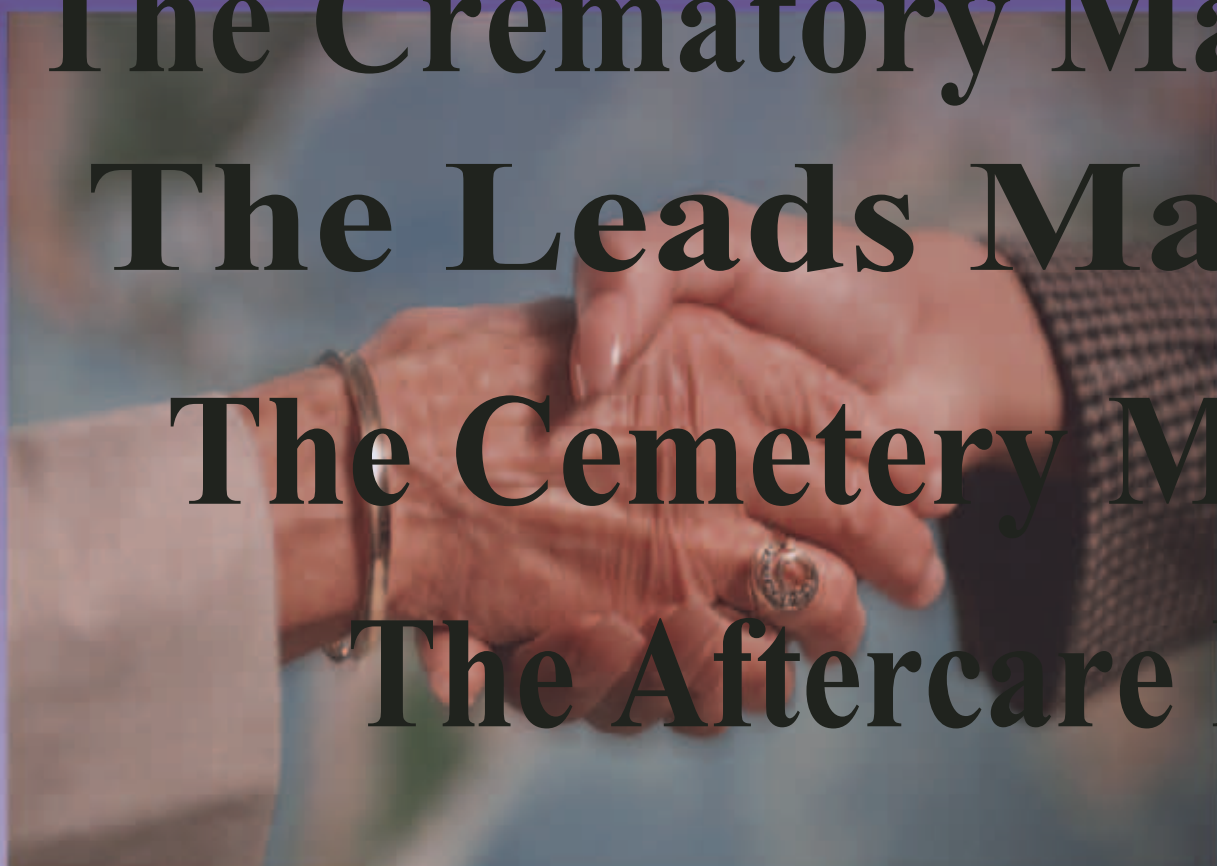
Put laughter into your routine and you will begin to quickly realize the benefits. Beyond the physical aspects, you will also notice the change in your mood, for laughter prevents a "hardening of the attitudes." Your response to stressful situations will change. You start to look for the "funny" in every conversation. Soon you will find that you live to laugh and laugh to live.

With certifications as a Laughter Leader, Funeral Celebrant, Grief Services Provider and Grief Management Specialist, Nancy Weil is uniquely qualified to bring new perspectives and new ways to help clients heal from the pain of grief as well as reduce stress for professionals in the industry. As Director of Aftercare at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Buffalo, NY, Nancy has developed one of the most comprehensive aftercare programs of any cemetery in the country in order to support families following the death of a loved one.

A professional public speaker, Nancy brings her passionate interest in the healing qualities and therapeutic benefits of laughter to groups across the country through her company The Laugh Academy. Nancy's latest project is a collaborative scientific inquiry into the relationship between the use of humor and laughter while coping with the death of a loved one. She has also developed a DVD, *Bandages for Your Heart*, with techniques that can help ease the pain of grief immediately.

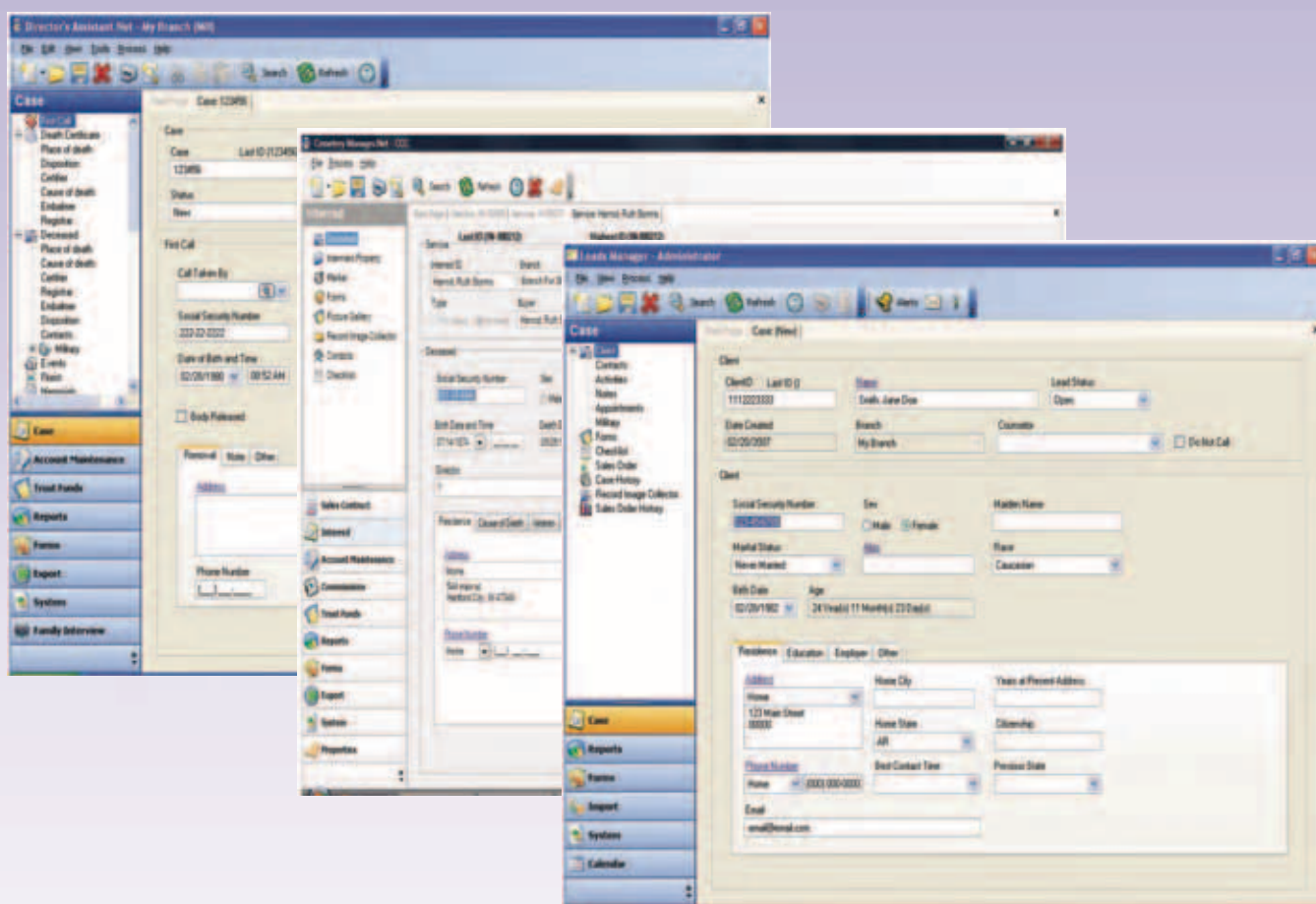
You can contact Nancy at [nancyw@mountcalvarycemetery.com](mailto:nancyw@mountcalvarycemetery.com) or visit her website at [www.thelaughacademy.com](http://www.thelaughacademy.com).

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**McKay's South Bay Mortuary holds Earthquake Preparation Seminar**

LAWDALE, CA— There was a lot of shaking going on at the McKay's South Bay Mortuary in Lawndale, CA on Wednesday, July 1, 2009. The mortuary hosted an earthquake preparation seminar at their Marine



The McKay's South Bay Staff



A few of the items that were included in McKay's earthquake preparation bags.

Avenue Chapel in response to the alarming earthquake that shook the Los Angeles area earlier this year.

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the community knew what to do in the event that another earthquake of equal or greater magnitude was to hit that area again. Representa-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A12**



Joseph A. Scarano

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**Legal Speak**

By Atty. Harvey I. Lapin

**Dealing with the Unthinkable (Part 3)**

The situation involving the Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois and the alleged crimes committed by four employees continues to be a problem for the industry in Illinois. It has to be indicated that the crimes committed were alleged because the four employees are still being investigated and prosecuted by the Cook County Sheriff's Office. We also previously discussed the reaction of the members of the Illinois Cemetery and Funeral Home Association ("ICFHA") and the development of an action plan for responding to the immense adverse reaction to the situation by the owners of spaces at Burr Oak, the media and government officials. Some of the action plan material can be reviewed on the ICFHA's website at icfha.org. It was also indicated that various federal and state governmental agencies had commenced an investigation of cemeteries in the state of Illinois to determine if new legislation was required.

The action by the various governmental agencies led to the introduction of extensive legislation that if enacted could result in serious financial problems for a segment of the cemetery and funeral industry in Illinois. After the Report of the Governor's Oversight Task Force, the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation ("DORPR") was assigned to develop new legislation in Illinois regulating the cemetery segment of the Industry. This legislation, after numerous drafts and discussions with different interests in the industry, was introduced into the Illinois General Assembly on October 27, 2009, during a short Veto Session, as Amendment No. 2 to SB 1471. SB 1471 originally dealt with a minor change to the Illinois Cemetery Care Act and since it had already had passed in the Illinois Senate it could be amended, under the General Assembly Rules of the House, with similar legislation and then sent quickly back to the Senate.

The 2nd Amendment to SB 1471, titled the "Cemetery Oversight Act" ("COA") totaled over 250 pages in length. It covered every cemetery in the state of Illinois, except for small inactive cemeteries. Previous drafts of the proposed legislation had also exempted the religious, municipal and fraternal cemeteries. Accordingly, the advocates for these cemeteries were not concerned about the requirements of the proposed legislation because it did not apply to them. The COA would require the licensing of all cemetery authorities, cemetery managers, cemetery service employees involved in selling to consumers and the registration of all other cemetery employees. COA included a Business Practices section that imposed new maintenance, mapping and recordkeeping requirements and even required cemeteries to be responsible for controlling traffic outside the gates. The COA also has a section titled "Consumer Bill of Rights" that sets out contract requirements, disclosures of information about pricing and provides limitations on the merchandise and services to be sold by cemeteries.

The jurisdiction and administration of the COA was transferred to the DOFPR and extensive administrative provisions for issuing licenses, revoking and suspending licenses were added. The DOFPR also could impose fines up to \$10,000 for each violation. Many of the requirements were not specified and were subject to further clarification by Rules issued by DOFPR. One of the House Members requested that another agency of the Illinois Government provide an estimate of the cost for DOFPR to administer the Act. It was subsequently estimated that the cost would be over nine million dollars. Since the State of Illinois is having the same financial problems as most of the other states, it is expected that the cost would be paid with fees collected from the proposed licensees.

When COA was introduced and covered most cemeteries, the advocates for the religious and municipal cemeteries realized there were serious and onerous problems with COA. They immediately began lobbying to be exempt from COA. They also testified at the Hearing on Amendment 2 about how onerous certain provisions would be on their operations. The sponsor of COA reacted to the apparent extensive political pressure by proposing Amendment 3 to SB1471 that now exempted the religious and municipal cemeteries from most of the provisions of COA. Amendment 3 passed the House after an extensive discussion on the floor about some of the problems, including the cost to administrate.

SB 1471, as amended, then was sent over to the Senate for its consideration during the last morning of the Veto Session. ICFHA and its members that were still covered by the proposed COA were strongly against its passage since it now only applied to an estimated 12% of the cemeteries in the state and

the cost of compliance would probably result in some cemeteries going out of business. Fortunately, the leaders of the Senate had some concerns that this was proceeding too fast, so SB 1471 was not acted upon and it was indicated that it would be considered when the regular session of the Senate commenced on January 12, 2010.

This saga will continue next year and hopefully COA can be modified so that it has a less onerous affect on those cemeteries that it covers. Of course it is possible that the legislature may decide in the process that some of the provisions of COA should apply to all cemeteries. Since this is the last column of the year, the author would like to wish everyone a great Holiday Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

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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## McKay's Earthquake Preparation Seminar

Continued from Page A10



Mark McKay with Gas Company representative Dennis Lord



Shannan Guillory presents one of the attending families with a complimentary earthquake preparation bag.

tives from the Gas Company (*Dennis Lord*) and Los Angeles County Fire (*Captain Mike Dodd*) came out to show their support and offer some important tips to the eager listeners about the Do's and Don'ts when an earthquake occurs. The McKay's also gave away full earthquake preparation kits to all who attended which included: bleach, water, flashlights, diapers, hygiene products and many other necessities. A complete earthquake-ready first aid kit valued at \$100 was also raffled off to the attendees. The event was a complete success and all who were in attendance were overall pleased with the event.

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## Observations

By Steven Palmer

### Nearsighted

*Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world.*  
—Arthur Schopenhauer

I have some experience with being nearsighted. Diagnosed with the affliction at the age of nine, stubbornly refusing to wear my "corrective lenses" until the age of 12, my eyesight has been failing me ever since. I couldn't "see" the long term consequences. Now I read newsprint up close and I may not recognize an acquaintance across the room. Most street signs become someone else's responsibility. It is an affliction I didn't ask for, yet I did not properly recognize it when I should have.

At the recently ended National Funeral Directors Association Convention, the House of Delegates, at which I was present as a voting member, showed, in my opinion, the same shortsightedness with the failure of enough votes to pass the Allied Membership resolution.

The resolution would have established a category of membership for "Allied Members." These applicants for membership in NFDA could be "an individual, business or organization not otherwise eligible for membership in NFDA." Also, "an applicant must be involved in a field allied to the funeral profession."

Those applying for membership "would be granted at the discretion of NFDA Executive Board after carefully reviewing each application and considering numerous factors." Input from state associations and two references

from current NFDA members in good standing are required. They obviously must support NFDA's "mission, vision and goals."

Allied Members would not have served on the Executive Board, Policy Board or House of Delegates.

It would have allowed the 4 to 5 interested individuals and businesses who call NFDA headquarters every week to join. These people wanted to be in the same association as their customers or potential customers and receive information and education from us about what we do.

NFDA's mission statement: The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is the worldwide resource and advocate across all facets of funeral service dedicated to high ethical standards and helping members provide meaningful service to families.

How can we live up to this statement when we don't advocate all facets of funeral service?

In February of 2010, NFDA and CANA will hold a joint "cremation symposium": for the training of funeral service practitioners desiring proficiency into this ever-growing part of final care.

Mark Musgrove, NFDA Past President proudly stated, prior to the vote, "I am a funeral director, I am also a cemeterian, I am also a cremationist, I am also a caterer. Why should I have to go to other associations to get the training that I and all of my staff need?"

NFDA Past president Jack Hogan's thoughts were to those (the cemetery products vendors, cremation vendors and the others) who have generously paid for many parts of the convention and its functions. He stated, "We ask them to pay for dinner, but they are not allowed to sit at our table."

A two-thirds vote was needed for the resolutions passage. Out of 647 votes, the final vote tally was 409 for, 238 against; 23 votes short of the needed 432; a defeat that will someday be turned into victory. There is no

other option to the eventual survival of this association. Most people outside of our vocation consider funeral directors, cemeterians and cremationists as one, the same.

NFDA has been warned in its Governance and Member Audit that unless it expands its representation of related final care providers that it will eventually become a niche association.

NFDA members are involved in the following businesses: monument companies (33.8%), crematory (26.9%), cemetery (14.4%), insurance company (11.1%), flower shop (5.5%), pet cemetery (4.5%) and other (10.5%).

What we have told them is there are other associations that will welcome your allied business membership, but not NFDA.

My nearsightedness is not correctable. But NFDA's members' myopia is. A careful look at where the future of our vocation is, not where we want it to be, is desperately needed. It is changing as we read this. Those who do not embrace or try to understand it, or put it in services to help families will be the sight impaired. Woe to them. I am desperately working on my vision problem, are you?

*If we are to survive, we must have ideas, vision, and courage. These things are rarely produced by committees. Everything that matters in our intellectual and moral life begins with an individual confronting his own.*

—Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

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

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## Michael S. Lake begins Skydiving Certification



**NORTH ATTLEBORO, MA—** Michael S. Lake, co-owner of the **Dyer-Lake Funeral Home** in North Attleboro, has begun the certification process of becoming a certified skydiver. He performed his first skydive in Newport, Rhode Island recently and is currently enrolled in a program to become a licensed skydiver. The certification program consists of seven levels. Each level provides the training on the ground with an instructional skydiver.

The training begins with an intensive ground school where the basic orientation

to skydiving occurs and aircraft procedures, freefall body position, canopy control and safety procedures are learned.

Following ground school, candidates are assigned two Accelerated Freefall Certified Master Jumpers. The instructors assist the candidates through the next levels of training including the basic skills for body flight, maneuvers during the 125 MPH freefall, "heading control," 360 degree turns and freefall flips.

Lake anticipates being certified by spring 2010.

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# New England Burials at Sea LLC expands both its Fleet and its Territory



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Captain Brad White

MARSHFIELD, MA— New England Burials At Sea (NEBAS), now the north east's largest burial at sea provider, is expanding its charter fleet by offering larger vessels that can accommodate up to 400 people with affordable, individualized and personal memorial ash scattering and full body sea burials from Boothbay Maine to the Mid Atlantic area (the Carolinas) and to the west coast of the USA through approved affiliates.

NEBAS now offers attended or unattended year round memorial cruises for traditional ash scatterings or complete full body casket free eco friendly sea burials, both per strict U.S. Coast Guard and EPA regulations, presided over by a USCG licensed vessel captain (and a licensed funeral director) for full body committals.



Sea Bottle™ Commemorative

At the Boston NFDA show, NEBAS introduced the industry's first and newest patent pending Atlantic Sea Burial Shroud® for full body sea burials. The soft-sided shroud is hand stitched in New England and designed as an ocean friendly burial alternative that is more cost effective than the price of a full wood or metal casket. It is suitable for pre voyage funeral home viewings and comes in a variety of earth tone colors with custom monogramming available. The shroud is made from natural materials and is designed to degrade in a few short months offering a true "eco-friendly" sea burial.

Captain Brad White recently announced, "The NFDA show really helped to introduce us to many funeral homes, crematories and the US Military who now are aware that NEBAS offers cost efficient sea burial services in a professional and dignified manner within 48 hours of the first call."

Available options are ocean friendly flowers arrangements including hand woven sea wreaths and urns. Digital and video photography of the service is available for online photo shows and full documentation of the event. White recently announced that live event simulcasting can also be broadcast worldwide to friends and family members that may not be able to attend but who can easily log online

to witness in real time.

For ash scatterings, the vessel voyages three nautical miles to sea and scatters ashes with a customized family sea tribute service. At the close of the service, loved ones receive a commemorative distinguished parchment burial certificate indicating the date, time, depth and exact latitude and longitude of the ceremony so that area can be visited at a later date. Also included is an aerial ocean photo view of the location and a Sea Bottle™ filled with the specific area's water, sand and indigenous sea shells that are wax capped sealed and hanked with sailor's marlin wrap as a keepsake of the event.

The company is building a network of approved and qualified sea burial certified captains™ on the east coast of the USA with affiliates recently established on the West Coast.

White also added, "Our sea tribute service is not only an improved thematic way for the loved one's final wish to be committed to sea, but a great opportunity for funeral directors to recapture shrinking revenue from increased lower cost direct cremations by adding a dignified and affordable at sea send off for the family."

Sea Burials are affordable dignified alternatives to traditional burials. NEBAS ensures a loved one a final resting place at sea, while relieving family of significant financial burdens in their time of distress.

For more information visit [www.NewEnglandBurialsAtSea.com](http://www.NewEnglandBurialsAtSea.com), write 149 Old Main St, PO Box 489, Marshfield Hills, MA, 02051-0489, or call (781) 834-0112, cell: (617) 966-1986, toll free (877) 897-7700, Fax (781) 834-0113, or email [OceanBurial@Aol.com](mailto:OceanBurial@Aol.com).



# OSHA Compliance

By Gary Finch

*"I got a question for you: Are you fired up? Are you ready to go? Are you fired up? Are you ready to go? ..."*

I only wish that I could tell you that this was from an address to the National Cheer Leaders Association. The fact is, it is from President Barack Obama in his address to the AFL-CIO. It has been thirty years since the unions were this excited. Oh, how the unions loved Jimmy Carter.

Most of you are not aware of what OSHA was like under President Carter. This was a time when OSHA was not inspecting funeral homes. It was years before OSHA promulgated the Hazard Communications, Formaldehyde, or Bloodborne Pathogen Standards. The focus back then was on heavy industry.

More importantly, it was a time when OSHA was throwing everything but the kitchen sink at employers. Inspectors were given wide latitude in interpreting regulations and issuing citations. A friend of mine operated a rendering plant in Nixon, Texas. They cooked byproducts that the local poultry processing plants did not use.

He was cited and fined because his employee restroom did not have a split seat on the commode. The inspector claimed this was an accident just waiting to happen. A male employee could accidentally get his private parts trapped under the toilet seat. It wasn't just the inspector that was this grandiose, it was the agency itself.

Twenty years later, the tiny agency of OSHA with its 3000 employees, tied the massive IRS in a poll to determine the most hated federal agency. This is the pe-

riod where OSHA earned the hatred. It is the period that OSHA earned so much love from unions. This is when the US Chamber of Commerce changed from being pro-OSHA to anti-OSHA. That is the same US Chamber of Commerce that is part of President Obama's enemies list.

Safety insiders are uncertain on how far this will go. Labor's first priority is for Congress to pass an Ergonomic Standard. In our current economic environment, be assured that big business and the US Chamber of Commerce is going to fight it. It should be a brawl. If something is passed, what it will actually require is anyone's guess.

So, brothers and sisters, are you longing for a new reinvigorated OSHA? Are you fired up now? Are you really fired up? Are you ready? Are you ready for changes that you can believe in? Well it's here.

It is about to happen. Or, it is about to try. It should be interesting. If you aren't up to date on compliance, you might think about getting there. You might even check your toilet seat.

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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**NEWS**

## Missoula Cemetery hosts Stories and Stones Historical Tour

MISSOULA, MT— One of Missoula's oldest cemeteries presented an afternoon of history coming to life through stories of individuals from Missoula's past on Sunday, October 25. This was the **Missoula Cemetery's** seventh year of this vastly popular event for all ages.

The historical tour answered these questions and more:

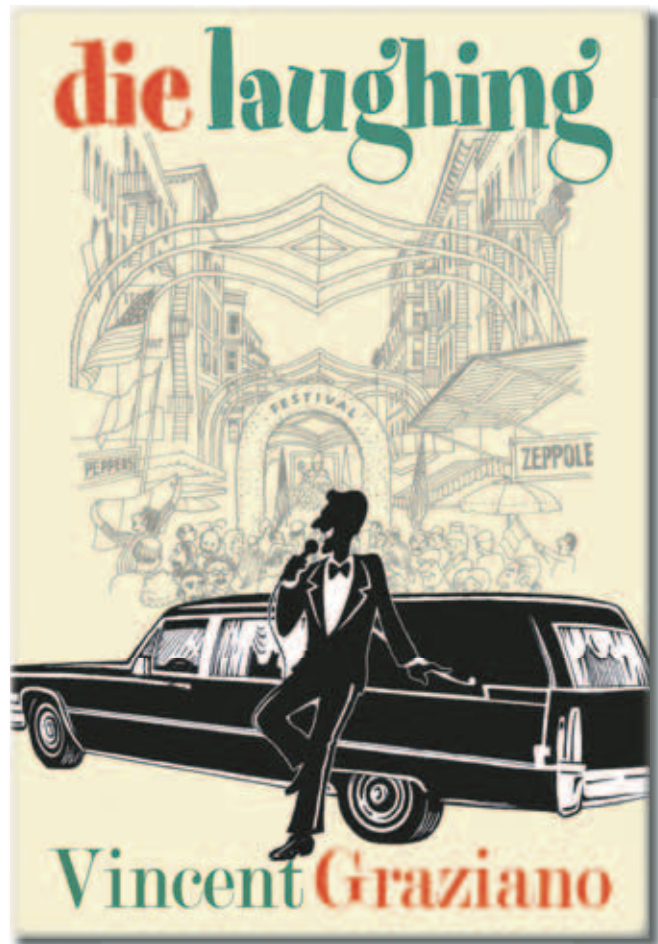
- Which sheriff was removed from office for making moonshine in the jail?
- Which Shakespearean actor went bust east of town?
- What brought a famous sheriff from the City of Deadwood to the Missoula valley?
- Who ran Missoula's Red Light District and still waves to "her boys"?
- Which local laundress

was murdered in the streets by her husband?

- What mysteries surround the burial of a smoke-jumper/CIA operative?
- Which minister needed a sheriff to keep the drunks in line during church services held in the local saloons?
- What do a dove, a tree trunk, an ivy plant, an anchor, and a bird's nest symbolize?

Volunteers told 40 stories. Visitors were treated to live music, food, and fun, and individuals dressed as figures from times of old re-enacted people of the past. For more information, contact Mary Ellen Stubb at (406) 552-6070.

## Die Laughing, a novel by Vincent Graziano is Now Available



Vincent Graziano

daughter. Food and wine flow as freely as the punch lines in a zany neighborhood that combines an obsession over mourning with a zest for life—and where Frankie Grace always makes sure his customers leave with a smile on their face.

Vincent Graziano was born and raised on Mulberry Street in New York City. He is a graduate of Pace University and the *American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Directing*. He is the married father of two children and currently lives and works in Westchester County where he is a licensed funeral director.

*Die Laughing* is available at winoca.com, amazon.com, bn.com, and independent bookstores.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY— Like the hero of his laugh-out-loud-funny novel, funeral director **Vincent Graziano** was born in New York's Little Italy—and has attended the annual Feast of San Gennaro on more than one occasion. Whether he's ever slept in a casket—or was born in a hearse—are questions his readers will have to ask him.

Twenty-one-year-old Frankie Grace, heir apparent to the family funeral business, is sure his life's calling lies not in embalming but in entertaining. But on the eve of Little Italy's annual Feast of San Gennaro in 1971, he finds himself in deep when he's summoned to make arrangements for a member of the mob. Will Frankie become a hit—or the victim of one?

*Die Laughing* nails the characters, from mafioso Johnny Ballsziti and his henchmen to Sal, the neighborhood restaurateur who doubles as Frankie's manager, to Frankie's drop-dead-gorgeous love interest—who happens to be JB's

## Alfords take delivery of New Federal Fleet



SOUTH BEND, IN— **Donald Alford, Sr.** and **Donald Alford, Jr.** of **Alford's Mortuary**, South Bend, IN, shown after delivery of their new fleet of Federal Coaches, consisting of a Lincoln Oval Window Hearse and two Lincoln Six Door Limousines. They also purchased a new Dodge First Call Vehicle for their firm. Their new fleet was sold by **John Muster** of **Muster Coaches**, Calhoun, KY.

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# The Final Bath by Amber Lenore Winckler

ESCONDIDO, CA— *The Final Bath*, by Amber Lenore Winckler, portrays young and optimistic Louise, a recent graduate of Mortuary Science who begins her journey into a required two-year embalmer's apprenticeship. Confident in her education in caring for the dead, Louise struggles to understand life, love, tragedy, and the common bond that attracts workers to the profession. Unaware at first that the start of her professional life will also coincide with her path toward a spiritual awakening, Louise begins to understand the incredible cycle of life that ends with *The Final Bath*.

The Final Bath is a story of those who chose to orchestrate by hand the last rite of passage for the rest of us...the last hands to touch us.

"I believe that all college students should read this book—especially Mortuary Science students. They are faced with many of the difficulties that you express here; sex, alcohol, drugs, and the falling of men-

tors," said Professor Dave McCament of Cypress College of Mortuary Science. Lyn Talone, former mortuary office manager, says the book is "better than reality television. Soul stirring."

Amber Lenore Winckler is a 1995 graduate of the Cypress College Mortuary Science Program. She was formerly the General Manager of Alhiser-Comer Mortuary in Escondido, CA and she has the distinction of being the first woman ever hired as a Forensic Autopsy Assistant at the San Diego Medical Examiner. She currently writes full-time and is an active local Trade Embalmer.

*The Final Bath*, published by Sassy Britches Publishing, is available for purchase on Amazon.com in paperback and Kindle. For more information, see the author's website at <http://amberwinckler.com/default.aspx>.

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Want to get into green funeral services or want to take your existing green options to the next level?

*What are the exact steps for taking "green" to the next level in deathcare?*

*What are the common mistakes that firms make?*

*How can you tell which products are truly green?*

*What is the potential for revenue?*

*How can this niche maximize exposure in the press?*

## INTERNET MARKETING: THE SOCIAL THING TO DO



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July 28 - 29 • "W" Hotel

How can funeral homes and cemeteries benefit from social marketing? How can your website actually enhance your business and produce revenue for your brick and mortar? This cutting-edge, innovative two-part seminar will show you everything you need.

*How to use social marketing to reach new consumers at low costs - Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn*

*Do social networking sites represent an advertising tool for funeral service?*

*New ways to improve your website.*

*Is a website update worth the investment? If so, what should be the focus?*

## Florida Mortuary Services leads Industry with Innovation

TAMPA, FL— Funeral transportation meets technological innovation. Maintaining the position as the leading funeral shipping company in Florida is no easy task, yet despite the competition, Florida Mortuary Services shipping has held that title year after year. Since inception in 1967, the company has stayed cutting edge with industry practices and standards.

Now, through the use of Eagle's Wings Air's technology and industry specific software, Florida Mortuary Services shipping offers streamlined air transportation services and unsurpassed oversight anywhere in Florida.

"Our relationship with Eagle's Wings Air enhances our ability to serve our funeral homes and their clients in a more efficient and excellent way," comments John Loyless, president of Florida Mortuary Services. "We can now offer concierge services for funeral shipping arrangements as well as bereavement travel for families."

Florida Mortuary Services isn't your typical shipping service—we're an extension of your staff. We can handle all the shipping details with the same level of competency that you would so you can focus on serving your families' other needs.

For additional information on shipping anywhere in Florida with Florida Mortuary Services, contact John Loyless or visit [www.floridashipping.com](http://www.floridashipping.com).

# Service Corporation International announces support agreement with Keystone North America

HOUSTON, TX— Service Corporation International (NYSE: SCI), has announced the execution of a definitive support agreement with Keystone North America Inc. "Keystone." Under the terms of the agreement, SCI has agreed to offer to purchase all the outstanding common shares of Keystone, including those represented by income participating securities, at C\$8.00 per share, for a total estimated transaction value of approximately \$256 million (including Keystone's outstanding debt).

The transaction is anticipated to close in the first quarter of 2010, subject to customary closing conditions, including expiration of the waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Act. Upon closing, the transaction is expected to be immediately accretive to SCI's cash flow and earnings in 2010.

SCI, headquartered in Houston, Texas is North America's leading provider of death-care products and services. At June 30, 2009, SCI owned and operated 1,264 funeral homes and 365 cemeteries in 43 states, eight Canadian provinces, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Keystone, headquartered in Tampa, Florida is North America's 5th largest provider of death-care products and services with 199 funeral homes and 15 cemeteries operating in 31 states and the Province of Ontario, focusing specifically on the small to mid-size markets.

A take-over bid circular containing the terms of the offer was to be mailed to Keystone shareholders, together with Keystone's directors' circular unanimously recommending acceptance of the offer, on or before November 16, 2009. Once mailed, these documents will also be available on SEDAR at www.sedar.com. The offer will be open for acceptance for at least 36 days (subject to any extension) and will be conditional upon, among other things, at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Keystone (on a fully diluted basis) being validly deposited under the tender offer and not withdrawn. In addition, the offer will also be subject to other customary conditions, including the receipt of regulatory approvals.

The Support Agreement entered into between SCI and Keystone provides for, among other things, a non-solicitation covenant on the

part of Keystone, customary "fiduciary out" provisions which entitle Keystone to consider and accept a superior proposal, SCI's right to match and the payment to SCI of a break fee in an amount and in

circumstances that is typical for a transaction of this nature.

Additional factors that may affect future results, as well as this article in its entirety are available at SCI's website www.sci-corp.com



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33 gallon	1.2 mil	31" x 43"	200/cs	<b>\$69.00 cs</b>
44 gallon	1.2 mil	40" x 46"	100/cs	<b>\$49.00 cs</b>
44 gallon	2 mil	40" x 46"	100/cs	<b>\$74.00 cs</b>
33 gallon	3 mil	31" x 43"	100/cs	<b>\$82.00 cs</b>
40 gallon	3 mil	40" x 46"	50/cs	<b>\$59.00 cs</b>
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**Excerpt from... 353 More Great Ideas to Exceed  
 the Service Expectations of your Families**

By Todd W. Van Beck

**IDEAS TO IMPROVE FUNERAL SERVICE QUALITY**

- Awards/Plaques** – Compile all company awards and individual plaques, etc., and arrange them on a prominent wall in the funeral home for better exposure and effect.
- Donation Box** – Have a donation box for people to drop off clothing and/or canned food. Goods that the funeral home will periodically deliver to the appropriate shelter of charities.
- Meals On Wheels** – Sponsor Meals on Wheels once a month or sponsor meals at a food kitchen periodically.
- Practical Assistance Program** – Set up a program for widows, widowers, and bereaved families as part of the aftercare program where information is presented on how to live alone, or in changing circumstances. Cooking meals, banking, cleaning, laundry household management, etc.
- Phone Cards** – Give "phone me" certificates with the funeral home logo on them to families so they can contact relatives out of town to inform them of death and/or funeral arrangements.

- Jump Start Acknowledgement** – Enclose postage for the first twenty pieces of acknowledgement stationery.
- Bookmarks** – Provide good quality leather or cloth bookmarks with funeral home logo with the register book and paper products.
- Hurrah For Hollywood!** – Sponsor a movie night once a month at a shelter, residence hall senior citizen center, etc. Sodas, popcorn included.
- Feed The Scouts** – Find out the dates of Scout meetings in your town and every quarter send pizza's over to feed the kids.
- Clean Car Program** – Buy car wash tickets in books of three to five and give to family at time of arrangement. They can have their cars washed so they are clean for the procession. Have the car wash validate used tickets so they can't be reused.
- Pallbearers Creativity** – Offer eight shoulder-carrying pallbearers. Families can choose this option to give more class to the funeral. This is dignity not seen much today.
- Veteran's Name Board** – Set up a name brand under the funeral home flag when a veteran dies. List all military service information. Take a picture of it for the family.
- Crayons** – Keep a supply of crayons and inexpensive coloring books for children at calling hours. Also have storybook available.
- Ethic Considerations** – Have refreshments and food available for special groups of people. Ex. For Italian families have Italian pastries and espresso coffee; for German families have sliced sausages and different breads, etc.
- Mints/Candy** – Have a dish of mints or candy in each room.
- Senior Transportation** – Pick up seniors at nursing centers for visitation.
- Family Transportation** – Pick up family for visitation time.
- Food At Home** – Send a fruit basket or basket of coffees, teas and biscuits to each family who has just completed arrangements expressing concern and thanking them for placing their trust in the funeral home.
- Paper** – Have different cards and folders available for different ethnic groups.
- Feed At The Funeral Home** – Cater in dinner for the family if they are going to stay over the supper hour.
- Mourning Badges** – Provide black ribbons and/or arm bands for families to use on lapels or dresses. Easy identification to visitors.
- Hotel, Church, Cemetery Directions** – List of all hotels, church, and cemetery directions for families.
- Director Check-Up** – Require each funeral director to personally check up with each family several times during the visitation.
- Funeral Director Reply** – Have funeral director's reply to all "thank you" letters.
- Freshen Up Room/Nap Room** – Have a room in the funeral home where family members can change clothes, freshen up or even take a nap.
- Partner Directors** – Partner directors so that after arrangements are made, the second person will not be a stranger. Especially important with changing shifts.
- Baseball Caps and T-Shirts** – Given to all funeral home employees. Great morale builders.
- Memorial Park** – A memorial book, (mahogany) put out on a nice table in the foyer of the funeral home. All deceased people have their names engraved and beside the book is a candle that is always shining (eternal flame).
- Tell Your Story** – Promote the funeral home at MALL SHOWS. Great way to give out information and offer water to mall walkers.
- Fall Color Tour** – Meet at the funeral home; rent a bus to take them to see the fall tree colors. Furnish a light lunch.
- Clergy Liaison** – At each funeral, someone sits with the clergy and shows them great attention. Then ask if they would like to fill out a questionnaire (periodically).
- Out of Town Visitor Pack** – Have available to families expecting visitors from out of town a package, which has current maps, transportation/schedules, hotels, restaurants, etc.
- Hotel/Restaurant Discounts** – Make arrangements for your families to get a discount for food and lodging.
- Guide to Specialty Services** – Have a readily available guide for specially requested services such as clean up and disaffection, appraisal services for house contents and furnishings, referrals for real estate agents, lawyers, videographer, home watch service, storage facilities, etc.
- The Town Scrap Book** – Use old pictures of the funeral home and local sights, some of construction of the funeral home additions as well as newer pictures of the staff. Use this as an icebreaker and on tours and visits.

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- Children's Play Area** – Install a playground set on funeral home property for children's use during visitation times.



Todd W. Van Beck


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## Outlook Leadership Team formulates 2010 Strategy

FRANKLIN, OH— The leadership team of **The Outlook Group, Inc.** held their annual company strategy meeting in late October at the corporate office in Franklin, Ohio. Purpose of the meeting was to begin in-depth sales and marketing planning for 2010. All areas of the company's current and past year's performance were comprehensively analyzed and discussed. Wide-ranging plans were outlined to keep the company at the forefront of the pre-need profession well into the next ten years.

**Chris Kuhnen**, Vice President of Marketing stated, "I've attended several of these meeting in the past. Never before have I known our leadership team to be more focused and highly energized about the future of our company, and pre-need in general." **John Feher**, Vice President of Sales added, "I wish to thank everyone for their time, talent and intellectual investment which will undoubtedly prove financially profitable

for the company in the years ahead." Immediately following the meeting, Regional Development Directors began outlining their 2010 goals and objectives and the step by step plans to support them. They will be meeting with their respective funeral home clients, and Advance Funeral Planning Professionals, throughout November and into the first week of December to assess 2009 sales performance and seek mutual agreement on individual funeral home goals and objectives for the New Year. These meetings have proven invaluable in helping affiliates attain and/or surpass their desired long term pre-need program objectives.

The Outlook Group, Inc. is the nation's premier Funeral Service Solutions Company serving independently owned and operated funeral homes across the United States and Canada. For more information about any of the company's services visit [www.theoutlookgroup.com](http://www.theoutlookgroup.com).

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## Excerpt from... 353 More Great Ideas to Exceed Expectations

Continued from Page A18

37. **Trust the Driver** – On the final evening of visitation introduce the family with a business card to the driver who will be picking them up the next day. Have the driver ask any questions about directions, traffic, etc.
38. **Community Events Board** – Provide a board outside the funeral home for the community's use.
39. **Country Flag** – On a small stand insert a small flag of the country of the deceased's birthplace beside the register stand. Give to the family after the funeral.
40. **Gravediggers** – At Christmas send fruit baskets to all cemetery gravediggers. Shows appreciation.

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

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

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## Basic Funeral Home Services increased more than 12 Percent, says Citrin Cooperman Survey

NEW YORK, NY— The average price for basic funeral home services increased more than 12 percent over last year, according to a survey of funeral home executives in the Northeast by accounting and business consulting firm **Citrin Cooperman & Company, LLP**, as funeral homes sought to maintain revenue and profit levels in what remains a relatively flat market.

“We believe the increases in pricing reflects a pricing correction as funeral home executives come to grips with the service costs associated with low-margin services such as direct cremations and immediate burials,” said **Ed Horton**, partner-in-charge of the Funeral Industry Services practice at Citrin Cooperman. “In the past, the industry has been slow to raise prices, instead attempting to control or cut overhead costs. You can only cut overhead costs so much before risking a diminished quality of service. Funeral homes are still sensitive to cost issues, but there’s a better understanding that previous pricing structures had eroded profits to the point that threatened many funeral homes’ ability to stay in business.”

Citrin Cooperman annually surveys funeral home owners and directors primarily in the Northeast, and this year polled more than 230 respondents primarily from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

The average charge for direct cremations has risen 17 percent since last year, according to the survey. Funeral home executives also raised prices of immediate burials, another traditionally low-margin service, by 16 percent.

### Pricing Reflects Profitability and Sustainability Concerns Among Funeral Home Owners

“Previously, direct cremations and immediate burials yielded minimum profits, as these services were basically offered at cost,” said Horton. “Now we see funeral home executives adjusting their pricing for these services so that they are better compensated for the time and effort required to perform even these ‘no frills’ services.”

“We believe that these trends represent a long overdue shift in pricing strategy. Many funeral directors are no longer relying on casket sales to generate revenues and profits. As customs change and with cremations on the rise, caskets are increasingly viewed by families as a commodity. With casket revenues on the decline, smart funeral directors are shifting their attention to how they price their services, which is what is truly unique and special about the funeral industry. This shift comes at a time when such services have become more demanding as families are seeking increased personalization of funeral ceremonies.”

Another sign of smarter business practices is a decrease in the number of funeral homes that allow customers to lock in pricing on a pre-need basis, despite the fact that the prospect decedent may be alive for many more years. In 2009, 67 percent of funeral homes always or sometimes locked in pricing, as opposed to 75 percent in 2008. Because costs are bound to increase between the initial transaction and the time of the burial, funeral home executives have created a potentially money-losing situation.

“We understand that many funeral directors feel that locking in prices ensures future revenues, but many homes may be mortgaging their future on today’s pre-need sales,” said Horton.

The survey also noted a continuing trend toward homes adding more offerings and options, and becoming more flexible. Adjustments in services and their pricing are also critical as some funeral directors try to recoup profits from services that are being lost in declining sales of caskets.

Among the survey’s other key findings:

- Cremation and other alternative means of body disposal (such as “green burial”) are the bane of the largest number of survey respondents, 42 percent, although this number is down from 48 percent in 2008.
- When asked the “biggest issue” facing the profession, funeral home execs still ranked cremations as No. 1 (at 29 percent), but closing the gap is profitability concerns, which more than doubled, from 12 percent in 2008 to 25 percent in 2009.
- The number of owners who live at their funeral homes continued to decrease, from 37 in 2008 to 35 percent this year.
- Personalization of services remains important, as in past years, although issues such as technology (26 percent vs. 12 last year) and a focus on business (15 percent this year vs. 5 percent last year) are becoming bigger priorities.
- Less than 60 percent of funeral home executives surveyed say that know the present value of their business, and only half of those have an exit strategy or a formal plan to transfer ownership.
- Familiarity with “green” cemeteries continues to increase as 94 percent of funeral directors have at least some familiarity with them, as opposed to 63 percent just two years ago.
- There continues to be a decrease in the number survey participants who own just one home and an increase in the number who own two or more.

“Many of the challenges facing the funeral home industry remain the same as in recent past, but now the economy has been thrown into the mix,” said Horton. “After years of cost cutting, and flat death rates not predicted to rise until 2020, profits are still being squeezed. The good news is that industry executives are broadening services and increasing prices to better meet these challenges.”

For a full copy of the 73-page survey report or to interview Ed Horton or one of the funeral directors who participated in the survey, please contact **Anca Munteanu** at 212-697-1000, or [amunteanu@citricooperman.com](mailto:amunteanu@citricooperman.com).

Citrin Cooperman ([www.citricooperman.com](http://www.citricooperman.com)), a Top 35 full-service accounting firm provides tax, accounting and consulting advice to a variety of clients in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, with a special emphasis on professional services firms, restaurants, real estate, entertainment, staffing and executive search, litigation support and Sarbanes-Oxley. The firm, founded in 1979, has offices in midtown Manhattan, White Plains, NY, Southport, CT, Springfield, NJ, and Philadelphia.

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## Let's Chat

By Kristan Dean

One of my favorite carols begins: “The weather outside is frightful but the fire is so delightful so if I’ve no place to go let it snow let it snow let it snow...” Leading me to wonder: when do we have time to have no place to go? When can we take time to enjoy the moment? These questions make me grateful for the times when my to do list is complete or at least without anything urgent, allowing me time to find the true joy in a quiet moment with those I love. This is a blessing that makes me thankful for their love and so much more.

Fifteen years ago I could find very little joy in a quiet moment. Those moments became filled with overwhelming sadness as I grew in understanding how broken my heart was at the loss of my husband. This makes me wonder how many people, in your communities are walking the path of loss today? How many are unable to find joy without also experiencing the acute pain of loss?

What are you doing for the families you serve during their quiet moments? Understand: it is during the times your families face the sad truth that there is nothing anyone can do that will take away their pain of loss, that they need your kindness and support the most. You can help your families find comfort in knowing that others can and will help them find their hearts’ path to healing. Do you realize that one of the greatest things you can do, especially at the beginning, is simply “be there” for the families you serve?

If you are like the many amazing funeral directors I met at our recent NFDA Convention you know how much your families need you after the service. You reach out to the families you serve in multiple ways. You call each family after the service, often more than once, to check in and let them know that you are there. Your families receive a personal letter of comfort and support from you. Members of your aftercare team visit the families you serve. You find a way to be there during your families’ quiet moments. The families you serve know that you are there for them.

Please let these directors inspire you. Let them help you find the best way for your team to reach out and “be there” for the families you serve. You will be amazed by how much your presence means to the families you serve and awed by how they help you and your team grow.

Our greatest blessings come from the families who accept our invitation to reach out to us during their quiet moments. We are forever grateful for how they help us further realize the many different paths hearts can take to become whole. I look forward to learning from you. Please give me a ring at 781-331-5308 or, if you prefer, email me at [kristan@mooneytunco.com](mailto: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.

## Dyer-Lake's Tim Nay is part of a Contingent to Ireland



Delegates from Newport, Rhode Island prepare for the Mad Hatters Taste of Kinsale "All-Day Food Crawl". (L to R) Executive Chef Kevin Thiele from the Hotel Viking in Newport, Executive Chef Eric Steinheur from the Newport Marriott Hotel group, Kathryn Farrington, Vice President of the Newport County Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Timothy R. Nay a member of the delegation.

**NORTH ATTLEBORO, MA—**  
**Timothy R. Nay**, co-owner of **Dyer-Lake Funeral Home** in North Attleboro, recently returned from a trip to Kinsale, County Cork, Ireland where he was part of a delegation representing the City of Newport, Rhode Island on a journey to their sister city, Kinsale, to celebrate the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Gourmet Food Festival sponsored by the Kinsale Good Food Circle.

The contingency from the City of Newport included members of the Newport County Convention and Visitor's Bureau and executive chefs Eric Steinheur from the Newport Marriott Hotel group and Kevin Thiele from the Hotel Viking in Newport.

Following the groups arrival to the "Foodie Capital of Ireland," the chefs performed a cookery demonstration prior to the official launch of the annual event. Over the years the festival has hosted celebrities such as star chef Richard Corrigan, one time resident of Kinsale – Keith Floyd, the Duchess of York, Kinks star Ray Davies and former US Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith. Derek Davis, famed Ireland television personality, was the master of ceremonies for the four-day long event.

Kinsale has earned the title of "Gourmet Food Capital of Ireland" having the heaviest concentration of top class restaurants in the country.

In addition to dining at some of Ireland's premier restaurants, those in attendance joined the Mad Hatters Taste of Kinsale for an "All-Day Food Crawl" around the community that afforded all a taste of various restaurant recipes and venues.

On the closing day more than 225 people attended the famous Fruits de Mer luncheon of lobster, crab, prawns, oysters, mussels and many more unusual "fruits" of the sea followed by a charity auction.

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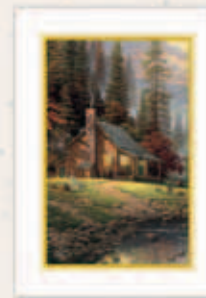
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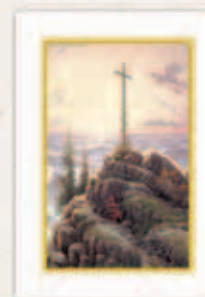
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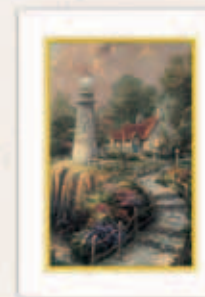
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## CCMS Prepares Student for Service in the Middle East

*Continued from Page A8*

were supported by many people who helped with such tasks as clearing out the old mortuary and taking inventory of its admittedly limited supplies.

My training helped me determine the supplies we would need to be adequately prepared. A key item was a cooler that could accommodate 10 deceased personnel. Surprisingly, there had been no refrigeration in order at the mortuary before this. With the supplies and inventory in place, I turned my attention to the Mortuary Continuity Binder. I wanted to create a manual that would allow anyone coming in after me, and without my training, to know what to do in every casualty situation. I also developed a Mass Casualty checklist that would allow for quick response in an emergency mass casualty situation.

While carrying out these responsibilities, I attended meetings with the Force Support Squadron's commanders, informing them of the progress being made. I was the lone Staff Sergeant (and a new one, at that) in a room of officers. I was naturally intimidated at the thought of presenting to a room of "brass," but my knowledge of what I was presenting gave me confidence. I kept reminding myself that it was no big deal. My confidence didn't waver when the commanders informed me that there would be a base exercise involving "mass casualties." It was a test of our ability to respond effectively and I assured them I was more than ready for it.

Those of us on base who would play an active role in the exercise – including those who were part of an emergency response unit – were notified of the weekend on which the exercise would occur, but not the exact time. In preparation we assembled two teams. One was a Search and Recovery team and I served as the team leader of the other, a Mortuary team. These teams were made up of specialists from such areas as Hazmat, fire and medical as well as Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD).

We were both eager and nervous for the exercise to begin. When the alarm announcing the exercise sounded at 1900 (that's 7:00 p.m. civilian time), we jumped to action. I stuffed my mass casualty checklist and the roster of my team into my cargo pocket, just to make certain I was prepared for anything and everything. We were informed of the situation at hand: an accident involving one of our aircraft that crashed into our communications building, taking out all communication plans.

We got in position to execute our search and recovery plan. My six-man mortuary team got the call to head out to the morgue. But things became more complicated when we were informed that we would be conducting the search *and* working the morgue process. This threw us a curve, but my team listened to my commands, didn't second guess my decision-making and performed in an impressive, level-headed manner. Since our team carried total responsibility, their performance was key to the success of the exercise and made things run oh-so-smoothly. I was grateful to have such a great team of people.

Our hard work and preparation paid off. The Base Commander Chief and the Wing Commander congratulated us on such a "successful and impressive" exercise. It was a great way to wrap up my responsibilities as the Base Mortuary NCOIC. I turned in my Mortuary Continuity Binder to my captain, officially completing all of my mortuary tasks for the deployment.

I was proud that the course work at CCMS prepared me so well to provide an important and needed service at my base. And I can't think of a better hands-on learning experience than the opportunity I had just completed. It gave me an increased sense of pride about my decision to choose a career in funeral service. I'll have plenty to share with my class and the faculty when I resume my studies at CCMS when I return home!



## Cremation Issues and Answers

By Ronald Salvatore



CREMATION DIVISION

### Pet Cremation

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the average mortality rate of a pet is under 14 years and there are over 61 million pet dogs and 70 million pet cats in the US. In a recent consumer research study we conducted, one of the topics discussed was pet loss. Attendees spoke of their pets as their "furry children," and shared the challenges and difficulties they experienced in obtaining meaningful pet memorialization.

There exists a tremendous opportunity to provide care to families who have lost a pet. Talk with someone who recently experienced the loss of a pet and you will find most are still overwhelmed with grief. They have difficulty explaining the depth of their loss and are often afraid to discuss their feelings, lest others think of them as being "emotional." To some, it was only an animal, yet to "pet parents," their pets are part of the family and they are as loving and devoted to them as they are to their children.

The question today is who will provide this care. While some progressive veterinarians are embracing the idea of providing pet cremation and memorial products, it is largely ignored by veterinarians who, understandably, are focused on keeping pets healthy and alive. What we are seeing is an

increased number of pet cremation equipment orders from those outside of the pet care industry, including the general public and funeral directors.

If you're thinking about adding a pet crematory to your operation, I'll tell you all you need to know about getting started.

In this industry, there are two primary markets to serve: pet cremation and animal incineration. I'll start with the latter and briefly discuss each.

Animal disposal refers to humane societies, animal control facilities and such where large quantities of stray animals, road kill and pets are disposed of in batch type incinerators. Of course pet cremation means the performance of cremation where the remains are returned to the family. There may be only one pet in the cremation chamber or there may be two or more with one pet separated from another by using a wall made of refractory brick or by placing each in its own tray. More on this next month.

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

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

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

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

## Veterans & Family launches their annual "Operation Christmas Stockings for Soldiers"

**SANIBEL, FL**— "The mission is sending our troops overseas a little piece of home and some Christmas Cheer for the holidays," says **Mark Davis**, founder and CEO of **Veterans & Family Memorial Care**. Participating VFMC Providers nationwide give out Free Christmas stockings to people in their community who decorate them, fill them with Christmas goodies, and return them to the funeral home who will then ship them to our heroes overseas. "This year we are working closely with the staff at MacDill AFB in Tampa, FL to ensure that the stockings are shipped in time for a Christmas delivery," said Mark Davis. "Our goal is to provide an entire Brigade with stuffed stockings this year."

There are nearly 800 family owned funeral homes in 45 states and Guam that are the exclusive Veterans & Family Memorial Care Provider in their community. Operation Christmas Stockings for Soldiers is just one of many community outreach and public relations programs that VFMC initiates for its providers to choose from. "Our strategic partnerships with Cell Phones for Soldiers, Wreaths Across America and Bugles Across America are shining the spotlight on our Providers nationwide," said Mark Davis. "Everyone benefits. The non-profits reap the rewards of our efforts which trickle down to our veterans and active duty military. For example, our nationwide network of family owned funeral homes collected over 4000 old cell phones in a three month period for Cell Phones for Soldiers, which translated into a quarter million (250,000) free calling time minutes for our troops overseas."

VFMC providers have the benefit of choosing to participate in any or all of the initiatives. For example VFMC's "Operation Sweaters for Veterans" in honor of Veterans Day was an overwhelming success. **Bill Hindman**, owner of **Hindman Funeral Homes** in Johnstown, PA said, "Mark the sweater initiative has been a huge success for us. In addition to collecting upwards of 300 sweaters, a few of which were purchased, new gift wrapped and mailed directly to us, we have written several pre-needs all with new veteran families in the last week alone. There is no question that working the programs is working for us. On another note we are hosting a Veterans Day breakfast from 7-10 tomorrow. We are expecting 200-300 veterans and their families...I will let you know how we make out. Thank you for the extra brochures."

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## Basler Funeral Homes' New Facility has Family in the Details

Continued from Front Page

With TWC Architectural Design & Construction as project manager, and local contractors on the job, they watched their dream funeral home become a reality.

Located on the main thoroughfare of this small town, the 12,000-square-foot brick structure definitely has curb appeal. Eight tall pillars symmetrically grace the porte-cochere leading to the grand entranceway. Inside, the main room is traditionally decorated with sage walls, cream trim, and flower earthtone wall-to-wall carpeting. Elegant chandeliers and accent lighting perfectly complement the cove lighting of the vaulted ceilings, making seating areas more in-



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timate and comfortable.

Basler Funeral Home has three nicely appointed chapels that can be

opened to accommodate 300 visitors for large funerals, a **Batesville** selection room and a confer-

ence room. The Baslers are also very proud of their large family lounge **CONTINUED ON PAGE A27**

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## Shades of Green: We should be concerned with our environment!

By Richard Santore

Green happens to be my favorite color. I drink green tea, love the Green Bay Packers, Green Acres re-runs on TV, and as a kid I read Green Lantern comic books. I recycle, but, Kermit the Frog said it best, "It's not easy being green." The problem is being Green can also be expensive. There are people out there who seem to go out of their way to take my concern for the environment as an opportunity to overcharge for Green products because apparently they feel I should pay a premium to be green. Green insulation, made from recycled denim and cotton (cellulose) for my home costs twice as much as the old fashion fiberglass kind which by the way replaced the practice of stuffing walls with crumpled newspaper (cellulose) in the early part of the 20th Century. You are also being encouraged to go back to cotton diapers to cover the baby's bottom because the new kind has a plastic liner and formaldehyde is used in the production of the absorbent paper part of that diaper as well as the plastic liner. What you're not being told is the amount of energy consumed to manufacture and clean the old fashion cotton kind outweighs the negative effects and convenience of picking up a package of diapers at the supermarket.

It is pretty much accepted that burning fossil fuel is bad for the environment but don't let yourself be fooled into thinking our need for petroleum is going to go away with the coming of alternative fuel sources to power your car or heat your home. Petroleum is used in the manufacture of numerous products, mostly plastics.

Something else that isn't going away anytime soon is formaldehyde. As a funeral director you have come to equate formaldehyde with embalming. The fact is the production of formaldehyde-based resins accounts for a good portion of formaldehyde consumption. It is a component in polyurethane paints and is used in the manufacture of explosives. The textile industry uses formaldehyde-based resins as finishers to make fabrics crease-resistant. It is used in the manufacture of adhesives. It has been found in outer space. Simply put, formaldehyde is here to stay; we just need to understand that we are dealing with a potentially dangerous chemical compound and need to use care and restraint; while taking advantage of its benefits.

The point of all this is, there are Shades of Green. And there are people and groups that will distort facts and spread fear for their own personal gain. I could go on sighting examples of Shades of Green but I am specifically concerned with the funeral industry and the emergence of Green Funerals. Am I against Green Funerals? No! Am I against Green Cemeteries? No! Am I against marketers that would spread fear to unsuspecting funeral directors and their clients? YES! Am I against consultants that profess to have all the answers so they can charge hefty fees? YES!

Let's look at the facts. The green burial movement is protesting the use of formaldehyde, which oxidiz-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A26**



## Prelude to the Basics of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Embalming Technology (Part 2)

By John A. Chew

Twenty-first century temporary preservation is based on the use of natural and/or prefabricated enzyme inhibitors. The primary purpose is to decrease the natural enzyme activity. In nature, basic inhibitors can be as simple as temperature, moisture and/or PH control.

Enzymes are protein in nature and are folded long linear chains of amino acids. Each is unique in their specific properties and in their actions. Most enzymes can be denatured (unfolded and inactivated) by heat (temperature) or chemical denaturants which disrupt the structure of the protein.

Depending on the specific enzyme, denaturation may be reversible or irreversible. This is the foundation of donor methodology and/or temporary preservation for green burials.

Once death occurs, decomposition takes place in stages. The process of tissue breakdown begins at the cellular level and may take from hours to several days. As embalmers, our interest centers on several days to provide time for visitation and now to meet environmental concerns.

To retard physical changes is our goal during the initial steps in the funeralization process. At death, homeostasis has ceased allowing cellular changes to occur because of the process enzyme autolysis. At this point, the body enters algor mortis, a natural cooling which in actuality slows down the decomposition. When the

body is placed under refrigeration or in an air conditioned environment, it further retards the autolysis process.

Having retarded autolysis, the next step would be to fill the vascular system using a pre-injection enzymatic inhibitor formulation. Retention of pressure allows the initial chemicals to penetrate internally and externally.

During the pre-analysis, external discolorations should be noted and treated with restricted drainage control. Once the clearing has been accomplished, the final injections are applied in gallon injections building internal pressure.

If the body at a cellular level is allowed to go through the final stages of autolysis, an anaerobic environment is created which is an environment wherein oxygen is not present. It allows the body's normal bacteria to breakdown the remaining carbohydrates, proteins and lipids. This breakdown creates acids, gases and products which cause volatile organic compounds.

The process presented is implemented to control general putrefaction which causes bacterial breakdown of hemoglobin into sulfhemoglobin causing red and green color changes. The methodology controls the natural decomposition without the use of toxic chemicals during the embalming process such as formaldehyde. The European Union is currently considering placing a total ban on all toxic embalming products with the American chemical industry possibly following with similar restrictions.

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

## Walmart's New Casket Sales Underscores Importance of Aftercare Opportunities

By Timothy Miles

If ever there was a signal that the funeral industry is undergoing fundamental changes, Walmart's entry into the casket business has to be difficult to ignore. October 28<sup>th</sup> saw news that the world's largest retailer introduced 15 value priced caskets on their website. The caskets are being supplied by **Star Legacy Funeral Network** in McHenry, IL. Prices range from \$999 and cap under \$2,000 excepting the "Sienna Bronze" weighing in at \$2,899.

Recent years have seen the introduction of online casket sales with numerous companies offering a wide variety of caskets but Walmart dwarfs them all. With over \$400 Billion in sales and 100 million people visiting Walmart weekly, they just mainstreamed online casket sales and the assumption will be that Walmart offers greater values than local funeral homes. While this assumption is disputable, the truth will have little to do with the overall effect. The casket sales capture rate that funeral homes realize will diminish while casket margins in many homes will be further reduced. Still, in the end, this could turn out to be a really good thing for funeral homes across America.

Over the past 20 years, the funeral industry has evolved slowly but steadily. We've witnessed trends away from burials and towards cremations and trends toward honoring and celebrating the deceased's life instead of mourning their death. We've seen the decentralization of the family and the mobilization of Americans effectively changing the size and nature of funeral services. Then, the explosion of the internet, coupled with new regulations, opened the door for online casket and urn sales.

However, the impact of all these margin challenging realities has been greatly mitigated by a steadily growing number of customers, a quality unique to the funeral business and one that will continue for many years to come. This circumstance, increasing business to offset shrinking margins, has allowed many funeral homes to hang on to the status quo rather than aggressively seek new ways to effectively increase profits.

This unique convergence of realities, coupled with the funeral industry's iron grip on traditional business practices, goes a long way towards explaining why the funeral industry has an inordinately low percentage of establishments using websites compared to other service oriented businesses and why so few are open to fully exploring the significant profit opportunities presented by the growing after-care market and online marketing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A27

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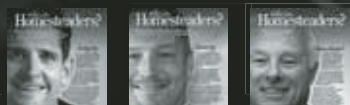
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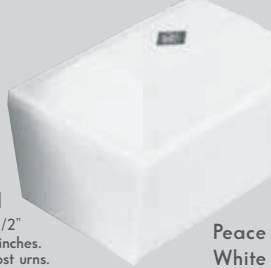
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## Shades of Green: We should be concerned with our environment!

Continued from Page A24

es to formic acid, the toxin in red and fire ants, adding what may be considered pollution to the ground as embalmed bodies decay. The EPA, along with the Green Chemistry Program, promotes the research, development, and implementation of innovative chemical technologies to support chemical technologies that reduce or eliminate the use of hazardous substances during the design, manufacture, and use of chemical products and processes. But the greening of chemistry is a slow shift, not a revolution. Most chemists lack basic training in understanding environmental hazards while seeking safer solutions.

The Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 established a national policy to prevent or reduce pollution at its source whenever feasible, and provided an opportunity to expand beyond traditional EPA programs and devise creative strategies to protect human health and the environment. Green chemistry is the use of chemistry for pollution prevention. More specifically, green chemistry is the design of chemical products and processes that reduce or eliminate the use and generation of hazardous substances.

Shortly after the passage of the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990, the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) explored the idea of developing new or improving existing chemical products and processes to make them less hazardous to human health and the environment. In 1991, OPPT launched the "Alternative Synthetic Pathways for Pollution Prevention to research projects that include pollution prevention in the design and synthesis of chemicals.

Utilizing this Green Chemistry Philosophy, the body is prepared without chemical preservatives or with environmentally friendly chemicals and buried in a biodegradable casket or simple shroud. A natural burial preserve often uses grave markers that do not intrude on the landscape such as shrubs and trees, or a flat indigenous stone upon which can be some engraving.

Planting native trees, shrubs, and flowers on or near the grave establishes a living memorial and helps form a protected wildlife preserve. Irrigation is not used, nor are chemical pesticides and herbicides applied. Irrigation by the way prevents soil erosion which can cause ecological damage. Cemetery legislation protects natural burial preserves in perpetuity from future development while the establishment of a conservation easement prevents future owners from altering the original intent for these burial grounds. For people who are mindful of the cyclical nature of life, a natural burial is an alternative to

CONTINUED ON PAGE A28

## Awards of Excellence



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

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



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

## Distinguished Woman of the Year: Karen Jones Smith, CFSP of Royal Funeral Home, Huntsville, AL

**Karen Jones Smith**, business proprietor, licensed mortician, beloved wife, devoted mother and quiet leader is passionate about a life of service, not only in business but also in church, community, family and in social involvements.

Being involved influences Karen to serve in her special way and always give back. Enhancing the lives of others is a way of life. She is committed to the legacy of her family in the funeral profession, involved with her church because of her deep-rooted religious values, getting or providing for a good sound education and making a way for others in need. Her family firm, **Royal Funeral Home** was established in 1918, and is the oldest African American owned business in Huntsville, Alabama. Standing on a well-laid foundation, Karen is a proud third generation entrepreneur, owning and operating the business. Her grandfather, **Lawrence Hundley, Sr.**, was former owner of this prestigious firm. Honoring the legacy of her late grandfather and the wonderful memories he left behind, Karen founded the 2009 Lawrence Hundley, Sr. Funeral Service Scholarship, given to a deserving mortuary science student.



Karen Jones Smith

Karen graduated from Morris Brown College where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. After graduation she later attended *Gupton Jones College of Mortuary Science* in Decatur, GA where she graduated with highest academic honors. Karen returned to the state of Alabama where she gracefully stepped up to the plate in the family funeral business and made a dynamic impact on the Huntsville community. She immediately became involved with various educational seminars and continuing education classes and attended state, district and national conferences. She quickly received her designation as a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner and continues to be respected by her funeral service colleagues around the nation.

Karen Jones Smith is an inspiration to women in the funeral industry as she serves as a role model in a traditionally male dominated profession. She is a highly successful business woman and icon in her Huntsville community. She gives great comfort and quality bereavement services to the families she serves as well as those seeking advice for their loved ones. Karen knows that women have made a big impact on our profession and employs a large contingency of qualified women in her business. In today's society there is always a need for a positive role model to mentor to young women, especially to those entering the demanding funeral service profession. She is an inspiration to all who come in contact with her. Her warm and pleasant personality is delightful and she always has a positive outlook on life.

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE A29

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# Basler Funeral Homes' New Facility has Family in the Details

Continued from Page A24



Family Lounge



The Selection Room

and coffee bar. The open, airy room features ceramic tile and half moon windows making it cheerful and bright.

Referring to the differences in the new funeral home and the firm's former location about a mile away, Eric says, "It's really great to have everything all in one building and all on one level. We only had off-street parking for about thirty cars, and now

we have a parking lot for over one hundred." All funerals are now held at the new facility or the firm's chapel in St. Mary, MO.

Basler Funeral Home was founded in 1898 by **John and Sophia Basler**, and was run by them until John's death in 1932. John's son, **Leo C. "Pumpkin" Basler, Sr.** and his wife **Agnes** eventually took over the funeral home. Their son, Leo

C. "Chipper" Basler, Jr., a licensed funeral director and embalmer, and his wife, Carolyn, a licensed funeral director, have operated the business since Pumpkin's death in 1971. Their son Eric is a funeral director and embalmer with the firm. The Basler family is committed to serving the Ste. Genevieve community with dignity and respect, now and for many years to come.

# Walmart's Casket Sales Underscore Opportunities

Continued from Page A25

Perhaps, with the introduction of the 800 lb Walmart gorilla into the mix, funeral homes will finally open their minds and realize they can no longer afford to remain just in the funeral business but rather are in an excellent position to adopt a full service approach beginning with pre-need planning and continuing with their clients through exploring the many options offered in the aftercare market.

Forward thinking funeral directors are realizing the opportunities within the aftercare market and, by intelligently applying technological advances, are turning their websites into profit centers without adding to inventory or overhead.

*Timothy Miles has been an entrepreneur for 35 of his 43 year career. He has worked as a business and management consultant for a wide variety of industries specializing in turn-arounds and developing new marketing strategies. Timothy has been involved with the relationship between business and the internet for the past 15 years and for*

*the past two years has been developing Patchwork Memorials, a recently launched memorial products manufacturing company that brings the latest website technologies to traditional funeral homes allowing them to turn their website into a profit center without increasing overhead, inventory or effort on the part of funeral home staff. Timothy's website is at <http://www.PatchworkMemorials.com>. He can be reached at 320-310-0117.*



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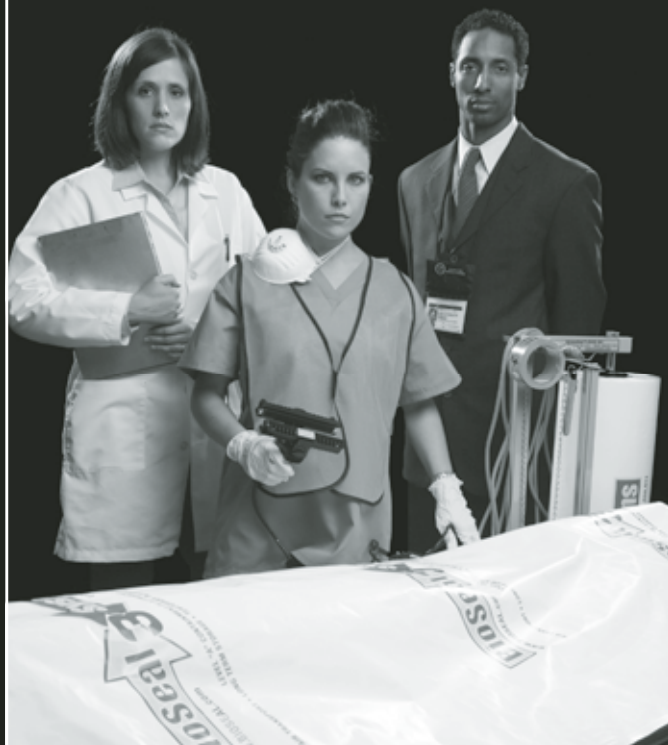
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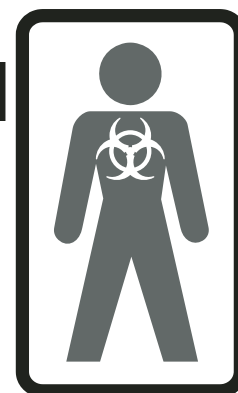


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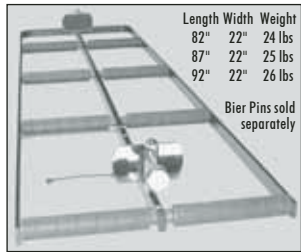
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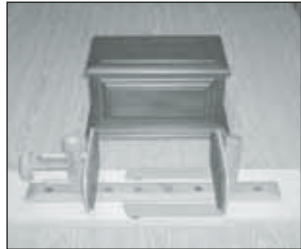
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## New Providers Join Veterans Funeral Care's Rapidly Expanding Network

CLEARWATER, FL— Veterans Funeral Care is proud to announce that the following have joined its ever-growing network of providers: **Angeleno Mortuary**, North Hollywood, CA; **Angeleno Mortuary**, Van Nuys, CA; **Farnstrom Mortuaries**, Independence, OR; **Keizer Funeral Chapel**, Keizer, OR; **Farnstrom Gable Funeral Chapel**, Portland, OR; and **Bateman Funeral Home**, Newport, OR.

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, FL 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.

Veterans Funeral Care started off as just one funeral home in Clearwater. "Our area has many veterans and

retired military in addition to two National Cemeteries and two VA Hospitals," says **Jim Rudolph**, Veterans Funeral Care's President. "Almost immediately after we opened our Clearwater location, we began to get phone calls from Veterans around the country asking if there was a funeral home in their area that offered services like ours."

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).

## Shades of Green: We should be concerned with our environment!

*Continued from Page A26*

conventional burial methods. However, the truth be told, the Green Chemistry Philosophy can be applied to every existing cemetery.

The Green Burial Council offers the following statistics to justify their existence while also promoting and certifying other Green Burial Products.

Each year, 22,500 cemeteries across the United States bury approximately: 30 million board feet of hardwood used to make caskets; 90,272 tons of steel used to make caskets; 14,000 tons of steel to make vaults; 2,700 tons of copper and bronze to make caskets; 1,636,000 tons of reinforced concrete to make vaults; and 827.060 gallons of embalming fluid, principally formaldehyde.

The fact is I have problems with these statistics!

The Green Burial Council claims there are 22,500 cemeteries in the United States. Since I have no desire to try to count them, I'll accept their number as correct; but I find myself wondering, are these all active cemeteries or are many old church yard, inactive cemeteries. Let's assume The Green Burial Council did

their homework and each is an active cemetery.

The Casket and Funeral Supply Association (CFSA) estimates that last year there were 1,771,845 casketed human remains. Assuming that the Green Burial Council figure of 30 million board feet of hardwood was used in their manufacture; that would only amount to 200,000 caskets. Or 11.3 % of all caskets manufactured. But this is an unverified statement so the actual amount of hardwood used could be substantially less. CFSA also doesn't differentiate between those casketed remains being buried or cremated so I will assume all are buried. Bear in mind that currently the cremation rate nationally is close to 40% and the projected rate of cremation by 2025 will exceed 50%. So, by my assuming all casketed remains are being buried I am being very generous.

The Green Burial Council claims that 90,272 tons of steel was used to manufacture caskets. This would mean that 1,031,680 steel caskets were buried. But this number as well as the numbers for steel vaults, and copper and bronze caskets is unimportant as these products are manufactured from minerals that are found naturally in the ground.

Likewise the same can be said for concrete vaults; concrete vaults are manufactured from earth friendly materials; sand, gravel, and cement. Concrete solidifies and hardens after being mixed with water. The water reacts with the cement, which bonds the other components together, eventually creating a stone-like material. Concrete is used to make pavements, building foundations, roadways, and building blocks. Concrete is used more than any other man-made material in the world. As of 2006, about 10 billion cubic yards of concrete are made each year. More than 55,000 miles of highways in the United States are paved with reinforced concrete. Only about 1/2 a cubic yard of concrete is used to manufacture a vault. So I fail to see the significance of mentioning this earth friendly material; unless it is to state that a concrete vault will keep a grave from settling thus requiring less maintenance of a grave site or to protect harsh chemicals (formaldehyde) from seeping into the ground.

So, now we are down to the only true potentially harmful material, Embalming fluid.

Allow me to assume that 1 pint, 16 ounces of concentrated formaldehyde mixed with water is used to make two gallons of embalming solution, and 1 pint, 16 ounces of concentrate is used for cavity treatment. That means 118,151 gallons of concentrated formaldehyde can potentially be harmful to ground water. But we need to factor in that earth friendly material (concrete) that will prevent that seepage. Now let us assume that only 25% of all casketed burials are also placed in a concrete vault. That means that the risk of ground water being polluted is also reduced by 25% or 29,538 gallons leaving 88,613 gallons of concentrate. Now going back to the 22,500 active cemeteries and divide that concentrate equally between them you now have 4 gallons of formaldehyde that can contaminate the ground water under each cemetery. Assume that each cemetery is approximately 25 acres the result is, you have approximately 20 ounces of formaldehyde contaminating each acre. I contacted the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to determine if this was within acceptable limits. It is!

In the final analysis; if your client wants Green Burial you should comply with their wishes, because you are there to serve. Just be sure you clearly express the facts and they are not being motivated by fear. Fear that they are harming our environment by having their

**CONTINUED ON PAGE A29**



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## Carriage Services announces Third Quarter 2009 Results

HOUSTON, TX— Carriage Services, Inc. (NYSE: CSV) announced results for the third quarter ended September 30, 2009.

Melvin C. Payne, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "Given a weak revenue environment, third quarter results were satisfactory primarily because we achieved EPS of \$0.05 versus \$0.03 on a comparable basis and \$0.01 on a GAAP basis last year. Despite the lower funeral volumes and challenging economic conditions, our expense management across all areas of our business has continued to be excellent. The cost control theme was evident in the third quarter of 2009 as we reduced field level expenses by \$1.4 million, more than offsetting the \$1.0 million reduction in revenue and resulting in an increase of 160 basis points in Total Field EBITDA Margin to 32.2% in the quarter compared to 30.6% last year. As we enter the more seasonably high revenue period, we are well

positioned to finish strong in the fourth quarter and to get off to a good start in 2010," concluded Payne.

Total revenue for the third quarter of 2009 was \$42.2 million compared to \$43.2 million in last year's third quarter. Carriage earned \$0.05 for the third quarter compared to \$0.01 per diluted share on a GAAP basis in the same period last year. Consolidated EBITDA in the third quarter increased 4.3% to \$8.7 million versus adjusted consolidated EBITDA of \$8.4 million in last year's third quarter. Consolidated EBITDA Margin increased in the third quarter of this year by 130 basis points to 20.7% compared to adjusted Consolidated EBITDA Margin of 19.4% in the third quarter last year. Adjusted 2008 Consolidated EBITDA excludes litigation costs, termination charges, and other costs that were nonrecurring.

The full results are available online at [www.carriageservices.com](http://www.carriageservices.com)

### Shades of Green: We should be concerned with our environment!

Continued from Page A28

loved one embalmed, placed in a metal casket and a concrete vault. They are not.

Cemeteries are not restricted to using only chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. There are many organic or natural, fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, available. The point is you can have a Green Cemetery and still have the lush rolling lawns and a park like setting.

Richard A. Santore is the President and founder of Practicum Strategies. Practicum Strategies is an approved provider of Continuing Education in every State that accepts Online and home-study continuing education courses for funeral professionals. Richard can be reached by email at [Richard@pshomestudy.com](mailto:Richard@pshomestudy.com) or 800-731-4714. Visit Practicum Strategies website at [www.pshomestudy.com](http://www.pshomestudy.com).

## Distinguished Woman of the Year: Karen Jones Smith, CFSP of Royal Funeral Home, Huntsville, AL

Continued from Page A26

The 100BWFS Board of Directors selected Karen as our 2009 Woman of the Year because she exemplifies the poise, grace and essence of womanhood—truly a "phenomenal woman." She is a designing woman and a driving force for women entering the mortuary science profession.



Lawrence B. Hundley

Karen's parents, James A. and Barbara Hundley Jones, second generation purchasers of their family business, have been dedicated to quality service with a personal touch and to serving the Huntsville community. Their values have been passed on to Karen. The family has owned and operated Royal Funeral Home for 63 of its 91 years, and they are very proud of their place in Huntsville history. Karen will continue to carry this torch with great pride.

In 2008, Karen and Royal Funeral Home celebrated a variety of special events to honor its 90 year legacy and commitment to the community. The grand event was a Royal Masquerade Ball to benefit the Chessie Harris Foundation, Harris Home for Children and the National Children's Advocacy Center. The celebration culminated with a gospel concert at the Progressive Union Missionary Baptist church. It is not surprising that this phenomenal woman is thinking of others and giving back. That is what makes her so special to all who come in contact with her. Her heart is big and her arms are always open to welcome those in need.



Royal Funeral Home Founder C.K. Binford

Karen Jones Smith, the 2009 Woman of the Year is a true visionary and a mover and shaker, and already building a legacy for the next 90 years. Married to her soul mate and love of her life, David Smith, Sr., they are the proud parents of one tremendously handsome son, David Smith, Jr. Together this family is making a difference.

We applaud Karen Jones Smith for all she has done and all she is doing in the name of service to mankind through her funeral service ministry. We are already looking at what she will be doing in the future as she works so diligently to keep her legacy alive. Remember that name, Karen Jones Smith, visionary, leader and major player in the funeral service industry. She's a first class sister!

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# Educational NEWS

## Dr. Alan Wolfelt and Coleen Ellis to launch new Pet Loss Companioning Course

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**— Responding to the growing demand for education in pet related grief and bereavement subject matter by both veterinary and funeral industry professionals, **Coleen Ellis** and **Dr. Alan Wolfelt** are collaborating to offer a new Pet Loss Companioning Certification program at the **Center for Loss** in Fort Collins, CO.

This coursework is specifically designed to impart the learning and skills necessary to be highly effective in working with clients who have experienced the death of a pet. As Dr. Wolfelt notes in his book *When Your Pet Dies: A Guide To Mourning, Remembering and Healing* "grief is the reflection of the love that we had for the animal." Ellis continues, "Therefore, it's not difficult to

understand why this particular educational theme has become so important given the humanization of our pets in recent years. For many of us, our pets have truly become family members, and pet-related service providers are waking up to the fact that they are ill-prepared to handle grieving clients," She adds, "The customer rapport – and brand loyalty – that can result from certain simple acts of caring at a time of great emotional stress can be astounding."

Dr. Alan Wolfelt, internationally noted author, educator, and grief counselor, and founder of the Center for Loss; and Coleen Ellis, noted thought-leader and subject matter expert in the pet death-care industry, and founder of **Two Hearts Pet Loss Center**, are proud to be first to offer this new professional learning series focused exclusively on the subject of pet grief and bereavement. The first course will be held February 1 – February 4, 2010.

For more information, or to register for this course, please call the Center for Loss & Transition at 970-226-6050 or Coleen Ellis at [www.TwoHeartsPetLossCenter.com](http://www.TwoHeartsPetLossCenter.com).

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## Fountain National Academy of Professional Embalming Skills announces its 2010 International Conference

**SPRINGFIELD, MO**— **Vernie Fountain**, Founder of **Fountain National Academy (FNA)** has announced plans for FNA to sponsor/host an additional event in 2010. FNA has conducted educational seminars for professional embalmers for 19 years and 2010 will mark its 20th year of providing this type of education. In addition to providing the FNA regular seminar format each May and September, 2010 will be the beginning of what Fountain hopes will be its biennial International Embalming and Reconstructive Surgery Conference for Professional Embalmers. The conference is not designed to compete with any other state or national convention because it is designed strictly for the working embalmer. It was designed to impart the largest amount of technical information at one place at one time.

Mr. Fountain has engaged twelve hand-picked speakers, and all have graciously confirmed their participation. Each will conduct one-hour presentations detailing various specific technical subject matters and participate in an open roundtable discussion on various topics. In addition to the speakers the agenda allows for as many as 8 concurrent 30-minute presentations conducted by exhibitor representatives that will allow exhibitors to speak about their products and specific product capabilities.

The theme of the conference is "Dedicated to The Value of Open Casket Viewing." Mr. Fountain has been

a strong worldwide advocate of the values associated with embalming, reconstructive surgery, viewing of the body and of the value of visitations for the families professional embalmers serve. Fountain states there will be around 22 table top exhibits featuring only items related to the theme of the conference. In other words there will not be any displays of urns, jewelry, or miscellaneous items like displayed at many conventions. In addition to all the conference activities and speakers Mr. Fountain has selected three Guests of Honor. These individuals will be recognized in a special way for their many years of contributions, dedication and professionalism toward embalmer education.

The conference is scheduled for August 5-8, 2010 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Springfield, MO. This venue was chosen to help hold down the costs of travel and lodging for those who attend. "If I accomplish my goals for the conference attendees from many parts of the world will attend and learn new exciting techniques, make new friends, network with other embalmers, have fun and relax and leave the conference GLAD that they attended." Fountain continues, "I want it to be very educational and worthwhile." For further information contact Vernie R. Fountain, Fountain National Academy, 2211 West Norton Road, Springfield, Missouri 65803. Phone 417-833-5130 or Email [vrffountain@earthlink.net](mailto:vrffountain@earthlink.net).

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## PIMS Students sponsor Annual Halloween Party



(L to R) Alicia Young, Ashlee Hagan and John Brennan at the Halloween party.



Sean Truby prepares pumpkin coloring for children.



PIMS Students at the Halloween Party

**PITTSBURGH, PA**— Students from **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)** recently sponsored the school's annual Halloween party for patients at The Rehabilitation Institute of Pitts-

burgh. This year's event was a success and the students are to be recognized for their philanthropic goodwill. Approximately 50 patients were in attendance in addition to staff, family members, and

friends. The students purchased Halloween decorations and goodies, as well as pumpkins and a personal prize for every patient who participated in the "best costume" contest. Other activities included

dancing and pumpkin coloring.

In addition to the Halloween party, PIMS students also sponsor an Easter party at the Rehabilitation Institute, as well as a Christmas Food drive for the needy.

## PIMS Class 140 Students tour Donatelli Crematory



Mr. Fred Donatelli (Right) with PIMS Class 140 officers (L to R) Chad DuBarr, Vice-President, John Brennan, Secretary-Treasurer and Sean Truby, President.



Mr. Fred Donatelli presents cremation merchandise.

**PITTSBURGH, PA**— Students from **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)** Class #140, recently toured the **Donatelli Crematory**. Mr. Fred Donatelli has invited every PIMS class to his facil-

ity for the past 25 years. Additionally, Mr. Donatelli owns and operates a monument company and pet crematory that the students had the opportunity to visit. Mr. Donatelli spoke about the legalities, formal-

ties, and marketing of cremation. At the conclusion of the program a luncheon was served. Mr. Donatelli has established a scholarship for PIMS students who wish to continue their education and earn the Associate in Specialized Business degree in Funeral

Service Management. At the program, a check was presented to the class towards the Fred Donatelli Scholarship. PIMS students and administration are thankful to Mr. Donatelli and his family for their continued support of funeral service education.

## PIMS Students visit Reynoldsville Casket

**PITTSBURGH, PA**— Students from **Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS)** class #140 recently visited and toured the **Reynoldsville Casket Company** plant. As part of their Professional Seminar Series course, the students were invited to Reynoldsville by **Wayne Jackson**, president of Reynoldsville Casket Company and the program was delivered by **Rusty Meyers**, vice president of Reynoldsville.

Additionally, the students toured the plant where they saw caskets being manufactured from raw steel. Concluding the program and tour, Reynoldsville Cas-

ket Company staff, specifically **Judy Vandervort**, supplied lunch for the students before they returned to Pittsburgh. PIMS is grateful to Reynoldsville for their continued support of funeral service education.


Additional Professional Seminar Series speakers for PIMS Class #140 are: **John Eirkson**, *Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association*; **Donatelli Memorials (Pittsburgh Cremation Service)**; **Ernie Heffner**; **Kathleen Berry**, **Wilbert Burial Vault Company**; **U.S Airways-Inman Nationwide Shipping**; **Dave Beck**, **Clark**



Rusty Meyers, Reynoldsville Casket Co. Vice President, speaks to the PIMS students.

**Vault Company**; **Eugene Ogrodnik**, PIMS; **Eileen Carlins**, SIDS Alliance of Pittsburgh; Center for Organ Recovery and Education; The Caring

Place; **Ben Kyle**, **Stewart-Kyle Funeral Home**; and **Robert G. Mayer** and **Ed Strimlan**, Allegheny County Medical Examiner's Office.



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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## Theta Chapter Holds Embalming Seminar

MONROE, LA— Epsilon Nu Delta, Theta Chapter's inaugural Elizabeth Brannum-Trass/John A. Sims Embalming Seminar was held Tuesday, October 13, 2009 in Monroe, LA. "Theta Chapter was proud to name this



educational session after these two celebrated embalmers. It was the most honorable and noble act to them," said the host **Bro. Rodney McFarland, Sr.** "We are most grateful to the funeral directors, embalmers and students who came from as far away as Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas to make this seminar memorable. Special thanks to the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice, **Bon-**

**dol Chemicals (Lorenzo Peterson) Dodge Chemical, and Nomis Publications** for their special contributions to the event."

The four CEU PowerPoint sessions were instructed by professional speaker, **Shun Newbern, CFSP**, National Chairman of Epsilon Nu

Delta. The four sessions centered on restoring the value of embalming and ways to handle the challenges faced by embalmers. The sessions shared action plans to build credibility, create goals to improve family satisfaction and expand the practitioner's skill level.

## Delgado Community College receives Accreditation



NEW ORLEANS, LA— Delgado Community College Funeral Service Education Program, New Orleans, has received initial accreditation by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. **David Coughran**, Program Director, **Bobbiann Lewis**, Instructor and **Ray Gisclair**, Assistant Dean were present to receive the accreditation certificate from **Michael Landon**, Chair of the Committee on Accreditation Sunday, October 25 at the ABFSE fall conference in Boston, MA.

## Michigan Embalmers to hold Winter Seminar

ROYAL OAK, MI— The Michigan Embalmers Society will hold their 2009 Winter Seminar on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM at Wayne State University Mortuary Science Building in Detroit, MI. The seminar will cover "Embalming Beyond Minimum Standards" followed by a laboratory demonstration with participation encouraged.

The speaker is Michigan Embalmers Society President **Sharon L. Gee**. A 1986 graduate of Wayne State University Mortuary Science, she has been teaching at her alma mater since 1996. With over 24 years in the funeral profes-

sion, she is also manager of the **Pixley Funeral Home, Godhardt-Tomlinson Chapel** in Keego Harbor, MI. She is also vice president of the *American Society of Embalmers* and a member of the *British Institute of Embalmers*. She is an avid public speaker and author on embalming-related topics. Her articles appear in numerous professional journals and she is a contributor to the embalming text, *Embalming: History, Theory & Practice*, Mayer, Robert G. 4th Ed. (McGraw-Hill Co., Inc., 2006).

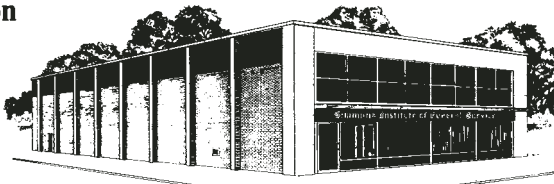
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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## MCCC Elects 2010 Class Officers



TRENTON, NJ— The 2010 Funeral Service Class at Mercer County Community College in Trenton, recently elected its class officers. Pictured from left to

right are President Esteban A. Montufar, Vice-President Jessica Buccafusco, Secretary David M. Bell and Treasurer Ashley K. Padgett.

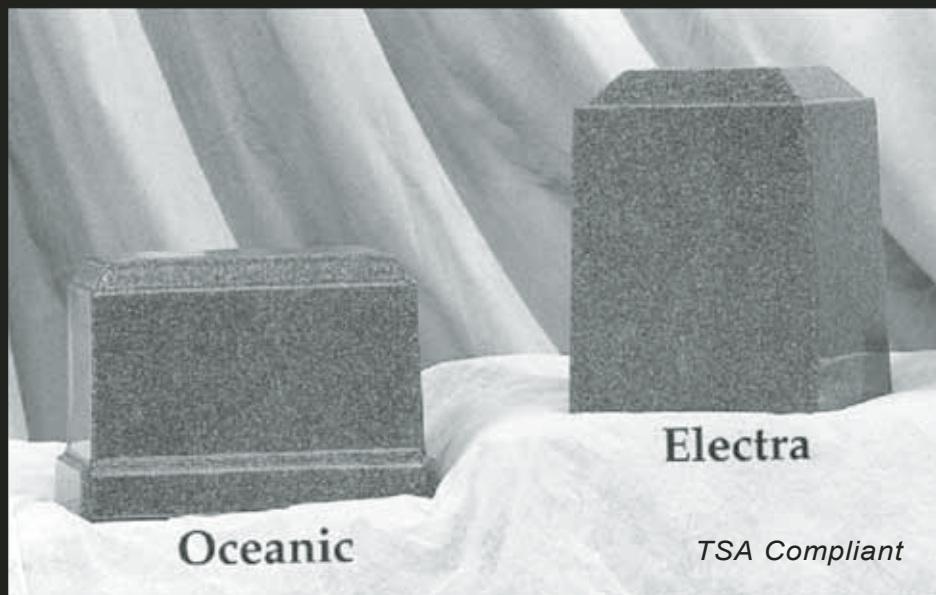
## Conference Convention to be held in Orange County, California

FAYETTEVILLE, AR— The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc. will hold its 106th annual convention on February 25 - 26, 2010 at the Doubletree Anaheim / Orange County in California. The two day event will feature presentations on legal basics for board members, funeral service ethics, inspection procedures, cremation regulation, and pre-need regulation with an added focus on how states compare. District meetings and a welcome reception will provide forums for networking and discussion about topics of interest to attendees. The 2010 convention will come to a close Friday evening with a dinner function that will give the guests a chance to experience the OC flavor of Southern California. A more detailed agenda is available on The Conference's website.

The Doubletree, a premier destination hotel, is located in the heart of Orange County and offers a complimentary shuttle to Disneyland, which is just minutes away. Discounted Disneyland tickets are now available for purchase online for attendees and their guests. With the shops and restaurants of the GardenWalk also nearby, there's plenty of fun for the whole family.

For further information regarding registration, agenda topics, discounted Disneyland tickets, and hotel information please contact Sarah Gill at The Conference by calling 479-283-6875 or online at the [www.theconferenceonline.org](http://www.theconferenceonline.org).

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## Worsham College provides their students firsthand experience at a Cemetery

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL— Over one hundred **Worsham College of Mortuary Science** students and faculty joined together on Wednesday, October 7th to participate in four simulated graveside services at **Shalom Memorial Park**.

Instruction was provided by faculty members who are licensed funeral directors, **Anthony DiCanio**, **Timothy Kowalski**, and **Joseph Rago**, **Robert Sparacio**, and Ethics Instructor, **Robert Arvidson**. The exer-

cise was facilitated by Worsham College administrator, **Karl Kann** and funeral director, **Robert Weinstein** along with cemetery personnel.

Students began the day with instruction from **Mindy Botbol**, licensed funeral director and manager of **Shalom Memorial Funeral Home**. Ms. Botbol enlightened the students about Jewish funeral customs. Following the presentation, **Dan Baines**, from **Baines Professional Vehicles**, provided a hearse and a limousine, for procession to the gravesides, adding to the reality of the experience. The different scenarios provided the students the opportunity to ask questions and undergo each step of the way from a traditional service to a cremation service. The students participated as funeral directors, pall bearers, family members and guests.

Worsham College in Wheeling, IL is considered to be a leader in mortuary science education, believes schools must go beyond the classroom curriculum. "The students enjoyed the opportunity to participate and take an active part in their learning. This is another approach for Worsham to create 'The Practical Experience' for our students" stated Stephanie Kann, Program Director.

**Maynard Grossman**, Executive Director of **Randhill Park**, Shalom Memorial Park and Shalom Memorial Funeral Home, was instrumental in providing the opportunity to use his facilities. Maynard stated, "In light of recent events covered in the Illinois press with regards to cemeteries and funeral homes, we here at Shalom Memorial Park and Shalom Memorial Funeral Home welcome the opportunity to work, learn and teach, with our future colleagues in the industry for the betterment of the families we will service. We are honored that Worsham College has chosen us for this venue"

The ICFHA (*Illinois Cemetery and Funeral Home Association*) has produced a video for continuing education programs. "This endeavor will benefit Worsham College graduates and ICFHA membership" states **Vicki Hand** of the ICFHA.

Worsham College is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education and offers a 12-month, full-time certificate or Associate of Applied Science degree program.



## St. Louis Community College Mortuary Science Program



Class Officers (L to R) Robert Curtis, Kristen Langkopf, Melissa Speight, and Emily Roesslein.



Scholarship Winners (L to R) Kyle Clay, Jim Gramlich, Kristen Langkopf, LaRhonda Willis, and Ramona Revels.

ST. LOUIS, MO— **St. Louis Community College** Mortuary Science Program is off to a great start this semester, according to Mortuary Science President **Melissa Speight**.

Six students won scholarships for the 2009-2010 school year. Generous contributors have given the *Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association* Education Fund the opportunity to award these five students \$300 scholarships: **Kyle Clay**, **Jim Gramlich**, **Kristen Langkopf**, **Ramona Revels** and **LaRhonda Willis**. In addition, the *National Funeral Directors Association* awarded **Chandra Zeisset** a \$1,000 scholarship.

New class officers were elected and are working hard to make this a pro-



Melissa Speight



Chandra Zeisset

ductive year. In addition to president Melissa Speight, officers include **Robert Curtis**, **Kristen Langkopf**, and **Emily Roesslein**. They are planning many fundraisers as well as community service activities. One popular fundraiser is the annual t-shirt sale.

Several students are looking for practicum sites

and/or apprenticeship opportunities to begin after passing exams in May. If any funeral home in Missouri or Illinois would like to help, please contact Steve Koosman at St. Louis Community College. More information can also be found at the class blog at <http://stlfuneral.wordpress.com>.

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# Educational NEWS CONTINUED

## AAMI Students Tour Woodlawn Cemetery



AAMI Students at Woodlawn Cemetery

**NEW YORK, NY**— On July 21, 2009, students at **American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Service** spent a day of learning about the history and operation of **The Woodlawn Cemetery**. The first part of the tour consisted of a talk on the history of the famous 400 acre cemetery located in Bronx, NY. **John Toale**, President of Woodlawn spoke of the rich history of the cemetery, it's founding and it's operation today. **Dennis L. Woolard**, Executive

Director of Family Services spoke to the students about services offered to families, from burial to entombment, cremation and private mausoleums.

The class was then taken to the crematory to learn about the operation of a crematory and the cremation process. From there they were taken on a walking tour by **Susan Olsen**, Director of Historical Services. Ms. Olsen also spoke of the rich history of the cemetery and the need to

preserve that history by caring for the oldest plots and family mausoleums. Finally, they were treated to a picnic lunch hosted by **Marguerite Bardini**, Assistant to the President. The students were very appreciative of their tour and their gift bags

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which included the book 'Woodlawn Remembers, Cemetery of American History', Brochures describing Woodlawn Cemetery and Crematory and Maps of the cemetery, listing the most famous individuals who are interred and entombed at Woodlawn.

## Funeral Service Pinning brings National Presidents to Piedmont Technical College



Participating in the pinning ceremony for the funeral service program at Piedmont Technical College were, (L to R) **Dedrick Gantt**, **Doggett Whitaker**, **Ernest Adams**, **John Reed**, **L. Ruple Harley**, **David Martin**, and **Dr. Ray Brooks**, president of Piedmont Tech.

**GREENWOOD, SC**— A gathering of funeral service students at **Piedmont Technical College** brought together two influential members of the profession: the presidents of two national associations.

**John Reed**, president of the *National Funeral Directors Association*, was the keynote speaker for a pinning program recognizing all of the funeral service graduates for 2009, including those set to complete their studies in December. **Ernest Adams**, president of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*, administered the funeral director's oath.

"This is the first time that two presiding presidents have attended such an event," said **David Martin**, instructor and program coordinator for the funeral service program at PTC.

Martin became acquainted with Reed before he was elected president while working as a funeral director in West Virginia, Reed's home state. When Martin came to Piedmont Tech's funeral service program, Reed offered to come speak to the students. His advice to the graduates was to stay educated in a constantly changing profession.

Adams was also well acquainted with the program, serving as the state inspector with Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation for all funeral homes and crematories in South Carolina.

The program also included two past presidents for NFDA. **R. Doggett Whitaker** from **Whitaker Funeral Home** in Newberry and **L. Ruple Harley** from **Harley Funeral Home and Crematory** in Greenwood both participated in the ceremony.

"To have one sitting president participating in an event is a fantastic accomplishment, but to have two sitting presidents and two past presidents is phenomenal," said **Dedrick Gantt**, PTC funeral service instructor.

The South Carolina Center for Funeral Service Education, also known as the funeral service curriculum at Piedmont Technical College, is the only funeral service program in South Carolina, with students from all over the state as well as western North Carolina and parts of Georgia. For more information on the funeral service program, contact Martin or Gantt at (864) 941-8774 or go to [www.ptc.edu/funeralservice](http://www.ptc.edu/funeralservice).

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# Association NEWS

## William C. Wappner installed 2009-10 President of National Funeral Directors Association

*Continued from Front Page*



The 2009-10 National Funeral Directors Association Executive Board. (L to R) Back row: At-large Representative Jzyk S. Ennis, At-large Representative J. Michael Krill, NFDA CEO Christine Pepper, At-large Representative Robert L. Bates, At-large Representative Mark Mortimore, and NFDA General Counsel T. Scott Gilligan. Front row: Treasurer Randall L. Earl, President-elect Patrick E. Lynch, President William C. Wappner, Immediate Past President John D. Reed, and Secretary Robert T. Rosson.

MS; Immediate Past President **John D. Reed Sr.**, CFSP, CPC, **Dodd & Reed Funeral Home and Adams-Reed Funeral Home, Inc.**, Webster Springs and Cowen, WV; At-large Representative (2008-10) **Robert "Robby" L. Bates**, CFSP, **Bates Family Funeral Home**, DeKalb, TX; At-large Representative (2008-10) **J. Michael Krill**, CFSP, **Krill Funeral Service**, Edgerton, OH; At-large Representative (2009-11) **Jzyk S. Ennis**, MPA, CFSP, **Ridout's Trussville Chapel**,

Birmingham, AL; and At-large Representative (2009-11) **Mark Mortimore**, **Mortimore Funeral Home, Inc.**, Thermopolis, WY.

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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## NFDA <sup>2</sup> <sup>9</sup> Around the Convention Hall...

BOSTON MASS. OCTOBER 25-28



**More NFDA Convention Photos on Next Page**

# Association NEWS CONTINUED



## Kavod's Fall meeting creates new relationships with NFDA and SIFH and Matthews Casket

FAIRFIELD, CT— At its Fall Meeting, as part of the *National Funeral Directors Association* Convention and Expo in Boston, Kavod – The Independent Jewish Funeral Chapels had important con-

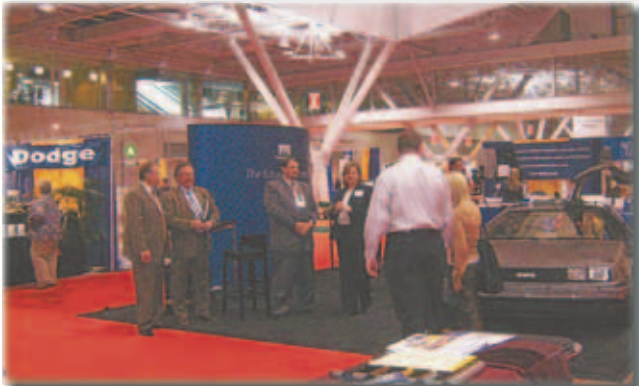
ferences with **Anna Bernfeld** and **John Fitch** from NFDA and **Rob Paterkiewicz** and **Thomas Broussard** from *Selected Independent Funeral Homes*. These conferences were discussions on how each association can help with not only the independent Jewish funeral home, but how we can all assist the independent funeral home.

The discussions were very productive and formed new relationships. Kavod honorary member, **Richy Adlman**, along with **Matthews Casket Division**, also unveiled their newest all wood construction casket called *Kavod*, designed exclusively for the association. The new casket which consists of a specific Kavod embroidered panel, all wood perfection cut shell design with new all wood hinging system, all wood sliding front latches, a newly designed lid support with locking security system, and the availability of interchangeable panel designs, a first in the product line, will be offered starting late 2009 to its members.

CONTINUED ON PAGE A39



## Around the Convention Hall...



More Convention Photos on Next Page

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## NFDA<sup>2</sup><sup>9</sup>

BOSTON MASS. OCTOBER 25-28

### Around the Convention Hall...

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED



*Around the Convention Hall..*



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MENS FIT ALLS.....	\$17.95 pr
LADIES ROUND HANKIES.....	\$44.95 dozen

## Kavod's Fall Meeting

*Continued from Page A37*

Kavod is proud and thankful to have been a part of the events in Boston and their newly formed relationships. Kavod will now look to April 2010 when they will hold their Spring Meeting in Aventura, FL.

Founded in 2002, the *National Independent Jewish Funeral Directors* are providers of Jewish funeral services. This group was formed to create a network of independent family owned Jewish funeral providers to support one another in this changing environment and where many have expressed a need to have an individual service provider who is independent and will facilitate as an advocate for the families that we are all privileged to serve. In 2006, the organization changed its name to KAVOD – The Independent Jewish Funeral Chapels. KAVOD...honor, respect, esteem, strong moral principles, and a source of pride. It is with these ideals that this organization has dedicated itself to having only the highest level of family owned Jewish firms as part of its' organization. The organization became recognized by other national organizations, including the National Funeral Directors Association, Selected Independent Funeral Homes, the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, and the *International Order of the Golden Rule*, as consultants for Jewish funerals. Membership to KAVOD is by invitation. For more information about KAVOD, please visit [www.kavod-jewishfunerals.com](http://www.kavod-jewishfunerals.com).

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service present the 2009 Rebecca Barksdale Academy Awards Leadership and Scholarship Breakfast



The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to Swanson Funeral Home.



Michigan's Senator Martha Scott presents a Proclamation for the 100 BWFS to Eleanore Davis Starks



June Williams receives the 2009 Funeral Service Minority Business Entrepreneur of the Year



Marcella Boyd accepts the Funeral Service Couple of the Year Award for parents William and Mary Boyd of EF Boyd Funeral Home.



Gift sponsor John Sparicino of Pure Country

**LONGWOOD, FL**— The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service and **Batesville Casket Company** honored the memory of one of its late founding members, and founder of two flourishing establishments in the city of Detroit, **Rebecca Barksdale**, on August 5, 2009 at the 16th Annual Breakfast Celebration of Excellence at the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association* Convention held at the Detroit Renaissance Center Hotel. The 100 BWFS Award Committee honored some of the great family legacies in the funeral service business that started

as humble servants to mankind from around the nation..  
 The Star Divas of Funeral Service walked the Red Carpet and left no stone unturned. We say DIVA because the 100 BWFS has a membership of funeral professionals who are

- D – Diverse, Dedicated and Directing
- I – Independent, Intriguing and Inspirational
- V – Vivacious, Victorious and having Voluptuous personality
- A – Articulate, Admirable and Adorable



2009 Cemetarian of the Year is awarded to Janice Matthews



The President's Awardee, James H. Cole Home for Funerals



Stephanie Kann, is awarded Educator of the Year

The theme of the Leadership and Scholarship Breakfast was "Walking the Red Carpet with a "Hat-A-Tude" and some of the most adoring hats were on parade. Gift cards were awarded by the **Matthews Casket Division** in several categories by Corporate Diva **Tyra Butler** and

CONTINUED ON PAGE A44



### Klicker's Crosswords

*Learning does not have to be a chore, it can even be fun!*

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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.

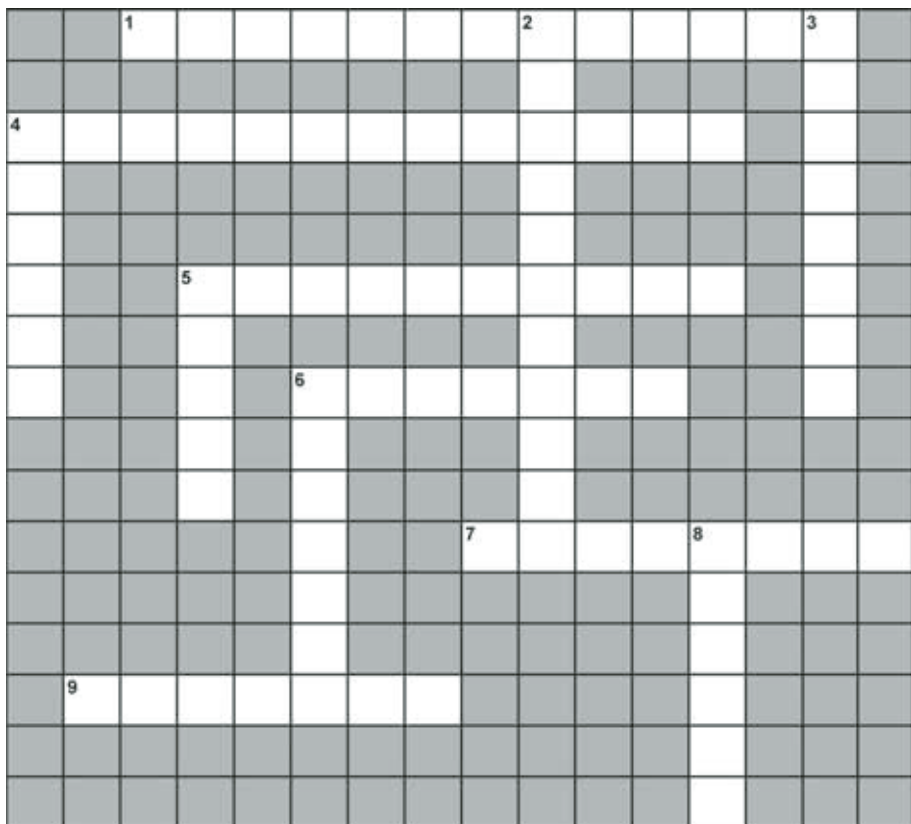
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4. Death from poisonous gas
5. Falling blade
6. Give comfort
7. Three-headed dog
9. No longer existing

**DOWN**

2. Disastrous event
3. Life-threatening
4. To mourn
5. Execute by impalement
6. Sentence to death
8. To die



ANSWERS ON PAGE A44

# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Selected Independent Funeral Homes installs New Officers and Board Members



Thomas A. Broussard



Corinne H. Curtis



James B. Kepner



Thomas M. Belford

DEERFIELD,IL— Selected Independent Funeral Homes, an international organization of independent funeral service providers, has announced that two new officers—**Thomas A. Broussard** as President and **Corinne H. Curtis** as Secretary-Treasurer—and two new board members—**James B. Kepner** and **Thomas M. Belford**—were officially installed at its recent annual meeting in San Diego, CA.

Broussard is Co-CEO of **Broussard's Mortuary** in Beaumont, TX. He was elected to the board of directors of Selected Independent Funeral Homes in 2007, representing the south central region of North America. His father, **Alex Broussard**, also served on the association's board and was president in 1972.

"I look forward to continuing our efforts to make this association viable and compelling to our members and to the industry," said Broussard. "We have taken some great strides in recent years. I am excited and unbelievably honored to serve in this capacity and to help keep us moving forward."

Curtis is Co-President and Secretary of **Platt's Funeral Home, Inc.**, Augusta, GA. She was elected to the board of directors of Selected Independent Funeral Homes in 2007,

representing the south eastern region of North America.

Kepner is Vice President of **Kepner Funeral Home**, Wheeling, WV. He was elected to the board of directors of Selected Independent Funeral Homes this year, representing the north central region of North America. Both his grandfather, **Wade H. Kepner**, and father, **John W. Kepner**, are past presidents of the association, serving in 1939 and 1980 respectively.

Belford is President of **John A. Gentleman Mortuaries**, Omaha, NE. He was elected to the board of directors of Selected Independent Funeral Homes this year, representing the central region of North America.

The board of directors also includes: **Paul E. Foster**, Fulton, NY; **John J. Horan**, Aurora, CO; and ex-officio **Glenn P. Taylor**, Owensboro, KY.

Founded in 1917 as National Selected Morticians, Selected Independent Funeral Homes is the world's oldest and largest association of independently owned funeral homes. Membership is by invitation only, and members subscribe to the association's "Code of Good Practice" in providing the public with reliable, high-quality funeral services and funeral-related information.

## 100 BWFS visit Ronald McDonald House of Michigan



(L to R) Erma Hudson from Ronald McDonald House accepts a check from Eleanor Davis Starks, June R. Williams and Marilyn Buxton of the 100BWFS.

DETROIT,MI— The 2009 Books and Bears Project of the **100 Black Women of Funeral Service** was in full gear on Thursday, August 6, 2009 when project chairwoman, **June R. Williams** of **Stinson Funeral Homes**, Detroit, 100BWFS founder **Eleanor Davis Starks** and members unloaded the Stinson Funeral Home limousine with their 2009 Wish List. From front to back the 100 BWFS officers had to shuffle for seats to roll with this sister for the annual visit. The members and officers gladly unloaded the limousine full of goodies and had a wonderful tour and visit with the staff of the *Ronald McDonald House*.

Project Director and 2009 Minority Funeral Service Academy Award winner June R. Williams made history, leaving no stone unturned as she coordinated the best annual visit to the

Ronald McDonald House Charities and Pediatric Hospital made since 2000. "June got the wish list and she worked all of her funeral service suppliers and friends and colleagues and it was a monumental success. We had never come close to raising \$1,350 before. Thanks to a very special member who strives for excellence in all that she does, everyone opened their hearts and their wallets for June and for the sick and infirmed children of Detroit. It was an honor to present the Ronald McDonald House of Detroit with the check," stated Starks.

"We cannot thank June, her working Detroit Team and the wonderful friends who donated to our cause enough. We must also thank the colleagues and members who donated story books and teddy bears for the very special

family room at the facility. It's very humbling for us to receive the Bears and Books at the Annual Convention of the *National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association*. It's all about making a difference and touching the lives of children and families before we leave the convention city," added Starks.

Ronald McDonald House of Detroit, which provides a home-away-from home and support services to parents with hospitalized children, opened November of 1979 in the Detroit Medical Center adjacent to Children's Hospital of Michigan. The Detroit House is owned and operated by a non-profit Board comprised of leaders of the community, residents and representatives of McDonald's restaurants. Eighty-five percent of the home's funding depends on continued generosity of individuals and businesses. The affiliation with Ronald McDonald House Charities and McDonald's continues to contribute about 15 percent of the cost of operating the house.

100BWFS remind all to start gathering Books and Bears for this needy cause during the NFD&MA Convention in Fort Lauderdale, FL in August 2010.

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## Illinois Association elects Officers and Directors



New ICFHA Officers (L to R) Treasurer Vickie Hand, Secretary Peggy Grenke, First Vice-President Willie Carter, Second Vice-President Maynard Grossman, and President John Renfro.



New ICFHA Directors (L to R) Jo Green, Mike Puhr, LeNette VanHaverbeke, and Maynard Grossman.

**HOMewood, IL**— The **Illinois Cemetery and Funeral Home Association** has elected new officers for 2009-2010 as well as new directors for the Class of 2012.

The newly elected officers are: President – **John Renfro, Graceland Funeral Home & Cemetery, Decatur**; First Vice-President – **Willie Carter, Restvale Cemetery, Alsip**; Second Vice-President – **Maynard Grossman, Shalom Memorial Park & Shalom Memorial Funeral Home, Arlington Heights**; Treasurer – **Vickie Hand,**

**Washington Memory Gardens, Homewood**; and Secretary – **Peggy Grenke, Highland Garden of Memories/Highland Memorial Funeral Home, Belvidere.**

The newly elected Class of 2012 directors are: **LeNette VanHaverbeke, Evergreen Cemetery, Steger**; **Mike Puhr, Sunset Funeral Home Memorial Park & Cremation Center, Danville**; **Jo Green, Fairlawn Cemetery, Decatur**; and **Maynard Grossman, Shalom Memorial Park & Shalom Memorial Funeral Home, Arlington Heights.**

## NCBVA to hold 2010 Convention in Las Vegas with World of Concrete

**LONGWOOD, FL**— When the **National Concrete Burial Vault Association (NCBVA)** holds its annual convention on February 2 - 4, 2010, its attendees will be able to experience the best of two worlds because the NCBVA Convention will be held in conjunction with the *World of Concrete (WOC)*. Concrete burial vault manufacturers will be able to meet with their peers at the NCBVA Convention, participate in a program designed just for the burial vault industry, then, thanks to an arrangement worked out by NCBVA & WOC, attend the WOC Show at the Las Vegas Convention Center at no charge. Considering the current economy, this stretching of convention budget dollars is a definite “win-win” situation.

The NCBVA Convention centers on a unique “partnership plaza” concept. An outstanding program of speakers, displays by suppliers to the burial vault industry, and breakfast-and-lunch food functions will be held in one large meeting space in the world-class Bellagio Hotel. The Partnership Plaza concept provides plenty of opportunity for networking among members of this specialized industry. After each day of the 2010 NCBVA program concludes, registrants will have time to participate in the World of Concrete and get new ideas for the concrete side of their businesses—important information that can help them sustain and grow their companies.

The NCBVA seminar program features two two-hour educational seminars. **Janelle Barlow, PhD**, author of *Branded Customer Service*, will discuss “Brand Selling—All Burial Vaults are Not the Same.” **Maureen O’Brien, CEO and Founder, O’Brien & Son, Inc.**, will confront the controversial subject of green burials in her seminar, “Is It Time to Fight Back or Time to Cut and Run?”

“Branding” is an integral part of modern business strategy, and Barlow will give burial vault manufacturers the information they need to:

- Personalize and reinforce brands through staff/customer interactions;
- Link brand propositions to selling style and messages;
- Create their brand of service into “organizational DNA;”
- Communicate more effectively within their own companies to ensure that branding resonates throughout their entire organizational structure.

The bottom line of Barlow’s seminar is that an identifiable, attractive brand offers an enormous competitive advantage. By applying the concepts she will outline, burial vault companies can use customer service as a powerful tool for establishing and maintaining a distinct brand identity.

It’s a known fact within the industry that there is a growing movement against traditional burials and burial vaults, and vault market share is becoming smaller and smaller. Author, lecturer and business owner Maureen O’Brien thinks solutions to this problem can be found right in the same burial vault industry that is losing market share. She will help vault manufacturers and dealers discover the answers that will bring back market share.

O’Brien’s company is a unique business that works with national and international companies, helping them set intentions (what a company wants to do) and deliverables (what a company can reasonably expect to do). As an extraordinary listener, O’Brien is able to develop programs containing strategies that are meaningful and immediately implementable. She has motivated and inspired hundreds of corporate audiences through her real-life stories and down-to-earth message.

The NCBVA Convention will conclude with a Viva Las Vegas party (with some surprise guests) and installation dinner at the Stratosphere Hotel.

Complete program details can be found at [www.ncbva.org](http://www.ncbva.org). Early-bird registration prices are in effect through December 31 and rooms at The Bellagio can be reserved on the website for \$179. On a limited first-come, first-served basis, associate members (suppliers to the industry) may reserve display tables at no charge.

NCBVA is a professional membership association comprised of burial vault manufacturers, franchisers in the deathcare industry, and supplier companies that provide products and services to burial vault manufacturers. NCBVA provides a forum through which manufacturers of concrete burial vaults cooperate for the purpose of developing high standards of quality; promoting the use of concrete burial vaults through approved advertising and ethical sales methods; encouraging fair trade practices among its members; and engaging in such research and educational activities that contribute to the growth and improvement of the concrete burial vault industry.

Through its publications and website ([www.ncbva.org](http://www.ncbva.org)), NCBVA provides educational information to the general public regarding reasons to buy a lined concrete burial vault.

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“In 1663 in New England, cranberries (bounce berries) were tested for ripeness by their ability to bounce.”

—American Heritage Cookbook

*Cranberry sauce and brown sugar create a tangy glaze for meatballs that make a wonderful appetizer or a great main dish. This is a microwave recipe; however, the old-fashioned, stove-top way would work as well.*

### YUMMY CINNAMON COFFEE CAKE

1 Pkg white cake mix  
1 Pkg instant vanilla pudding  
¾ cup vegetable oil  
¾ cup water  
½ tsp vanilla  
4 eggs

Mix all together on high speed for 9 minutes. Meanwhile, mix the following in a small bowl:

1 Tbsp. cinnamon  
2 Tbsp. sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
½ cups chopped walnuts

Grease 11 x 17” pan and spread with ½ cake mix and ½ sugar-nut mix. Repeat with remaining halves of cake and sugar-nut mix. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

While cake is baking, mix together:

1½ cups confectioners’ sugar  
3 Tbsp. milk  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 tsp. butter flavoring (optional)  
1 tsp. vanilla

Drizzle over warm cake.

### CHRISTMAS MEATBALLS

2 eggs  
1 envelope onion soup mix  
½ cup seasoned bread crumbs  
¼ cup chopped dried cranberries  
2 Tbsp. minced parsley  
1½ lbs. lean ground beef

#### SAUCE:

1 can (16 oz) whole cranberry sauce  
¾ cup ketchup  
½ cup beef broth  
3 Tbsp. brown sugar  
3 Tbsp. finely chopped onion  
2 tsp. cider vinegar

Combine eggs, soup mix, bread crumbs, cranberries and parsley. Mix well with ground beef. Shape into 1” balls; place 12 – 14 balls on a microwave safe plate and cover with wax paper. Cook on high for 3-4 minutes, until no longer pink. Remove the paper towels and repeat for all meatballs. In microwave-safe dish, combine sauce ingredients. Cover and cook on high 3-4 minutes, until heated thoroughly. Gently stir in meatballs. Cover and cook on high for 1-2 minutes.

# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## ASCAP is inspecting Funeral Homes without Music Licenses

**BROOKFIELD,WI**— A funeral home in a small town in South Dakota recently opened the door to an unwelcome visitor during a funeral service – an ASCAP inspector who was checking up on funeral homes that do not have music licenses. ASCAP, along with BMI and SESAC, are the three music-licensing organizations in the United States.

After determining that the South Dakota funeral home was allowing copyrighted music to be performed during the funeral service, the ASCAP inspector gave the funeral home a choice: pay for an ASCAP license for 2009 or face a copyright infringement suit with penalties of up to \$30,000. The funeral home had no choice

but to pay for the ASCAP license for the final four months of 2009.

That individual license cost more than the annual music license fee available through the *National Funeral Directors Association*, which gives a funeral home a blanket license for all music in the ASCAP, BMI and SESAC libraries. Not surprisingly, the South Dakota funeral home that alerted NFDA about the inspection quickly signed-up for the NFDA music license for 2010.

When NFDA contacted ASCAP officials about the inspection, ASCAP verified that it has targeted funeral service for enforcement after discovering significant numbers of funeral home locations that were not licensed. Several

## NFDA reminds all members to comply with copyright law by purchasing license

NFDA members have also reported receiving letters from ASCAP regarding federal copyright law and the music license requirement. If a member has all of its locations licensed through NFDA, they should disregard the letter; if they are not licensed through NFDA, they should contact NFDA immediately to renew their license.

Members of NFDA are eligible to purchase a comprehensive music license covering all three music-licensing organizations, ASCAP, SESAC and BMI, at the lowest price available anywhere. A license must be purchased annually for each funeral home location in order for the business to be properly licensed and comply with federal copyright law.

NFDA extends this exclusive pricing to all federated state funeral associations and Funeral and Memorial Information Council (FAMIC) member organizations: *International Order of the Golden Rule, National Funeral Directors & Morticians Organization, Cremation Association of North America, Selected Independent Funeral Homes, Casket & Funeral Supply Association, Monument Builders Association of North America, National Concrete Burial Vault Association*, and the *American Monument Association*.

To learn more about music licensing or to purchase a license, please visit [www.nfda.org/about-nfda/membership-information](http://www.nfda.org/about-nfda/membership-information) or call NFDA at 800-228-6332.

## McCullough elected to Public Affairs Board

**ALBANY,NY**— Randy L. McCullough, Deputy Executive Director of the **New York State Funeral Directors Association (NYSFDA)**, was elected as a member of the Board of Directors of the Public Affairs Council at the Board's meeting this month. The Council, based in Washington, DC, is the leading international association for public affairs professionals and is comprised of over 600 member companies and associations. Its mission is to advance the field of public affairs and to provide tools and resources that enable public affairs executives and managers to achieve their business and professional goals.

The volunteer Board of Directors, which governs the Public Affairs Council, is comprised of leaders in the public affairs arena. Board members are typically outstanding, senior-level executives from leading corporations, associations and consultancies who have demonstrated a commitment to upholding the mission and goals of the Council. Board members provide input and oversight for the Council's programs and services, approve budgets and allocate resources and participate in high-level discussions about emerging public policy and business issues.

McCullough, from Amsterdam, has been NYSFDA's deputy executive director for over six years, having previously served as the Association's director of government affairs. From 1988 - 1998, he was senior staff member/committee director for former New York State Assemblyman *Paul D. Tonko*, who now represents the region as a Member of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives (NY-21). McCullough graduated from Hartwick College (Oneonta, NY) with a B.A. in Political Science, earning Departmental Distinction honors. He also undertook graduate studies in international affairs at The George Washington University, Washington, DC.

McCullough also serves on the Board of Directors of the Albany-based Empire State Society of Association Executives (ES-SAE). He has also been a member of the board of directors for several organizations, including the American Red Cross (North-eastern New York Chapter) and the Hartwick College Alumni Association, where he served on its Executive Committee, and headed the Albany-area Alumni Chapter for several years.

Founded in 1889, NYSFDA's mission is to promote the highest standards of funeral service to the public and to enhance the environment in which its members operate. Over 900 member firms and their 3000 licensed funeral directors who practice across the state belong to the Association.



Randy L. McCullough

## Elleanor Davis Starks presented with the Adiago Health Tempo Award

**PITTSBURGH,PA**— **Elleanor Davis Starks**, founder of the **100 Black Women of Funeral Service**, The Eden Hall Foundation of Pittsburgh, PA and its Trustee *Deborah S. Foster*, and Magee-Women's Hospital of University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and its President *Leslie Davis* were recipients of the Adiago Health 2009 Tempo Award.

The presentations were made by *Sandra T. Tomlinson* and the Adiago Health Board of Directors during the VIP party that preceded Hot Pink Pittsburgh. Elleanor and her son, Pittsburgh Steeler **Max Starks**, have been honorary chairs of this Pittsburgh event that features a sizzling evening of music and dance to fight breast cancer and cervical cancer for the past five years.

Eden Hall Foundation is a private foundation established pursuant to the will of *Sebastin Mueller*, a Pittsburgh philanthropist and vice president and director of the H.J. Heinz Company. During his lifetime, Mr. Mueller gave substantial support to improve conditions of the poor and disadvantaged, the promotion of sound education, and the support of health facilities and projects. Today, the trustees of the Eden Hall Foundation continue his stewardship in the areas of education, social welfare, health and the arts.

Magee-Women's Hospital of UPMC is a world class center for both women's health and comprehensive medical-surgical care. Ranked among the top 12 hospitals in the nation for gynecological care, Magee-Women's Hospital is a National Center of Excellence in Women's Health, one of the first recognized by the US Department of Health and Human Services. An innovative leader in the delivery of women's health care and research, Magee is elegantly designed and welcoming with state of the art technology for diagnosis and treatment.

Elleanor Davis Starks, CFSP is the founder and Executive Director of the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service. Founded in 1993, this organization has provided a strong network for leadership development, continuing education opportunities, mentoring, leadership and scholarships making quality education a priority. A native of Detroit, MI, Ms. Starks has studied at Kentucky State University, Xavier University, Emory University, University of Florida and *Gupton Jones College of Funeral Service*. She is a licensed funeral director and embalmer in the state of Florida. She has served on the Board of Directors of the *Florida Morticians Association* and is past Education Director, past Director of Public Relations and past Programming Director for the Children's Jr. FMA Program, Regional Vice President of Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, Inc Alpha Gamma Chapter, and currently is a member of the Al-

pha Omega Chapter-Atlanta, as well as their National Executive Secretary. She served as the district governor of District Five for the states of Florida, Georgia and Alabama. The 100 BWFS is a national convention exhibit partner with NFDMA, NFDA and ICCFA, Inc.

A 17 year breast cancer survivor, Elleanor is actively involved and committed to the awareness, education and the fight against breast cancer. She is an advocate for the Sister Study Cancer Research Project, and annually holds the Mama Starks Annual Charity Bowl for Cancer along with her support of the annual Adiago Health Hot Pink. Elleanor is also involved in many education and literary causes with her son and the Max Starks Charitable Fund at the Pittsburgh Foundation. She is an ambassador of the American Heart Association Go Red Campaign and is an American Stroke Association advocate for better health for African Americans around the nation- this year promoting the Power to End Stroke Program through her funeral directors association.

Elleanor Starks affectionately known around the Pittsburgh Steelers Organization players and staff, as "Mama Starks," has served as the NFL Steeler Team Mom and the TV Chunky Campbell Soup Mom Celebrity of the Super Bowl Champion Pittsburgh Steelers. She lends her support to the Professional Football Players Mothers Association, The National Mom Squad and serves the NFL Moms Organization as their President. Each NFL Mothers organization is involved with many philanthropic causes and charities both locally and nationally as well as in the development of foundation work for the families of NFL Players.

Elleanor finds time for the Pittsburgh Foundation Sports Advisory Board, The NUP Charter School School Community Advisory Board and Mentoring Programs, The Max Starks Charitable Fund Board, Director of the The Max Starks NFL Free Youth Football Camp, Co-creator with her sister Dr. *Ida R. Muorie* of the Max Starks Characters in Action Leadership Program for Parents and Youth and the Max Starks Celebrity Golf Event to name a few.

She is the mother of four and grandmother of two handsome boys and a well deserving recipient of the 2009 Tempo Award and making a difference in the lives of families and youth wherever she steps.



Elleanor Davis Starks



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## 100 BWFS visit Cypress College

CYPRESS, CA— The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service Officers made a site visit to Cypress College and enjoyed an afternoon of discovering old treasures common to old time undertakers and new trends preparing students for the future in funeral service.

Cypress College has a rich listing of alumni from California and the west coast making it easy to see why the California Funeral Directors and Morticians Association is one of the most progressive associations of the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association. Tour guide for the day was none other than **Lori Hopper**. The group was also able to spend some time with program director **Glenn Bower** who has been a great friend and supporter of the 100 BWFS. President **Dottie Hector**, CFSP-CPC and chair of the site committee stated, "The funeral service program got their report card and came out with an overall grade of A from the board of directors of the 100 BWFS. The grading committee feels complete confidence in the faculty staff and mortuary science program at Cypress College under Director Glenn Bower."

The 100 BWFS have one scholarship student registered in the current program at Cypress College. **Namyia Shepard** who is mentored by Chairman **Mary Louise Winston**, **House of Winston**



(L to R) Elleanor Davis Starks, Glenn Bower and Lori Hopper at Cypress College.

**Mortuary and Pamela F. Anderson, Angelus Funeral Home**, has successfully passed her conference exam.

"This is what good schooling is all about," states Vice President **Tootie Adkins**. "Passing your National Exam and getting ready for graduation and moving to the next level."

The Mortuary Science Department at Cypress College prepares men and women for a career that cares for the dead and comforts the living. Students are prepared for employment as funeral directors and embalmers through courses

in funeral service management, embalming, funeral directing, anatomy, restorative art, funeral service science fundamentals, funeral service counseling and mortuary law. The Mortuary Science Program has been at Cypress College since 1977 and features the finest in equipment and student services.

"It was a great site visit and we are looking for our next site visit at a Mortuary science program in your area," stated **Elleanor Davis Starks**, CFSP Founder and Executive Director of the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service.

## 100 BWFS Academy Awards Leadership and Scholarship Breakfast

Continued from Page A40

her selection committee for the best looking hats.

Mistress of Ceremonies **Annette Foster** of Batesville Casket Company and founder **Elleanor Davis Starks** were just two of the great presenters for this star-studded affair honoring the best of the best. Special guests included the NFDMA President **Hall Davis, Jr.** and President Elect



The Star Divas of Funeral Service

**Ernest Adams** as well as Past NFDMA President and association historian **J.C. "Skeepie" Scarborough**. Co-sponsors included **Matthews Bronze Company, Federal Coach, Matthews Casket Division, Forethought Life Insurance Company, MRA-Reflections-The American Funeral Mobile Unit, Funeral Home Gifts-Pure Country**, as well as 16-year supporter, **Nomis Publications, Inc.** and Platinum Sponsor **Batesville Casket Company**. *American Legacy Magazine* National Publisher **Robert Reynolds** was in attendance along with Michigan's State Senator **Martha Scott**.

Senator Scott also presented a proclamation on behalf of the State of Michigan and City of Detroit to 100 BWFS Founder **Elleanor Davis Starks** honoring her accomplishments and commitment to the women of funeral service in establishing a premier organization. In addition, the proclamation noted her personal dedication to the future of funeral service through mentoring programs and the 100BWFS scholarship program, providing approximately 20 mortuary school scholarships annually.

The 2009 Honorees included: **Karen Jones Smith, Royal Funeral Home**, Huntsville, AL; **Karla Cole** and Family, **James H. Cole Home for Funerals**, Detroit, MI; **Janice Matthews**, owner of the **Dorie Miller Memorial Park**,

**Waco, TX; William F. and Mary Boyd of EF Boyd Funeral Home**, Cleveland, OH; **June Williams of Stinson Funeral Homes**, Detroit, MI; **Dr. O'Neil D. Swanson, Sr. and Family, Swanson Funeral Homes** of Michigan; and President **Stephanie Kann**, Educator, *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*, Wheeling, IL. The recipient of the M. Athalie Range Trailblazer Award is **Pamela C. Rayner** of the **A.A. Rayner Funeral Homes**, Chicago, IL. This is a great group of heavy-hitters who are committed to the growth of the funeral service profession. Each awardee will be individually featured in the monthly column of the 100BWFS by written founder **Elleanor D. Starks** in the *Funeral Home and Cemetery News*.

The 100 BWFS is very proud of its 2009-2010 Scholarship Donors who honor their loved ones through the gift of education. They give back through scholarships to those who have impacted their lives. A special thanks to the following scholarship donors: **Funeral Financial Systems, Nomis Publications, Virginia Perry-Slater, Pamela C. Rayner, Aloysia Fouche, Linn Ann Griffin**, The March Family of Baltimore, **Batesville Casket Company, Samuella Marshall, Lisa Williams, Renata W. Boston, Belverleann Madison, Ken Coffey** of *Forethought*,  
**CONTINUED ON PAGE A45**

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

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# Association NEWS CONTINUED

## The 100 Black Women of Funeral Service present the 2009 Rebecca Barksdale Academy Awards Leadership and Scholarship Breakfast

Continued from Page A44



100 BWFS President Dorthea "Dottie" Hector



2009 Woman of the Year, Karen Jones Smith



NFDMA Past President and Historian J.C. "Skeepie" Scarborough with wife, Queen Scarborough.



Chicago Divas on the Red Carpet to honor Pamela C. Rayner (Left) recipient of the 2009 M. Athalie Range Trailblazer Award

N. Patrick Range, Gladys and Vernon Wallace, Karen Jones Smith, Mary Louise Winston, Chedonna Trimble-Holston, Tryphina and Lenora Wiseman, Lottie K. Weldon, Cynthia Johnson-Reid, Gregory and Betty Levett, Jr., Madonna Multinational Funeral Home, Janice Matthews, Robert Dorshey, Wanda Bacon, Debbie Dodge, Tyra Butler and Mathews Casket Division of Pittsburgh. This is a very special and unique group of scholarship supporters who know the importance of giving back unselfishly to help others climb the ladder of success. The 100 BWFS Officers and Board thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

stitute; Jennifer Ward, Wayne State; Lindsay Lincoln, Mt. Ida College-NEI; and Stacey Walker, Fayetteville Tech.

The Rebecca Barksdale Academy Awards of Funeral Service Leadership and Scholarship Breakfast was honored to have many of the 2009-2010 scholarship students present this year from around the nation. They were presented with their scholarship check and ribbons recognizing them for being one of the finest classes of scholarship students. This year's class of scholarship recipients were: **Cheryl Busby**, Dallas Institute; **Karen Y. Peoples**, Florida Community College; **Adilah Shamid-Deen**, Dallas Institute; **Ronnetta McDowell**, Dallas Institute; **Morgan Ledyard**, Dallas Institute; **Eric A. Wilson, II**, Commonwealth Institute; **Kathy Baril**, Wayne State University; **DaiDrian T. Brown** (who is also the 100 BWFS 2009 Student of the Year) of Dallas Institute; **Shondelle Pink**, American Academy-McAllister Institute; **Jay Diderickson**, Arapahoe Community College; **Kimberly Caldwell**, Dallas Institute; **Namya Shepard**, Cypress College; **Latoya Logan**, Worsham College; **Elizabeth Andrew**, Wayne State University; **Dimitra Johnson**, Catonsville College; **Howardia A. Turner**, Worsham College; **Adriana Corral**, Miami Dade Community College; **Emily Gordon**, Mt. Ida College-New England In-

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**ROBERT T. STRAWBRIDGE** of Wilmington, DE died October 26, 2009 at the age of 61. A graduate of *Mercer County College*, he was a licensed funeral director in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. He was currently managing the **Beeson Funeral Homes** of Wilmington and Newark. He was also a member of the *Delaware Funeral Directors Association*.

**FRED A. ROSE** of Knoxville, TN died October 10, 2009 at the age of 91. He was longtime president of **Rose Mortuary, Inc.**, which was founded by his father, **Frank Rose**. He was a past president of the *Greater Knoxville Funeral Directors Association* and the *Tennessee Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers*, and a former member of the Board of Directors of the *National Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards*.

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**MILDRED SOROKA** of Duncanville, TX and formerly of Philadelphia, PA died October 24, 2009 at the age of 86. She graduated from *Eckels College of Mortuary Science* in 1942 and served as a funeral director with her father, **John H. Turko** in Philadelphia.

**KENNETH O. BOLIN** of Zanesville, OH died October 24, 2009 at the age of 97. He was a longtime funeral director and embalmer, serving his community since 1935. He graduated from the Cleveland College of Embalming and began his career with the Mader-Peoples Funeral Home in 1932, and was the owner and operator of Bolin-Dierkes Funeral Home until his death. He was a member of the *Ohio Funeral Directors Association*, District 13 and the *National Funeral Directors Association*.

**DON S. FLESHER, SR.** of Van Alstyne, TX died November 4, 2009 at the age of 88. He began working at **Fox-Fanning Funeral Home** in Van Alstyne in high school. He graduated from the *Dallas School of Embalming* and received his funeral director/embalmer license in 1942. He then worked for **Hartwig Funeral Home** in Ft. Worth, TX, **Guardian Funeral Home**, Ft. Worth, and **Crouch-Moore Funeral Home** in McKinney, TX. In 1953 he purchased the Fox-Fanning Funeral Home, Van Alstyne, renaming it the **Fox-Flesher Funeral Home** and later **Flesher Funeral Home**. He was awarded his Doctor of Mortuary Science in 1965. Reprinted from *The Deadbeat*, Golden City, MO.

**GEORGE E. PITTS** of Orlando, FL died October 16, 2009 at the age of 70. He graduated from *Miami Dade College*, and began his career at Starks Funeral Home in Orlando. He later began working for **Marvin C. Zanders Funeral Home**, where he was employed for nearly three decades.

**BILLY DEWAYNE GRACE** of Jasper, AL died October 26, 2009 at the age of 62. He worked at **Kilgore-Green Funeral Home** in Jasper for several years and became a licensed funeral director.

**JOHN E. KRAFT** of Mountville, PA died October 14, 2009 at the age of 77. He owned and operated the **John E. Kraft Funeral Home**, Mountville from 1962 until 2004 and opened his branch location in Columbia in



1992. He was a graduate of *Eckels School of Embalming* and a member of the *National Funeral Directors Association*, the *Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association* and the *Lancaster County Funeral Directors Association* where he served as Past President.

Submitted by Greg and Dolly Workman, current owners of the Workman Funeral Homes, Inc., Mountville/Columbia, PA formerly the John E. Kraft Funeral Homes, Inc.

**MARIANO "MORRIE" COLETTA** of Chicago, IL died October 14, 2009 at the age of 66. A graduate of *Worsham College of Mortuary Science*, he and his twin brother, **Michael Coletta**, were third generation funeral directors who owned and operated the **Michael Coletta Sons Funeral Home**, founded in 1908 in Chicago.

**RICHARD F. "RICK" NEAL** of Myrtle Beach, SC and formerly of McCreary County, KY died October 13, 2009 at the age of 54. He was the former owner of the **RF Neal Funeral Chapel**, Pine Knot, KY from the early 1980s until the building was destroyed by fire in 1994, and he attempted to reopen in Revelo for a short time.

**JOE A. BREWER** of Blossom, TX died October 29, 2009 at the age of 83. After mortuary school in Houston, he received his funeral directors and embalmers licenses in 1950. He worked for several funeral homes in Texas and was a salesman for **Aurora Casket Company**, **Royal Bond Chemicals** and retired as a salesman for **Dodge Chemical Company**. He was a member of the *Texas Funeral Directors Association*, receiving the 1997 TFDA Supplier of the Year Award. Reprinted from *The Deadbeat*, Golden City, MO.

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**10 Things You Need to Tell Families But Are Afraid To**

Do families know that grave liners have holes in the bottom for drainage? Or that if you scatter cremated remains, a subdivision may someday be built on top of them? Linda Darby-Sempsrott, Trigard, Danville, Illinois, raises in-your-face facts that every funeral professional should discuss with families. Learn how to discuss 10 important, yet sensitive topics.



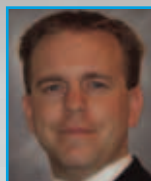
**Habla Hispanic Family Service?**

Mark A. Russell, Resthaven Gardens of Memory Cemetery, Mausoleum and Funeral Home, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, will share how his business managed to capture 95 percent of the local Hispanic market through targeted marketing efforts that work.



**Good to Great Funeral Homes**

Rod Attwell of Connelly-McKinley, Edmonton, Alberta, will analyze our profession using concepts from Jim Collins's best-selling business book "Good to Great." Among the principles he'll explore are: good is not a friend of great; facing the facts about where you currently stand; putting the "who" before the "what"; and simplicity is key.



**Evaluating "Green" Products and Practices**

What is a green product? What do families expect when they hear the term "green?" Jim Bedino, The Champion Company, Springfield, Ohio, will examine offerings in eco-friendly death care, including how to verify suppliers' product claims and the potential backlash if your company passes along false information.



**Toward a Standard in Pet Loss Care**

Bill Remkus, Hillsdale Animal Cemetery & Crematory, Willowbrook, Illinois, will lead a discussion on a proposed set of standards in pet loss care and discuss how to promote those standards among both pet loss providers and the veterinary community.



**Event Planning Best Practices**

Paula Staab Polk, Staab Polk Memorial Home and Crematory and Reception Center, Chatham, Illinois, will show you how to stage events that can help strengthen the value of funeral service and generate new revenue.



**Marketing to Non-Profits & Seniors**

Laura Markey, Bay Gardens Funeral Homes and Bayview Cemetery, Crematory and Mausoleum, Hamilton, Ontario, will share her firm's innovative marketing strategies, including "how to" steps and take-home tools you can use at your location.



**How to use Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to Promote Your Sales Operation**

Join Chuck Gallagher, American Funeral Financial, Greenville, South Carolina, to learn how to make connections via the Web to tap into the aging but tech-savvy Baby Boomer market.



**Embalming: Bacteria and Staph**

Shun Newbern, Rose Hills Mortuary, Whittier, California, will cover the types of bacteria that

enter and often stay in the prep room and the chemicals and procedures you can use to keep your work environment safe. You'll receive take-home handouts from the Centers for Disease Control and other health organizations.



**The \$10,000 Cremation: A Look at Your True Costs**

Funeral director and attorney Poul Lemasters, Lemasters Consulting, Cincinnati, Ohio, will share examples of cremation-related litigation, including a look at solutions and the "cost" to prevent and reduce the risk of lawsuits.



**Marketing to the Mexican Community**

Guerra & Gutierrez Mortuaries is the largest family-owned mortuary in East Los Angeles, in part because of their ability to attract and serve the area's extensive Mexican population. In this session, Anthony Guerra and Richard Gutierrez will share their insights into attracting and serving this community.



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