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MAGAZINE

June/July 2018
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CANA Convention in Ft. Lauderdale & Cremation Trends are Just Beginning to Heat Up

100th Annual CANA Convention Preview
and Agenda

How Elberton Granite is Battling Cremation
by Adina Solomon

Cremation + Paperwork = State Law
by Larry Stuart

First Crematory in U.S., 1876, in LeMoyne, PA,
is Featured This Fall at National Museum
Funeral History

Keys to Service = The Vital and Active Role
of the Funeral Professional by Todd Van Beck
National Alliance for Grieving Children Company
Profile

C&J Financial Acquires Beta Capital

In Memory of Tom Flynn - A True
Canine Companion



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FEATURES

- 4 Cremation Rates Continue to Grow Confirming that Cremation is the New Tradition
- 6 100th Annual CANA Convention Preview and Agenda
- 12 How Elberton Granite is Battling Cremation by Adina Solomon
- 16 Cremation + Paperwork = State Law by Larry Stuart
- 22 History of Cremation Exhibit Opening Fall 2018
- 28 Keys to Service = The Vital and Active Role of the Funeral Professional by Todd Van Beck
- 32 National Alliance for Grieving Children Company Profile
- 34 Suicide rates rising across the U.S.

INDUSTRY NEWS

- 27 C&J FINANCIAL acquires BETA CAPITAL of Portsmouth, VA.
- 26 In Memory of Tom Flynn - A True Canine Companion

June/July 2018

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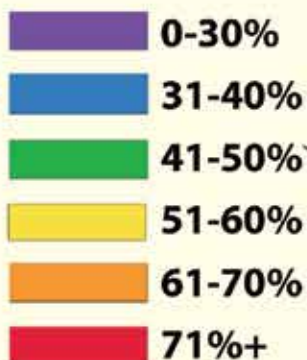


CREMATION RATES CONTINUE TO GROW CONFIRMING THAT CREMATION IS THE NEW TRADITION.

2013



2017



2017



51.6%

THE U.S. CREMATION
GROWTH RATE IS
REACHING
ITS PEAK AND WILL
BEGIN TO SLOW
WITHIN A
DECADE—BUT
CREMATION RATES
WILL CONTINUE
TO RISE ACROSS THE
COUNTRY.

2022



57.8%

SOURCE: CANA
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Cremation Innovation Convention
Fort Lauderdale, FL • July 25-27, 2018

CANA COCP™: July 25, 2018 *(see inside!)*



#CANA18

CONVENTION PREVIEW
WWW.GOCANA.ORG



CONVENTION REGISTRATION HOURS

Wednesday 12:00pm-7:00pm

Thursday 7:00am-6:30pm

Friday 7:00am-12:00pm

TUESDAY, JULY 24

8:00am-5:00pm • CANA Board Meeting

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

8:00am-4:00pm	CANA COCP™ (pre-convention seminar)
2:00pm-4:30pm	Exhibitor Set-Up/Registration Open
4:00pm-5:00pm	Family Reception
5:00pm-7:00pm	Opening Cocktail Reception

THURSDAY, JULY 26

7:00am-6:30pm	Convention Registration and Exhibit Hall Open
7:00am-7:45am	Convention Breakfast/Exhibits
7:45am-8:00am	Convention Welcome—Opening Ceremonies
8:00am-9:00am	Session 1 • Jason Engler • <i>CANA Centennial Celebration</i>
9:00am-10:00am	Session 2 • Joe Weigel • <i>Marketing 101 Boot Camp</i>
9:00am-11:00am	Family Bingo (breakfast with convention attendees)
10:00am-10:30am	Coffee Break/Exhibits
10:30am-12:00pm	Session 3 • <i>Current Trends in Cremation Regulation</i>
12:00pm-1:30pm	Lunch/Exhibits
12:30pm-1:00pm	Membership Meeting/In Memoriam
1:00pm-1:30pm	2018/2019 Board Meeting
1:30pm-3:00pm	Session 4 • <i>Cremation Fundamentals Panel</i>
3:00pm-3:30pm	Coffee Break/Exhibits
3:30pm-4:30pm	Session 5 • <i>Local Innovation: Selling Across Multiple Brands</i>
4:30pm-6:30pm	Cocktail Reception

FRIDAY, JULY 27

7:30am-12:00pm	Convention Registration/Exhibit Hall Open
7:00am-7:30am	Supplier Meeting
7:30am-8:30am	Convention Breakfast/Exhibits
8:30am-9:30am	Session 6 • Bob Boetticher, Jr. • <i>Cremation GPS</i>
9:30am-10:00am	Coffee Break / Exhibits
10:00am-11:00am	Session 7 • John Bolton • <i>Beyond the Niche</i>
11:00am-12:00pm	Session 8 • Lori Salberg • <i>Customer Experience 101</i>
12:00pm-5:00pm	Exhibitor Teardown
3:00pm-7:00pm	100th Celebration Party

Come early for the CANA COCP™

Wednesday, July 25 •
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

The Cremation Association of North America's Crematory Operations Certification Program™ (COCP™) features content designed by industry experts to strengthen your success.

The program is approved for up to 8 CE hours by the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice and numerous states and provinces. This program meets the requirements of most states requiring crematory operator certification.



In addition to continuing education (CE) hours from the CANA COCP, up to 9 hours of CE will be available for participating in the Cremation Innovation Convention. Due to varying state continuing education regulations, not all sessions will be approved for CE credits. Contact your state regarding CE approval for the Convention.

Session 1 • All Things Cremation: Past, Present, and Future

Jason Engler, CANA Historian



Join Jason as he shares the many ways our Association is at the forefront of all things cremation. Experience the transformation of CANA over the past 100 years, from a fledgling organization with 11 charter

members to deathcare's largest cremation-focused organization. Discover your own connections to the past and future as you see how CANA membership has been indispensable in the advancement of best practices in operations and memorialization since cremation's modern revival in the U.S.

Session 2 • Marketing Boot Camp 101: You Must Start with the Basics

Joe Weigel, Weigel Strategic Marketing



Acquire the core skills you need as a marketer—whether you are a novice or in need of a quick refresher. You'll learn how to properly use marketing to improve your firm's overall competitiveness and increase

revenues, receive a solid grounding in the tools, techniques and approaches used in a plan, and be provided with a template to generate your own marketing plan.

Session 3 • Current Trends in Cremation Regulation

Jennifer Kandt, Nevada;

Charles Perine, Alabama;

Sandy Mahon, Saskatchewan



CANA recently updated its Model Cremation Law, although for the first time ever, the law was updated in response to trends in state and provincial laws and regula-

tion. Several states and provinces are leading in interesting areas including licensure of crematory operators, alkaline hydrolysis, body donation and more. This panel will explore trends in cremation regulation that may be coming to your neighborhood soon.

Session 4 • Cremation Fundamentals

Anne O'Reilly, ASD; TBD, IAOPCC;

Jennifer Head, CANA



The cremation fundamentals panel focuses on bringing you three short presentations on topics related to foundational business

practices. This year we'll talk about customer service training, owning pet crematories, and using competencies for employee development and recruitment.

Session 5 • Local Innovation: Selling Across Multiple Brands in a High Cremation Market



John McQueen, Foundation Partners Group; Richard Baldwin, Baldwin Brothers Memorial Care Services, Inc.

There are both risks and rewards associated with brand

segmentation, especially in avoiding self-cannibalization. John and Richard both do this successfully in the high cremation state of Florida. They'll share their journeys with you, and explore brand differentiation and brand marketing, as well as what John refers to as the "Kia Effect."

Session 6 • Cremation GPS

Bob Boetticher, Jr, SCI



Learn how to put the power of CANA statistics and your own business to work for you. Use Cremation GPS to navigate towards success with an increasing cremation rate and consumer trends.

G = Gather Information; P = Process; S = Strategy (Execute).

Session 7 • Beyond the Niche: Creating an Effective Cremation Development Strategy

John Bolton, Blackstone Cemetery Development



We are all aware of the impact cremation is having on our business. We all know how the market is changing; the question is "Are we changing at the

same pace as our clients?" John will lead us past the "If we build it, they will come" philosophy and break down the ins and outs of developing a true cremation strategy for our cemeteries, including inventory and product mix, marketing strategies and how cremation fits into your overall approach to effectively meeting the needs of today's non-traditional cremation consumer.

Session 8 • Customer Experience 101: How to Develop a Customer Experience (CX) Strategy

Lori Salberg, Johnson Consulting Group



Cremation consumers reject ritual and tradition and expect a unique and personalized experience. The industry has seen an influx of products and

services that aim to create that experience. But *Customer Experience* is defined as how customers perceive their interactions with your company. Leading companies understand that how an organization delivers for customers is as important as what it delivers. That's why Customer Experience is the next frontier for companies hoping to maintain a competitive edge. So how do you develop a Customer Experience strategy?

GoCANA.org/register



HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

To make your sleeping room reservations at the Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa, either book online at **CANARooms.com** or call 800-222-6543 in order to receive the CANA rate. Please make housing arrangements by July 3, 2018—before the CANA room block is sold out!

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To guarantee your sleeping room reservation, the hotel requires a first night's room deposit on a major credit card. The \$30/day resort fee is optional, but should you choose to add it on, it includes 2 cocktails per stay, 2 bottles of water per day, 2 chairs and 1 beach umbrella per day, high-speed internet, and much more.

CONVENTION PRICING GoCANA.org/register	MEMBER		NONMEMBER	
	Early (through 7/3)	Late (after 7/3)	Early (through 7/3)	Late (after 7/3)
Convention Registration	\$645	\$745	\$845	\$945
Convention + COCP	\$1000	\$1100	\$1200	\$1300
Add'l Employee Registration	\$445	\$545	\$645	\$745
One Day Pass (Thursday 7/26 only)	\$350	\$450	\$400	\$500
Wednesday evening reception only	\$100			
100th Convention Celebration Party	\$75 (children are free)			
Spouse/Travel Companion	\$350 (children under 18 are free)			
Students	\$350			

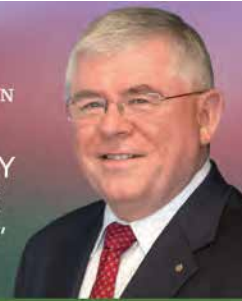
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The Spouse/Travel Companion Registration includes full access to the convention programming (excluding continuing education credit), meals at the convention (breakfast, lunch), and two cocktail receptions.



FAMILY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

4:00-5:00pm Spouse/Family Reception
5:00-7:00pm Cocktail Reception

THURSDAY, JULY 26

7:00-7:45 am Breakfast with convention attendees
9:00-11:00am Bingo
12:00pm-1:30pm Lunch with convention attendees
4:30pm-6:30pm Cocktail Reception

FRIDAY, JULY 27

7:30-8:30am Breakfast with convention attendees
3:00-7:00pm CANA 100th Celebration Party

100th Celebration Party*

Friday, July 27 • 3:00 - 7:00 PM

Bring the family and join CANA beach-side as we celebrate the close of our 100th Convention. We'll eat, drink, and be merry, enjoying the beautiful sunset with friends old and new. A great time to kick back and relax as you finish pool time and get ready for a night out. We can't wait to see you there! (*Purchase of additional ticket required)

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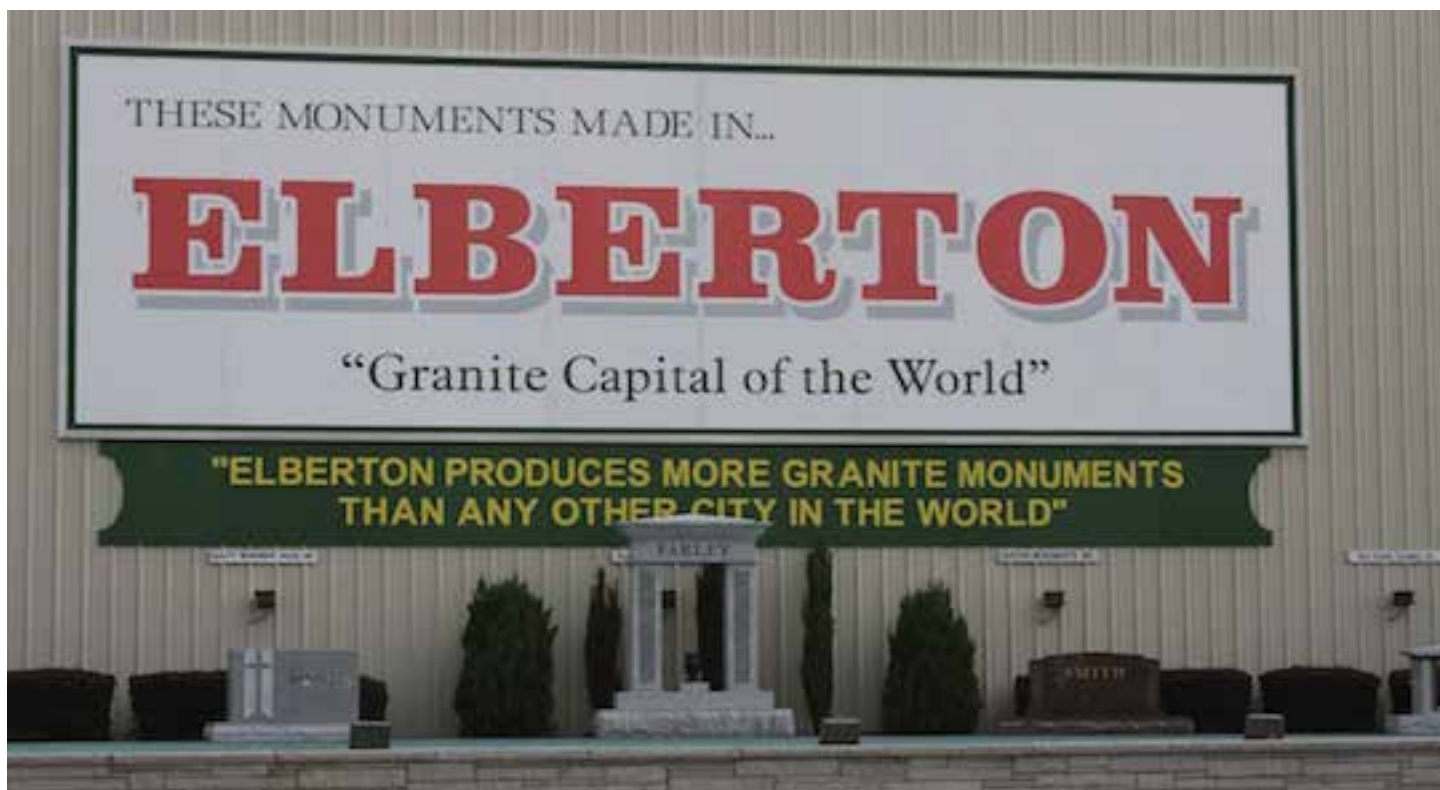
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A Dying Industry? Memorial Makers Want to Avoid That

The granite industry in one Georgia town has long carved markers for cemetery burials. But as cremation rates reach an all-time high, how will this sector cope?

by Adina Solomon

A good many places in the U.S. have a piece of Elberton, Georgia – at least if those places have a cemetery. Elberton, a town about 100 miles east of Atlanta, produces two-thirds of all granite headstones in the U.S., according to Elberton Granite Association estimates. Granite is among the most popular materials for memorials.

A large fracking operation becomes a new part of the horizon with Mount Meeker and Longs Peak looming in the background on December 28, 2017 in Loveland, Colorado. As fracking and oil and gas exploration continues to explode along the front range operations such as these are seen more and more along the front range.

Burial has long been the preference after death in the U.S., but a change threatens Elberton's business. The first cremation in the U.S. took place in 1876, and by 2006 the cremation rate was 33.8 percent. In 2016, the cremation rate reached an all-time high of 50.1 percent, according to the Cremation Association

of North America. By 2020, the U.S. cremation rate is projected to jump by about another 6 percent. And while memorials are sometimes created after cremation, granite markers are used far less often.

“When more people become cremated, it obviously cuts down on the need for the upright monuments that we sell,” says Chris Kubas, executive vice president of the Elberton Granite Association.

Granite is the mainstay of Elberton's economy. The town started quarrying the stone in the 1870s, and it has buildings, signs and even a 15,000-seat high school football stadium made of granite. Kubas, sitting in the Elberton Granite Association's building (which is, of course, made of granite), says about 2,000 people work in the industry, more than 10 percent of the population of Elbert County. The industry sells to cemeteries and funeral homes, not individual consumers. Walker Granite Company, headed by Rose and Marty Walker, is one of about 120 granite-related businesses in Elberton. An adjacent granite manufacturing facility

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looms over the company's office trailer, and trucks lug granite pieces the size of rooms. "Obviously, it's changing because there's a world of cremations, and it's taken away from our business some," Marty Walker says. Experts agree that more consumers are choosing cremation at least in part because of its low cost compared to traditional burial. In 2017, the national median cost of a funeral with viewing and cremation was \$6,260, while the median cost for a funeral with burial was \$7,360, according to the National Funeral Directors Association.

While the granite memorial industry also faces challenges that are familiar to other industries – fewer companies and more imports from overseas, especially China and India – Greg Gunter, president of Matthews Granite in Elberton, says a cultural shift has taken place over the last decade or two, making cremation more socially acceptable.

"Families are not maybe as centrally located as they once were. It used to be the family was a nucleus and they all lived in the same area, and now you've got kids and grandkids are spread out all over the country," Gunter says. "If you look in Elberton here, 10 years ago even, it seemed like almost no one was doing cremation, and now if you look, both the local funeral homes have changed their names and put 'cremation' in (their) name." Cremation allows a loved one's remains to travel anywhere, leading to a decreased need for a permanent granite marker.

Don Calhoun, president of the Funeral and Memorial Information Council and past president of the Monument Builders of North America, estimates that by 2025, the memorialization industry's revenue will atrophy by 17 percent. Calhoun works as president of Murphy Granite Carving in Minnesota; that state, Vermont and the Elberton area are the U.S.'s three major granite-producing regions.

The number of baby boomers have offset any lessened demand for memorials due to cremation, Calhoun says. "The burial market is still fine," says R. Michael Eddy-Herrera, president of Matthews Cemetery Products, of which Matthews Granite in Elberton is a division. "It's not going to grow. It's never going away. It just appears that it's shrinking when in reality due to the death rate, it's still maintaining itself."

Though the granite memorial industry has relied on

burials, it is working to capture the cremation market. Rose Walker of Walker Granite Company says that starts with encouraging the memorialization of cremains.

"You may want to set mom on a shelf, but I know my children don't necessarily care about keeping grandma on the shelf or great-grandma on the shelf, so we still encourage them to memorialize the life," she says. Unlike death certificates or online documentation, a permanent marker is a physical memorial that anyone can easily access to find out when your loved one lived. Kubas says cremation provides new market opportunities for Elberton, which has made upright monuments since 1900.

"When more people become cremated, it obviously cuts down on the need for the upright monuments that we sell," he says. "It's not always a negative thing. It's an opportunity for us to be proactive and look forward and try to develop new products and services for those people that want to be cremated. It's an opportunity to take advantage of a market that's there that's not existed in the past as heavily."

Matthews Granite has a team that creates cremation gardens, some with water features. The company also sells granite benches, pedestals and bird baths that can hold cremains. Kubas says memorial walls with a series of niches are a popular option in memorial gardens and small churches. Urns go into the niches, which are then covered with a granite slab. Cremations can also use columbaria, a community mausoleum usually located in cemeteries. Marty Walker says works like these boost the industry but bring in less revenue than traditional, individual upright monuments.

"You're going to get 20, 25 spaces for a lot less money than you would with 25 normal monuments," he points out. As it mulls cremation options, the granite memorial industry needs to think outside the cemetery. Calhoun says only 20 percent to 25 percent of cremains end up there.

"There's many forms of memorialization happening. We're not just saying goodbye to whoever lived on this Earth," he says. "It's just that it's morphing. So the granite industry's key is going to be how well they are adapting to that." < < <

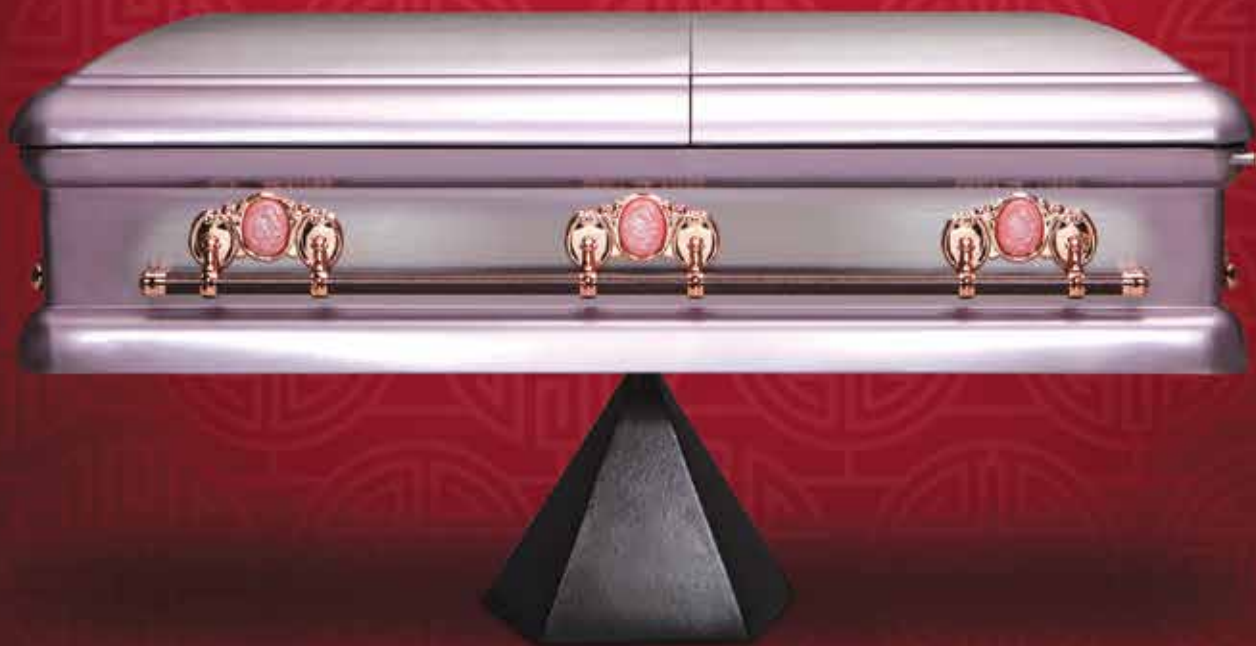
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Nobody likes paperwork. It's a pain in the rear and a nuisance. Filling out forms and checking off boxes is a waste of valuable time for the crematory operator.

AM I RIGHT? (That statement is as WRONG as saying the earth is flat.)

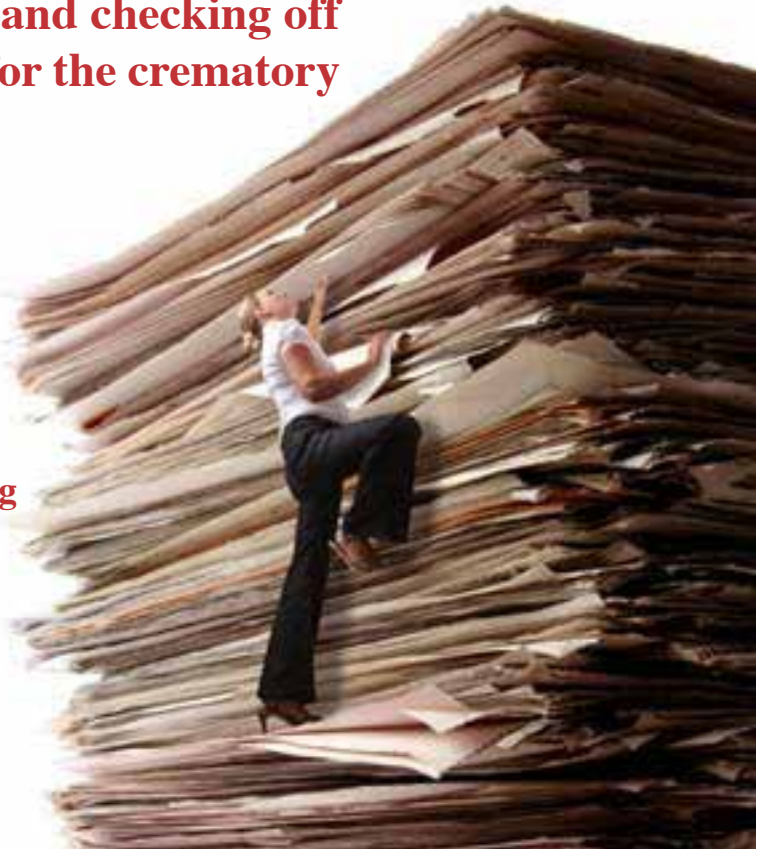
The Importance of Paperwork and Record Keeping

by Larry Stuart, Crematory Manufacturing

Documentation and record-keeping policies—and following them consistently—are just as important as any other task performed in the crematory. This includes the safe and efficient operation of the cremation equipment. If you understand the reasoning behind all of this paperwork and documentation, you can better appreciate its importance. Even more important is understanding the impact of not following your company record-keeping and documentations policy consistently.

State laws dictate what paperwork is required for the cremation of the deceased and it is important that you comply with these regulations. Because cremation is irreversible, it is crucial that you can provide proper and probative documentation to confirm what happened during each and every step of the process. Proper and consistent paperwork reduces the risk of litigation in the event you are accused of doing something wrong. When you make a mistake, it's easy to deal with it. Admit your error, make good on it, take your medicine, and move on with your life. The hard part is when you are accused of doing something wrong that you did not do. Without proper documentation it can be difficult to prove your innocence.

There are numerous civil cases involving an alleged wrongful cremation (where the operator did NOT cremate the wrong person). Because there is no DNA in cremated remains there is no way to prove who the cremated remains are. These cases typically settle out of court for hundreds of thousands of dollars because the facility didn't keep good records and there was no way to prove that the operator did the right thing.



Consistency in product descriptions across the entire process is important as well. Consider this example. A funeral home provides a cremation service to a family. The alternative container selected is called “The Golden Sand” model by the funeral home (it’s really a standard particle board container but “Golden Sand” sounds better). The crematory listed it on the cremation log under “type of container” as “PB” for particle board container. The plaintiff’s attorney used this discrepancy between what the container was named when it was purchased vs. what was on the log to further his allegation that the wrong person was cremated.

Your firm should maintain a comprehensive written procedure outlining the steps in the process from receipt of the deceased to return of the cremated remains, and it should include the associated forms, verification, and documentation required. In the crematory, there are forms for the operator to fill out and forms that are already complete. The operator is responsible for verifying the presence, accuracy, and validity of these already completed forms prior to each next step in the process. Forms required in the cremation process at the crematory include (but are not limited to):

A RECEIPT OF REMAINS form to be filled out by the individual crematory personnel taking custody of the deceased for cremation and signed for by both the receiving and delivering party. The receipt will include the name of the deceased, the name of the funeral home associated with the deceased, the current date and time, corresponding identification control number, the type of casket or alternative container, and a space to indicate confirmation that the name and information of the deceased documented on the label on the casket or container was physically verified by the recipient against the name on the Authorization to Cremate. A copy should be retained by both the recipient and the person making the delivery.

A comprehensive and completed AUTHORIZATION TO CREMATE that includes

- Verification of the identity of the deceased
- The name of the funeral director in charge
- Indication as to whether the death occurred from an infectious, contagious, communicable disease according to the Department of Health
- The name of the Authorized agent(s) and their

relationship to the deceased

- A Statement of Authenticity indicating that the Authorized Agent(s) does/do in fact have the right to authorize the cremation of the deceased
- A statement explaining the process of cremation and the processing of cremated remains
- Documentation of the urn or other container selected
- Language for the authorization for the crematory to cremate the deceased
- Representation that the deceased does not contain a pacemaker or any other material or implant that may be hazardous or cause damage to the cremation equipment or persons involved with performing the cremation
- The name of the person authorized to receive the cremated remains if different than the Authorized Agent(s) with a verified Authorization to Deliver or Forward Cremated Remains executed by the Authorized Agent
- Indication of the manner in which final disposition of the cremated remains is to take place, if known
- Indication that only organic materials will be returned after the cremation takes place

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- Direction to divide and distribute cremated remains
- Disclosure that in certain circumstances, elements that may be found in the cremated remains other than bone fragments, such as body prostheses, dentures, dental fillings, etc. will be removed and recycled or disposed of in accordance with the applicable laws
- The signature of the Authorized Agent(s) attesting to the accuracy of all representations contained on the form
- Language indemnifying and holding the funeral home, crematory, agents, and affiliates harmless and a release of liability
- Signature of the Funeral Director in Charge or other authorized representative of the funeral home that obtained the Authorization to Cremate

A central and master CREMATION LOG to be filled out by the crematory personnel documenting

- The deceased's name
- Date of receipt of remains
- Date and time of death
- The original funeral home or facility
- The corresponding unique identification control number (e.g., ID Disc number)
- The type of container
- Date and time of the start of the cremation
- The date and time of the completion of the cremation
- The date and time of the processing of the cremated remains
- The date and time of the packaging of the cremated remains
- The date and time of the release of the cremated remains
- The method of final disposition of the cremated remains

A CHAIN OF CUSTODY form to be filled out in real time by the crematory personnel as each step is performed. The identity of the deceased must be physically verified and documented at each step as well.

A REFRIGERATION LOG for tracking the deceased when placed in or removed from the cold storage area (if applicable). A record of all cremated remains disposed of by the crematory in accordance with state or provincial law

A CREMATED REMAINS RELEASE form to be filled out by the crematory personnel releasing custody of the cremated remains to either the Authorized Agent, funeral director in charge, or other person legally authorized to receive the cremated remains. (It is a good idea to confirm the identity of the person, if not known, to assure the legally responsible person is receiving the cremated remains and not someone else.)

Be Consistent

Policies, procedures, forms and all of the paperwork in the world are worthless without compliance and consistency. Doing it the same way every time helps assure that mistakes are not made. If you never do it differently, you will do it right every time.

Knowing and being able to say you do it right every time is a powerful statement to make when you are being grilled by a plaintiff's attorney in a deposition.

Never Leave It Blank

Be thorough and complete with every entry every time. If you leave a field blank it will raise a red flag. Was that field forgotten? Or was it really not applicable? If there is a space to record information and you either do not have that information or it doesn't apply to this individual, mark that fact down in the space. An incomplete form is worse than not having a form in the first place, when it comes to covering your backside.

Be Legible

Write legibly when filling out forms. A document that you cannot read is worthless.

Strikeouts not Whiteouts

Never use correction fluid if you make a mistake filling in a field. It's better to cross out the mistake with a single line and put the correct information in next to the error. Initial and date the correction. Correction fluid can make someone think you changed the document entry after the fact, to cover your mistake. Keeping a mistake transparent is always better when defending your actions.

File Carefully

Document retention and filing methods are important as well. If you can't find something, even if it was filled out perfectly, it doesn't exist. No one likes to file paperwork, but an organized file system could save your job someday.

Management should perform regular audits of the crematory's record keeping to assure that all the procedures are being consistently performed.

Because cremation has become the number one area of liability in the funeral profession, solid documentation accompanied by iron-clad policies and procedures are the best way to demonstrate the truth and quash an overzealous plaintiff's attorney or ease the mind of a concerned family member.

The most important reason to consistently follow all documentation and record-keeping policies and procedures is the fact that doing so will virtually eliminate doing the wrong thing.

A crematory operator is a vital part of the overall process of turning a dead body into a living memory for a family. It is absurd to think that any good operator would want to do anything less than a perfect job for the family of the deceased. After all, it's more about the family than anything else, right?

Throughout his experience as President of Crematory Manufacturing & Service, Inc., Larry has seen, first hand, the negative impact that poor crematory operations can bring about, both in the front and back of the house. Larry has written articles, developed cremation curricula, and spoken at numerous professional

events. He has trained and certified thousands of cremation professionals across North America, all with a mission to advance the safety and efficiency of cremation facilities and the safety of their employees, and to foster a more positive impact on our community and our environment. As the founder of Cremation Strategies & Consulting, Larry continues his mission to educate our industry peers, our customers, and the public about cremation, its history, its cultural significance as part of the funeral rite, its impact on the environment, and operational best practices.



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History of Cremation Exhibit Opening Fall 2018

by: Kelly Rehan

History of Cremation Exhibit Opening Fall 2018 Cremation in America is a largely untold story—until now.

In 1876, the LeMoyne Crematory in Pennsylvania became the first crematory in the United States. That same year, a man named Baron De Palm was the first person cremated there.

The inaugural cremation was an event. Local Board of Health members and physicians were invited. Crowds gathered outside the crematory hoping to get a glimpse of the mystical method of disposition by fire. A handful of honored guests received a small, clear apothecary jar filled with a portion of De Palm's remains.

Those jars signify the birth of cremation in America. And one of them will be on display at the History of Cremation Exhibit opening fall 2018 in Houston's National Museum of Funeral History (NMFH).

The History of Cremation Exhibit is a joint project of the NMFH and the Cremation Association of North America (CANA). The exhibit is a first-of-its kind undertaking—telling a visual story of cremation in America through historical urns, pamphlets, replicas of original equipment and other artifacts, while educating on the technology and memorialization possibilities of modern cremation.

“The Time Is So Right for This Exhibit”

Cremation in America has seen wide-swinging shifts since its inception in 1876, ranging from religious outcries labeling it a pagan practice to today's consumers making it the disposition method of choice.

But a gap exists: Consumers today prefer cremation over burial, but they know relatively little about it. That's where the History of Cremation Exhibit comes in.

“The profession is looking at cremation, at worst, as a necessary evil and, at best, a real opportunity and new way to serve families,” says Barbara Kemmis, Executive Director of CANA. “The time is so right for this exhibit. People can gain a better understanding of



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our roots and what our future can look like.” Kemmis says origin of the exhibit began when Jason Engler, a funeral director who has been involved in funeral service for most of his life, joined CANA as its official historian. Engler, who has collected historical cremation items for most of his life, says becoming CANA's historian made him wonder whether his stock of artifacts could be enjoyed on a grander scale.

“Joining CANA pushed me into a new realm of being able to spread the information,” Engler says. “Funeral service history is well studied, but not as much has been dedicated to cremation.”

In the spirit of sharing Engler's collection to a bigger audience, CANA pitched the idea of an exhibit to the NMFH.

When Genevieve Keeney, NMFH President and curator, heard the idea—it didn't take much convincing.

“Not only was the exhibition driven by the obvious increase in cremation, but I also walk the museum floor and listen to my visitors,” Keeney says. “It gives me insight on what's needed. A lot of the comments were about the lack of information on cremation.”

Keeney says the exhibit has been three years in the making, requiring the right mix of people, namely Engler and CANA leadership.

In addition to Engler's extensive historical knowledge, CANA members donated time, resources and artifacts—all to help consumers and the funeral services industry better understand cremation and the possibilities for

memorialization.

“It’s exciting to me to tell the cremation story and to help dispel the myth of how cremation has always been disposal,” Engler says. “It came from a fascinating beginning.”

A Sneak Peek Inside the History of Cremation Exhibit Though the History of Cremation Exhibit won’t open until fall 2018, here is a first look at what to expect.

While the exhibit primarily focuses on cremation in the United States, the first thing visitors see at the front of the exhibit is a kiosk where they can learn about the ancient history of cremation. Knowing the ancient history of cremation will give visitors a “full circle” view of cremation’s evolution.

From the ancient history of cremation, the exhibit will then focus on the history of cremation in the United States. And there’s no better way to begin that history than at the LeMoyne Crematory, America’s first crematory. As visitors approach the opening to the exhibit, they will stand before an exact replica of the

façade of the LeMoyne Crematory. It will be as if they have been transported from Houston to Washington, PA.

Upon entering the exhibit, visitors will enter a room modeled after LeMoyne Crematory’s cremation chamber, where the first cremation in America took place. From there, visitors will continue to walk through the history of cremation—how the cremation process and memorialization evolved over time in the United States, and CANA’s central role to America’s cremation story.

A large part of the historical exhibit comes from Engler’s personal collection of cremation artifacts. He is donating about 90 percent of his extensive collection to the History of Cremation Exhibit, including:

- 140 books, pamphlets and brochures about historic cremation facilities
- 120 urns, some dating back to the late-1890s
- 60 postcards depicting various crematories
- 20 urn catalogues printed from the 1890s to the 1990s

The advertisement features the Cherokee Child Caskets logo in the top left. The main title, "Remembering Little Angels," is prominently displayed in the center. Below the title, two child caskets are shown. The left casket is white with gold trim and features a gold "HWN" monogram with wings. The right casket is dark wood with a blue "Larkin" monogram and a small train illustration. To the right of the caskets is a pink "Princess" monogram with hearts and a green tractor logo. Below the caskets is the tagline, "Every Little Angel has a Story that Deserves to be Told." At the bottom, five small icons represent different themes: a princess, a tractor, a monkey, a ballerina, and an elephant. The website and phone number are listed at the bottom.

Cherokee Child Caskets

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"The lid of the casket for Jane Pitman, first woman cremated in the U.S., and second person cremated in the LeMoyne Crematory..1876 (Washington, PA). Jane Pitman was an early follower of cremation along with her husband, Benn Pitman, who was the creator of the shorthand phonography."



CANA Members and Donors that made the Cremation Exhibit possible at the NMFH



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- 20 original articles, documents, certificates and images about different aspects of cremation

Other stand-out items from Engler's collection are a copy of "Modern Cremation: Its History and Practice," signed by author Sir Henry Thompson, founder of the Cremation Society of Great Britain, and a copy of "The Cremation of the Dead" written by Hugo Erichsen, founder of CANA.

Engler is also contributing a unique photograph of the exterior of Rosehill Crematory in Linden, NJ. The photo shows a hearse carrying the body of Charles Lindbergh, Jr. turning up the driveway in front of crematory.

"It was a tragedy, but at the same time the photo shows a fascinating glimpse that cremation was happening even then," Engler says.

In addition to Engler's personal collection, the exhibit will showcase several prized items from America's first crematory:

- A notebook listing all who were cremated at LeMoyne Crematory, which was kept by the designer, builder and operator of the crematory
- A book written by Dr. Francis Julius LeMoyne, LeMoyne Crematory's founder
- A copy of the exclusive invitation for the cremation of Baron De Palm, the first modern cremation in the United States
- The casket plate from De Palm's casket
- An apothecary jar containing a portion of De Palm's remains

The exhibit will also showcase the casket lid of the first woman cremated in America—Jane Pitman, who died in 1878. Visitors will also see a letter written by her husband, Benjamin Pitman, requesting her cremation.

From the historical portion of the exhibit, the content will shift from past to present. Visitors will stand before a modern cremation chamber. In the opening where the body is placed within the chamber, a video screen will detail the cremation process from start to finish. In the modern cremation portion of the exhibit, visitors will learn the science behind cremation—how it is methodical and well controlled.

Be Part of the History of Cremation Exhibit: Donation Details

The History of Cremation Exhibit is a first-of-its-kind undertaking—and you can make your mark on it by providing monetary support or donating artifacts.

Several monetary donation options are available:

- **Niche wall donors** (contact Genevieve Keeney for pricing information): Commit your donor space by **June 1, 2018**, to ensure your engraved urn with your company's name is on display in the niche wall by grand opening.
- **Urn donors** (\$1,000): Commit your donation by **July 1, 2018**, to ensure your company name is listed on the contribution wall by grand opening.
- **Keepsake donors** (\$500): Commit your donation by **July 1, 2018**, to ensure your company name is listed on the contribution wall by grand opening.

Contributors will receive a Signature Keepsake Urn commemorating their donation. Niche space donors will have an urn engraved with their company's name placed in the donor niche wall for a 5-year period with the option to renew. Donors may also elect to place their own urn in the niche space upon approval. All donors will receive a personal invitation to the grand opening of the History of Cremation Exhibit in the fall 2018.

Want to make a financial contribution?

Contact Genevieve Keeney, NMFH President
gkeeney@yahoo.com
(832)-419-3705

Interested in donating an artifact?

If you have an urn, photo, pamphlet or other historical cremation item you'd like to donate to the History of Cremation Exhibit collection, contact Jason Engler, CANA Historian
cremationhistorian@hotmail.com
(479)-381-4424

“It will open up peoples’ minds to understand the process of cremation and perhaps give them more of an appreciation for cremation,” Keeney says. “The exhibition will allow people to go behind the scenes—seeing cremation containers, the process, how we recycle, how we memorialize.”

Beyond a Donation: Get in Front of Consumers and Show Your Support for the Exhibit

Visitors won’t just learn the history of cremation and the modern-day processes, they will see some of the suppliers, manufacturers and funeral professionals behind cremation. This affords the cremation industry a unique opportunity to showcase their products and services to a captive audience.

“We help visitors to see all the opportunities they can have with cremation—from urns to celebrant services,” Engler says. “We call it our Product and Services showcase, and it’s a wonderful way for us to introduce a company’s products and services.”

Engler notes that the final thing visitors see as they leave the exhibit is the donor niche wall, which was graciously provided by Carrier Mausoleums Construction Inc. The donor niche wall will feature urns engraved with businesses and individuals who’ve supported the History of Cremation Exhibit. The wall serves as a visual representation of the array of products, services and people who make cremation a trusted and dignified part of death care.

Keeney shares Engler’s sentiments, noting that the donor niche wall tells the story of the companies that participate. She says the wall also gives companies name recognition, which can leave a lasting impression on consumers.

“In a time of grief, people tend to look for some sense of familiarity and comfort,” Keeney says. “My goal is for people to come to the exhibit, see a company name, and learn about their products and services when they aren’t distracted by grief. In a time of need, they may come across that company and will want it to be part of their loved one’s funeral process because it is familiar.”

“I want companies see this as more than simply a donation to a nonprofit organization,” Keeney continues. “It’s a relationship builder with consumers that you won’t get anywhere else.”

A Personal Passion Turned Museum Exhibit

Jason Engler, CANA Historian, has donated 90 percent of his personal collection of cremation artifacts to the History of Cremation Exhibit. Here’s a snapshot of his contribution to the exhibit:

- 140 books, pamphlets and brochures about historic cremation facilities
- 120 urns, some as old as the late-1890s
- 60 postcards depicting various crematories
- 20 urn catalogues printed from the 1890s to the 1990s
- 20 original articles, documents, certificates and images about different aspects of cremation

To learn how you can show your support for the History of Cremation Exhibit, contact Keeney at gkeeney@yahoo.com or (832)-419-3705.

An Enduring Theme of Memorialization

The History of Cremation Exhibit shows and tells America’s cremation story in one place, in a way that’s never been done before. To Engler, the exhibit delivers well-deserved clarity to an industry shrouded in mystery.

“It’s a positive way to help the public understand everything from memorialization options to creating ‘gee-whiz’ moments that open their eyes to things they never knew about cremation,” Engler says.

But the public aren’t the only beneficiaries. For historic crematories that get involved in the museum, Engler says the exhibit is an outlet to tell their stories and show people that their focus is memorialization, not body disposal.

“While we do talk about the process and history of cremation, what we want the visitor to leave with is the enduring theme of memorialization and how it is achieved in modern times,” Engler says. Kemmis of CANA agrees, saying she hopes the exhibit will demystify cremation for both funeral practitioners and the public. Specifically, that cremation memorialization means more than scattering remains or an urn on a

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mantle. “Cremation isn’t just direct disposal,” Kemmis says. “It’s a way to memorialize in new and creative ways. We hope this exhibit gives people a greater understanding of the cremation process, the options for memorialization, and that funeral directors and ceterians are resources for the public to explore options for permanent placement of their cremated remains.”

Kemmis notes that while cremation continues to rise in the United States—more than half of Americans are choosing it—too often, people stop at “just cremate me.” Where will the cremated remains rest permanently? Cemeteries struggle to capture cremation families and get them to place remains in a permanent resting place.

Even seasoned funeral directors and ceterians struggle with presenting all the options and effectively educating consumers.

“Consumers are choosing cremation, but they may not clearly understand what they are choosing,” Kemmis says. “Cremation is a new tradition, so the endless options are overwhelming for everyone.”

As consumers continue to choose cremation, the challenge, Kemmis says, is showing consumers the seemingly limitless possibilities of memorialization after cremation.

“This is a perfect time to highlight the profession,” Kemmis says. “Consumers are already excited about this, now it’s time to get professionals on board and educate everyone in the process.”

3 Ways to Stay Updated on the History of Cremation Exhibit

The History of Cremation Exhibit will celebrate its grand opening this fall at Houston’s National Museum of Funeral History (NMFH). In the meantime, stay connected on its progress by:

1. Visiting www.NMFH.org
2. Signing up for NMFH’s monthly e-newsletter via NMFH’s website
3. Liking NMFH on Facebook

5 Misconceptions and Facts About Cremation

The story of cremation’s history in the United States has largely been untold, so the industry is shrouded in mystery and myth. Jason Engler, CANA Historian, shares the five common cremation misconceptions, including an oddity he’s observed over the years.

1. If you’re cremated, you must be scattered or kept in an urn in the home. “People often ask, ‘Why would you put a pretty urn in ground?’” Engler says. “People don’t understand that urns are meaningful receptacles to hold remains and may be treated as a casket.”
2. Cremated remains have always been pulverized into a powder. Not true. In fact, historic cremationists in America would not pulverize cremated remains because they considered it desecrating the remains. “They believed if you left cremated remains undisturbed, it would aid in a permanent memorial as opposed to scattering,” Engler says.
3. It’s impossible to know whether cremated remains belong to your loved one. Many people don’t understand that there is one body per chamber, so only one person is cremated at a time. Also, crematories today use technology to track the cremated remains throughout the entire cremation process, giving people the assurance that the remains definitively belong to their loved ones.
4. Cremated remains are ashes. Cremated remains are technically pulverized bone fragments, Engler clarifies.
5. People almost always try to open the urn. This is a fascinating consumer habit Engler has observed over the years. “When a family is selecting an urn, it has been my experience that the first thing they usually do is grab the top and start twisting,” he says. “Is it human nature to see the inside?”

C&J FINANCIAL acquires BETA CAPITAL of Portsmouth, VA.

Rainbow City, AL – C&J FINANCIAL, LLC, through its affiliate, Security National Financial Corporation (NASDAQ:SNFCA), is pleased to announce that it has acquired Beta Capital Corp. of Portsmouth, VA. Beta Capital has been operating in the assignment factoring business for over 22 years and has strong brand recognition in the industry. The transaction closed June 1, 2018.

Andrew Quist, Vice President of C&J, said, “C&J is extremely pleased we were able to come to terms with a company as well respected as Beta Capital. Their longevity in an industry that sees such frequent turnover speaks for itself. We’re happy we can now include Beta Capital’s strong group of funeral home customers in our family at C&J.”

Beta Capital has over 200 funeral home clients across the United States and funds over \$30 million dollars of insurance assignments annually. Beta Capital’s

presence is especially strong in the Mid-Atlantic and Mid-West regions of the United States, areas that compliment C&J’s existing network of clients.

“We believe we can build on the strong foundation of customer service Beta Capital has built over the years” said Jamie Meredith, C&J’s head of sales and Executive Vice President. “We want each and every Beta Capital client to know we will continue to provide the same excellent service you have come to expect at Beta Capital, and hopefully through this new relationship with C&J, we will add functionality and capabilities that will enhance your funding experience.”

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Working with the Media

Keys to Service = The Vital and Active Role of the Funeral Professional

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


In bygone days in our profession there was a method of “arranging” a funeral which was called “the indirect method” of counseling. At the core of this funeral arranging approach was that the funeral director played an entirely passive role in the decision making processes that the “family” was engaged in. The results of this approach to the funeral interview was that it did not work, very well. One funeral director who was a disciple of this approach once told me, “When I make arrangements I don’t even want the family to notice that I am in the room.” I cannot disagree with this type of funeral interviewing approach more for this is another example of black and white rule making, in which the funeral professional is making all the rules – doesn’t the families feelings and wishes need to be involved, need to be taken account of, need to be respected? I believe they do.

Just imagine this scenario. The bereaved family has seen one or two caskets in their entire lives. Now, today the door is opened and they are looking at twenty-one caskets or 40 urns, or 20 keepsakes and they are in the room alone – absolutely alone and on their own. Do you think this type of situation creates a vulnerable and possibly high risk client situation? Analogous to this, for a naive fellow like me would be my wanting to buy an airplane.

The airplane company representative opens up a door to the airplane hangar that has twenty-one new airplanes for sale and then turns heel and leaves. For a limited guy like me, well I don’t have a chance!


The reason the indirect approach flopped so many years ago is that while some funeral professionals were attracted to it, the collapse of the indirect approach came because our valued client families did not like it. The indirect approach to helping I believe was created because of our professions long standing phobia

concerning any type of criticism whatsoever, and particularly our high alert sensitivity concerning being criticized about being a “high pressured sales person” or worst of all “taking advantage of the bereaved.” I understand our professions sensitivity to this, and Jessica Mitford made hay in the sunshine using and abusing this theme. However her book was published 51 years ago and still our addiction to wanting to please absolutely everyone in everything all the time, which is utterly impossible for any human being to accomplish, still haunts our great profession (but this theme is fodder for another article). I personally would like to suggest that the reason the indirect approach



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to helping a family didn't work is that it relegated the funeral professional to an exaggerated passive role, and I have concluded that bereaved client's are not attracted to passive funeral director helping.

I do not see the funeral professional as the interviewer or as a presence in the funeral experience as serving a passive role in the least. On the contrary, I perceive the funeral professional as staying active at all times. I am not implying that he/she should talk a great deal, but I am saying that he/she should make their presence and interest continuously felt – throughout the entire funeral home experience, not just the arrangement interview. The funeral interviewer is ideally active in revealing to the client family that they are indeed an interested person in the welfare of the client family. Being too passive does not have enough energy about it to convey this important communication. In fact being passive is in reality as dry as a piece of unbuttered toast.

The question then is not whether the funeral professional will be of assistance, help or counsel. **In all sincerity of purpose is not the larger question this: Will my assistance, help and counsel be based on active wisdom and care, on active insight and compassion, and on active trust and respect? The operative word here is active.**

Primary to this vital role is that the funeral interviewer is and acts as a genuine person. As funeral interviewers we contribute of ourselves and our professional knowledge to help the client family, and not simply to display our intellect or our splendid personal qualities. The funeral interviewer reveals what they themselves see and understands, what they think the client family is thinking and feeling, in order to help him/her look deeper and try harder to reach his/her inner self to make the type of once in a lifetime decisions that offer two priceless gifts in taking the journey through the valley of the shadow of death: Peace of mind and the feeling that one has done the right thing. The combined psychological health of these two feelings is absolutely priceless; no dollar sign can ever be attached to this – never!

Coming right down to it in our ongoing quest for substance and meaning, what do funeral professionals actually bring to the helping interview? Essentially, we bring our knowledge, experience, professional skills, the information we possess, and the resources at our

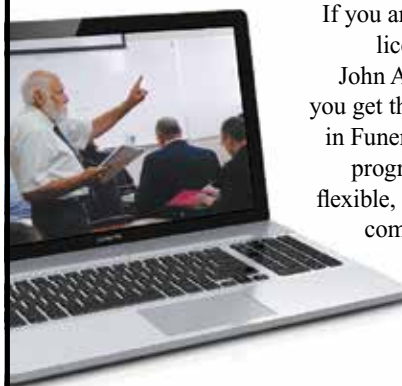
command, and above all else a genuine committed love of the profession in which we serve. It follows then that the continuous funeral student (going considerably beyond Mortuary College and the National Board) actively continually learns about every single aspect of the funeral service profession.

This type of quality learning time will result in creating the most effective professional who by the results of their dedication to lifelong learning will possess the most knowledge. This professional funeral person will then be able to assist family clients by be offering and suggesting creative ceremonial experiences, creative help and counsel which will result in a tangible enhancement of our bereaved clients arriving at wise, valid, and satisfactory decisions.

Here are some suggestions to help us stay active in the experience of the funeral interview and funeral service in general. Ponder these, and add to them. Your time spent thinking about these four points will prove helpful in the long term.

First: Funeral professionals use themselves first and foremost. If the funeral professional is calm,

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understanding and clearly concerned as well as obviously wanting to be helpful they set the stage for the response of those being served.

Second: Funeral professionals are usually and fortunately where the action is. Doing something constructive is an important way of moving people through a crisis. Inner balance can be sustained by outer action. Having people do things will help to confirm reality, express feelings, and gain group support is never a passive experience, these important funeral standards are always in the active tense.

Third: Funeral professionals help the expression of feelings in the helping interview. The funeral professional is usually present when feelings are intense. The funeral professional within the save harbor of the funeral interview and overall funeral experience can provide the personal attitude and social atmosphere within which the appropriate deep grief feelings can be expressed and most importantly accepted and understood.

Fourth: The funeral professional also has quick access to items to memorialize creativity which can help the mourner's experience deeper expression and find deeper significance in the selected services and goods which are decided upon and invested in.

The funeral professional/interviewer/arranger (last week I learned a new professional designation "Remembrance Counselor") who is keenly aware of these four simple points and who uses them in an active, not passive way will find additional foundations of worth in their communication with the client families.

Bringing yourself, being in the thick of the action, allowing for the expression of feelings, and having at your immediate access valuable remembrance and memorial items is a wonderful way to further assist our families we are privileged to service, and that is the goal, is it not – to work to further assist our client families to the best of our abilities. <> <> <>



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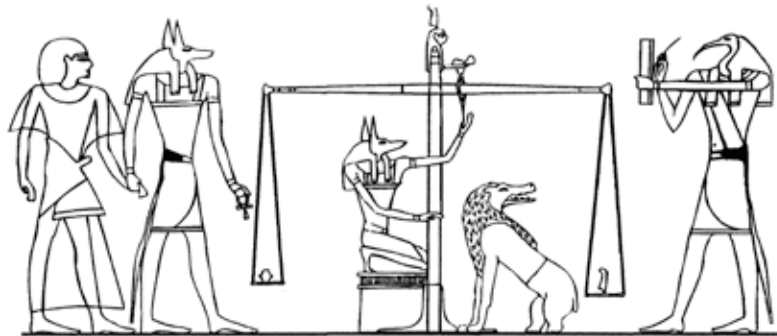
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The National Alliance for Grieving Children

The National Alliance for Grieving Children (NAGC) appreciates and applauds the funeral profession. The work you do is very honorable but must surely be difficult. We affirm the importance of memorialization. The NAGC is privileged to share with you the honor and responsibility of caring for families when a death has occurred. Many deaths, involve children and adolescents. Our mission is to raise awareness about the needs of those children and teens grieving a death and provide education and resources to anyone who wants to support them.

All children grieve, regardless of age. All bereaved children and adolescents, no matter where they live or their circumstances, should have the support and resources they need to positively adapt to a loss in their lives. **Our vision is that no child grieves alone.**

The history of The National Alliance for Grieving Children dates back to 1997 with an inaugural Symposium on Children's Grief held in Oberlin, Ohio. This meeting served as a platform to bring together social workers, chaplains, counselors and volunteers from across the United States. This was the conduit for initiating a dialogue amongst death and bereavement professionals to share their work and discuss challenges. United in one purpose, they conceived a broader vision for addressing the issue of childhood grief in an effort to increase awareness about support services.

Childhood bereavement professionals have continued to meet annually at the Symposium in cities across the country, giving practitioners in thousands of communities the opportunity to learn and work together. As a result, a network of hundreds of organizations began to emerge, which led to our robust alliance. This year we celebrate our 22nd in San Antonio, Texas with approximately 500 individual attendees working to increase the services and quality of programs offered to bereaved children and adolescents across the nation. We welcome participants from the funeral profession. Together we can strengthen our services to bereaved families. Through the collective voice of our members and partners we educate, advocate, and raise awareness about childhood bereavement and healthy families. Today, the NAGC is a nationwide network comprised

of professionals and volunteers from a variety of backgrounds who promote best practices, educational programming, and critical resources to facilitate the mental, emotional, and physical health of grieving children, teens, and their families.

As an alliance we exist as thought leaders, researchers, and professionals in the childhood bereavement field to:

- Strengthen and expand research and information in our field in order to collectively raise awareness.
- Promote the availability of resources in communities across North America and elevate the profile of grief support programs and services.
- Provide education and information to professionals from a variety of disciplines on topics related to childhood bereavement support.
- Increase public sensitivity and competency in supporting bereaved children, while garnering community support.

The NAGC is honored to partner with many funeral homes and service providers across the United States. Almost every day you, as a funeral professional, experience a child affected by the death of a loved one, whether it be a parent, sibling, grandparent or friend. Our goal is to equip you as professionals to empower families to do the difficult work of grieving. The end goal is to create healthy grief systems and opportunities that create healthy families; thereby creating healthy communities.

As a way of strengthening the resources provided to your families and your communities, the NAGC offers an opportunity to connect funeral homes and end of life professionals to a wealth of resources that are specific to grieving children in communities across the nation. Essentially, we want to help you be the expert by connecting your families to best practices and programs in the child bereavement field. Please check out our website www.childrengrieve.org to find resources. On the website, you will find a map that displays programs that are available in your area at little to no cost to your families. In addition, explore other tools such as "10 Ways to Support a Grieving Child" and a video "Talking to Kids About Death and

Dying.” The NAGC has recently published an activity/discussion book for elementary children and their caregivers. This book was created by experts in the field of childhood bereavement. This is a user-friendly tool that encourages discussion and offers guidance to adults on connecting with children on the very difficult subjects of death, dying, and bereavement. Many funeral homes distribute the books to a family when a child has been affected by the death of a loved one. “When Someone Dies – A Child-Caregiver Activity Book” is available at a nominal fee on orders starting as little as 50 or individually on Amazon. For more information, contact Kathy Wisniewski at Kathy.wisniewski@childrengrieve.org.

Each fall, the NAGC holds a Fall Conference and LIVE webcast. The location of the conference and topic changes annually yet the LIVE webcast is available virtually anywhere. This webcast provides a great vehicle to host community events. This would be a great opportunity to bring in your local partners (schools, churches, hospice, civic groups) and view the webcast followed up with a community discussion. This year the conference will be held in Princeton, New Jersey and the panel of experts will speak on supporting youth and schools after a community tragedy. Please let us know if you would like to be a leader in your

community on this very important topic. We would be pleased to equip you for this role in your community. As a national alliance the NAGC is very interested in connecting funeral homes to our member organizations in every community that is providing grief support to children, teens and their families. We believe the stronger the network, the stronger the community. Please let us know if we can help connect you to our members. The NAGC would love to have you join us as a member and become an official part of our network. Memberships are very nominal and include access to ‘members only’ resources on the NAGC website, free monthly webinars, discount to Annual Symposium, discount to Marian University for a degree in Thanatology and much more. Please contact Megan Lopez at Megan.lopez@childrengrieve.org for more information about membership with the NAGC.

The NAGC is a nonprofit organization with a nationwide network comprised of professionals, organizations, institutions and volunteers who promote best practices educational programming and critical resources to facilitate the mental, emotional and physical health of grieving children and their families. **Please consider joining us in our vision that no child will have to grieve alone.** Please visit www.childrengrieve.org or contact vicki.jay@childrengrieve.org.



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Grieving Children

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ChildrenGrieve.org

Suicide rates rising across the U.S.

Comprehensive prevention goes beyond a focus on mental health concerns

Suicide rates have been rising in nearly every state, according to the latest Vital Signs report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2016, nearly 45,000 Americans age 10 or older died by suicide. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death and is one of just three leading causes that are on the rise. Suicide is rarely caused by a single factor. Although suicide prevention efforts largely focus on identifying and providing treatment for people with mental health conditions, there are many additional opportunities for prevention.

“Suicide is a leading cause of death for Americans – and it’s a tragedy for families and communities across the country,” said CDC Principal Deputy Director Anne Schuchat, M.D. “From individuals and communities to employers and healthcare professionals, everyone can play a role in efforts to help save lives and reverse this troubling rise in suicide.”

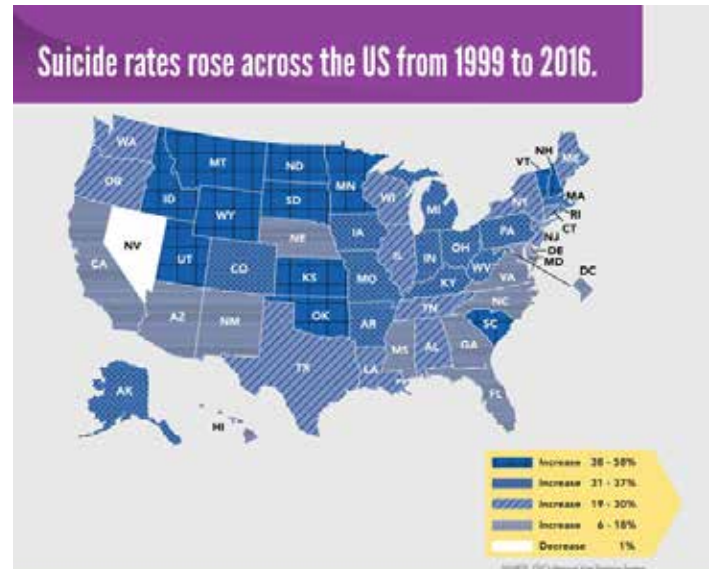
Many factors contribute to suicide

For this Vital Signs report, CDC researchers examined state-level trends in suicide rates from 1999-2016. In addition, they used 2015 data from CDC's National Violent Death Reporting System, which covered 27 states, to look at the circumstances of suicide among people with and without known mental health conditions.

Researchers found that more than half of people who died by suicide did not have a known diagnosed mental health condition at the time of death. Relationship problems or loss, substance misuse; physical health problems; and job, money, legal or housing stress often contributed to risk for suicide. Firearms were the most common method of suicide used by those with and without a known diagnosed mental health condition.

State suicide rates vary widely

The most recent overall suicide rates (2014-2016) varied four-fold; from 6.9 per 100,000 residents per year in Washington, D.C. to 29.2 per 100,000 residents in Montana. Across the study period, rates increased in nearly all states. Percentage increases in suicide rates



ranged from just under 6 percent in Delaware to over 57 percent in North Dakota. Twenty-five states had suicide rate increases of more than 30 percent.

Wide range of prevention activities needed

The report recommends that states take a comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention and address the range of factors contributing to suicide. This requires coordination and cooperation from every sector of society: government, public health, healthcare, employers, education, media and community organizations. To help states with this important work, in 2017 CDC released a technical package on suicide prevention that describes strategies and approaches based on the best available evidence. This can help inform states and communities as they make decisions about prevention activities and priorities.

Everyone can help prevent suicide:

Learn the warning signs of suicide to identify and appropriately respond to people at risk. Find out how this can save a life by visiting: www.BeThe1to.com

Reduce access to lethal means – such as medications and firearms – among people at risk of suicide.

Contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for help: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

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In Memory of Tom Flynn

It is with deepest sympathy to announce that Thomas (Tom) M. Flynn passed away on June 18, 2018. Often known as “The Man with the Dog”, many recognize Tom Flynn as a regular attendee of ICCFA educational events, often accompanied by his grief therapy dog, Soloman. At the 2018 ICCFA Annual Convention, Mr. Flynn received the Lasting Impact Award. He was the creator of the famous Avenue of 444 Flags and the War on Terror Veterans Memorial, and placed the first Canine Companions for Independence grief dog into his funeral home.

He is survived by his sons, Tom M. Flynn Jr. and his wife, Fran, of Chicago, John R. Flynn and his wife, Jennifer, of Hermitage; grandchildren, Patrick, Jessica and Hans; two sisters, Margaret Mary Butler and her husband, Robert, of Flossmoor, Ill., Kathleen Armstrong and her husband, Robert, of Lake Zurich, Ill.; several nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and nephews.

There will be a visitation at America’s Cemetery on Thursday, June 21 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the John Flynn Funeral Home and Crematory (2630 E. State St., Hermitage, PA).

The funeral service at 11 a.m. Friday, June 22 with full military honors in the funeral home, with the Rev. Douglas Dayton officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Avenue of 444 Flags Foundation, P.O. Box 1243, Hermitage, PA 16148 or to Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Care Foundation.

2018 Lasting Impact Award Recipient: Tom Flynn

Creator of the famous Avenue of 444 Flags, and the War on Terror Memorial, as well as placing the first Canine Companions for Independence grief dog into a funeral home, Tom’s dedication to honor those who have died in the name of freedom and teach future generations of the high price of that freedom, is a testament to his vision, morale code and character. Tom will proudly share this honor with his beautiful dog, Solomon!





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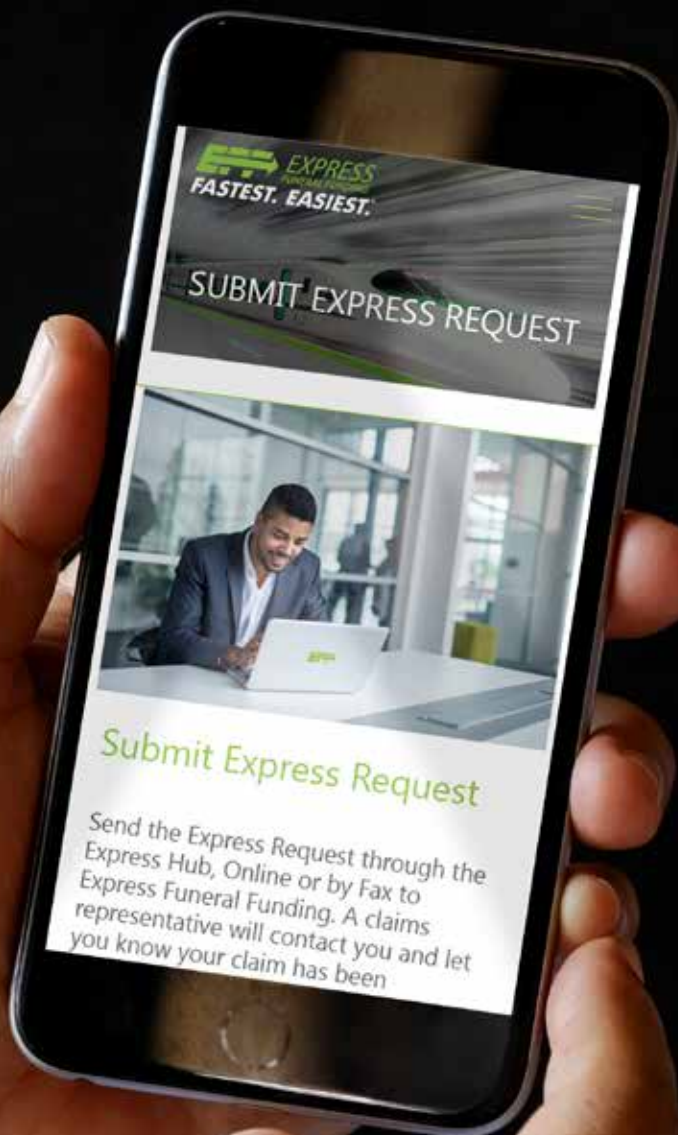
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Cherokee Child Caskets	21	www.cherokeechildcaskets.com
C&J Financial	27	www.cjf.com
Columbian Financial Group	19	www.cfglife.com
Custom Air Trays	17	www.customairtrays.com
Doric Products	25	www.doric-vaults.com
Express Funeral Funding	39	www.expressfuneralfunding.com
Frigid Fluids	30	www.frigidfluid.com
FuneralCall	3	www.funeralcall.com
Funeral Service Foundation	37	www.funeralservicefoundation.org
John A. Gupton	28, 29	www.guptoncollege.edu
Matthews-Aurora Funeral Solutions	11	www.matw.com
National Alliance for Grieving Children	33	www.childrengrieve.org
Ogeechee Technical College	22	www.ogeecheetech.edu
Physicians Mutual/Precoa	40	www.physiciansmutual.com
Service Casket/SICH	15	www.sichcasket.com
Shields Southeast Sales	13	www.myhearse.com
Trouvaille Creative Concepts	31	www.trouvailleLLC.com
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