

The Dead Beat

The Caregiver's Soapbox



Dedicated to providing information about the people and places involved in the funeral industry.

May /June, 1999

Volume 1 Issue 1

Welcome to the First Edition!

Our goal is to provide you with news from funeral homes and other sources. Our intention is not to replace or compete with existing publications from statewide FD organizations, however we hope to provide you a fresh, new perspective and opportunity to learn what other funeral directors are doing in your own backyard and in neighboring states. We are not selling subscriptions, however we are encouraging advertising.

Like many of you, I come from a funeral home family. I am third generation. I started working the family business at the age of 10, and went on my first ambulance call at the age of 12. Back in those days, we didn't have to worry about

child labor laws, or OSHA regulations. I earned my embalmers license in 1954. Things sure have changed since I handled the arrangements of serving my first family in need. The one thing that hasn't changed is the human element. Professionals like us helping and serving our neighbors, friends and acquaintances in the community.

What are those stories? We want to know. As a long time funeral director, I know I've worked a variety of cases, as well as you, where we had to muster all our strength and courage to complete the service successfully. How did you overcome those insurmountable problems like cases involving peculiar arrangement details or

a particularly difficult family circumstance. We would like for you to share your story with other funeral directors who understand and care. It is our desire that by sharing your story it will help all of us in our own business.

We also want to know about your families, your employees and their families. Send us your

(Continued on page 20)



Alan Wolfelt at Bolivar seminar.





Grief and Fear By Kenneth Doka

When her husband died, Peggy found it hard to go to sleep. She was so afraid that she kept a night light on. Carl worried about his abilities to raise three young children on his own, and he was fearful of the effects that his wife's long illness and death might have on his children in the future. He was unsure of parenting now, he wondered how he should respond, whether each outburst or misbehavior was a sign of grief, how soft or tough he should be.

Fears and anxieties are a constant part of the grieving experience, once familiar experiences, even simply sleeping, now may seem different or even frightening. Our beliefs are challenged as well. We are aware of how

vulnerable we are, how everything can change in such a short period of time. That, too, can be scary.

Our own grief can frighten us. We may be frightened of certain feelings; perhaps we never realized how angry we could become. One may become anxious that we are grieving too much or too little, too fast or too slow. But we are not powerless. Here are some suggestions that can help us deal with fear.

Face Fear. Like other parts of the grief experience, not everyone faces the same fears or the same amount of fear. Fear may be a major part of the grief experience, or it may only play a small role. We can best fight fear by simply acknowledging it, recognizing that this too, is part of grief.

Assess Fear. Once we have

faced and named the things that we are afraid of, we can ask some questions. First, how realistic are our fears? Many times when we look closely at our fears they are not as terrifying as we once believed. Another question to consider is what control we have. Some things we can do, but we may be powerless over others. We can take actions in some situations, but it does not make much sense to worry over things we cannot control. Talking about our fears with others can help.

Fight Fear. We are not powerless. Breathing Exercises, meditation, or prayer may help. Problem solving also helps. What can we do to lower our level of anxiety? Carl dealt with his worries by maintaining regular contact with his children's teachers. His children

(Continued on page 23)

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Mortuary Muse*



*to think or consider deeply; meditate

By Lowell

As we stated in our lead article we hope this newsletter will become a caregiver's forum. We don't care if you work for a corporate giant or are the one woman/man show in the hinterlands. We know you have valuable knowledge that can help others and that you have opinions that usually don't get expressed at district meetings. Please feel free to express yourselves. We will insist that all letters or essays be signed, (Why should I be the only one with my foot in my mouth) but we really want to hear from you.

Occasionally, we all have that next of kin who for one reason or another does not want to accept the financial responsibility for the loved one's final expenses. Our county commission has a small yearly allowance for indigent burials, but there are so many hoops to jump through we do not even consider applying for it. Nevertheless sometimes a survivor may indicate that they think you are obligated to bury the deceased, especially if there is a county or state allowance. **Neel Baucom**, Knell Mortuary, Carthage, Missouri has a response I like. After being informed by someone that Neel was obligated to bury their relative, Neel replied, "No, we are **privileged** to bury _____, but we are not obligated to do so."

On the morning of the 20th of December as this paragraph was written, The FAX machine unloaded itself with various notices from MFDA about state board regulation changes that are taking effect now. If you haven't checked out any possible

(Continued on page 11)



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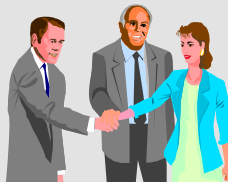
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SURVEY

"How do you feel about death?"

An AP dispatch in the Jan. 11, 1999 **Joplin Globe**, reported on the End of Life task force in northwest Missouri. The task force, a group representing caregivers, churches, funeral homes and senior citizens mailed about 3,000 random surveys to residents in Buchanan and Andrew counties.

The press release said, "... The goal is to identify the attitudes, religious values, and cultural differences that impact end-of-life choices," said the Rev. Sally Schwab, a member of the task force and Heartland Regional Community Foundation and the Heartland Charitable Trust are funding the project. "The results will help medical workers learn how to do their job better," said Becky Hampton, Heartland's team leader for private duty nursing."

TDB spoke with Rev. Schwab about getting a copy of the survey results. Rev. Schwab told us that they were having a pretty good response with about ten percent of the people returning the surveys. Respondents were selected randomly from the phone book.

A few people who do not want to think about death were upset to receive the survey, as well as some widows whose telephones were still listed in their husband's names. Rev. Schwab said she would try to get us a copy of the results of the eight page survey.

Behind the Back Fence By Lowell

The drought last spring took its toll on a small pine shrub next to our entrance steps. Betty and I had just returned from being with Carol Pugh, our daughter-in-law who was a patient at M.D. Anderson in Houston. The nursery folks had trimmed the shrubs and this one look ill. I started a frequent watering campaign, but it was too late.

Now it's not like I'm particularly cheap, but why replace a shrub during a drought? The next thing I knew it was time for the annual community celebration and we still had this dead as a

doornail pine shrub by our entrance. With apologies to professional nursery people and the Heloise column, here is how you do an emergency dead shrub repair. **Green spray paint** and a few trimmings from a live tree. Actually I didn't have to add the clippings until fall when the needles were getting a little sparse. By the time to put on the Christmas lights it was looking a little peaked again. I added some scotch pine pieces that had to be trimmed near the driveway and it looked better than its live counterpart on the other side of the walk. I planned to replace it by Memorial Day, but Doty the nurseryman heard about it and

now there is a new one.

You don't have to take my word that it looked good. Larry Stroud, Griffin Casket Company, came by shortly after I fixed it. I'm sure he was impressed. He probably would have told me if he could have stopped laughing.



(Continued on page 22)

Tom and Helen Moss Celebrate Anniversary

Tom and Helen Moss, of Baxter Vault Company, Baxter Springs, Kansas celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a family dinner at the Cafe on the Route on March 27, 1999. The dinner was hosted by the couples' five children: George Moss, Baxter Springs, Mary Moss, Toronto, Canada; Margaret McDonald, Webb City, Missouri; Beth Cunningham, Kansas City, Missouri and Robert Moss, St. Louis, Missouri.

Tom and Helen Morrow were married in Lockwood, Missouri where Helen's mother owned a ladies dress shop. Tom and Helen met during their college years. Tom, a native of Carthage, Missouri is a graduate of the St. Louis

College of MortuaryScience. Helen, a native of St. Louis, is a graduate of the George Washington School of Nursing. Tom was employed by the Ulmer Funeral Home in Carthage, Missouri until he purchased Moss Funeral Home in Sarcoxie from Kenneth Jackson in 1960. They sold the funeral home in 1974 and bought the Baxter Vault Company, April 1, 1975 with their son George who is part owner and president of the company.. 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild. Baxter Vault Company has maintained a reputation for a superior level of service to the funeral homes they serve. The company also operates a branch in Lowell, Arkansas.

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Tom and Helen Moss

What Is A DMORT Team? by Dean Snow

Dean Snow is the Dept. National Commander and Region 7 Commander of DMORT.

The Federal Response Plan task the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) under Emergency support Function #8 to provide victim identification and mortuary services. These responsibilities include Temporary morgue facilities, victim identification using latent fingerprint, forensic dental, pathology, and forensic anthropology methods, processing, preparation, and disposition of the remains.

In order to accomplish this mission, NDMS entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Foundation of Mortuary Care (FMC), a nonprofit organization, to develop Disaster Mortuary Teams (DMORT). DMORT Teams are composed of private citizens, each with a particular field of expertise, who are activated in the event of a disaster. DMORT members are required to maintain appropriate certification and licensure within their discipline. When members are activated, licensure and certifications are recognized by all states, and the team members are compensated for their duty time by the Federal government as a temporary Federal employee. During an emergency

response, DMORT teams work under the guidance of local authorities by providing technical assistance and personnel to recover, identify, and process the deceased.

The DMORTs are directed by the NDMS in conjunction with a Regional Commander in each of the ten Federal regions. Teams are composed of funeral directors, medical examiners, coroners, pathologists, forensic anthropologists, medical records tech's and transcribers, fingerprint specialists, forensic odontologists, dental assistants, X-Ray technicians, mental health specialists, computer professionals, administrative support staff and security and investigative personnel.

At the present time there are two complete mobile morgues available to assist in any disasters. One is based in the warehouse in Gaithersburg, MD. The other is based in Columbus, OH. The Mobile Mortuary Containers are a depository of equipment and supplies for deployment to a disaster site. It contains a complete morgue with designated workstations for each processing element and prepackaged equipment and

supplies.

Some of the deployments that DMORT Teams have been associated with are: 1993 Midwest Floods, 1994 Southwest Georgia Floods, 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing, 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, 1996 Quincy, Il Aviation Disaster, 1997 Monroe, Michigan Aviation Disaster, 1997 Guam Korean Air 801 Aviation Disaster, 1998 Del Rio, Texas floods, 1998 Southeastern Hurricane and 1999 Papal Visit to St. Louis, Missouri.

DMORT teams are always looking for new Team members. If you are interested in joining a DMORT Team, for Missouri and Kansas residents you can contact myself, Dean Snow at 122 W.N. Main, Richmond, MO 64085, for Oklahoma and Arkansas contact Jack King at 1215 15th St, Huntsville, TX 66340.



Stygar Family Opens Mid Rivers Facility

By Holly Stansberry



Though still putting on the finishing touches, St. Charles County's newest funeral home received notification of its license approval at 1:00 P.M. on January 4th and made arrangements for its first funeral service that same afternoon. Years of planning and ten months of construction culminated as Stygar Mid Rivers Funeral Home opened its doors for business at 5987 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., three miles south of Mid Rivers Mall.

On a recent afternoon, I visited the new Stygar Mid Rivers Funeral Home. My conversation with Jeffrey Stygar and the press release he provided give a professional and personal view of the Stygar Family of Funeral Service. "The 15,000-square-foot, single level home boasts some interesting special features designed to provide families the greatest comfort and convenience," said Jeffrey Stygar, its managing director. Providing comfort and convenience to families is the reason the Stygar family decided to open a facility in St. Charles County.

St. Charles County is one of the most rapidly growing areas in the state. Much of the growth is families from St. Louis and St. Louis County. While this expansive growth created a need for more funeral homes, the main purpose for Stygar's expansion is their customers. Long time customers of the Stygar Family of Funeral Service are among those moving to St. Charles County. Jeffrey Stygar said

they wanted to continue to provide the best possible service including convenience, accessibility and continued family support of their customers. Referring to the first funeral the first week in January, Stygar said a member of the family commented that she used to live next door to the first Stygar funeral home operated by Stygar's grandfather, John Joseph Stygar. Her family had a garden between her house and the funeral home. "That shows why we opened this facility," stated Stygar. "We wanted to follow our families, move with them, and continue to serve them, our customers, from one generation to the next."

Talking about the growth of the business, Stygar said, his grandfather eventually expanded by adding on to the old three-story shotgun style building and "took that lady's garden." Then followed a new building specifically for funerals, a "new" concept at the time, on Riverview Boulevard. From there the business has grown to four facilities in St. Louis, Florissant, and St. Charles, Missouri,

A graduate of Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Stygar commented even though he wasn't an embalmer, he sometimes wished he had a small funeral home where he could do it all, from embalming

to cutting the grass. But, he said, that isn't feasible today in an urban area with competition from large corporate funeral homes. Though the business has grown, family pride and teamwork are evident. As indicated earlier, Jeffrey Stygar enjoys building design and function. He also enjoys marketing and advertising. His brother Steve enjoys electronics and is responsible for implementing the computer systems and electronic components such as the sound and security systems. The youngest brother, Greg Stygar, has recently rejoined the firm after three years pursuing other opportunities. He formerly was active in the logistics of the day to day operations among the facilities. In a unique mix between the old and the new, each brother has talents and strengths that, combined with the steady influence of their father John M. Stygar, the patriarch of the family has helped build and maintain a flourishing business.

The Stygar funeral homes were the first in the St. Louis area to provide a grief support program, free of charge, to the families they serve. The program, the only one in the area run by a

Stygar Mid Rivers Funeral Home (continued)

certified grief counselor is offered at Stygar Mid Rivers, too. Pre-need funeral planning and pre-funding are also available and transferable between any of the four Stygar locations.

The Stygar funeral homes employ about 50 to 60 full-time and part-time personnel. Though they will work at all of the locations as needed, they recently divided into two main teams with each team focusing on two of the locations. Personal service is paramount with the Stygar philosophy and their customers thrive on the personal service of the Stygar personnel. A funeral director with the firms stays with a family over the years to provide the comfort and service they know they can expect. Jeffrey Stygar said they have two rules.

Rule #1: The customer is always right.

Rule #2: If the customer is ever wrong, reread Rule #1.

For the new facility on Mid Rivers Mall Drive, Stygar said he wanted to combine the best of features gleaned from his experience in various operations and building designs. "We started with site selection. Stick a pin in the middle of a map of St. Charles County, the middle of the "Golden Triangle" of I-70, US 40 and MO 94 and there we are! We're easily accessible from I-270, I-70, Hwy. 40, and the proposed Page Avenue extension." he said.

It's the building design that really sets Stygar Mid Rivers apart, according to Stygar. "We put a lot of thought into the design and tried to answer the needs of the families." Set well back from Mid Rivers Drive, with parking out front, the building features a covered, drive-up entry with one main entrance to aid in a smooth



The front view of the Funeral Home

flow of traffic in and out of the building. This enables staff to properly greet customers and attend to their needs. He also wanted the building to be light and airy, not dark and oppressive with many windows, special lighting, and an attractive interior furnished in soft, soothing colors for a comfortable, home-like atmosphere. Stygar noted that many people prefer to visit and linger outside the parlor area. For this purpose he provided a spacious lobby that allows convenient access to the offices, restrooms, and other parts of the building and has comfortable seating areas with a fireplace that reaches to a vaulted ceiling.

A fully equipped children's activity area features a television that can be tuned to view the proceedings in any parlor so parents can stay with crying children without missing the funeral. Family members can use the lounge area and separate smoking lounge or private family dining room for meals and snacks, family gatherings, or respite.

The Mid Rivers facility is similar to the Florissant location in that it is a single parlor. However, the 3,370 square-feet of parlor space can be divided into from one to four sound proof parlors, depending upon the

size and needs of the family through a system of movable walls, mobile fixtures for informal or chapel settings, and chapel chairs. Stygar feels it is important for a small group not to feel overwhelmed in a large room that is half empty or a large group to be overcrowded in a room that is too small.

Although there is an electronic organ, more customers are requesting prerecorded music or accompaniment tracks, so a state of the art sound system has been installed which staff can control from touch pads in each room or combination of rooms or select sound being played through the main systems. Video cameras will also be installed for taping of services as well as monitoring from the children's area. Another little amenity Stygar bought are widow's chairs, with higher seats, so the customer can sit comfortable and converse while maintaining eye contact with others during visitation or a receiving line.

The display area, called the Meaningful Memories Room utilizes the Batesville Casket

(Continued on page 8)

Stygar Mid Rivers Funeral Home (continued from pg. 7)

(Continued from page 7)

Company design with cubicles and themes for showcasing ideas to help families plan their service. Stygar says he has noticed customers touch the casket displays and feel the samples for interior lid designs, being more relaxed and less intimidated than standing in an open room full of caskets. A floral display offered in cooperation with area florists also eases selection and ordering of floral arrangements. Across a hallway are three comfortable well lighted arrangement conference rooms, restrooms, and a small snack area. A small "cemetery" outside is also planned for displaying monuments.

The service area behind the parlors includes a wide hallway with access doors to all the parlors from the flower delivery room, the dressing room, garage area and service planning area. The flower delivery room is equipped with an electronic push plate opening system for florists with hands full of flowers, plus a phone system with electronic entry for after hours deliveries. The embalming room, accessed from the dressing room, a storage area, and employee lounge complete the well designed layout.

Stygar already has plans for future expansion. The building was designed for addition of a crematory and a formal chapel. He said instead of a formal chapel, he might build a family



Jeff and Christopher Stygar

center for receptions and dinners. The family center would be a convenient alternative to a church, hall, restaurant, or family home.

Though busy wrapping up construction and attending to details himself, such as hanging pictures and arranging furniture, as well as going to and from the other facilities, Stygar is also busy at home. He and his family moved to a St. Charles county

subdivision from Florissant. He said he thought it would be much different living across the river, away from St. Louis, but that hasn't been the case. He said the house is almost like the one they left in Florissant except it doesn't have a fireplace. So, he's building one, hoping to complete it by his wife's birthday. His son Christopher, otherwise known as Bubba, 12, accompanied Stygar on the day of our visit. He and his son were going to the hardware store later in the afternoon to get more materials for that job.

Stygar said Christopher will be the next generation to carry on the business, although he wouldn't push him. When asked, Christopher said he is thinking about marine biology as a career choice. When asked how he felt about the family moving to St. Charles County, Christopher said he hadn't wanted to move. He didn't want to change schools and leave his friends, but he liked it more than he thought he would. Stygar said they are glad they decided to relocate. They want to be part of the St. Charles County community and live and work where their customers live.

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MEETINGS & SEMINARS

BOLIVAR, MO Alan D. Wolfelt was at his best during a recent seminar, **Helping the Bereaved: Practical Ideas for Family, Friends and Caregivers.**

Allan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., a nationally renown speaker and grief educator, is the Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, Fort Collins, Colorado. The seminar held March 4 was sponsored by Citizens Memorial Hospital, Hospice of Bolivar, Missouri and area funeral homes. The seminar was approved for 7.2 contact hours of continuing education for nurses, social workers and others. Funeral homes that assisted in the sponsorship were: Murray Funeral Homes of Bolivar and Humansville, Butler Funeral Home, Bolivar; Montgomery-Viets Funeral Home, Buffalo and Brumback Funeral Home in Stockton. Area florists furnished table arrangements. Southwest Baptist University assisted with book sales.

Funeral directors attending included Ken Murray, Humansville, MO; Tim Stacy, Evergreen Memorial Chapel, Nevada, MO; Sandra May and Dianne Lowerie, Grief Resource Coordinator, Chapel Hill Mortuary, Cedar Hill, MO; Joanne Howard, Betty Pugh and Lowell Pugh, Pugh Funeral Home, Golden City, MO.

A show of hands indicated that a high percentage of the attendees had suffered recent deaths of family members.



Tim Stacy and Ken Murray at Bolivar Meeting with Alan Wolfelt

JASPER, MO The 8th District of the Missouri Funeral Directors Association met in Jasper, Missouri on February 11. The meeting was hosted by the Weng Funeral Home of Jasper at Sharon's Family Restaurant. Richard Brumback, the district director, reported on legislative matters, but the well attended meeting was primarily



Dale Daniel and Tom Keckley at District 8 Meeting

PARSONS, KS The annual Bruce Memorials Product Knowledge Seminar was held March 5th and 6th at the VFW in Parsons, Kansas. The annual event for Bruce Memorial dealers, cemeterians and funeral service people was well attended.

The morning program included: **Cemetery and Mortuary Law**, by Ed Carpenter who holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Washburn University of Topeka and his Juris Doctor degree from Washburn Law School; **Thanatology**- including views on death and dying, coping with loss, life cycle perspectives of death and dying, the significance of the funeral service and how to organize bereavement groups, presented by Rev. John Chastain who holds a Bachelor's degree in psychology from Pittsburg State University.

Afternoon presentations included: **Review of granite products and quarry operations** by Jack Stengel, President of Dakota Granite, Milbank, SD and Mike Riley, regional sales representative for Dakota Granite and **Production of Memorials** by Richard Babcock and Chris Carson, owners of Individual Mausoleum Company of Parsons.

Tours of the Individual Mausoleum plant and the memorial production facility were conducted by Mike Forbes, National Sales Manager and other staff members. Visitors were impressed with the several artisans that were at work designing, etching, and carving memorials. The tour also included mausoleum and vault manufacturing areas. The attendees were from several different states.



Richard Babcock, Chris Carson, and Jack Stengel at the Bruce Memorials Product Knowledge

LEBANON, MO The 9th District MFDA held their quarterly meeting at the newly remodeled Holman-Howe Funeral Home in Lebanon. Banquet facilities were set up in the new garage decorated for the occasion. Hanley Coach Sales, St. Louis, and Capital Reserve Life Insurance Company, Jefferson City, hosted the social hour. The program, "Future Millennium for Cadillac Funeral Coaches," was presented by Jim Zoli, V.P. of

(Continued on page 11)

Todd McCoy speaks to Lions on sight

Todd McCoy, manager of Lohmeyer-Konantz Funeral Home, Lamar, Missouri, was introduced by Dean Blaser, a Lions Club member. McCoy proceeded by telling the value of the Lions State Sight Project in promoting eye care assistance in the prevention of blindness.

As eye enucleator for the mortuary, he spoke of a number of problems in securing eyes. To remove the eyes of the deceased with or without a donors card, permission must be secured from the next of kin. A time limit exists as to when the eyes must be removed. After the eyes are placed in the Lions transportation kit, it must be delivered to the Springfield Eye Bank timely.

Lions members who have signed for duty may be called any time. The transporting of the eyes is done almost entirely by Lions members, as the highway patrol is now overloaded with its regular duties.

Todd suggested that those wishing to donate eyes, or other organs, should be sure that the family understands their desires before death.

Dr. Ron Walkenbach, executive director of the Heartland Lions Eye Bank (HLEB), in a recent article, reported that the "gift of sight was being given at the rate of six times a day through

transplants. HLEB noted that during 1998-99, a total of 1,486 eyes were retrieved, and 764 transplants were made. Eye material is also used for repairing damaged eyes, for medical training, and many other purposes.

Eye donor cards may be secured from Lions members upon request.

Reprinted from the **Lamar Democrat**,



McNeese named Managing Funeral Director

Junction City, KS- **Charles W. McNeese** has been named Managing Funeral Director of Johnson Funeral Chapel and Mass-Hinitt Funeral Home in Junction City, Kansas. Charlie is a native of Council Grove, Kansas and attended Emporia State University. He began his funeral service career in the U.S. Army Grave Registration in Viet Nam in 1969. He worked for several years as an assistant funeral director prior to graduating from Kansas City, Kansas Mortuary Science Department. Charlie is a licensed embalmer-funeral director in Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas and has done OSHA consulting for the funeral industry for 7 years. He started work with Heartland Management in January, 1997. Charlie has been a private pilot since 1974 and enjoys flying when time permits. Charlie and his wife, Viki make their home in Junction City.

(Clipping courtesy of Fraley Funeral Supply)

PETAL TALK

A florist friend, **Darrell Sparkman**, Lockwood Greenhouses, Lockwood, Missouri passed a copy of a newsletter for florists, **O'Bits & Pieces**. Its purpose as stated below the date: **Dedicated to promoting communication between retail florists and funeral directors.**

One of the items discussed was the possible consequences to the florist/funeral director relationship when funeral homes sell flowers and retail florists start selling caskets.

Some of the funeral home retaliatory measures mentioned included: hours of acceptance of flowers changed from 6:00 pm to 3:00 pm; increased number of please omit notices; size of casket pieces limited; friendliness of funeral home staff is different; flowers for a Sunday viewing must be in the flower room by 11:00 am Saturday.

The previous issue had discussed the matter of funeral homes retailing flowers direct to family. They were cautioning florists to think carefully before investing in a product they were not familiar selling. O'Bits & Pieces also mentioned that the average flower arrangement is handled eight times by the funeral home staff.

O'bits & Pieces is edited by Bud Lipinski, AFS Satellite Office, 962 East Royal Ridge Drive, Oro Valley, AZ 85737, (520)-825-5700. Mr. Lipinski said he has been invited to write an article for the Funeral Ethics Association newsletter and was asking for input from florists.

Mortuary Muse by Lowell

(Continued from page 3)

changes in your state's regulations, now is the time to do so.

This is the time of year that many funeral homes will be taking a hard look at the GPLs. When ever our funeral home has an interaction with a colleague we try to swap GPLs with them. It's interesting how many times the bottom line may be only a couple of hundred dollars apart with as much as a thousand dollar spread between two firm's non-declinable charges. Often the difference is reflected in the selling price of a comparable casket.

As casket stores and internet sales become prevalent, funeral homes are going to have to recover all of their overhead costs within the framework of their service charges. The same will be true with an increasing cremation rate. There has to be a point where a firm will either have to recover (or at least charge) a true proportional share of overhead charges to every client serviced. Of course, in some

market areas this will not be possible and the funeral director is likely going to have to find another line of work.

Casket stores are hardly a new phenomenon. Our firm's very first entry in the record books was an over the counter sale in the furniture and undertaking department, January 7, 1904. Items purchased were a black crepe casket #22 from Kregel \$25.00, slippers \$1.75 and hearse rental the next day, \$8.00. The funeral was at the country residence and family or neighbors took care of everything else.

We have attended some memorial services that had no funeral director involvement. Yet, the next of kin and friends created very meaningful services with traditional guest books, memorial folders and flowers. Following one service a contingent of family and friends went in procession to a distant cemetery for burial of the cremains. On another the friends sought guidance from us and we contributed a book, folders and service assistance. We at least made our presence known. The

elderly family had declined to arrange anything, though they attended the service.

The point is if the market demands changes that enable friends and relatives to do most everything themselves, the changes will occur. And if casket stores become too successful they will find themselves in the same boat as other retailers battling, Wal-Mart, K-Mart or "Deathmart."

Regardless of the fact that we know everyone should have a meaningful remembrance service of some kind, there will be families who can not afford anything or simply will not feel the need for any kind of service. Alan Wolfelt stated in his article, "And we Wonder why People Question the Need for Funerals," **The Director**, Dec., 1998, "Our culture of immediate gratification, self-absorption and deceit has confused us about what is right and wrong, good and bad. Many people have no clue what family life should be like, let alone what a meaningful funeral should be like. And we wonder why people are questioning the need for funerals."

MEETINGS & SEMINARS

(Continued from page 9)

Cadillac Motor Fleet Division. Mr. Zoli was assisted by Angela Jurson and Jim Snitgen. Ken Howe reported that nearly 80 persons attended the meeting.

*

If you have attended or know of a meeting or seminar coming up soon, please send information to DB so we



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Associates**
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Higginsville, MO 64037
(660) 584-7000
F.R. Frosty Hoefler

KANSAS

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139 N. Main
Canton, KS 67428
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Pugh Funeral Home
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Golden City, MO 64748
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NEBRASKA

**Gubser Funeral
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OKLAHOMA

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Funeral Associates*

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Funeral Service**
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Mustang, Ok 73064
(405) 376-1616
Fax (405) 376-1716

With your license number you can get into this directory for \$10.00 per issue. This month's random selection winners are shown in addition to paid individuals

Continuing Education and Licensing Comments

Steve Palmer, writing in his "Observations" column of the **Yellow Book News**, November, 1998, was discussing the difficulties in suggesting unique and clever remembrance ideas to families who have little or no understanding of religion, funeral service or other rituals. Mr. Palmer made the following comment, "... I am disturbed by the trend of large firms to employ "funeral consultants." These people, paid slightly above the minimum wage, are without experience or knowledge into the true purpose of a funeral. Yet a grieving family is left in their care to decide how to deal with their significant loss. A decision that will be retained in their memory with comfort or be remembered with deep regret..."

We agree with this assessment. Any size firm can fall into this trap when using untrained funeral directors or third party preneed sales people who are primarily interested in collecting a commission. It can literally cut the heart out of funeral service.

Jerry Overton, a past president of

NFDA (National Funeral Directors' Association), spoke at the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards' (ICFSEB) 95th convention last fall. As reported in the **American Funeral Director**, December, 1998, Jerry expressed the need for funeral service licensees to have license portability to practice their profession as they move from one portion of the country to another. Overton discussed the work of the Task Force that is exploring the areas of endorsement, a baccalaureate degree for funeral service and tiered licensing. The Task Force included members from NFDA, ICFSEB, and the American Board of Funeral Service Examiners.

With the great diversity or perhaps disparity of licensing requirements from state to state accomplishing this necessary goal will be quite a challenge. The continuing education requirements in the states that are represented by this newsletter are a good example. The number of contact hours by state are: Arkansas 8 hours every year; Iowa 24 hours

per 2 years; Kansas 6 hours per year; Missouri 0 at this time, proposed legislation would require 12 hours per 2 years, excluding persons licensed before January 1, 1978; Nebraska 16 hours per 2 years and Oklahoma which previously required CE, but was canceled by the state government.

Don't misunderstand me, I am in favor of a higher standard of educational requirements and continuing education. There is no bigger fool than the person who thinks he/she knows everything about funeral service there is to know.

With the changes that have been taking place regarding funeral service and public attitudes, sometimes states' licensing requirements become little more than legalized mediocrity. And then there is Colorado with no state requirements. What would you as an ethical funeral service practitioner change in your operations if your state board was dissolved tomorrow?

Upcoming Conventions:

****May 2 -5- Kansas** Funeral Directors Association Annual Convention - Salina Holiday Inn Holiday and Bicentennial Center, Salina.

****May 10-12 - Oklahoma** Funeral Directors Association Annual Convention - Westin Hotel and Myriad Convention Center, Oklahoma City.

****June 7-9 Missouri** Funeral Directors Annual Convention, Downtown Marriott-Kansas City.

****June 8 - 10 "Scale New Heights"** at the 117th Annual Convention of The Funeral Directors Association of **Kentucky**. Hyatt Regency Hotel & Commonwealth Annual Convention- Clarion Resort Convention Center, Louisville, Kentucky. For more information contact, Alan L. Leichhardt, Executive Director, (800) 866-3211

****June 13-17 -Arkansas** Funeral Directors Association Annual Convention. Clarion Resort on the Lake, Hot Springs

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SCORE . . . Counselors to America's Small Business

by Ralph W. Stonebraker, SCORE Today, Region VII Editor

The SCORE Association (Service Corps of Retired Executives) is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. This year SCORE is celebrating 35 years of counseling and training. During that time, more than four million Americans have participated in SCORE mentoring and counseling sessions.

Working and retired business owners, executives and professionals donate their time and expertise as counselors, mentors and workshop presenters. There are presently

over 12,000 members in 389 chapters. SCORE is a resource of the Small Business Administration.

There are SCORE chapters in the Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. To locate the nearest chapter call the national office at 1-800-634-0245, or use the Web site

www.score.org and click on "Find SCORE" link. SCORE is the only professional organization that offers email counseling. The Web site also provides entry to that service. Last year 550 email counselors conducted 30,000 email counseling sessions.

Anyone needing help in

starting or operating a small business can contact SCORE, their services are absolutely free-of-charge.



Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

ARKANSAS

Rosetta Cromwell, 82, Hamburg, died Feb. 3, 1999.-Vice president of the board of directors of Cromwell Funeral Home.

D.F. Turner, 80, Stamps, died Jan. 25, 1999-General Manager of A.O. Smith Funeral Homes, Inc.

KANSAS

Sylvia S. Danner, 86, Abilene, died Jan. 19, 1999-co-owner Danner Funeral Home.

Theodore D. (Ted) Ricke, 64, Hoisington, died Jan. 13, 1999- Co-owner of Nicholson-Ricke Funeral Home in Hoisington and Bryant-Christians Funeral Home in Great Bend, Kansas.

MISSOURI

James W. Birch, 88, Ash Grove, died March 30, 1999-owner of Birch Funeral Homes in Ash Grove and Everton. MFDA past president-70-71. 60 yr. MFDA member.

J.O.Mudd, 80, Bowling Green, died Jan. 29, 1999-associated with Mudd-Veach Funeral Home. Past MFDA president.

Harold B. Wright, 87, Brookfield, died March 5, 1999-owner Wright Funeral Home. 50 yr. MFDA member

OKLAHOMA

Warren P. Colley, 95, Sulphur, died Feb. 3, 1999-Co-owner Danner-Colley Funeral Home.

OKLAHOMA (cont.)

Kenneth V. Kernke, 52, Oklahoma City funeral was held Feb. 4. 1999-licensed funeral director and embalmer for Smith & Kernke Funeral Directors for 25 years.

If you know of a fellow funeral service colleague that has died that we have not included, please send the information (The Dead Beat, P.O. Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748) or fax it to us (417-537-4797).

After-thoughts by Joanne Howard

Aftercare, continuing care, grief help, whatever you call helping those experiencing grief from a loss- that's what will be covered in this column. Though everyone's grief is unique, much has been studied and recommended. The bodies of study and personal thoughts will be explored in this column.

I have experienced grief first hand recently with the loss of my daughter, Laura. She was 10 years old when she died suddenly from bacterial meningitis. It has been a little over a year since that happened.

Hopefully, I can shed some light on some of the grief literature and theories that may help you or your friends or your clients that are going through the grief process.

My perspective will also be influenced by the fact that I have been a licensed funeral director for six years and have contributed to continuing education correspondence courses on grief reconciliation. Being a funeral director you are given the privilege to help people in the beginning of



their grief journey and possibly throughout the first year at least.

Grief hurts and most of us want to help people feeling pain. Sometimes understanding what is going on helps. Sometimes just knowing that you are not crazy for feeling something helps.

Several products are available that can provide this service for you. Literature is sometimes sent in a particular sequence for example at 3 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 11 months. Sometimes mailings are sent monthly for several months.

The information provided relates to what you may be feeling at the time. We have even sent our materials to our friends and relatives that we have not served. We have received many compliments on our resources sent. In our funeral home we continue sending materials for a year and ending our mailings with an anniversary card on the first anniversary of the date of loved one's death.

Annually we also provide a remembrance service that includes candle lighting for those since the last service and a tree or wreath of remembrance with those that we

have served for the last 4 years. We invite all to come share in the remembering of their loved ones. Our observations have been that the second and third year griever have a tendency to come and appreciate this service. We have also changed from a more Christmas oriented to a Thanksgiving oriented get-together. Our theme has become one of giving thanks for loved ones with a fall decor. It has become a more positive experience.

This is just one example of caring beyond just doing your job. Though you give the same material to all who need it, as I have previously referred to, not everyone will find it helpful.

The material is generic to cover feelings that people do not always have at the same time. From personal experience I have read many things and had a good idea why things were happening and why I felt a certain way. This did not take my pain away, but I understood it a little bit better. So not everyone may benefit from your assistance, but if you only help a couple it would be worth it.

Please feel free to send your comments about my thoughts so I can learn and pass them on to our readers.



Tree of



Memorial Table

Bath-Naylor Funeral Home

Joe Naylor is third generation funeral family. His grandfather, A.W. Naylor, opened the family's first funeral home in the small southeast Kansas mining community of Scammon in 1924. Seven years later, A.W. Naylor opened his second location in Weir, Kansas, just a few miles ways from the original Cherokee County funeral home. In 1951, Joe's father Ned Naylor, became partners with Ed Quinn of the Quinn Funeral Home in Pittsburg, Kansas. The merger was a natural, because Ned married Ed's sister Ann Quinn. The partnership of



Kevin Fry and Joe Naylor

burg, they can handle up to five bodies in state at the same time. And they can conduct two funerals at the same time. Joe says they've had to conduct two funerals at the same time only twice. When asked what his most peculiar or challenging case was, he said, " there are no more traditional funerals anymore. they are all pretty much customized, each one has their own little twist. Each service always has something unusual. For example, we had all the pallbearers ride their motorcycles in the funeral procession to the cemetery one time. Back when they first did that, it was pretty radical, but



Gaynol Ross and Joe Naylor

location.

Today, Joe Naylor operates out of their main location in Pittsburg, Kansas. He has four funeral directors working on staff: David Friskel, Kevin Fry, Shawn Jewell, and Glenn White. The Bath Naylor Funeral Home office manager is Gaynol Ross. They still conduct funerals at their Weir facility, along with doing cremations. And David and Alice Friskel continue to manage the day to day operations of the funeral home in Frontenac. Joe Naylor earned his bachelor's degree in Funeral service Education at Central State University, in Edmond, Oklahoma.



Shawn Jewel

Ned Naylor and Ed Quinn was dissolved in 1983, when Ned bought out Ed.

The Naylor's closed their original Scammon location in the early 70's. In 1987, the Naylor's merged with Bob Bath of the Bath Funeral home of Pittsburg, Kansas. Bob Bath's father Tom had previously purchased the Smith Funeral Home from E.K. Smith of Pittsburg. In October of 1997, Joe Naylor merged with David and Alice Friskel of the Friskel Funeral home in Frontenac, Kansas. And in April of 1998, Joe Naylor opened a crematory at their Weir, Kansas

At their main facility in Pittsburg

today, stuff like that happens all the time.



Joe Naylor in the chapel



Grieving School Children

Highway accidents, home fires, sudden tragic illnesses and murders have taken a terrible toll of children in our area the last few months. Schools have had the sad duty to bring in more counselors and coordinate memorialization activities for the students and teachers.

The **Springfield News Leader** January, 1999 gave several accounts of classmates attending the visitation, church funeral and York Elementary memorial services for three classmates and their unborn sibling who were murdered along with their mother.

At school, teachers told the children about the deaths. Then they were allowed to talk about it with counselors.

Three books of letters and notes written and pictures drawn by classmates for the children were available at the visitation. The funeral services for the five were held at Central Assembly of God Church in Springfield, Missouri and a final good-bye for the school children was held at their school, York Elementary.

I'm sure some school districts are better prepared to handle these emergencies than others, but all should be offered assistance by our profession. A variety of helpful materials are available, but one of the best we have seen is Dr. Ralph Klicker's manual, **A Student Dies, A School Mourns**



Memory Table at School Service

.....Are You Prepared?

Major sections of the manual include: Grief In The School Community; Activities That Promote Healing; Response Planning Procedure; Responsibilities of Staff; Staff Responsibility Guide; Staff Responsibility Timetable/Flow Chart; Recommended Readings; Recommended Audio-Visual Resources; Inservice Training; Commonly Asked Questions and Their Answers; and Bibliography.

Our community had not had a school death for several years when a high school student that had recently transferred away died suddenly. We approached the principal about offering any assistance, but help was declined. However, Joanne provided the counselor with some article reprints.

The following summer a 12 year old boy, despondent over a girl friend, committed suicide the day his father left the country for annual marine training. We were not called initially but the body was transferred to us several days later to provide services.

Since school was closed the only contact with school officials was when the grade school principal attended the funeral along with classmates and their parents. It was interesting to note that quite a number of parents dropped their children off for the funeral but did not attend themselves.

The family is Polynesian and orchestrated a very moving and participatory service. The closed casket was covered with an elegant lace pall in a south pacific design. Everyone attending was exposed to a very meaningful service blended from a different culture.

A few months later the community was shocked again when a popular high school freshman boy died as a result of

huffing butane. The body was at a distant medical center and was transferred to a crematory refrigeration unit.

School officials at first declined any assistance that was offered when they called to check on service arrangements. A short time later they asked for planning help when it was learned the family did not plan to have any services. As two principals and a counselor met with us at the funeral home, Dr. Klicker's manual proved to be an exceptional resource item. We also gave the school their own copy of the manual.

The school put together a very meaningful service that included a lot of participation by the students. The funeral home staff handled flowers and provided folders and a book while students took over all



Setup at School Memorial Service

other activities. The family attended the school's memorial service prior to having a private service at the funeral home with their religious advisers.

Unfortunately this proved to be a dress rehearsal for another tragic event. A year later, Laura, the ten year old daughter of our associate, Joanne Howard and her husband, Claude, died suddenly of meningitis. The lessons had been well learned and the school developed a beautiful and heartfelt memorial service the morning before Laura's afternoon church funeral service. Anyone wishing more specific information about Dr. Klicker's manual may call us at our office, 417-537-4412.

The Dead Beat

Volume: One

Number: One

The Dead Beat is published bi-monthly. Editorial and business offices are located at 400 Chestnut, Golden City, MO 64748. Phone (800) 575-2611

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For subscription and circulation assistance, write, phone or fax P.O. 145, Golden City, MO 64748 Toll Free (800) 575-2611 Fax (417) 537-4797

**Norman & Loeta Thompson
Honored at Retirement
Dinner**

Norman and Loeta Thompson were honored for more than 45 years service to the community working for the Lohmeyer-Konantz funeral home in Lamar, Missouri.

Norman went to work for the funeral home founder, Carl Konantz, June 6, 1953, as embalmer and funeral director. Loeta worked as an associate in the firm. They remained with the firm through four ownership changes. A letter of remembrance from former manager **Jo Jurgens** was read during the retirement dinner. The Thompsons enjoy traveling and Norman had excelled in his photography hobby.

Norman and I have been colleagues and neighbors our entire working lives. He has always been there when you needed a helping hand.

Kids Volunteer As Pallbearers

AP. Joplin Globe, 1/31/99, Ambridge, PA

High school students, long known for volunteer work in places like hospitals and public parks, shouldered a different kind of burden in this aging mill town. They act as pallbearers at a funeral home where the deceased's mourners are sometimes too few or too old to carry a coffin.

For 15 years students at Ambridge Area High School have been volunteering about once a month as pall bearers at Kasper

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**Co-Op Casket Buying
Plan**

An AP dispatch in the Little Rock Democrat-Gazette 1/15/99, reported that the Justice Department had approved a plan by Family owned funeral homes to cooperate in obtaining cheaper caskets by joining together to buy them at bulk discounts. They made their request through the National Selected Morticians, a trade association that represents 865 mom-and-pop funeral homes. Assistant AG Joel I. Klein concluded that the plan would not harm either casket sellers or consumers.

Abandoned Cemeteries

Two stories in **Funeral and Cemetery Today, December 1998**, told about abandoned cemeteries. A cemetery in Newark, NJ had been leased for storage over the years and was buried under debris and garbage. Persons searching for relatives buried in City Cemetery, a potters field, with 18,000 burials from 1869-1954, are appalled and have sued the city demanding that the cemetery be restored.

In Florida the Abandoned and Neglected Cemeteries Task Force has been established to create a data base of unregistered cemeteries and gather information to formulate recommendations to the legislature in Tallahassee.

Almost daily there is a story somewhere about the discovery of an abandoned cemetery or communities and individuals struggling to maintain or restore a cemetery. These situations often present funeral homes with another opportunity for favorable public relations.

Assisting with setting up a management organization, recruiting volunteers, replacing markers are just a few of the opportunities available.

Occasionally desperate attempts by cemetery owners to provide maintenance and security collide with the wishes of survivors. Conflicts between funeral directors and cemetarians are also not unusual. Sometimes both parties need to back off and reassess how they can better serve their publics with understanding and cooperation.

Maumelle, Arkansas hopes to convert an abandoned historic cemetery to a park. The Pyeatte-Mason Cemetery has 10 graves dating to late 1812 or 1813. The area, known as Crystal Hill, was the original village settlement in Pulaski county. A family member now living in Springfield, Missouri has encouraged the city of Maumelle to restore the site which was placed on the National Register of Historic places in 1996.



Scattering Cremains in a Natural Area



**Native Grasses and Flowers
Reaching to the Sky**

For those with a love for the natural landscape, arrangements have been made with the private owners of **Golden Prairie**, a registered natural landmark, to scatter cremains on their property. In addition to the arrangements, a picture and GPS location of the actual site is included.

Memorialization for cremains scattered at any location is available in our Garden of Remembrance, a cremains burial and scattering garden with a memorial cenotaph.

For information contact:

Pugh Funeral Home

400 Chestnut, P.O. Box 145
Golden City, MO 64748-0145

Pets

For some people their pet companion is as dear as a child or sibling and they can be easily offended by a flippant or uncaring attitude. Years ago a strange little man kept dozens of cats and rabbits in his house. Once he inquired about embalming for a deceased feline that he found dead under his house. The unnamed funeral director explained that six weeks under the house was a little too long to accomplish a satisfactory job. A few years later he came into the director's retail store seeking some sort of casket or container for another dead cat. The director said he didn't intentionally offend him, it just popped out. He suggested a mail box so it could go "first class."

If we lived in a denser population area we would consider a pet cemetery/crematorium and merchandise outlet at some location. The last time I shopped a Petsmart they did not have any pet burial containers. A cooperative venture with a veterinarian animal hospital might be appropriate. At least let them know that you have pet grief materials. We also keep a couple of containers available for small pets.

A Knight Ridder Newspaper article by Carol McGraw explored various religions' and cultures' attitudes about animal souls and animal afterlife or the lack thereof. The piece is too long to reprint, but we have copies if anyone is interested. The point is that pet death should be in every funeral home's grief resource library. The ones we have given out have been very well received. Contact the DB for more information.



Welcome to the First Edition

(Continued from page 1)

photos of you, your employees, your building, or a community event your funeral home played a part in. Help us put a face with a name, readers want to see what you and your place look like. Now I can hear some of you right now saying, "I'm not going to take the time to sit down and write a story, then submit it." Not to worry, just call us and we will interview over the phone. Of course, if you want to submit a story in writing we will gladly accept it!

I would like to introduce Joanne Howard to you . She is the editor of the **Dead Beat**. Joanne is a Missouri licensed funeral director and a member of the Missouri Funeral Directors Association and the National Funeral Directors Association. For the past several years she has been the extended care coordinator of the Pugh Funeral Home and research Director for H.L. Pugh and Associates Consulting. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis earning her BA in psychology. She has completed some post graduate work in experimental psychology at Western Illinois University. In 1982 and 1983, Joanne was recognized by the Florida West Coast Chapter of the American Marketing Association for Outstanding Contributions as Newsletter Chairperson when she worked for Eckerd Drug Corporation. You should direct to Joanne all inquiries about story and photo contributions, advertising rates and guidelines for the **Dead Beat**.

Hope you enjoy our first and future editions of our **Caregiver's Soapbox, the Dead Beat**.

Financial Reports, Mergers, and Acquisitions

Activity in the prairie states, that we cover, was pretty dormant in the first part of the quarter. In late February and early March male greater prairie chickens began staking out territories, sparring with opponents and wooing hens. By the end of the quarter this activity had become very intense and less dominate competition was decimated as hens entered the trading arena. There were several mergers reported. Hopefully the end of the second quarter will show many dividends. Meanwhile millions of priceless spring flowers are bursting forth on the scene. Oh yeah, some months some of us made a little money and some of us didn't.

Picture of Prairie Chickens

Public Relations by Charlie Shipman

Greetings for Bartlesville, Oklahoma!

When sending your advertising message to an audience you need to consider several variables. Among them are the number and kind of people you want to reach. The kind of people has to do with demographics, for example, male, female, age, ethnic origin, funeral directors, income level, or zip code desirability. However for this exercise we are only going to look at number of people.

How much you should be paying for an ad? Because there are so many publications, with different ad sizes and rates, with choices of black and white or color, it's tough to know if you are getting your money's worth. Remember back in grade school when adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing fractions? Your teacher said, "Find the lowest common denominator first." That's what performing a CPM, or Cost Per Thousand calculation does. It takes different

items from the same category and compares them on an equal basis. For example, apples, oranges and bananas are all different, but they're all fruit. A CPM calculation can be performed for other media such as magazines, radio, TV, or newspapers. For example, get the ad rates for all the radio stations in one market and calculate a CPM per station. Or get the ads rates from all the magazines targeting a specific group and calculate a CPM per magazine.

The equation for calculating Cost Per Thousand is:

$$\frac{\text{Cost of Message}}{\text{Circulation}} \times 1000 = \text{CPM}$$

What a media buyer has to do is ask, "What is it costing me to reach 'x' number of people?" "Is that cost in line with other media I am considering?" When they say it's not about money, it is about money.

And when they say it's not about sex, it is about sex." In calculating the cost per thousand of any type of media, it's about making your advertising dollar work smarter and harder. It's about saving you money, so you can have more sex.

Charlie Shipman is an associate of H. L. Pugh and Associates Consulting. Charlie has owned and operated his marketing research company for eight years. Clients include: banks, savings and loan, pharmacies, and funeral homes. He is also a certified mediator in Oklahoma and Kansas specializing in dispute resolution for business

The Dead Beat Rate Card

Ad Size	Issues Per Yr	Cost		Annual Cost	Circulation*	Cost		1st Month Special Rate
		Per Ad	Per 1000			Annual Prepaid	Per 1000	
Full Page	6	\$265.00	\$0.78	\$1,590.00	2030	\$0.78	\$1,325.00	\$221
1/2 Page	6	\$225.00	\$0.67	\$1,350.00	2030	\$0.67	\$1,125.00	\$188
1/4 Page	6	\$185.00	\$0.55	\$1,110.00	2030	\$0.55	\$925.00	\$154
1/6 Page	6	\$165.00	\$0.49	\$990.00	2030	\$0.49	\$825.00	\$138
1/8 Page	6	\$145.00	\$0.43	\$870.00	2030	\$0.43	\$725.00	\$121
1/12 Page	6	\$115.00	\$0.34	\$690.00	2030	\$0.34	\$575.00	\$96

*Includes the states of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma

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Behind the Back Fence by Lowell

(Continued from page 4)

On one of the coldest days this winter, I skipped my morning walk on the prairie to sweep a little snow off of the walks and de-ice the hearse. While letting the car warm, I raised the hood and was surprised by the loose insulation hanging down from the hood and a pile of acorn and pecan hulls. **Ray Rawie** and **Olen Harbin** please take note. I don't need a new hearse. The hearse needs a new nut.

Speaking of squirrels, this past summer **Norman Thompson** and **Jo Jurgens**, Lohmeyer-Konantz funeral Home, Lamar, Missouri, battled a pest that insisted that the carpet on the back ramp was a lunch item. They don't cover these kind of things at the mortuary schools.

By now **Jo** is settling into her new position at Heckart-Gillespie Funeral Home in Sedalia, Missouri. We and the community of Lamar will miss **Jo**, **Rod** and their family. **Jo** was a major backup player for us.

Elsewhere in this issue I was commenting about abandoned cemeteries and funeral director opportunities. We had a lot of favorable comments about some unmarked graves that we bought markers for in a local cemetery that has a volunteer cemetery board.

The graves we donated stones for were: a 12-year old Gypsy girl who died as they were traveling through about 1900; an unidentified murder victim from 1922; and the local version of "Happy Hooligan: who died in 1927. A regional newspaper did a nice story about the event.

Unfortunately, I am not too good about following my own advice when it comes to dealing with the organization that owns our community's primary cemetery.

Too many late evening calls by the the big cheese to tell me they won't open the grave because the perpetual care wasn't paid. Of course, this usually happens when the person in charge did not plan on being here until the day of the



Sign in Front of Local

funeral or the family doesn't know where to look for a 30-year old receipt.

One recent year, four out of five families came up with receipts signed by the big cheese himself.

We hope the readers will bear with us on this first issue or two. Some of the news items are pretty old as we have been collecting and researching while awaiting equipment and trying to make decisions.

One thing we really need is input from funeral directors, embalmers and anyone else that works in the trenches. If it turns out that no one who wants to read this newsletter we'd like to find that out too.

(Continued on page 23)

Behind the Back Fence by Lowell

(Continued from page 22)

Joe E. Moreland from the Eddy-Birchard Funeral Home, Osawatomie, Kansas attended the Bruce Memorials seminar in Parsons. Joe was commenting to us that funeral service has not been doing a very good job of selling the value of the funeral service. We couldn't agree more. We have an article about that subject in the March, 1999 issue of **Mortuary Management**.

If I had a big sombrero I'd certainly tip it to the folks at **Morticians of the Southwest**. Their March issue reviewed "Grief in the Workplace," as aired on National Public Radio's **All Things Considered**. Their review covered many of the key points involved with grief in the workplace. Please excuse us for taking pride in the fact we have specialized in this concern by providing a funeral director's

continuing education course on the subject since 1995. See our ad in this newsletter and **Morticians of the Southwest**.



Joe E. Moreland and Sandy Pratt at Bruce Memorials Product Knowledge Seminar

Grief and Fear By Kenneth Doka

(Continued from page 2)

participated in hospice bereavement retreats. He went to a group for single parents. It helped him to feel that he was taking action to ease his fears.

Search Strengths Whatever helped us in the past when we were afraid may help us now. It may be faith, or the support of others. We need to tap into those sources now. And we need not be embarrassed. Peggy was ashamed about using a night light, but my advice was simple. It helped before, and it was helping her now. It hurt no one. She left the night light on, sleeping better in its glow.

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Kenneth J. Doka, Ph.D., is a Professor of Gerontology at the College of New Rochelle. Dr. Doka's books include **Disenfranchised Grief; Living with Life Threatening Illness; Living With Grief: After Sudden Loss; Death and Spirituality; Living With Grief: When Illness is**

Prolonged; Living with Grief: Who We Are, How We Grief; AIDS, Fear & Society; Aging and Developmental Disabilities; and Children Mourning, Mourning Children. In addition to these books, he had published over 60 published articles and chapters. Dr. Doka is the associate editor of the journal **Omega** and editor of **Journeys**, a newsletter for the bereaved. Dr. Doka has served as a consultant to medical, nursing, hospice organizations, as well as businesses, educational and social service agencies. As Senior Consultant to The Hospice Foundation of America, he assists in planning, and participates in their annual Teleconference. In 1998, The Association for Death Education and Counseling, honored him by presenting him an Award for Outstanding Contributions to the field of death education. In March 1993, he was elected President of the Association for Death Education and Counseling. Dr. Doka was elected in 1995 to the Board of the International Work Group on Dying, Death and Bereavement and elected Chair in 1997. Dr. Doka is an ordained Lutheran clergyman.

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