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MAGAZINE

Memorialization &  
Aftercare

March 2016

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Eyes of Freedom - A Powerful Traveling Memorial Honoring Our Fallen Veterans by Sean Flaharty  
Honoring Eyes of Freedom Profile  
Aftercare Programs - There is Something About Tuesdays by Gail Rubin  
South Carolina FDA Holds Record Breaking Mid Winter Expo  
Cherokee Specialty Caskets Celebrating "75th" Diamond Anniversary  
National Museum of Funeral History 22nd Annual Golf Charity Classic



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### MAGAZINE

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*March 2016*

**Southern Funeral Director Magazine®**  
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## notes from the editor

### 7 Things You Didn't Know About Memorial Day by: John Yopp

**1. It was originally called Decoration Day.** To honor the deceased, soldiers would decorate graves of their fallen comrades with flowers, flags and wreaths. Hence Decoration Day. Although Memorial Day became its official title in the 1880s, the holiday wouldn't legally become Memorial Day until 1967.

**2. It wasn't always celebrated the last Monday of May.** After the Civil War, General John A. Logan, commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, called for a holiday commemorating fallen soldiers to be observed every May 30. But due to the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which took effect in 1971, Memorial Day was moved to the last Monday of May to ensure long weekends. Some groups, like the veterans' organization American Legion, have been working to restore the original date to set the day apart and pay proper tribute to the servicemen and women who sacrificed their lives defending the nation.

**3. It's legally required to observe a National Moment of Remembrance.** In December 2000, Congress passed a law requiring Americans to pause at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day to remember and honor the fallen. But this doesn't appear to be common knowledge, or if it is, by 3 p.m. most people seem to be too deep into a hot dog-induced food coma to officially observe the moment.

**4. James A. Garfield delivered a rather lengthy speech at the first Memorial Day ceremony.** Of course then it was still called Decoration Day, and at the time, Garfield was a Civil War General and Republican Congressman, not yet a President. On May 30, 1868, he addressed the several thousand people gathered at Arlington National Cemetery. "If silence is ever golden," Garfield said, "it must be beside the graves of 15,000 men, whose lives were more significant than speech, and whose death was a poem the music of which can never be sung."

**5. Several states observe Confederate Memorial Day.**

In addition to the national holiday, nine states officially set aside a day to honor those who died fighting for the Confederacy in the Civil War: Texas, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Virginia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Georgia. The days vary, but only Virginia observes Confederate Memorial Day on the last Monday of May, in accordance with the federal observance of Memorial Day.

**6. Waterloo, New York is considered the birthplace of Memorial Day.** According to the town's website, in 1966 Congress unanimously passed a resolution to officially recognize Waterloo as the birthplace of the holiday. However, it remains a contentious debate, with other towns, like Boalsburg, Pa., claiming the title of "Birthplace of Memorial Day" as well.

**7. More than 36 million people will travel at least 50 miles from home this Memorial Day.**

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# Funeral Care Industry Partners with Military Memorial to Bring Healing and Comfort

Fifty years after the conclusion of the Vietnam War, our country is still attempting to properly welcome home our Veterans. And after 15 years of fighting the Global War on Terror in the Middle East, the 2.5 million men and women and their families who have answered the call to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan now battle their adjustment as they return home. Never has there been a more crucial time to give thanks and show support for these brave men and women. We are being called to respond compassionately to our returning Veterans. The funeral industry is poised to carry the torch of honoring the gift of service and sacrifice. Several funeral homes and companies in the industry have already hosted The Eyes of Freedom: Lima Company Memorial, a powerful traveling memorial that does exactly that.

Mac Cariveau of Coldspring was the first to call the Eyes of Freedom Team when he recognized that comforting the survivors and loved ones of those that have passed is a mission that is shared with the funeral care industry. In the spring of 2013, Cold Spring invited The Eyes of Freedom Traveling Memorial to be showcased at the ICCFA Convention in Tampa, making its debut in the funeral industry. As a result, several members of the Veterans Funeral Care Network made arrangements for the display to visit some of their participating communities, sponsored by their local funeral home. This resulted in a great relationship building within the industry, one that continues today.

This military tribute travels the entire country “Honoring ALL Who Answer Our Nation’s Call; Then, Now, and Tomorrow.” From late 2011 to the present, the Eyes of Freedom has impacted over 195 different communities. Hundreds of thousands of people have had the chance to experience the life-size portraits of the twenty-two Marines and one Navy Corpsmen





from Columbus Ohio-based Lima Company who were killed during combat operations in Iraq in 2005. While the portraits themselves reflect the fallen of this Marine unit, they represent everyone that has served our country. Whether we are at a state fair, community festival, sporting event, concert or military installation, uniting the community around a salute to service is powerful. Uniting Veterans with one another can be life changing.

### The Eyes of Freedom Story...

For Central Ohio, the summer of 2005 would unfortunately be marked by the tragic loss of many of their local heroes. While the Marine Reserve Lima Company's deployment successfully rid the Ambar Province in Western Iraq of the insurgent threat, the Ohio



community felt the sting of true sacrifice. Like many in Ohio, portrait artist Anita Miller wished she could do something to help the devastated families. Several months later, she awoke in the night with a vision of eight freestanding panels standing in an octagon. On those panels were life-sized portraits of the fallen from the Columbus unit as well as their combat boots and an ever-living candle. She saw the portraits standing in the Ohio Statehouse rotunda with people interacting with the paintings and then her vision shifted as she saw a team disassemble the panels and move the exhibit to other locations: a traveling memorial.

Anita's call to create the Lima Company Memorial began in 2006 and continued for two and a half years as she painted and worked directly with the Gold Star families of the fallen. The result of her work was unveiled in the Ohio Statehouse rotunda on Memorial Day 2008, just as her vision foretold. After six months in the Ohio Statehouse, requests to show the Memorial in other places began to trickle in.

Meanwhile, Corporal Mike Strahle of Lima Company was all too familiar with this unit's sacrifice. On May 11th, 2005, the vehicle that Mike was riding in hit a large roadside bomb. Six of the Marines surrounding





him were killed, most from his squad. Mike was severely injured but managed to survive, along with several others. Six years after the incident that took so many of his fallen brothers, Mike reached out to Anita to bring the memorial to a Veteran's event he was planning. During that event, the two spoke of the memorial requiring additional help to sustain its travel. Soon after, Mike joined the team and within months became the Memorial's first full-time employee, traveling the country and telling the firsthand account of service and sacrifice. Mike realized the paintings serve a wider audience and suggested the Lima Company Memorial be renamed The Eyes of Freedom. The new name reflects the power of the eyes of the fallen in the paintings.

The mission for the Eyes of Freedom continues to grow and expand in ways the artist and team never thought possible. While the memorial was on a tour of Minnesota in the spring of 2015, Brian Zimmerman, an Army veteran who served in the first Gulf war, visited the exhibit and was overcome with strong emotions. He returned the next day to talk with the team and shared that he was at the lowest point of his life. He had lost many of the men he served with to suicide over the last couple of years and Brian himself was contemplating the same terrible end. That all changed when he experienced The Eyes of Freedom Memorial.

He felt hope and comfort, knowing he was not alone and honor, knowing there was something traveling to pay tribute to all veterans. Brian says, "The Eyes of Freedom and experiencing this tribute saved my life. It speaks for my unit and me as well." The team suggested Brian contact Anita to share the impact of the paintings for his healing.

Brian's call became the tipping point. Having heard from so many visitors about the power of the paintings to heal invisible wounds of posttraumatic stress, Anita felt called to address this difficult subject and create a new work to travel with the paintings. She asked Brian to help her create an image that would speak to other Veterans suffering from post traumatic stress and to bring awareness and recognition for those whose battle continues at home. He suggested the image of a service member, sitting on the ground with his back against the wall, holding dog tags of his fallen brothers. Brian's story would be the framework for this piece, providing him with another tool for his healing. Brian adds, "Showing a grieving warrior holding the dog tags of his fallen brothers and sisters would communicate that we are not alone in our pain." Anita chose to sculpt the new work, entitled "Silent Battle" and have it cast in bronze as a complement to the paintings.

Having this addition to the already powerful Eyes of





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Freedom portraits makes for an even stronger mission; a mission that can continue to help Brian and the thousands of others that are desperate to know they are not alone. Cold Spring Granite is stepping forward again by inviting the Eyes of Freedom to the ICCFA 2016 convention in hopes to garner financial support to have Silent Battle cast in bronze.

A crucial component of a traveling exhibition is transportation. The Eyes of Freedom was fortunate to partner with R+L Carriers, a family owned truck line based in Wilmington, OH. The freight company not only agreed to ship the memorial anywhere its on display, but they designed an amazing wrap for the trailer depicting the portraits of the memorial. R+L liked this design so much they wrapped over sixty of their trailers with the same design, letting the hundreds of thousands that see these trailers know about our mission. Those in attendance at the 2016 Southern Funeral Service Expo in Macon, GA were able to experience the Eyes of Freedom with the striking truck and trailer together on the showroom floor. R + L's commitment to honoring Veterans is evidenced on roads across the United States.

The impact of The Eyes of Freedom Memorial is expanding. Rallying communities and uniting Veterans all over our great nation, this tribute will travel for many years to come. Mike Strahle states, "When the Memorial showcases in towns across America, the community has an opportunity to come together and support their Veterans, welcoming them home and honoring their gift of service and sacrifice." Our military Veterans continue to struggle every day. The general public may not realize that even though the warrior may no longer be in a war zone, they may still be battling a war of their own. Especially for our combat Veterans, this

silent battle may go on for years to come. The Eyes of Freedom: Lima Company Memorial strives to reach these men and women, rally around them, and unite them with one another.

Perhaps your community has suffered losses from the war, and perhaps your local Veterans and their families still struggle with their own healing and readjustment. With your sponsorship and by hosting The Eyes of Freedom Memorial in your town, you could be the one to bring honor, gratitude and healing to your community's Veterans and their families.

Now is the time to reach out and show them that this time we are welcoming home our veterans with the support they deserve. Will you answer the call by hosting this powerful healing work in your community? Your commitment to compassion and gratitude to our military and their families will set a shining example and be remembered for years to come. To learn more please visit [www.EyesOfFreedom.org](http://www.EyesOfFreedom.org).

*Sean Flaharty has been involved with the Eyes of Freedom since the first brushstroke hit the canvas. He documented the entire two and a half year process of the creation of the memorial and now travels full-time with the exhibit along side Cpl. Mike Strahle. Sean's initial involvement with the project started as he wanted to pay tribute to his friend, Sgt. Justin Hoffman, whom he worked with at a insurance company in Columbus, Ohio. Sgt. Hoffman was the first Marine Anita Miller painted"*



# ABOUT *the* MEMORIAL

## It all started with a dream...

Anita Miller's memorial dream has brought the memory of the fallen Marines to life. The men's spirits live on through this memorial, touring the country to share their story.

## THE ARTIST'S DREAM

Then-Columbus resident Anita Miller, artist and creator of The Eyes of Freedom: Lima Company Memorial, has truly birthed something larger than life. Like so many people in Ohio who heard of the Lima Company tragedies in 2005, her heart tore for the families of the fallen. Two months later, she awoke in the middle of the night with a vision of the completed Memorial standing in the Ohio Statehouse Rotunda. Anita would work for the next two and a half years to make it a reality. In May 2008 the Lima Company Memorial was unveiled in the Statehouse Rotunda, just as the vision foretold.

## THE FELLOW MARINE

Retiring from Lima Company 3/25 and seeing The Eyes of Freedom unveiled at the Statehouse in 2008, Mike Strahle knew he had witnessed something truly special. The bonds formed with these 23 men while fighting alongside them made the life-size portraits difficult to view at first, yet a sense of honor and remembrance soon prevailed.

Three years later he would contact Anita Miller, the artist and creator of The Eyes of Freedom, requesting to host the memorial at a Veteran's Support fundraiser he founded. It was this reunion that sparked the passing of the baton from its creator to the hands of a brother in arms. The artist and the Marine now share a relentless desire to make this memorial available all over the country. For Mike this mission is personal. He too was badly injured in an explosion that took six of his squad members, two more fell to enemy fire just days prior.



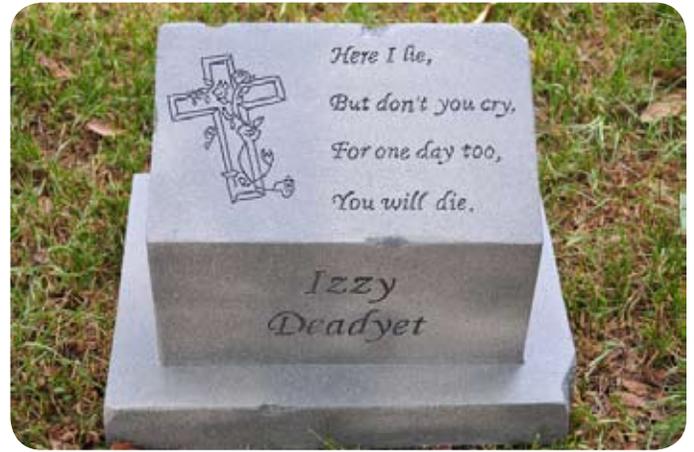
## THE MISSION

The life-size mural paintings of the 23-fallen of Lima 3/25 now travel the entire country, Honoring ALL Who Answer Our Nation's Call; Then, Now, and Tomorrow. Moving from town to town and city to city, The Eyes of Freedom rallies the public around one common theme. Saluting our great military, and their families who also sacrifice with their commitment.

## THE FALLEN

Private First Class Christopher R. Dixon	Lance Corporal William B. Wightman
Lance Corporal Christopher P. Lyons	Lance Corporal Timothy M. Bell, Jr.
Staff Sergeant Anthony L. Goodwin	Lance Corporal Eric J. Bernholtz
Petty Officer 3rd Class Travis Youngblood (Navy Corpsman)	Corporal Dustin A. Derga
Sergeant Justin F. Hoffman	Lance Corporal Nicholas B. Erdy
Staff Sergeant Kendall H. Ivy II	Lance Corporal Wesley G. Davids
Lance Corporal Nicholas William B. Bloem	Sergeant David N. Wimberg
Corporal Andre L. Williams	Lance Corporal Michael J. Cifuentes
Lance Corporal Grant B. Fraser	Lance Corporal Christopher J. Dyer
Lance Corporal Aaron H. Reed	Lance Corporal Jonathan W. Grant
Lance Corporal Edward A. Schroeder II	Cpl. David Stephen "Bear" Stewart
Sergeant David Kenneth J. Kreuter	LCpl. Kevin Waruinge
Lance Corporal Jourdan L. Grez	Sgt. Bradley Harper

# *Some of The Funniest Epitaphs on Tombstones, Because It Is The Last Joke You Can Make*





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## National Museum of Funeral History’s 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charity Golf Classic

HOUSTON, TEXAS – March 10, 2016 – The National Museum of Funeral History (NMFH) in Houston will welcome supporters to the NMFH 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charity Golf Classic on Monday, May 16, 2016 at the Kingwood Country Club, in Kingwood, Texas. Business executives and funeral industry professionals from across the country will come together on the greens to raise funds to support the museum and its mission to enlighten visitors of one of man’s oldest cultural rituals and celebrate the rich history of funeral service.

The tournament kicks off with breakfast in Kingwood Country Club’s clubhouse followed by the Golf Classic’s shotgun start, after which players will compete in a five-person golf scramble. On-course contests with tee-prizes and professional long drive fundraising entertainment will be located throughout the course. Additionally, a variety of vendors will be on-site for the tournament and players will each receive a voucher that can be used towards product purchases and special savings on the day of the event. Following the 18-holes, players retreat to the clubhouse for a silent auction, dinner and awards ceremony.



In 2015, more than 120 sponsors and 385 players supported the annual fundraiser, and the organization expects continued success in 2016. To register online for the NMFH Charity Golf Classic, please visit [www.nmfh.org](http://www.nmfh.org), or for more information, please call 281-876-3063.

### DETAILS

- WHAT:** National Museum of Funeral History (NMFH) 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charity Golf Classic
- WHEN:** Monday, May 16, 2016 | 8 am Breakfast | 9:30 am Shotgun Start
- WHERE:** Kingwood Country Club | 1700 Lake Kingwood Trail, Kingwood, TX 77339
- HOW TO REGISTER:** Individual player tickets are \$375. A five-person team is \$1875. Sponsorships range from \$1,000 - \$20,000. To register online before the April 31, 2016 pre-registration deadline, visit [nmfh.org](http://nmfh.org) or call 281-876-3063.

###

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#### About the National Museum of Funeral History

The National Museum of Funeral History houses the country’s largest collection of funeral service artifacts and features renowned exhibits on one of man’s oldest cultural customs. Visitors can discover the mourning rituals of ancient civilizations, see up-close the authentic items used in the funerals of U.S. Presidents and Popes and explore the rich heritage of the industry, which cares for the dead. The museum is located at 415 Barren Springs Dr., Houston, TX 77090 and is open Monday – Friday from 10 am – 4 pm, Saturday from 10 am – 5 pm and Sunday from 12 pm – 5 pm. Admission is \$10 for adults and children age 12 and older, \$9 for seniors and veterans; \$7 for children 6 – 11 years old; and free for children age 5 and younger. For more information, visit [www.nmfh.org](http://www.nmfh.org), like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/nmfh) or call 281.876.3063.



# After Care Programs: There's Something About Tuesdays

By Gail Rubin, CT

Families walk into a funeral home, walk through the funeral process, and walk away, hoping they won't have to do a funeral again any time soon. After care programs can make the difference between an okay experience with your funeral home and enthusiastic word-of-mouth and return business.

When you help the families you serve adjust to their new life situations, your business can benefit. After care programs can generate positive word-of-mouth for at-need and pre-need arrangements. Here are several examples of successful after care programs.

## **Foundation Partners Group, Orlando Florida**

*The LifeSteps™ ... stepping forward, remembering always* Healing Outreach was first launched in Florida in January 2010 by Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services. Beverly Brown, the program developer for LifeSteps™ and many other healing outreach events, was Community Outreach Programs Manager for the Foundation Partners Group and now works with StoneMor Partners, L.P.

Foundation Partners Group (FPG), a funeral home consolidator based in Orlando, Florida, very much believes in the power of after care programs. LifeSteps is one of the main components of FPG's national community outreach endeavors.

"The program was born out of a desire to offer support, both educational and therapeutic, to community members who have been affected by loss – to help them move through their grief and provide them with practical 'next steps' in their healing journey," said Brown. LifeSteps is a unique five-week outreach that takes place at educational facilities throughout the

communities served by FPG funeral homes. Each workshop has a different topic and speaker, designed to provide a grief healing "toolbox."

In 2014, all of FPG's locations hosted a combined 244 community outreach events attended by 11,250 community members. Hiers-Baxley also hosts more than 100 free healing outreach community events throughout the year to honor and remember the deceased and support the bereaved. Many of their creative marketing opportunities are easy to implement and relatively low in cost. They also build support groups through the interests of the bereaved, such as the Scrappy Angels Community Quilt Group and the Health Matters Walking Club.

While many workshops, seminars and remembrance events focus on grief education, some events have nothing to do with loss. For example, Hiers-Baxley holds charity picnic events at their memorial park. A significant number of community members visit the cemetery for the first time through these events.

Hiers-Baxley sees evidence of a return on their investment in after care programs. They pulled measurable data related to pre-need funeral and cemetery sales by matching the exact names of people on their picnic registrations and healing outreach list. In the first full year of implementation, they saw a 100-call increase over the previous year. This was during a year in which the funeral home anticipated a decline. Noted Brown, "It's impressive that as we have increased our outreach, we have decreased our advertising expenses and increased our volume, pre-need and at-need, at the same time."

## **FRENCH Funerals & Cremations, Albuquerque, New Mexico**

FRENCH offers free grief counseling and practical workshops to help client families transition after a loss. An individual can get up to three complimentary one-on-one sessions with staff counselor, Dr. Linda Phelps. If a mourner wants more individual counseling, arrangements can be made for further treatment. Free group counseling sessions are ongoing and there are online resources available at their website, [www.FrenchFunerals.com](http://www.FrenchFunerals.com).

On the practical side, FRENCH's director of community outreach, Barbara Stewart, holds free monthly After Care Workshops on the third Tuesday of every month. She holds two sessions, one at mid-day and one in the evening. These sessions are designed to help surviving family members organize and tackle the many tasks required after a death. The practical matters include follow-up with banks, attorneys, accountants, insurance companies and government entities. Activities include closing credit cards, applying for benefits, changing financial accounts, retiring voter registration and updating accounts for utilities, phones, and other services.

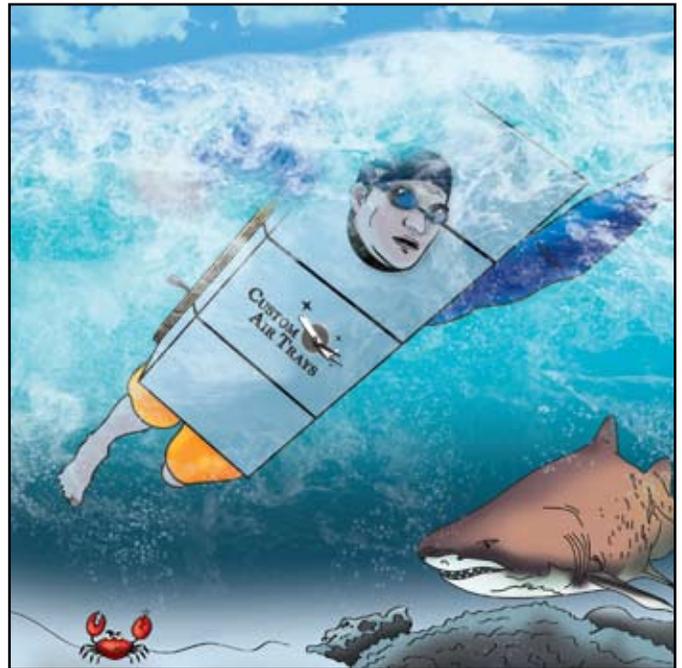
FRENCH provides a 33-page workbook with checklists and contact information to help the bereaved navigate through what can be a confusing maze of tasks. One of the suggestions is to pre-plan one's own funeral.

## **Bissler and Sons Funeral Home, Kent, Ohio**

After four of the principals at Bissler and Sons Funeral Home died in 1988, Jane Vair Bissler took a year off teaching to help her husband Rick at the funeral home. She went from teaching 4th through 6th graders how to use the Commodore 64 computer to working with families in Bissler's new after care program.

At first, Jane went to the homes of grieving families to give them resources, contacts for local groups, and books. The program was totally separate from pre-need sales. After one visit spending four hours with a suicidal woman, leaving only after she was assured the woman would not kill herself, Jane told Rick, "You don't pay me enough." She realized she did not have the proper credentials to be a grief counselor. She went back to school for her Ph.D. and got an LPCC counselor's license. She is now a Fellow in Thanatology and was the 2014-15 president of the Association for

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Death Education and Counseling (ADEC). Bissler and Sons contracts its aftercare program to Jane Bissler's Counseling For Wellness (CFW) business. About 10% of CFW's business comes from the funeral home, with 90% of their clients coming from other sources. CFW performs an intake session, makes an assessment and sees the grieving person a few times to help the client figure out what therapies would be most helpful.

CFW runs group sessions for 5 to 10-year-olds (called The Little People) and for 10 to 13-year-old adolescents. There are two adult groups that focus on child deaths and general loss. They run sessions on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. The funeral home pays for the group counseling sessions. Bissler also writes a weekly Q&A column in the local newspaper, the Kent Record Courier. For 20 years, Bissler and Sons has paid for this column in the Friday Religion section of the paper. The column includes contact information for Jane and the funeral home. Many readers in this town of 30,000 don't realize the column is a paid ad. Her column addresses questions about grief and mourning. After doing this column for 20 years, she now has enough material to create a series of books on grief over the loss of spouses, parents, grandparents, children, siblings, pets, and other relationships.

### **Gary L. Rollins Funeral Home, Frederick, Maryland**

Denise Rollins works with her husband at Gary L. Rollins Funeral Home. She was 29 when her mother was killed by a drunk driver and she was overwhelmed by grief. "People did not know how to deal with me," she said. Out of her tragedy, she recognized a need to be filled. "Grief isn't something you learn about in school, and it is a process you shouldn't go through alone," Rollins explained. Her approach, 2Grieve2Gether, uses after care to help cement the relationship with clients after a death in the family. Rollins holds weekly Tuesday night group sessions at a local church, which provides the space free of charge. She also holds special Saturday morning events for children, with concurrent sessions for their parents. She is also considering creating a separate grief group for men that her husband Gary will facilitate. The funeral home also holds special events that have proven quite popular. They attracted 55 people to a breakfast meeting about holiday grief, held at a local Golden Corral. Everyone paid for his or her own breakfasts and the restaurant provided the meeting space. Rollins handed out brochures and

materials at the event.

### **Smith Funeral and Cremation Service, Maryville, Tennessee**

Lisa Gibson's "Lunch Bunch" has 10-year veterans of her We Care and Share After Care program. Every month, 25-30 women, and a few men, get together for lunch at different restaurants. Gibson coordinates the meetings by mailing about 60 cards with the date, time and place of each meeting, which rotates to different restaurants in this small east Tennessee community. Each person pays for her (or his) own lunch, and they don't talk about death, grief or loss. "I never felt like it was right to tell any of them 'you can't come anymore,'" said Gibson. "We used to have a speaker, but we scrapped that part. They just want to chitchat and share photos. As long as there's still interest, we'll keep rolling with it." Occasionally, the regulars bring a new person, friends or neighbors who may have had a loss and not used the Smith funeral home. Because of the "Lunch Bunch" experience, perhaps these new people will use Smith's services the next time there's a death in the family.

### **What is it about Tuesdays?**

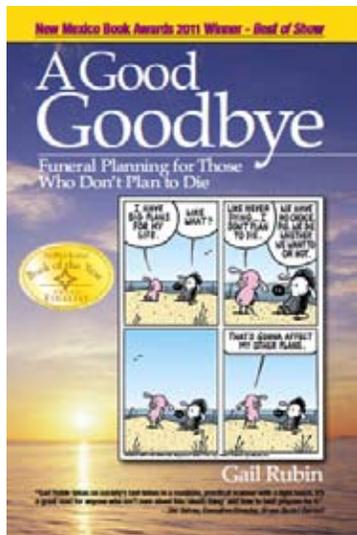
There are many different approaches to after care that a funeral home can offer. Events don't have to be held on Tuesdays, but that seems to be a popular day for after care gatherings. When you help the families you serve adjust to their new life situation, you'll be rewarded with a positive awareness that can generate word-of-mouth for at-need, and perhaps even pre-need, arrangements.

*Gail Rubin, CT, is a Certified Thanatologist (a death educator) who uses humor and funny films to attract people to the pre-need funeral planning conversation. She will be the featured speaker at the Alabama Funeral Directors Association meeting in Point Clear June 19-21, 2016. She wrote the award-winning book, A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die and Hail and Farewell: Cremation Ceremonies, Templates and Tips. Learn more at her website, [www.AGoodGoodbye.com](http://www.AGoodGoodbye.com).*



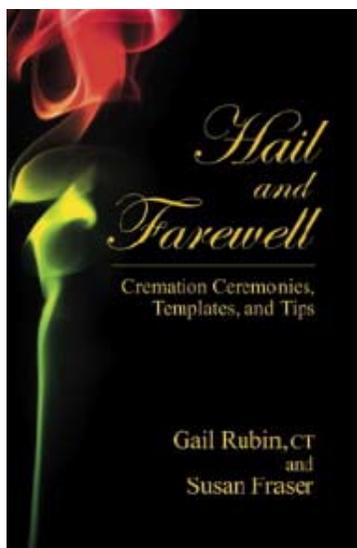
# Books to Die For... by Gail Ruben

## A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die



Get the information, inspiration and tools to plan and implement creative, meaningful and memorable end-of-life rituals for people and pets. A Good Goodbye won Best of Show in the 2011 New Mexico Book Awards and was a finalist in the Family and Relationships category of the national Book of the Year Awards. \$21.95 plus shipping.

## Hail and Farewell: Cremation Ceremonies, Templates and Tips

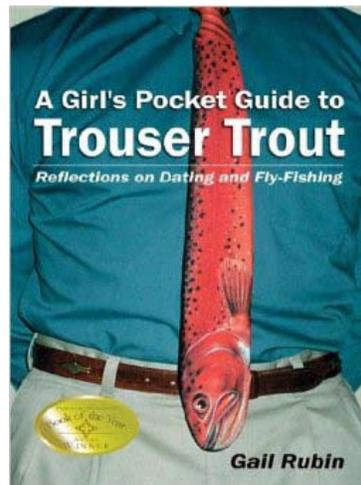


Hail and Farewell: Cremation Ceremonies, Templates and Tips offers families guidance and ideas for creating meaningful, memorable memorial services after a loved one has been cremated.

The book's title refers to the last line of an ancient elegiac poem written by the Roman poet Gaius Valerius

Catullus approximately 2,000 years ago. He mourns the death of his brother, who died while Catullus was traveling abroad. Upon his return, he sadly addresses his brother's cremated remains, "... with brotherly weeping. And forever, brother, hail and farewell."

Hail and Farewell: Cremation Ceremonies, Templates and Tips, is published by Light Tree Press and retails for \$10.00 (plus shipping and NM sales tax as applicable).



## A Girl's Pocket Guide to Trouser Trout: Reflections on Dating and Fly-Fishing

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to land a good catch, illuminating the murky waters of the dating pool with insights inspired by fly-fishing techniques and advice.

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## Pierce Chemical Representatives Earn Special Achievement Awards

BROADVIEW, IL, March 2, 2016 – Pierce Chemical recently recognized ten Regional Sales Representatives with special achievement awards earned for their efforts in 2015.

Bobby Herring was awarded the distinguished Bill Pierce Award, given to one who demonstrates exemplary professionalism and above-and-beyond efforts. Bobby was recognized for his 45 years of service with Pierce and most importantly for the valuable support that he provided to his many customers over the years. Bobby retired at the end of 2015.

Kevin Russell achieved the 2015 Rookie of the Year award, having quickly earned the respect of his customers and accelerating sales in his territory of Michigan and Indiana.

Michael Kuruc earned the award for the Largest Increase in Overall Sales in 2015. Michael is the sales rep for Virginia and portions of Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Rick Rork, who covers the state of Illinois, was given the award for Largest Increase in Fluid Sales in 2015.

Randy Emmert achieved both the Top Memorial Book Sales award and the Top Urns Sales award for 2015. Randy's territory encompasses Colorado, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Seven individuals received the Pierce 110% Club Award, given to sales representatives whose 2015 sales were at least 110% of those in 2014. These individuals are:

Angelo Frazetta (New Jersey, New York, portions of Pennsylvania)

David Hicks (Kentucky, portions of Ohio)

Michael Kuruc (Virginia, portions of Pennsylvania and Ohio)

Kevin Russell (Michigan, Indiana)

Abby Shurtz (portions of Texas)

Don Summers (portions of Texas)

Justin Willis (Arkansas, Louisiana)

“Each of these individuals has worked hard on behalf of their customers and deserve this recognition for their dedication and professionalism, said Lance Ray, COO and Executive Vice-President of Pierce. “Their achievements are testimony to the trust that their customers place in them for not only product but guidance and best practices to ensure that families are best served.”

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## Thirty-Four Wilbert Licensees Recognized for Special Achievements

BROADVIEW, IL, - Thirty-four Wilbert Licensees were recognized for sales accomplishments in 2015 at the Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc (WFSI) Annual Sales Meeting.

Sunnycrest, Inc., Auburn, NY, was honored with a Special Achievement Award for their initiatives in advancing the Wilbert ESP® application among their customers.

Two awards for sales growth in lined burial vaults were presented. Norwalk Wilbert Vault Company, Bridgeport, CT received the award for the greatest growth in the number of lined burial vaults interred in 2015 over 2014, while Omaha Wilbert Vaults, Omaha, NE achieved the greatest percentage increase in lined burial vaults. For cremation product sales, Brutsche Concrete Products, St. Joseph, MI earned the award for the greatest growth in units. Minnick Services Corp, Fort Wayne, IN achieved the greatest percentage growth in cremation products.

Thirty Wilbert Licensees received the Wilbert 110% Club award, which recognizes those whose 2015 burial vault sales were at least 110% of their 2014 sales. Recipients were:

Whited Cemetery Service, Menifee, CA  
 Florida Wilbert, Davie, FL  
 Northern Illinois Vault Co., Inc., Belvidere, IL  
 Kelley Vault Co., Inc., Champaign, IL  
 Farmington Wilbert Vault Co., Farmington, IL  
 Peoria Wilbert Vault Co., Inc., Metamora, IL  
 Schultz Wilbert Vault Co., Streator, IL  
 Williams Wilbert Vault Works, Inc., Des Moines, IA  
 Wilbert Funeral Services, Parsons, KS  
 Wilbert Funeral Services, Wichita, KS  
 Washington Wilbert Vault Works, Inc., Laurel, MD  
 Alpena Wilbert Vault Co., Alpena, MI  
 West Michigan Burial Vault Co., Muskegon, MI  
 May Wilbert Vault Corp., Port Huron, MI  
 Brown-Wilbert, Inc., Austin, MN  
 Brown-Wilbert, Inc., Morris, MN  
 Jackson MS Wilbert Burial Vault Co., Jackson, MS  
 Wilbert Funeral Services, Jackson, MO  
 Bayard Wilbert Vaults, Inc., Bayard, NE



Omaha Wilbert Vaults, Omaha, NE  
 Crews, Farrell & Mead, Wayne, NJ  
 Wilbert Funeral Services, Jamestown, NY  
 Longstreth-Wilbert, Galion, OH  
 Tri-State Wilbert Vault Co., Ironton, OH  
 Wilbert of Pittsburgh, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA  
 Ringtown Wilbert Vault Works, Inc., Ringtown, PA  
 Penn/Mar Wilbert, York, PA  
 Memphis Burial Vault Co., Memphis, TN  
 Oneida Concrete Products, Inc., Rhinelander, WI  
 Brown-Wilbert, Inc., Sun Prairie, WI

“Our sincere appreciation and congratulations go out to these Wilbert Licensees for their exceptional accomplishments,” said Mark Klingenberger, Vice-President Sales & Marketing, WFSI. “As the funeral professionals they serve can attest, the Wilbert Licensees play a key role in providing outstanding products and a good experience for families. It is that consistency in product and service quality that helps grow their reputation and sales. I am proud to recognize these organizations with these special achievement awards.”

To learn more about Wilbert Funeral Services or to find a local Wilbert Licensee, visit WFSI’s Funeral Professional website at [www.wilbert.com/funeral-professionals](http://www.wilbert.com/funeral-professionals).

**“What do I need to know  
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# South Carolina FDA Holds Record Breaking 29th Annual Mid Winter Expo



We have just wrapped up another very successful Mid-Winter Conference and Expo! Nearly 550 funeral professionals participated in what is nationally known as the premier state mid-winter conference! Attendees were treated to some of the best continuing education opportunities that I have ever experienced. This year's Expo was one of the largest ever (we actually had vendors exhibiting in the hallways) with plenty of new products and services.

Our Legislative Reception was the most well attended in several years! Kudos to SCFDA Executive Director Mike Squires and his able assistant, Rion Rampey, for planning, organizing and executing such a phenomenal event! More kudos go out to our Expo participants and Convention Sponsors, without your help and support, SCFDA could not offer such a terrific event for our members. My biggest thanks goes to all of our member funeral homes and guests who support this conference with their attendance! I applaud each of you for taking time away from your business to attend and recharge and re-energize your professional self. I hope each of you received exactly what you were looking for this year! Make your plans now to attend our Annual Summer Convention on June 5-7, 2016 at Wild Dunes Resort on the beautiful Isle of Palms, SC!!! This will be a truly family friendly event so plan on bringing your whole family! Wild Dunes Resort. Have you downloaded the SCFDA App yet? The App is available in the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store. Just search for SCFDA or South Carolina Funeral Directors Association! Be among the first to receive breaking news!

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Exhibit time at the Live Oak booth with (L-R) Bill Lynch, Mark Milton and Greg Dunbar



Legislative Reception (L-R) Scott Fowler, Brooke Taylor, Brent Taylor, Casey Ward, Bob Parks and Jay Dover



Atlantic Coast Life's (L-R) Bill Scarborough and Doug George with Chris Robinson; Robinson Funeral Home, Easley, SC



More Legislative Reception (L-R) Jerry Small - Bill Black Chevrolet-Cadillac; Jennifer Kaset -Trust 100 and Nathan Hurst - Federal Coach



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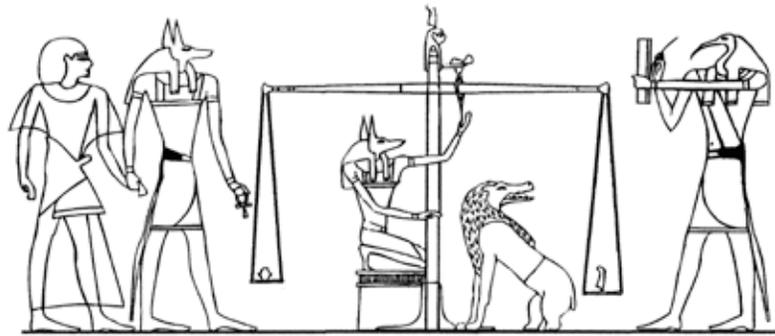


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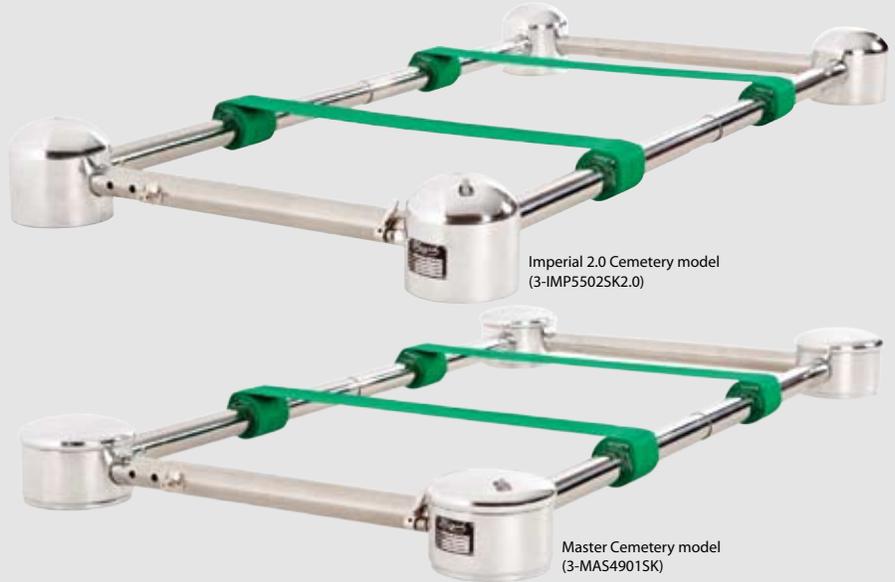
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## Cherokee Specialty Caskets Celebrating 75th Diamond Anniversary

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January 2016, Griffin, GA: For 75 years Cherokee Casket Company, Inc. has worked in partnership with funeral professionals around the world to provide families with thoughtful and unique options for saying goodbye to their precious child. From the most elaborate to the simplest we strive to provide the highest quality caskets and funeral products offered in the funeral industry.

“In celebrating this monumental anniversary, Cherokee has chosen to donate \$1,000 each month in 2016 to organizations that are fighting to save children’s lives every day.” Michael Dean Mims, President proudly announced during a production meeting last fall.

We offer our sincere thanks to each funeral professional who offered their families the Cherokee Child product line during the last 75 years. Our goal is to always provide the highest level of customer service, along with product selection and personalization options that

are unique and affordable. Thank you for helping us reach our diamond anniversary.

For more information about Cherokee Casket Company, visit on the web at [www.cherokeechildcaskets.com](http://www.cherokeechildcaskets.com) or call 1-800-535-8667. Also on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/cherokeechildcaskets>.



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**“Business is down and I don’t know why?”**

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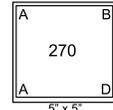
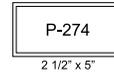
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