



Southern

◆ FUNERAL DIRECTOR ◆

MAGAZINE

September 2017

www.sfdmagazine.com

Boston Welcomes NFDA International Convention & Expo

NFDA Convention & Expo Speakers & General Sessions
NFDA Convention & Expo Agenda and Schedule of Events
Special "Notes from the Editor" Guest Writer, NFDA's Ashley Cozine
NFDA's "Pursuit of Excellence" Awards and Recipients
SFD Magazine's "Q&A" with Lacy Robinson, NFDA Member Development/Arranger Training
Five Tips for Evaluating Marketing Decisions by Ed Michael Reggie, Funeralocity, CEO Tennessee FDA and Tennessee Sales Club
Annual Convention Summary + Photos
Dealing With The Media by Todd Van Beck

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make your
families say



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NFDA Convention • Boston, MA • October 29 - November 1, 2017
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Jennifer Kaset
Vice President, Trust 100

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MAGAZINE

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September 2017

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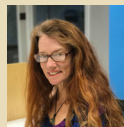
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Have
the
talk of a
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When the information is free...

The screenshot shows the Doric Vaults website. At the top left is the Doric logo, a green oval with a white classical building facade and the word "DORIC" in white. To the right of the logo is the phone number "Call us: (888) 55-DORIC". Below the logo is a dark green navigation bar with white text for "Home", "About", "Products", "Resources", and "Contact".

The main content area has a white background. On the left is a filter sidebar with three sections: "Quality" (Superior, Premium, Standard, Basic, Infant), "Protection" (Casket/Vault, Double Wall, Quad Wall, Triple Wall), and "Material" (ABS Lustra-tech, Bronze & ABS fiberlon, Copper & ABS fiberlon, Durapreme, Fiberlon, Stainless Steel & ABS fiberlon). A small note at the bottom of the sidebar reads: "*Products not available in all areas. Contact us to check for availability in your area." To the right of the sidebar is the "Concrete Vaults" section. It features a search bar with "Name of Product" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar is a grid of six product images, each with a "View Details" button. The products are: Olympian (gold), Olympian (silver), Doric Bronze (gold), Bronze Floral (gold), Lydian (silver), and Lydian Floral (gold). A mouse cursor is pointing at the "View Details" button for the Doric Bronze product.

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notes from the editor

Notes From the Editor – Special Guest – Ashley Cozine, NFDA President Welcomes You to Boston and NFDA International Expo

If you've ever seen the TV show "Cheers," you're probably familiar with the tagline "where everybody knows your name." It's a place where friends come together to spend time and share experiences and lift their burdens.

For me, the NFDA Convention is just that kind of place. One of the things I enjoy most about the event is the people – seeing old friends and making new ones. When you get a group of funeral directors together, we can't help but talk about our challenges and the unique things we are doing to meet families' needs in the communities we serve.

I hope that you are making plans to join me and many other members of our funeral service family from around the world in Boston (where "Cheers" is set) for the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo, October 29 through November 1. It's going to be an incredible event!

Our Professional Development Committee, which is comprised of funeral directors like you, have come up with an impressive line-up of workshops. If you're anything like me, you're sure to leave Boston with a lot of ideas from our expert presenters that you can put into action when you return home.

Our speakers, leadership expert Dr. John Maxwell and NFL Hall of Famer Troy Aikman, are sure to encourage you to be your best!

The special social and networking events NFDA has planned for us in Boston will help us connect with our colleagues to share ideas, unwind and enjoy all that Boston has to offer.

The world's largest funeral service expo at the NFDA Convention offers the perfect opportunity to meet with companies that can help you run a more efficient

business focused on meeting the needs of your families.

I hope you will make the effort to be in Boston. The experience will expand your horizons, encourage and enlighten you to be your best, and put you on the right track for success. Best of all, it's a friendly place where "everybody either knows or wants to know your name."

Ashley



NFDA Board of Directors

W. Ashley Cozine, MBA, CFSP, CPC, CCO - **2016-2017 President**

Kenneth A. Cahall, CFSP, CCO - **2016-2017 President-elect**

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Historic City. Remarkable Convention. New Opportunities!

The NFDA International Convention & Expo is *still* the place to find the most continuing education offerings, the latest in funeral service products and services and the best networking opportunities around. Here are some new ways to achieve more!

New Preconvention Seminar – Certified Celebrant Training!

Set your firm apart from the competition and offer more to the families you serve! A certified celebrant works with the funeral director to provide a funeral service, memorial service or tribute that is personalized to reflect the personality and life of the deceased.

Brought to you by Insight Institute

New in the Expo hall! Campfire Exchange *The best stories are shared around a campfire!*

Enjoy intimate, speaker-led sessions Monday and Tuesday during Expo Hall hours at the Campfire Exchange, a relaxed atmosphere. Each 20-minute session will explore a topic that impacts the profession.

Great Big Giveaway Day!

Stick around through Wednesday – there's a lot to look forward to! Be sure to revisit our valued exhibitors and look for this year's sponsors, who will be handing out tickets for your chance to win a variety of fabulous prizes! Winners will be announced during the

Wednesday General Session but your luck begins in the Expo hall!

“Go Dutch” with an Expert!

Looking for dinner plans? Break bread with one of this year's Convention experts and an intimate group of fellow attendees while enjoying informal, yet informational, conversation.

Monday:

Vernie Fountain – Embalming Expert

Or

Georganne Bender & Rich Kizer – Consumer Behavior Experts

Tuesday:

Wally Hooker – Embalming Expert

Sign up early – these will fill up quickly!

First-time Attendee Reception

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center

Sunday, October 29

5:30-6:15 p.m.

Calling all first-time convention attendees! Make the most of your convention experience with this unique networking opportunity! Meet fellow first-time attendees and NFDA staff (and enjoy a cocktail!) before heading to the Welcome Party.



At a Glance Subject to change

Friday, October 27

1 – 6 p.m. Celebrant Training:
Preconvention Seminar (Day 1)*

Saturday, October 28

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Registration
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Habitat for Humanity*
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. NFDA Arranger Training:
Preconvention Seminar*
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. NFDA Certified Preplanning
Consultant (CPC):
Preconvention Seminar*
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. NFDA Cremation
Certification: Preconvention
Seminar*
8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Celebrant Training:
Preconvention Seminar (Day 2)*
8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. NFDA Policy Board Meeting
12 – 5 p.m. NFDA Central

Sunday, October 29

8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Registration
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. NFDA Central
8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Celebrant Training:
Preconvention Seminar (Day 3)*
8:30 – 10:45 a.m. CPC Exam*
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Embalming and
Reconstructive Surgery
Techniques for Trauma
Cases: Preconvention
Seminar*
9 a.m. (shotgun start) Funeral Service Foundation
Golf Classic*
11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Workshops
1 – 4 p.m. Freedom Trail Tour*
5:30 – 6:15 p.m. First Time Attendee Reception
6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Welcome Party

Monday, October 30



“Think Pink” Day for Breast Cancer Awareness
Monday is Breast Cancer Awareness Day at the
2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo. Get
your pink badge ribbon and wear pink to show your
support!

7 a.m. – 5 p.m. Registration
7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. NFDA Central

7:30 – 9:30 a.m. Workshops
9:45 – 11:45 a.m. General Session
12 – 5 p.m. Expo
12:15 p.m. Expo Ribbon Cutting
Photo Opp
12 – 3 p.m. Fenway Park and Sam
Adams Brewery Tour*
4:30 – 5:30 p.m. All-Star Recognition Ceremony
5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Funeral Service Foundation
Donor Appreciation Reception*
7 – 9:30 p.m. Dark Side of Boston Tour*

Tuesday, October 31

7 a.m. – 5 p.m. Registration
7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. NFDA Central
7:30 – 10:45 a.m. Workshops
11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Service of Remembrance
12 – 5 p.m. Expo
12:30 – 2 p.m. Conversation Café
1 – 5 p.m. Harvard and JFK Museum
Tour*
4:30 – 5 p.m. Installation of 2017-18 NFDA
President and Board of
Directors
5 – 6 p.m. Board of Directors
& Heritage Club Reception*
6 – 7:30 p.m. International Reception*
8 – 11 p.m. Funeral Directors Under
40 Party*

Wednesday, November 1

7 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Registration
7 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. NFDA Central
8 – 9 a.m. Workshops
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Expo
12 – 2 p.m. Lunch* and General Session
2:15 – 4:15 p.m. Workshops
5 – 6 p.m. Board of Directors
Reception*
6:30 – 10 p.m. Spirit of Boston
Dinner Cruise*

Thursday, November 2

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Lexington & Concord Tour*

* Additional registration required • By invitation only



Preconvention Seminars

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Certified Celebrant TrainingInSight Institute program hosted by NFDAnfda.org/celebrant

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nfda.org/

CE is available for these programs and approval may vary by state. It is the individual's responsibility to verify that a specific program is approved for CE by the state in which he or she is licensed. Registration for these preconvention seminars



General Sessions

Everyone Communicates, Few Connect

Dr. John C. Maxwell, Renowned Business Expert and Author

Monday, October 30

9:45 – 11:45 a.m.

John C. Maxwell has been hailed as America's premier leadership expert. Each year, he speaks to hundreds of thousands of people, and his bestselling books impact millions more around the globe. Maxwell's influence empowers corporate leaders in more than 20 countries through world-class events, training and resources.

Join us as Maxwell reveals how to identify with people and relate to others in a way that increases your influence with them. As a leader, it's not enough just to work hard. It's not enough to do a great job. To be successful, you need to learn how to communicate in a way that connects with others. Maxwell masterfully underscores principles and practices to equip you to communicate at a level that runs far deeper than words. Approved for 1 CE hour by APFSP and licensing boards in most states and provinces.

Developing Your Inner Champion

Troy Aikman, Dallas Cowboys Hall of Fame Quarterback

Wednesday, November 1

1 – 2 p.m.

Three-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback Troy Aikman has harnessed the drive and dedication that defined his football career with the Dallas Cowboys into numerous successful business ventures since retiring from the game. Through broadcasting, real estate and The Troy Aikman Foundation, he discovered ways to keep himself occupied in "retirement."

After leaving the playing field, Aikman joined the NFL on FOX full time as a game analyst. He quickly displayed the accuracy and work ethic that marked his playing career and moved up to FOX's number-one broadcast crew prior to the 2002 season. He's received three Emmy nominations for his broadcasting efforts and has broadcast three Super Bowls (XXXIX, XLII and XLV).

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Workshops

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-  Customer Service
-  Grief & Bereavement
-  Preneed
-  Professional Skills
-  Technical Skills
-  Technology



Enjoy free WiFi in the Expo hall, meeting rooms and public spaces of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center!

Sunday, October 29 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

A Father's Reflections on the Value of Open-Casket Viewing

Shane A.S. Ritchie, CFSP, Huntington Mortuary Service

Aftercare: Strengthen Your Families and Business


Nancy Weil, Founder and Certified Grief Management Specialist, The Laugh Academy; Charles Castiglia, Funeral Director, Lakeside Funeral Home, President, International Order of the Golden Rule

Create Experiences, Gain Market Share

Justin Baxley, Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer, Foundation Partners Group; Erin Whitaker, Senior Director of Operations Integration, Foundation Partners Group


Smart Hiring, Smart Firing

Jamie Hasty, Senior Vice President, SESCO Management Consultants



Presenters, dates and times are subject to change.
 Simultaneous interpretation in Spanish available.

1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

 **Providing Care Through the Grief Journey**
Jason Troyer, Ph.D., Founder, Mt. Hope Grief Services

 **How the Future of EDRS Affects You**
Dr. Katharine Lewis, Task Lead, MITRE Corporation, CMS Alliance to Modernize Health Care; Robert C. Moore IV, NFDA Past President, Moore's Home for Funerals



1:15 – 3:15 p.m.



 **Recreating Physical Features for Identification** 
Karl Wenzel, CFSP, MBIE, Coordinator of Technical Education and Training, The Dodge Company

 **Best Practices for Burials at Sea**
Captain Brad White, Owner and President, New England Burials At Sea

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

 **Creating a Life of Legacy**
Rabbi Daniel Cohen, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Agudath Sholom



 **Understanding Suicide and Its Effects on Grief** 
Dr. Janet S. McCord, Associate Professor and Chair of Thanatology, Marian University



  **Engage Consumers with Have the Talk of a Lifetime**
Rob Rosenberg, President, Springboard Brand & Creative Strategy

 **Is a Ban on Formaldehyde Coming?**
Carol Lynn Green, NFDA Environmental Compliance Counsel, Law Offices of Carol Lynn Green

 **Tales from the Courthouse: Scary (and a Few Funny) Lessons**
Michael Sharkey, Funeral Director, Cousineau McGuire Chartered

Monday, October 30
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.



 **Decomp Doubters: Turning “Nays” Into “Yays”** 
Glyn Tallon, CFSP, Founder, Embalmer and Reconstructive Specialist, Tallon Mortuary Specialists


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 **Partnering With Your Local Donor Organization**
Jill Grandas, Corporate Executive Director, DCI Donor Services; Bob Arrington, NFDA Immediate Past President, Arrington Funeral Directors


 **Understanding Legal Issues in the Arrangement Conference**
T. Scott Gilligan, NFDA General Counsel, Gilligan Law Offices

 **How Zoomers, Millennials and Generation Z Buy and How They Are Challenging Your Sacred Cows**
Georganne Bender and Rich Kizer, Kizer and Bender Speaking!

 **Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma**
Beth Reynolds-Lewis, Trainer and Consultant and Kay Glidden, MS, Trainer and Consultant, Compassion Resiliency

Tuesday, October 31
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

  **10 Technologies That Will Transform Your Business**
Gene Marks, Author and Owner, The Marks Group

 **FTC Funeral Rule: Reducing Your Risk**
T. Scott Gilligan, Gilligan Law Offices; Craig Tregillus, FTC Funeral Rule Coordinator

Monday, October 30 (Cont.)

7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

How Zoomers, Millennials and Generation Z Buy and How They Are Challenging Your Sacred Cows

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Gene Marks, Author and Owner, The Marks Group

FTC Funeral Rule: Reducing Your Risk

T. Scott Gilligan, Gilligan Law Offices; Craig Tregillus, FTC Funeral Rule Coordinator

7:30 – 9 a.m.

Bringing Ritual to Cremation Arranging

Michael Nicodemus, NFDA Vice President of Cremation Services

Your Firm's Culture: People, Performance and Profit

Gary O'Sullivan, Owner, The Gary O'Sullivan Company

7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Quality Presentation from Embalming to the Final Touch

Wallace P. Hooker, CFSP, MBIE, Owner, Funeral Director, Embalmer, Family & Friends Funeral Home

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Apple 101: How to Make Your iPhone Work for You

Kevin Czachor, Vice President, Family-member Owner, ASD-Answering Service for Directors

Personality Types and Successful Communication

Corey Poirier, Speaker and Host, That Speaker Guy

Self-care for the Funeral Professional

Coral A. Popowitz, Executive Director, Children's Grief Connection

The New OSHA Penalties for Noncompliance

Edward M. Ranier, President and CEO, Law Offices of Edward M. Ranier

Overcoming Objections During the Arrangement Conference

William W. McReavy Jr., President, Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapel

Conversation Café

12:30 – 2 p.m.

Getting Grace: Inside the Funeral Director's Studio

Daniel Roebuck, Actor, Director and Filmmaker, The Roebuck Group; Paula C. Herron, Funeral Director and Supervisor, John F. Herron Funeral Home; Demetrios J. Herron, Funeral Director and Owner, Sell-Herron Funeral Home

Wednesday, November 1

8 – 9 a.m.

Beyond Price: Your Guide to Mastering Cremation Phone Inquiries

Lacy Robinson, CFSP, NFDA Director of Member Development

Ireland is Green and Growing

Jennifer Muldowney, Life Event Planner and Author, Farewell

Distracted Driving: Increase Awareness in Your Community

Jack E. West, National Account Executive, Federated Insurance Company

A Vital Part: The Embalmer's Heart

Joshua E. Allen, CFSP, CCO, Manager and Co-owner, Allen Funeral Home

Your Value Statement: The Key to Success in the Arrangement Conference

Michael J. Watkins, CFSP, CCO, Vice President of Operations and Compliance, The Signature Group

2:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Build Connections Through Confident Networking

Corinne Lavictoire, Author, President and CEO, InexInc.com

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Events

Habitat for Humanity

Saturday, October 28, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Join NFDA as we help Habitat for Humanity Greater Boston make home ownership a reality for a local family. There are three easy ways to support the cause:

- Volunteer for the day
- Donate
- Sponsor the build nfda.org/habitat

17th Annual Funeral Service Foundation Golf Classic

Sunday, October 29, 9 a.m.

Shotgun start (scramble format)

Stow Acres Country Club, Stow, Massachusetts The annual Golf Classic brings together funeral service professionals from around the globe for one of the profession's most noteworthy networking and fundraising events. Together, you'll tee off at Stow Acres Country Club in honor of the Funeral Service Foundation's mission to support funeral service in building meaningful relationships with the families and communities it serves. Stow Acres has held an important position in the great game of golf in New England for nearly 100 years. The award-winning site features two 18-hole courses known for their great shot values. You'll reap big rewards for a well-hit shot, but be careful – you'll also gain big penalties if you take a risk and fail! Visit FuneralServiceFoundation.org/golf for registration and sponsorship opportunities.

Welcome Party

Sunday, October 29, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center Ballroom

Boston is a mecca of colleges and universities, providing higher education to students from around the world. Celebrate the education you'll gain this week while reconnecting with old friends (and making new ones!) at NFDA's collegiate-inspired Welcome Party. Enjoy light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar, and represent your alma mater by wearing your favorite college apparel!

All-Star Recognition Ceremony

Monday, October 30, 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Join fellow attendees in celebrating the shining stars of funeral service as NFDA recognizes funeral professionals who are NFDA Certified Crematory Operators, NFDA Certified Preplanning Consultants and APFSP Certified Funeral Service Practitioners.

NFDA will also recognize funeral homes that are 2017

NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Award recipients, including Best of the Best recipients and Hall of Excellence inductees, as well as NFDA Green Funeral Practice Certificate holders.

Service of Remembrance

Tuesday, October 31, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

In 2013, people of all faiths came together to help their city heal following the Boston Marathon bombing. In this same spirit of unity, this year's NFDA Service of Remembrance will highlight our country's rich Judeo-Christian heritage. The service will both explain and demonstrate the meaning behind various religious rituals and traditions through which generations have found comfort and strength to cope in times of loss.

Through this educational and meaningful Service of Remembrance, attendees will come to better understand the role faith and religion play in funeral service and be better prepared to help those they serve in their own communities. Sponsored by Funeral One.

Funeral Directors Under 40: Laugh Boston

Tuesday, October 31, 8 – 11 p.m.

Enjoy a howling good time on Halloween night with fellow "Under 40s" at Laugh Boston, the city's premier comedy club! Enjoy a hilarious stand-up comedy show by a local legend that will have you ROFL! Enjoy light menu fare, cold drinks and great laughs with great friends. You'll be cracking up about this night long after the curtain falls. Don your favorite Halloween costume to add to the fun! Price per person: \$55 early bird by September 22, \$65 after September 22. Includes private comedy show, hors d'oeuvres and two drinks per person. Attire: casual or Halloween costumes.

Closing Party – Spirit of Boston Dinner Cruise

Wednesday, November 1, 6:30 – 10 p.m.

There's one more chance to party before we say bon voyage to this year's Convention! Cast off with friends and colleagues aboard the Spirit of Boston for a dinner cruise! Breathtaking views, satisfying beverages and a delicious dinner await as we sail around Boston's famous harbor. Get your party on as you bust a move on the dance floor or enjoy a stroll on the observation deck. A perfect ending to a great Convention in Boston! Price per person: \$95 early bird by September 22, \$105 after September 22. Includes: 3-hour cruise, buffet dinner, full bar, dance floor/DJ.

Suggested attire: Cocktail

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2017 List of Exhibitors

Current as of May 24, 2017

A Final Salute
A Simple Thank You
Able Caskets LLC
ABM Funding Inc.
Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice
Access Financial Group/Interment Trust Services
Advanced Audio Systems
AFE - Asia Funeral and Cemetery Expo & Conference
Aftercare.com
Aftermath Services LLC
Algordanza
Alviti Creations Inc.
American Academy McAllister Institute
American Airlines Cargo
American Association of Tissue Banks
American Cemetery Supplies Inc.
American Funeral Consultants Inc.
American Funeral Supply Company
American Mortuary Coolers & Funeral Source One
Applied Lighting Solutions Inc.
Armbruster Stageway
ASD - Answering Service for Directors
Astral Industries Inc.
Australian Funeral Directors Association
B&L Cremation Systems Inc.
Bass-Mollett Publishers Inc.
Batesville
Behrens Design & Development Inc.
Bereavements by PIM
Beta Capital Corp.
Bio-Response Solutions Inc.
Bissell Big Green Commercial
Body Scoop by B-Mobile Inc.
Body Sealer
Bright White Paper Co.
C&J Financial LLC
Cadillac Professional Vehicles
CANA - Cremation Association of North America
Capital One Spark Business Card
Catholic Extension
Cemetery Funeral Supply
Cemetery360 Inc.
Champion Company (The)
Chateau Urns
Cherokee Casket Company Inc.
Chicago Cremation Supplies
Church & Chapel Metal Arts Inc.
Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science
Clark Grave Vault
ClearPoint Federal Bank & Trust
Columbian Financial Group
Commemorative Rosaries
Connecticut Casket Company
Contemporary Concepts
Continental Computer Corp.
Cooperative Funeral Fund Inc.
Cost Segregation Services Inc.
Crescent Memorial
Crowne Vault/Cressy Memorial
Custom Air Trays
Davis Whitehall Co. (The)
Delta Cargo
Destiny Casket
Director On Call
Directors Choice Assignment Services
DNR Industries Limited
Dodge Company (The)
Donate Life America
Doric Products Inc.

Duncan Stuart Todd Ltd.
Eagle Coach Company
Eagle's Wings Air (EWA)
Eckels
Elegante Brass Company
Embalmers Supply Co.
Embossed Graphics
Empower Sound
Ensure-A-Seal
Eustis Chair
Everdays
Exhibitor Name
Express Funeral Funding
Facultative Technologies
Faggas Funeral Home & Embalming Service Inc.
FCA US LLC
Federal Coach
Federated Funeral Directors of America
Federated Insurance Company
Federated Insurance Company
Ferno-Washington Inc.
Final Embrace LLC
FINE Mortuary College
Fine 'N Rhine - Hong Kong
Fine 'N Rhine - Hong Kong
First Bank SBA
Florence Casket Co.
Fontana De Trevi, S.A.
Ford Acceptance Corp.
Ford and Lincoln Limousine and Livery Vehicles
Foresight Companies LLC (The)
Forever in Glass
Forever In My Heart Jewelry
Forston & Associates
Frazer Consultants
Frigid Fluid Co.
FrontRunner Professional
Funeral App (The)
Funeral Directors' Answering Service
Funeral Directors Life Insurance Company (FDLIC)
Funeral Directors Management System
Funeral Financial LLC
Funeral Home Gifts
Funeral Innovations
Funeral Services Inc.
FuneralCall Answering Service
Funeralocity
funeralOne
funeralOne
FuneralScreen
Funeraltech
FuneralVue
Garfield Refining Company
Glass Remembrance
Global Atlantic Financial Group
Great Western Insurance Company
Heart Strings / FL Solutions
Heirloom Bible Publishers
Henry Schwab, Co.
Hepburn Superior-U.S. Chemical
Heritage Memorial Funding
Holsag Canada
Homesteaders Life Company
Honor and Remember Inc.
Howard Miller/Hekman
Hunter Warfield
ICCF - Int'l Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Assn.
Implant Recycling LLC
Infinity Urns LLC
Inman Shipping Worldwide

Insight Books
International Mortuary Shipping LLC
International Order of the Golden Rule
Investors Heritage Life Insurance Co.
Ionic Services Inc.
J. Stuart Todd Inc.
Johnson Consulting Group
Kanga-Woo First Call Pouches
Kates-Boylston Publications
Keith M. Merrick
Kelco Supply Company
Kellerman Family of Professional Vehicles
Kerachrom USA
Lamcraft Inc.
LanKao Huamei Ind. Co. Ltd.
Legacy Touch
Legacy Tribute Inc.
Legacy.com
Lehmann-Peterson
Lending USA
Life Celebration Inc.
Life Cycle Urns
LifeStory Book
Link Manufacturing
Live Oak Bank
LoveUrns LLC
M. Kenny's - BK Hong Kong Tailors
M. Solomon Casket Co.
Mabrey Products Inc.
Mackinnon and Bowes Ltd.
Madelyn Co.
Marian University
Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions
Matthews Environmental Solutions
Meadow Hill Corporation
Memento Memorials
Memorable Impressions
Memori
Memoriams by Ancestry
Memory Glass
Merry Christmas From Heaven - MooneyTunCo Inc.
Messenger
Messenger
Messenger Calendars
Metropolitan Funeral Service Inc.
Michael's Custom Clothing
Microsoft Learning Center
Miller Architects & Builders
Mission Valley Bank
MKJ Marketing
Mobi Medical Supply
Mortuary Lift Company
Mortware
Mount Ida College Dept. of Funeral Service Edu.
Mt. Hope Grief Services
NADCO Marble
Naser Group
National Alliance for Grieving Children
National Assn. of Colleges of Mortuary Science
National Directory of Morticians/The Red Book
National Mortuary Shipping
Natural Legacy USA
New Memorials Direct/Bailey & Bailey
NFDA 2016 Exhibitor Lounge
NFDA Business Solutions
NFDA Publications
NFL Insurance Group
Nixon Consulting Inc.
Noble Metal Solutions
Nomis Publications Inc.

North Carolina Mutual
North East Casket Co., Inc
One Room LLC
Osiris Software by Funeral Director's Resource
PartnerShip LLC - NFDA Shipping Program
Passages International Inc.
Passare
PFA Tax and Accounting Professionals
Physicians Mutual
PICLIF
Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science
Polyguard & Co.
Pontem Software
Porcelains Unlimited
Precious Memories
Precoa
Pro Design Urns
R&S Designs
R&S Markers LLC
Regal Line (The)
Regions Bank
Remembrance Creations
Remembrance Keepsakes
Ring Ring Marketing
Riviera Tailors Ltd.
RK Productions Inc.
RKS Lanka
Roberts & Downey Chapel Equipment Inc.
S&S/Superior Coaches
Salesgenie-City Directories
Sauder Funeral Products
Scarf King
SecuriGene Technologies Inc.
Security National Life Insurance Company
Shanghai Custom Tailors
ShivaShade
Sich
Sigmund Produktdesign GmbH
SinoSource International
SinoSource International
Skyways Media
Southwest Cargo
SpartaCraft Inc.
SRS Computing
Stericycle Communication Solutions
Strickland Solutions
Sunwest Bank
Terrybear Urns & Memorials
TESCO
Thacker Caskets
Trigard
Triple H Company
Trust 100
TSYS
Tukios Inc.
Turner Memorial
U.S. Cremation Equipment
U.S. Department of Defense
United Heritage Life
UPD Urns
Vantage Products Corp.
WebCemeteries.com
White and Blue Lion Inc, dba Valyria
Whitmore Group Ltd. (The)
Wilbert Group (The)
With You Lockets
Withum Smith & Brown PC
Woodfold Manufacturing
Worsham College of Mortuary Science
Wright Keepsakes and Jewelry
XPain Solutions

NFDA Announces 2017 Election Results

Kenneth A. Cahall to lead association as 2017-18 president

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is pleased to announce that qualified association members have elected the following individuals to serve as officers on the 2017-18 Board of Directors: **President-elect Charles “Chuck” T. Bowman, CMSP, CFSP, CCO; Treasurer R. Bryant Hightower Jr., CFSP; and Secretary Randall P. “Randy” Anderson, CFSP, CCO.** The 2017-18 NFDA Board of Directors will be led by President Kenneth A. Cahall, CFSP, CCO.

The officers serve one-year terms of office that begin following the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Boston. 2016-17 NFDA President W. Ashley Cozine, CFSP, CPC, CCO, will continue his service on the Board with a one-year term as immediate past president that

commences at the end of the 2017 NFDA Convention.

Continuing his service on the Board of Directors is At-large Representative John “Jack” O. Mitchell IV, CFSP, CCO (2016-18). He will be joined by At-large Representatives Pasquale S. Folino, CFSP, CCO (2017-19), and Douglas “Dutch” R. Nie II, CFSP, CCO (2017-19), who were elected by the Policy Board in July 2017. The NFDA Policy Board will hold a special election during its meeting on October 28, 2017, to elect a fourth at-large representative who will complete the second year of an unexpired two-year term of service resulting from the recent resignation of Peter B. “Butch” Mulhearn Jr.

In the 2017 NFDA Officer Elections, Bowman, Hightower and Anderson ran unopposed. During the month of August, 781 eligible members voted for the individuals they believed should serve as officers on the NFDA Board of Directors. The Policy Board is responsible for electing at-large representatives.

Vantage Paramount Burial Vaults are designs of distinctive elegance. Their granite appearance finishes in Lapis Blue, Remembrance White, Rosewood, Dove Grey and Cherrystone offer a choice of styles for your loved one. Paramount Burial Vaults are injection molded of polypropylene which renders a seamless unit of great structural integrity that withstands the elements of nature and provides lasting peace of mind.



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Events

Sunday

Boston Freedom Trail Tour Sunday, October 29

1 – 4 p.m.

Boston's Freedom Trail is a 2½-mile walk through history! Your comfortable motor coach transports you to beautiful Boston Common to begin your tour. From there, your guide leads you on a 90-minute walking tour back to Colonial times. Along the way, you'll encounter 16 historic sites! The tour concludes at Boston's famous Faneuil Hall, where statesmen, orators and the public have gathered for two centuries to discuss and debate the most consequential issues of the day. You'll enjoy some free time at Faneuil Hall Marketplace's food hall and numerous shops before boarding your return coach to the hotel.

Price per person: \$60

Monday

Baseball and Beer: Fenway Park and Samuel Adams Brewery Tour

Monday, October 30

12 – 3 p.m.

Your tour begins at the world-famous Fenway Park in Boston! A professional tour guide will show you around the ballpark and share stories of notable games won and lost. You'll also see exclusive behind-the-scenes areas, such as the press box and broadcast booth, and hear stories about the stadium's iconic features, including Pesky's Pole and, of course, the towering left field wall called the Green Monster! Following the stadium tour, you'll make your way to Samuel Adams Brewing Company for a tour and tasting. Learn about brewer Samuel Adams and his role in the American Revolution as you experience the entire brewing process and enjoy a taste of history!

Price per person: \$80

Dark Side of Boston Tour Monday, October 30

7 – 9:30 p.m.

Explore Boston's darker side! This original guided walk through misery, misfortune, malevolence and murder is based on true historical events that occurred in Boston. Fact is often stranger than fiction! You'll hear many dark and disturbing stories not often shared with tourists, including: the scourges of smallpox and the Great Influenza, the dangers of Richmond Street, the vandalization of the Royal Governor's House, the Molasses Flood, body snatchers and the infamous Brink's Robbery, all against the backdrop of Boston's oldest neighborhood. We hope you'll join us for a walk

on the Dark Side. Crime, disease, death and disaster – what better way to enjoy a pleasant evening in Boston! Price per person: \$60

Tuesday

Harvard University and John F. Kennedy Library and Museum Tour

Tuesday, October 31

1 – 5 p.m.

Stroll through Harvard University as your guide points out the historic architecture of the oldest university in the country, where John F. Kennedy studied in his younger years. Visit hallowed Harvard Yard and the statue of college founder John Harvard... or is it? You'll have a brief opportunity to browse the unique shops, boutiques and bookstores of Harvard Square before heading off to Dorchester to tour the magnificent John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Begin your museum experience with a short film introducing Kennedy "the candidate" and then enter the recreated world of the Kennedy presidency for a firsthand experience of John F. Kennedy's life, legacy and leadership. With its collection of personal mementos and gifts, as well as historical artifacts, informative displays and unique films, you'll see events of the 1960s through President Kennedy's eyes and narrated in his voice, experience his optimism and wit, and be inspired by the hope and idealism that captivated America. Price per person: \$75

Thursday

America's History: Lexington and Concord Half-Day Tour

Thursday, November 2

8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

On April 19, 1775, British Regulars battled with colonists or minutemen in the first battle of the American Revolution, known as "the skirmish on the green." Your day starts here where it all began. The tour also includes notable stops in revolutionary history such as Buckman Tavern and Minute Man National Historical Park, with landmarks including Paul Revere's capture site, Battle Road and the Old North Bridge. Concord was also home to famous American writers; see the homes of literary greats Louisa May Alcott and Ralph Waldo Emerson before enjoying lunch at the historic Colonial Inn, whose rich history dates back to 1716. End your tour exploring Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Price per person: \$125

Attire for all tours: Wear what is comfortable. The tours will be indoors and outdoors *All prices include roundtrip transportation, parking fees and tolls, fuel surcharges, professional tour guide or tour escort, noted inclusions and all taxes and gratuities.

Tour registration closes October 13. For information or to register, visit nfda.org/boston2017.

All tours are subject to change.



Explore the latest innovations at the world's largest funeral service expo

Learn about the latest products, services and innovations to grow your business and better serve client families at the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo. For the most current list of exhibitors and to view the Expo floor map, visit nfda.org/boston2017

Expo Hours

- Monday, October 30: 12 – 5 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 31: 12 – 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 1: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

NFDA Business Solutions, Booth 3171

Stop in the NFDA Business Solutions area to learn about money- and time-saving tools to help you operate an even more successful business. Visit with representatives from Federated Insurance, TSYS, Hunter Warfield, Messenger, PartnerShip and more.

NFDA Publications, Booth 3279

NFDA Publications strives to keep you informed! Help keep us informed, too. Stop by and chat with the editors of *The Director*, *Memorial Business Journal* and *Director.edu* about topics of importance to you and your business. Remember, current issues of the publications are online for your convenience.

Lunch, snacks and beverages are available for purchase at concession stands in the Expo hall.



International Pavilion, Booth 1904

Representing nearly a dozen countries and associations, the International Pavilion is your one-stop international resource for finding answers to questions about funeral service around the world, including repatriation. This is a must-visit Expo booth whether you're currently doing business with funeral directors in other parts of the world or simply want to learn more.



Innovation Award

Your votes are needed! Find out which entries your fellow funeral directors selected as the most innovative products and services and then vote for your favorite. Cast your vote for the 2017 NFDA Innovation Award online at nfda.org/innovation beginning August 1. Top finalists and the award recipient will be announced during the Monday General Session. Be sure to check out all of the entries on the Expo floor!

People's Choice Booth Competition

Which booths are most creative, use the best visuals, have the best staff enthusiasm and the best giveaways? Let us know what you think – cast your vote onsite for best booths at the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo. Winners will be announced at the Wednesday General Session.

2017 NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Awards: Funeral Homes Honored for Excellence in Service to Families and Communities



Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is pleased to announce that more than 160 funeral homes have earned the 2017 Pursuit of Excellence Award. This award is presented by NFDA annually to firms that have demonstrated a commitment to raising the bar on funeral service excellence by adhering to strict ethical and professional standards and providing outstanding service to families and communities. NFDA will honor the 2017 Pursuit of Excellence Award Recipients on October 30 during the All-Star Recognition Ceremony, which will take place during the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo, October 29 through November 1 in Boston, Mass.

The 2017 Best of the Best Award finalists are:

- *Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines*
- *Chambers & James, Funeral, Pet & Cremation Services, Wellsburg, W.Va.*
- *Old Bridge Funeral Home, Old Bridge, N.J.*
- *Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Traverse City, Mich.*
- *Spicer-Mullikin Funeral Homes and Crematory, New Castle, Del.*

Association members should visit www.nfda.org/pursuitofexcellence to read finalists' essays and cast their vote. Voting for the Best of the Best Award closes September 8.

NFDA Hall of Excellence Inductees

NFDA-member funeral homes are inducted into the Hall of Excellence upon receiving their 10th Pursuit of Excellence Award. In recognition of their consistent display of professional and ethical excellence, four funeral homes will be inducted into the NFDA Hall of Excellence in 2017:

- *Lentz Funeral Home, Algona, Iowa*
- *Roller-Owens Funeral Home, North Little Rock, Ark.*
- *Shaughnessey Banks Funeral Home, Fairfield, Conn.*
- *Worlein Funeral Home, Austin, Minn.*

2017 NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Award Recipients

*Previously inducted into the NFDA Hall of Excellence

**2017 Best of The Best Award Finalist

***First-time Award Recipient

****2017 Hall of Excellence Inductee

- *Abels & French-Hand Funeral Homes, Grundy Center, Iowa*
- **A.H. Peters Funeral Home of Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich.*
- *A.H. Peters Funeral Home, Warren, Warren, Mich.*
- **A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors, Troy, Mich.*
- *Anderson & Sons Mortuary, Inc., American Fork, Utah*
- ****Anderson Funeral Home, Alexandria, Minn.*
- ****Anderson Funeral and Cremation Services, Belvidere, Ill.*
- *Anderson-Burris Funeral Home & Crematory, Enid, Okla.*
- ***Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines*
- **Arnett & Steele Funeral Home, Inc., Pineville, Ky.*
- *Arlington Funeral Directors, Jackson, Tenn.*
- **A.S. Turner & Sons Funeral Home & Crematory, Decatur, Ga.*
- **Baird Funeral Home, Troy, Ohio*
- *Ballard-Durand Funeral & Cremation Services, White Plains, N.Y.*
- *Baskerville Funeral Home, Wilmington, Ill.*
- *Bass Funeral Home, Inc., Gordonsville, Tenn.*
- ****B.C. Bailey Funeral Home, Wallingford, Conn.*
- *Brandon G. Thompson Funeral Home, Hammond, La.*
- *Brunswick Memorial Home, East Brunswick, N.J.*
- *Butler Funeral Home, Bolivar, Mo.*
- **Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home, Covington, Ga.*
- *Cannon Cleveland Funeral Directors, McDonough, Ga.*
- **Cassaday-Turk-Christian Funeral and Cremation Service, Inc., Alliance, Ohio*
- ***Chambers & James Funeral, Pet & Cremation Services, Wellsburg, W.Va.*
- *Christopher Mitchell Funeral Homes, Inc., Albion, N.Y.*
- *Copeland Funeral Service, Beaufort, S.C.*
- ****Cosmopolitan Memorial Chapels, Inc., Cebu City, Philippines*
- **Cozean Memorial Chapel & Crematory, Farmington, Mo.*
- **Cozine Memorial Group, Wichita, Kan.*
- *C.R. Lyons & Sons Funeral Directors, Danvers, Mass.*
- *Dalin-Hante Funeral Chapel, Winthrop, Minn.*
- **David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville, Mich.*
- **Davis Funeral Home, LLC, Nashua, N.H.*
- *Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory, Washington, Ill.*

- **D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel, East Hartford, Conn/*
- **D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, Wethersfield, Conn.*
- **Dobratz-Hantge Funeral Chapel, Hutchinson, Minn.*
- *Duksa Family Funeral Homes at Burritt Hill, New Britain, Conn.*
- **Duksa Family Funeral Homes at Newington Memorial, Newington, Conn.*
- **Dwayne R. Spence Funeral Home, Canal Winchester, Ohio*
- *E. Blake Collins Funeral Home, Wilkes Barre, Penn.*
- *Emerald Hills Funeral Home and Memorial Park, Kennedale, Texas*
- *Emmanuel Johnson Funeral Home, Philadelphia, Penn.*
- ****Ever Rest Funeral Home and Chapel, Muskegon, Mich.*
- *Falco Caruso & Leonard Camden Funeral Home, Camden, N.J.*
- *Falco Caruso & Leonard Funeral Home, Pennsauken, N.J.*
- *Farris Funeral Service and Crematory, Abingdon, Va.*
- *Finch & Finch Funeral and Cremation Service, Altavista, Va.*
- *Freitas Ruprecht Funeral Home, Yerington, Nev.*
- *French Funeral Home, Brazil, Ind.*
- *Funeraria Hernandez, Pennsauken, N.J.*
- *Funeraria La Esperanza S.A., Medellín, Colombia*
- *Funeraria San Vicente S.A., Medellín, Colombia*
- **Gamble Funeral Service, Savannah, Ga.*
- *Gardinier Funeral Home, Inc., Franklin, Penn.*
- *Geisen Funeral Homes, Crown Point, Ind.*
- *Geisen-Carlisle Funeral & Cremation Services, Michigan City, Ind.*
- *George I. Green Funeral Home, Inc., Munhall, Penn.*
- *G.H. Herrmann Funeral Homes, Indianapolis, Ind.*
- **Gorsline-Runciman Funeral Homes, Lansing, Mich.*
- **Gunderson Funeral Home, Madison, Wis.*
- ****Halpin-Bitecola Brookdale Funeral Home, Bloomfield, N.J.*
- *Heath Funeral Chapel & Crematory, Lakeland, Fla.*
- **Henderson Funeral Home & Crematory, Pekin, Ill.*
- **Heritage Funeral Home, Nipawin, SK, Canada*
- *Holman-Howe Funeral Home, Lebanon, Mo.*
- *Howard K. Hill Funeral Services, New Haven, Conn.*
- *Hughes Family Tribute Center, Dallas, Texas*
- *Hughes-Hantge Funeral Chapel, Hector, Minn.*
- *Inglesby & Sons Funeral Home, Pennsauken, N.J.*
- ****Irvin Macz Funeral Homes, Centralia, Ill.*
- *James Funeral Home & Northlake Memorial Gardens, Huntersville, N.C.*
- *Jennings-Calvey Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc., Clarks Summit, Penn.*
- *J. Garcia Lopez Casa Pedregal, Mexico City, Mexico*
- **Johnson-Hagglund Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Litchfield, Minn.*
- *Johnson-McBride Funeral Chapel, Glencoe, Minn.*
- **Jones-Wynn Funeral Home & Crematory, Douglasville, Ga.*
- **Jones-Wynn Funeral Home & Crematory, Villa Rica, Ga.*
- **Joseph Vertin and Sons Funeral Home, Breckenridge, Minn.*
- *Karrer-Simpson Funeral Home, Port Huron, Mich.*
- **Kerrville Funeral Home, Kerrville, Texas*
- **Kilpatrick Funeral Homes, West Monroe, La.*
- *Kimble Funeral Home, Junction, Texas*
- *Kok Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Cottage Grove, Minn.*
- ****Kramer Funeral Home – Palouse, Palouse, Wash.*
- ****Krestridge Funeral Home, Levelland, Texas*
- *Lakeshore Memorial Services, a Dignity Memorial Provider, Holland, Mich.*
- *Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home, Hamburg, N.Y.*
- ****Langley Funeral Home, Camp Hill, Ala.*
- *****Lentz Funeral Home, Algona, Iowa*
- *Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home, Stamford, Conn.*
- *Lord & Stephens Funeral Home, Athens, Ga.*
- *Martin & Hightower Funeral Home, Carrollton, Ga.*
- **Martin Funeral, Cremation & Tribute Services – Fairgrove, Fairgrove, Mich.*
- *Martin Funeral, Cremation & Tribute Services – Grand Blanc, Grand Blanc, Mich.*
- **Martin Funeral, Cremation & Tribute Services – Mt. Morris, Mount Morris, Mich.*
- **Martin Funeral, Cremation & Tribute Services – Vassar, Vassar, Mich.*
- **Memorial Funeral Home, San Juan, Texas*
- **Memorial Funeral Home, Edinburg, Texas*
- *Mercer-Adams Funeral Service, Bethany, Okla.*
- *Meredith-Clark Funeral Home, Cremation and Personalization Center, Morgantown, Ind.*
- ****Mililani Memorial Park & Mortuary Chapel, Waipahu, Hawaii*
- **Milward Funeral Directors, Lexington, Ky.*
- ****Molden Funeral Chapel, Bristol, Penn.*
- ****Morada Da Paz, Paulista, PE, Brazil*
- *Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, Madison, Ind.*
- *Morris-Baker Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Johnson City, Tenn.*
- *Morrissett Funeral & Cremation Service, North Chesterfield, Va.*
- **Myers Mortuary – Roy, Roy, Utah*
- **Myers Mortuary of Brigham City, Brigham City, Utah*
- **Myers Mortuary of Layton, Layton, Utah*
- **Myers Mortuary, Ogden, Utah*
- *O'Brien Funeral Home, Brick Location, Brick, N.J.*
- *O'Brien Funeral Home, Wall Location, Wall Township, N.J.*
- *Oceanside Memorial Home, Lake Como, N.J.*
- **Ochiltree Funeral Service, Winterset, Iowa*
- ***Old Bridge Funeral Home, Old Bridge, N.J.*
- *Oliverie Funeral Home, Manchester, N.J.*
- **Olson Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Sheboygan, Wis.*
- **Patrick T. Lanigan Funeral Home and Crematory, East Pittsburgh, Penn.*
- *Pedersen Funeral & Cremation Service, Morris, Minn.*
- **Pixley Funeral Home, Rochester, Mich.*
- **Pray Funeral Home, Inc., Charlotte, Mich.*
- *Radney Funeral Home, Alexander City, Ala.*
- *Ransford Collon Funeral Home, Caro, Mich.*
- **Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd., Coal City, Ill.*
- *Reichmuth Funeral Home, Elkhorn, Neb.*
- *** *Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Traverse City, Mich/*
- *Roller Coffman-Crouch Funeral Home, Mountain View, Ark.*
- *Roller Funeral Home – Paris, Paris, Ark.*
- **Roller Funeral Home, Mountain Home, Ark.*

- *Roller-Chenal Funeral Home, Little Rock, Ark.
- Roller-Cox Funeral Home, Clarksville, Ark.
- *Roller-Daniel Funeral Home, Searcy, Ark.
- *Roller-McNutt Funeral Home, Conway, Ark.
- Roller-McNutt Funeral Home Clinton, Clinton, Ark.
- ****Roller-Owens Funeral Home, North Little Rock, Ark.
- ***Savage-DeMarco Funeral Service, Endicott, N.Y.
- Seaver-Brown Funeral Service & Crematory, Marion, Va.
- *Sharer-Stirling-Skivolocke Funeral Home, Alliance, Ohio
- ****Shaughnessey Banks Funeral Home, Fairfield, Conn.
- Smith Family Funeral Home – North Little Rock Funeral Home, North Little Rock, Ark.
- **Spicer-Mullikin Funeral Homes and Crematory, New Castle, Del.
- St. Peter Chapels, Quezon City, Manila, Philippines
- *Staab Polk Memorial Home/Cremation Services of Central Illinois, Chatham, Ill.
- Sunset Funeral Home, Danville, Ill.
- ***Tetrick Funeral & Cremation Services, Johnson City, Tenn.
- Tetrick Funeral Home, Elizabethton, Tenn.
- ***Thomas L. Neilan & Sons Funeral Home, Niantic, Conn.
- *Thomas McAfee Funeral Home – Downtown Chapel, Greenville, S.C.
- Thomas McAfee Funeral Home – Northwest Chapel, Greenville, S.C.
- Thomas McAfee Funeral Home – Southeast Chapel, Simpsonville, S.C.
- Titus Funeral Home, Warsaw, Ind.
- *Twiford Funeral Home, Elizabeth City, N.C.
- Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Merrill, Wis.
- Waitt Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Morganville, N.J.
- Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park & Mortuary, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Watson Thomas Funeral Home and Crematory, Galesburg, Ill.
- Weeks' Dryer Mortuary, Tacoma, Wash.
- *Weeks' Enumclaw Funeral Home, Enumclaw, Wash.
- *Weeks' Funeral Home, Buckley, Wash.
- Wieting Family Funeral Home, Chilton, Wis.
- *Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, Royal Oak, Mich.
- *Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, Utica, Mich.
- ****Worlein Funeral Home, Austin, Minn.

INDUSTRY NEWS

FAMIC/Have the Talk of a Lifetime Update – October 2017

November is Have the Talk of a Lifetime Month. As families and friends gather for the holidays, funeral homes across the country are encouraging them to “have the talk” and discover what matters most to the people who matter most. The information families discover will lead to more meaningful memorializations when the time comes.

Here are four links to help families in your community start the conversation:

- National Family History Month and Have the Talk of a Lifetime Month Webinar
- FAMIC.org “Have the Talk Campaign Materials”: Get all of your marketing materials here!
- The Have the Talk of a Lifetime Month Event Page: FAMIC created a consumer homepage for Have the Talk of a Lifetime Month. This is where you can list your events and consumers can search for them in their area. There is also a link to download the Holiday Guide.
- Have the Talk of a Lifetime Awareness to Action Webinar: This video is a great resource to help funeral profession.

Find a Funeral Professional Search Tool

If you haven't already done so, sign up for this free

and easy opportunity to add your place of business to the Find a Funeral Professional Search Tool database on the Have the Talk consumer website, www.talkofalifetime.org.

As a member of NFDA you can sign up by following these easy steps:

- Visit www.talkofalifetime.org/search-yourself
- Search your zip code to see whether your business is already listed
- If your business is not in the search results:
- Include the Have the Talk of a Lifetime logo (available at www.famic.org – password: campaign) on the homepage of your website, and familiarize yourself and your staff with the program
- Then, simply complete the web form and submit for review
- You'll then receive an email once your business is added to the search tool (within two business days)

Have questions or require assistance? E-mail HaveTheTalkofALifetime@gmail.com.

NFDA is a member of FAMIC, the association that created the Have the Talk of a Lifetime program.

Austin Bell Funeral Home celebrates 175 years of service



Austin Bell Funeral Home
Springfield ,TN -
175 years service celebration
Bob Bell presented a award from the State of
Tennessee.

Some of the displays at the recent Open House in September.



Ambulance & Coach

Ambulance and Coach's, Hal Singletary, delivering new S&S Cadillac Limousine to Poteete Funeral Home in Albany, GA

Wayne Day delivered new fleet of S&S Cadillac's to Bushelon Funeral Home in Birmingham, AL for Ambulance & Coach



Ambulance & Coach delivered a new fleet to
Hamilton Funeral Home, Chattanooga TN



NFDA's, Lacy Robinson, Shares Her Insight in a Candid "Q&A" with SFD Magazine's Elli Morris

What is the most inspiring aspect of your job? What's the most challenging part?

As NFDA's Director of Member Development I've had the great privilege of facilitating the Arranger Training Program since its' official launch in 2016. I'm going into my 13th year of training and I continue to be highly motivated by those individuals in funeral service who crave new ideas and resources. I thrive on attendees taking notes, asking questions, holding up their smart phone to capture a slide. Their energy and desire to elevate the level of customer service at their funeral homes keeps me encouraged to stay on the hunt for business building solutions.

Which of your previous positions prepared you for current one most directly?

I tell workshop attendees that working in a funeral home and having walked in their steps has been invaluable, but what has been the most beneficial is traveling the country and visiting with funeral directors. Listening to their challenges and successes has helped me understand what it takes to get from point to A to point B. Having that insight helps me to help other funeral directors who may be facing similar obstacles.

What are some of the frustrations we deal with in the funeral profession?

Over the years funeral directors have shared with me their frustration that comes with client families who immediately dismiss the notion of a funeral. That leads to the other struggle that families are making that decision for a cremation with no services before coming to the arrangement conference to meet with the funeral director. Time management is also a big challenge that

is often discussed. I talk with many funeral directors who have a strong desire to spend more time with families during the arrangement process and want to take personalization to the next level but feel burdened by the limited time frame.



What aspect(s) of your position at NFDA do you see as being the most beneficial for the funeral industry?

NFDA's new Arranger Training Program addresses these challenges plus many others. In this eight hour workshop I cover everything from customer service skills to all aspects of event planning. I encourage attendees to share with the class what's keeping them up at night and what obstacles are keeping them from planning memorable life tributes. If it's on their mind I want it to be on my mind. There's a room full of funeral directors willing to help and explore solutions. It's a very interactive learning environment which adds to the overall success of the program.

How can NFDA's Arranger Training Program benefit each and every funeral home?

Over the years I've spoken to many funeral directors who truly feel they're not creative enough and offering unique ideas for remembrance is something they feel they're not capable of doing. Obviously, some people

are born with a creative mind others need to spend time mastering creativity. The Arranger Training Program is for any funeral director no matter their level of creativity. Funeral directors will learn a simple and practical approach to becoming more creative and receive inspiration with resources to keep handy as they plan memorable services for families. When a funeral director is organized with right resources and meaningful ideas at their fingertips reaching a high level of creativity is no longer a challenge. I'm going to make sure that each attendee is not only equipped with effective tools but know how to keep everything organized with their team.

What do you look forward to most about the convention?

I look forward to every part of NFDA's International Convention and Expo. Whether it's reconnecting with our international friends, the debut of new products at the expo or the All Star Ceremony it all gets my adrenaline going.

I'm really excited to meet Danny Roebuck who directed and acted in the movie Getting Grace, which is about a funeral director whose life is forever changed by a teenage girl dying of cancer. I'll be facilitating NFDA's Arranger Training on Saturday and speaking two more times starting on Monday. Any chance for me to share information to help funeral directors further grow their businesses is always energizing.

Where do you see funeral service heading in the next 10 years?

The next ten years is going to be a critical time period for funeral homes across the country. As Generation X evolves into a more active role during the funeral planning process they will discover more ways to implement personalization and event details.

Funeral directors will need to decide if they're on board partnering with Generation X or accept their decision of asking for minimal services and planning a tribute a month later without the funeral home's involvement. The increasing presence of hotels, hospice providers, and do-it-yourself family members in funeral service should be on every funeral directors radar. My hope is that funeral homes across the country expand on the services they offer and work on amping up their creativity that results in life tribute events that are

positive and memorable for all guests.

Who has been the most influential person in your endeavors and growth in the funeral profession?

Beyond my day to day responsibilities with NFDA I always look forward to Saturday. I'm a huge fan of The Lawrence Welk Show which still aires on Saturday night.

I have a massive collection of Lawrence Welk memorabilia and have met many of the stars. I credit Lawrence Welk for giving me daily life inspiration. Just like Lawrence Welk I love being in front of an audience and want guests to leave feeling energized and positive. Whether it was his live show, charity golf tournament or his vacation resorts he found a way to bring people together (specifically families) for a meaningful experience. He exemplifies the American dream and invited all to join in on his journey.

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Five Tips for Evaluating Marketing Decisions

By Ed Michael Reggie, Founder and CEO of Funeralocity

Few industries evoke as wide a variety of reactions – ranging from gratitude to suspicion – as that of the funeral profession. At-need funeral planning is a unique process that can stretch the emotional resilience of people coping with the loss of a loved one. During such a tough time, the person responsible for planning the funeral must make important decisions regarding the last wishes of the deceased – and the wishes of various family members – regarding the type of service, disposition, degree of formality, and other family requests. They can customize the funeral arrangements to reflect the life of the deceased ensuring that no two funerals are alike. They are as different as the families mourning and the deceased.

Despite the different demands, needs and perceptions of funeral homes among families, one important, undisputed trend is that people are increasingly going online to search for information about funeral planning and funeral homes. In the face of this increase in online research, funeral service marketing must continue to evolve to meet the needs of today's Amazon.com shopper.

The success of Amazon serves a critical lesson about the fate of companies that respond to growing consumer expectations and those that fail to read the market. The Borders bookselling chain ignored consumer shopping trends and went bankrupt. Barnes and Noble hangs on by a thread. Amazon soars.

So, when an outside marketing agency or potential partner shows up to help you with your internet marketing, you need to listen carefully and ask the right questions. Some want to improve your own funeral home website, some want to increase traffic to your site, some are listing services that act as online yellow pages, some are companion services that provide content on planning to people who come to your site, some are lead generation services that will purport to send leads to you.

How should you evaluate your choices and allocate your marketing dollars most effectively?

First, understand today's consumers' online needs. All too often, funeral homes assume that all consumers need is to search for a funeral home in their area, and then go to an individual website to get the information they need.

While a customized funeral home website that showcases your specific offerings is critical, relying on your own site as the only effective lead generation tool is misguided.

Reviewing one site at a time is difficult, time consuming and complicated for families. People are accustomed to being able to go onto a comparative website to look at all the choices available in one place, and then narrow their search based on what they see. This is true for cars, hotels, homes, and even funeral homes.

A Harris Poll commissioned in 2016 by Funeralocity among 2,033 adults, found that 79 percent of Americans would like to be able to shop for and compare funeral home services and pricing online if the need arose. In fact, 73 percent also said that such a site would influence their decision on which funeral home to use. In today's increasingly mobile society, fewer people have the ability to rely on a family funeral home. Families don't know how to evaluate or choose a funeral home, or even understand what funeral arrangements options are available.

These findings are consistent with a broad range of recent research about online shopping, including the 2015 Online Shopping and E-Commerce survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. That study found that, when buying something for the first time, "86 percent of Americans say it is important to be able to compare prices from different sellers," and 74 percent want "to be able to read reviews posted online by others who have purchased the item." Clearly, consumers expect to use third-party comparison sites in their online research.

But that doesn't mean they want to do everything online. They still want to plan their services with a

licensed funeral director. The Pew Research Center survey also found that “64 percent of Americans indicate that, all things being equal, they prefer buying from physical stores to buying online.” It is only logical that this number would be much higher for consumers making very personal decisions regarding funeral arrangements for a loved one or even for themselves.

Second, look beyond cookie-cutter marketing. The advantage of a site that lists all funeral homes is that consumers are able to differentiate the funeral home offerings they see. They can look at a variety of options and choose the one that best meets their need whether that be a funeral home that offers a therapy dog, special veterans’ services, or other customization opportunities.

Too often today, it is hard to tell the difference between funeral homes online. The sameness of funeral home websites blurs the lines and eliminates any distinctions that would matter for consumers. Everyone talks about the same features: family-owned, tradition, exceptional service, etc. But if everyone is saying the same thing, there is no way to distinguish besides price. And

third-party comparison sites are not about price. They are about value – a combination of services offered, pricing, consumer ratings and reviews, location, and other factors that meet a families’ needs.

There is a saying that “it’s hard to read the label when you’re inside the jar.” That happens to be true for funeral service marketing, as well. After becoming very familiar with an industry, conventions have a way of taking hold, and it becomes harder to find a marketing partner who will bring fresh eyes – from the family’s perspective – to enhance the likelihood of people choosing you.

Three, beware companies that ask for cash up-front. “Step right up, and place your bet on Red 19.”

Your payout is highly uncertain and risky. But traditional advertising mediums and even new on-line directory services that ask for a fee to list you without any guarantee that your expenditure will yield results are counting on you making just such a decision. There are certainly a number of community activities, sponsorships, and support of local businesses that are appropriate for you in your role as a community

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member. But the goal of marketing spending must be continued business growth and prosperity.

Writing large checks with nothing to show for it is an unwanted and unwelcome experience. Instead, partner with those who will share the risk with you.

Four, recognize the true cost of lead generation. Every business has an acquisition cost. You should look at trends of your spending versus your success rate in attracting new families to your firm. This is especially true in the age where many don't have a family funeral home.

An ideal partner seeks payment only for performance. They take their own risks, and put their know-how and expertise on the line to benefit you, and charge you only when they deliver results.

Enlist someone with the confidence to put their own skin in the game and share the risk of the outcome.

Five, ensure that you choose marketing partners with the financial strength and depth of expertise to make a difference to your bottom line.

Everyone has stories about companies that come into the market proclaiming they can better position you against your competition, deliver market share and incremental funerals – if only you would pay for the privilege. Then suddenly they run out of money and they're gone, leaving you with nothing but regret over wasted dollars. Look for "patient capital" with new entrants to the marketing mix. Many of us are out there trying to make a difference for the profession, but most are trying to do so on a shoestring. A patient investor – one who partners with funeral directors to co-create a solution that works for both families and funeral directors – is the smart move.



Ed Michael Reggie is the founder and CEO of Funeralocity, where he oversees daily operations of an online marketplace that helps people select the best funeral home for the best price when arranging funeral services for their loved one.

Funeralocity is the latest venture of Future Factory, a

company that creates and manages startups. Reggie is the founder and managing director of Future Factory, which brings management, capital and ideas together to invest in, grow and run smart businesses. He has run successful businesses in banking, healthcare, software, book publishing and other ventures.

Reggie's passion for innovation and developing solutions to address consumer needs extends beyond Future Factory. He has received awards from academic institutions including the Champion of Public Health Award from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in 2004. In addition, he serves on the board of directors of the New Orleans BioInnovation Center, a technology business incubator created to foster entrepreneurship within the bioscience market sector, and the Grameen Foundation, a global nonprofit organization that brings innovative and sustainable programs to the fight against poverty and hunger. Previously, he has served as an advisor to companies involved in medical technology, clinical research and healthcare payment systems. Reggie has a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of New Orleans as well a master's degree in business administration from Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business.

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Tennessee FDA Elects Brad Ridgeway, President, Succeeding Steve Spann - Tennessee Sales Club Elects Tripp Byrd Succeeding Jeff Murphy

The TFDA/TFSSC 114th Annual Convention was recently held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Murfreesboro, TN, June 4 – 6, 2017. There were 50 exhibitors represented along with 100 TFDA member firms that supported the convention.



During the convention TFDA elected and announced their 2017-18 Officers and Directors which included: Brad Ridgeway, President; Justin Jeffers, Vice President; Randy Nash, Secretary/Treasurer; Immediate Past President, Steve Spann; Marc Sims, West Director; Jeff Shackelford, West Director; Dale Layne, Middle Director; Mandi Marlin, West Director; Brent McNeeley, East Director and Laura Farrar Cantrell, East Director



In Coming TFDA president, Brad Ridgeway (2nd from left) during President's Reception with Out Going President, Steve Spann (far right), with Mike Smalley, Danny Hurt.



President Steve Spann presents "175th Anniversary" Plaque to Bob Bell, Austin & Bell Funeral Home, Springfield, TN for "175 Years of Service and History"



TFDA Executive Director, Bob Batson presenting to Richard Morrison "In Recognition of 50 YEARS in Funeral Service"



A Special Retirement Reception was given in honor of David Bentley as David Akard presents a plaque "In Recognition and Appreciation for Over 50 YEARS of Dedicated and Distinguished Service - Matthews-Aurora Funeral Solutions"



Tennessee Funeral Supply Sales Club 2017-2018 In Coming President, Tripp Byrd presenting to Out Going President, Jeff Murphy, for "Appreciation and Outstanding Leadership TFSSC 2016-2017"



Southern Funeral Director Magazine's, John Yopp, presents to 2016-17 TFDA President, Steve Spann, front cover of SFD as "Funeral Director of the Year" Congratulations to Steve Spann and his family for a year of service to TFDA...well done!



TFSSC 2017-2018 Officers: (L-R) Danny Hurt, Mike Smalley, Jackie Purcell, Jeff Murphy, Tripp Byrd, Dan Garner and Phillip Anglin



During the TFDA Reception (L-R) Judy and Bob Arrington, Charlotte Williams and Wendall Cates



Taking a break during the exhibits with Tommy Jones and son, Tom, Jr.



15 "Distinguished" Past Presidents for TFSSC



Retiree Honoree, David Bentley, with Matthews-Aurora sales staff



During the Opening Exhibits with (L-R) Tim Bond, Jeff Murphy and Randy Nash

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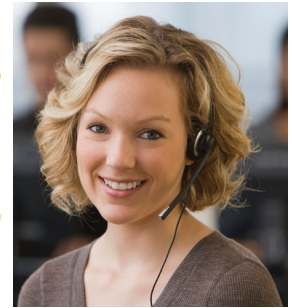
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The Media and Questions

Dealing with the Media

By: Todd Van Beck, Director of Continuing Education, John A. Gupton College, Nashville, TN

If you were seventeen in 1970 you would be fifty seven in 2010. If your mother was 25 when you were born she would be 82 in 2010. We all know that the older you get the closer to your own death you are, I know that to be absolutely true, regardless of what Dr. Oz, and Dr. Phil tell us on the television.

It is remotely possible, that in 2010 an 82 year old dies in your own town, and her 57 year old daughter might just have been one of the giggling girls who was a part of the tour we gave in 1970 in Western Nebraska, but by now in 2010 they all live in your own town. Today a 57 year old woman who took a worthless funeral home tour walks through your front door still possible after 40 years with absolutely no funeral service information, none at all, except maybe a faint memory of some grumpy looking dead undertaker photo's in a back room in Western Nebraska.

In this mobile society, might this just happen, it can happen, and it does happen, and lucky you, you get a chance to try and undo in 2010 what we did unwittingly in 1970, or more accurately what we did not do forty years ago when we had the golden opportunity to teach and create a knowledge base of funeral service literacy to yes a group of giggling girls, what a muffed job that tour was.

Those young ladies left the funeral home in 1970 knowing nothing about funerals. What a waste of time and energy.

Questions are good, answers from funeral directors are even better. Funeral directors should be the people answering questions about funerals – nobody else. Sounds strong, sounds highly opinionated, but do we really want the Jessica Mitford's of the world to be answering questions about our profession?

Now for something completely different as Monty Python would say.

Years later I was associated in a management role with John B. Turner & Son and I gave a tour. I had learned a great deal about answering questions and this night on this tour my answering funeral questions changed my life and career forever.

I gave a tour for a splendid organization called the "Webelos."

For sometime John Turner had been paying groups, any group that wanted to tour the funeral home a \$1.00 donation per member who came and attended the tour (all the other funeral directors thought he was nuts). For instance if fifty members of any group took a tour they walked away with a \$50.00 check and we reported it as a charitable contribution. It was a classic win/win. It also meant that once the word was out concerning our unique plan that we were paying members of any group to take a tour of our beautiful funeral home we ended up giving tours constantly. Interestingly we noticed that as we gave more tours and generated ourselves the opportunities to answer more questions during these tours and as a result built more community relationships and friendships our case volume went up. Paying groups a measly \$1.00 per member to take a tour resulted in our not waiting for the phone to ring, this program made the phone ring.

Everybody in town who were members of charitable organization and/or civic, church groups seemed mighty pleased that they no longer had to depend upon selling brooms, light bulbs, or work on dirty inky paper drives to make cash for their group, all they had to do was to sign up with Turner's for a tour. They not only walked away with a cash donation the amount of which was totally dependent upon the group

themselves, they also got a free glass of Tang with ice, and as many Otis Spunkmeyer muffins as they could eat. We always did things in style.

The benefit to the funeral home was manifest, we got to sell our story, we got to tell the history of the firm, we got to tell the value of the funeral, we got to tell the value and benefits of preneed, and we got to answer question after question. After one tour one of the pre need counselors came up to me and said, "Todd you know it is much easier and effective to talk and educate about pre arranging a funeral to 50 people sitting in the chapel of the funeral home whose hands I can actually shake, than it is to make 50 cold calls over the telephone." Enough said concerning the wisdom of paying groups to take tours.

Late one afternoon John Turner walked into my office and announced that he had lined up a tour and had forgotten to tell anybody about it. The tour was to begin in just 2 hours, and I was elected to be the tour guide. I was not a happy person.

Ever heard of a Webelo? That was the group that John had made the tour arrangements with, the Webelos. I had no earthly idea what or who a Webelo was, but I soon learned about this terribly interesting group of human beings.

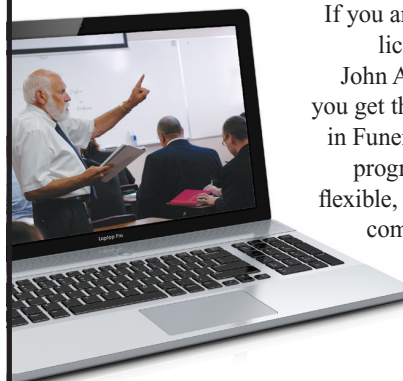
John mumbled something about Webelos being a branch of the Girl Scouts of America, boy was he wrong. Webelos are in fact little boys around 10 years and are moving up in the Scouting world and hierarchy from being Cub Scouts to being Boy Scouts. It appeared to me to be a period of time which was in reality for these boys an authentic rite of passage, and I learned that the world of Scouting takes this rite of passage very seriously, and I learned firsthand that they should. I learned that night to take the Webelos very seriously.

Seventy two Webelos, allow me to rephrase this, SEVENTY-TWO 10 YEAR OLD BOYS arrived at 7:30 p.m. for their tour. I remember the number seventy two because I wrote a check out for \$72.00 and handed it to the Webelo leader. He told me the group would be touring the funeral home for about ONLY 30 minutes, of course he was off by three hours, yes 72 ten year old boys were at the funeral home for three and a half hours.

The tour from a professional standpoint was an utter disaster; in fact there really wasn't a tour, just a out of control band of little human beings running aimlessly around the funeral home frantically draining our water cooler tossing Dixie cups hither and thither and asking a bunch of questions, more accurately a megabillion bunch of questions, they would not stop or shut up. I was frazzled, disgusted, and mighty grumpy and cranky when I got home, I swore "No more Webelos, ever, never."

The next morning good hearted John Turner added salt to my stinging wounds which had been inflicted by the Webelos by asking me very innocently "How did you do with the Girl Scouts thing last night?" I could have shot him, I decided not to even attempt explaining to John the concept of the "Webelos" because John, just to shut me up, would have told me once again that I was doing a great job and then he would walk off to read his Wall Street Journal totally putting out of mind what I had just told him. I knew that the juice created by telling the Webelos story to John was certainly not worth the squeeze, so I just let it be. Until the day he died I always though John B. Turner thought the Webelos were a branch of the Girl Scouts of America.

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However in the meantime the Webelos were not finished with me, yet.

Later that afternoon the County Coroner called and instructed us to respond to a residential death call. A man 39 years old had collapsed and died at his dinner table. Off we went and naturally the widow was beside herself, we called her priest, the coroner released the body, we transported the body to the County Morgue, and I set an appointment up with the widow for 10:00 a.m. the next morning.

On the hour the widow, her parents, and now a small little boy possessing the great name of Mr. Roland Henry arrived at the mortuary to make arrangements.

We all walked into the office, I began talking, and right in mid-sentence little Roland came over looked me straight in the eye and said “Do you remember who I am mister?” I had no clue who or what he was talking about. At this point the widow spoke up and through her tears was able to tell me that her little Roland was a member in good standing with the Webelos of the United States of America and he had been on the tour the night before. My heart hit the floor. It was his father, who had died.

Out of nowhere the widow cried out “I don’t know what I should do” “I don’t know what to do.” I got up out of my chair and tried to think of something to say to her, but her Roland beat me, and ran over to his mother and putting his hands on her cheeks said “Don’t worry mommy, I know what to do, I’ve been through this whole building, and I know what to do, I learned everything on the tour.”

Needless to say it was a show stopper, and needless to say the little Webelo named Roland Henry did indeed know what needed to be done, for he had asked many questions on the tour, and somewhere in the chaos and turmoil of the totally disorganized tour his questions got answered. What a simple yet powerful human capacity, the capacity to answer questions. WOW!

After the arrangements had been completed and the family was gone I saw John Turner and told him about what had just happened. John had been a funeral director for over 60 years by this time, doing about 800 funerals on average every year of those 60 – in other words he had been through it all. However this day he sat in his chair silently pondering after I told

him the specialness, the kindness, the maturity of that little Webelos, Mr. Roland Henry. Out of the blue John asked me “How much did we give the Girl Scouts?” I responded “Seventy-two dollars John.” John became quiet again, and then stood up and looked out the window, with tears in his eyes and sighed and said “That was probably the best \$72.00 this firm has ever spent.” The old man still had the heart of a funeral director.

I never looked at giving a tour the same way again. It was a living example that when funeral directors answer questions good things happen to people. Goodness, rightness, good things happen when you and I answer questions, even a little Roland Henry proud member of the Webelos of American understood this and I always felt that a power greater than ourselves directed that little chap Mr. Roland Henry the up and coming Boy Scout over to the John B. Turner & Son Mortuary that night, because he used the answers to his questions within 42 hours.

I hope by now I have made a good solid case concerning the importance of funeral directors answering questions and questions way beyond the funeral arrangement conference time. I also hope I have shown the absolute dangers when funeral directors refuse to answer questions.

Nowhere on the face of the earth are there more important, complicated,, crazy, silly, touching and difficult questions created than by the media. The media thrives on questions, and thousands of questions are just tossed almost randomly into the world by the minute. Some media people actually love the ambushing questions in the hopes of making people look ridiculous. Worse yet is when the media announces to the world that they tried to question this or that person, but they were unavailable for comment or the worse, no comment – not good.

I once had a professional communications person tell me that answering media questions was easy, just a snap– here was her formula: just tell the truth always and under all conditions and everything will come out just fine. I knew bloody well that her breezy suggestion was not totally accurate because I had seen Mike Wallace time and again beat the living stuffing out of people who were actually telling the truth. Yes

in academic absolute ethics in the church or on the university campus in the philosophy 101 course telling the truth is absolutely right it is a moral requirement, but working with the media IS NOT an experience of dealing academically or religiously with absolute ethics – there is a ton of ethical wiggle room in the world of the media and this ethical wiggle room is taken advantage of constantly.

So as usual I say caution when dealing with the media. Be careful answering the media's questions, and while the questions and answers are a wonderful way to tell our story we must be careful, not paranoid, but mighty careful.

Case in point: Many years ago there was a television program called "The Phil Donahue Show." Phil Donahue was an amiable mid-western fellow and had a nice easy flair about him. His show was aired most every afternoon. He was kind of the Dr. Phil of the 1980's without the Dr. Title.

One show was devoted to the subject of funerals. The normal battery of guests was assembled, the anti-funeral people, the president of one of the funeral director associations, a clergyperson, a bereaved person and of course Phil.

The course of events was so predictable that it could depress a hyena. The anti-funeral people once again, ad naseum pulled out the Mitford chapter and verse, they ranted and raved as usual about corruption, the president of the funeral directors association looked real nice, and tried to jump in now and then, but always he was the consummate gentleman. The clergy as usual was questioning the wisdom of giv


ing money to the funeral director, putting money in the grave were his actual words instead of giving the cash to his church, and the bereaved person told another death horror story, but this time a new twist this bereaved person was upset with everybody connected with her death experience. In her opinion the hospital staff were a bunch of incompetents, the nurses were stupid, the doctors were quacks, the undertaker was creepy and gouged her financially, the cemetery people did not leave the flowers on the grave long enough, the florists sent dead flowers, the newspaper screwed the obituary up, and finally the clergy at this funeral did not, according to her, believe in God. It was truly

the usually media funeral circus program and good old Phil was running around breathless pushing the microphone in everyone's face.

I was not interested in the others, but I was mighty interested in the performance of the president of one of the funeral director associations. I knew this man personally and what an outstanding human being, and stellar professional he truly is. Funeral service is mighty lucky to have him walking within our ranks. In fact if I lived in his area of the country and someone died in my family – I would call him.


Here is how telling the absolute truth can back fired when working with the media. Eventually the issue of funeral profits came up and off the rest of the group went, too much this, too much that, too much money, etc. Finally the president of the funeral directors association said very gently, the average profits on the average American funeral were X \$. in 19__" The profit he quoted was the truth. Then he added this thought to finally make his point "I would like to see any of you buy a fine pair of shoes with that amount of money."

He was telling the truth, but he did not have the time



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or opportunity to fully explain the nuances and twists and turns of funeral economics or of any economic structure for that matter. He told the absolute truth both about the profit equation, and also about the average price of a fine pair of shoes. The man told the absolute truth.

It was a media disaster, and when I saw and heard what was going on my heart hit the floor for this man because the rest of the guests and now the audience started hooting and booing, and shaking their heads in disgust, and Phil had a media field day. Again the president of the funeral directors association told the absolute truth, and he got fried.

The truth will out certainly, I guess, hopefully most of the time, but concerning the media there are other considerations to be taken seriously into account, such as the lack of time to actually explain and elaborate on the bluntness of telling the absolute truth, and the lack of retreating to try to regroup once again.

The truth in relationship to the media requires reflection, discernment, diplomacy, choice, selection

and being above all political. I well remember a friend of mine who gallantly proclaimed to the world that “I don’t play politics.” She was in conflicts with people constantly.

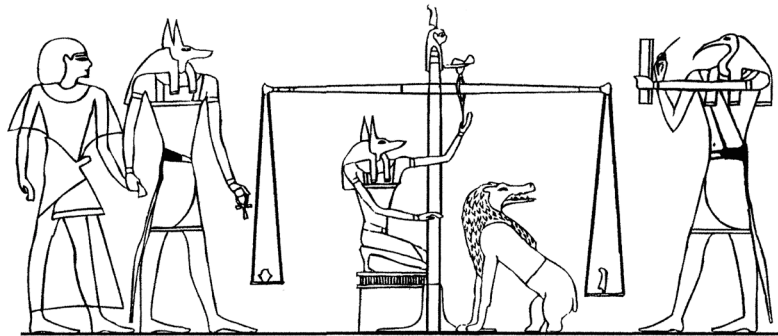
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Let’s dive into the questions in next month’s issue.

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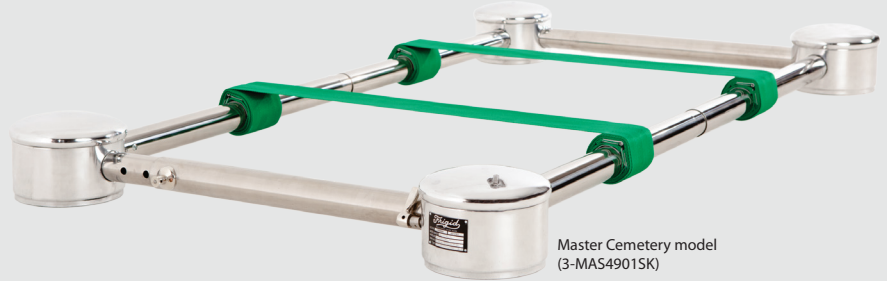
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