

# The Dead Beat



## The Caregiver's Soapbox



Summer, 2008

www.thedead-beat.com

Volume 9 Issue 2

### 100th Anniversary for Reeder-Davis Funeral Home, Inc. Hughes Springs, Texas

When Jimmie Reeder first began selling caskets in his retail business 100 years ago, Hughes Springs, Texas had no funeral home. Since then, he and two more generations of his family have continuously served funeral needs for northeast Texas families.

To celebrate those 100 years, Reeder-Davis-Schindler Funeral Homes hosted a party at their Hughes Springs location and all funeral directors were warmly invited.

The industrious Jimmie Reeder, who usually donned a derby hat, became well-known through his retail, funeral and insurance businesses. In 1951 he was recognized by the local newspaper as "Man of the Half-Century." Reeder was a devout Baptist at the town's biggest church, almost from the time he arrived in Hughes Springs at age 16. He actually came to Hughes Springs by train from his even-more-rural community of Lassater, TX to finish high school while doing janitorial work at the local store.



At age 28, he married schoolteacher Lizzie Everett. Their first son died of diphtheria at age seven and their second son died at age 16 of appendicitis. "My grandfather became convinced these deaths were a message from God that he should surrender to preach. So he became a preacher, in addition to running the quite successful store and selling funeral insurance," recounts Betsy Schindler, his granddaughter and co-owner of the family business. At one time he was said to have pastored seven churches at the same time, preaching at various hours. He preached at Bethel Cass Baptist for a while and served South Union Baptist and Cason Baptist for a couple of decades—all the while running his retail business, insurance company and funeral home.

With all his responsibilities, Jim Reeder was glad when his only living child, Leita, brought her husband Charles Davis home to live and work with him in the home where the next generation— Jim and Betsy— were raised. Reeder had taken a test to receive his funeral director's license in 1938, and Leita, who had earlier earned college degrees followed suit and received her license during World War II. Charles was drafted, meanwhile, and served in the Army overseas.

Jim Reeder's forte was in his devotion to the people he served, his granddaughter said. "He loved driving his hearse and sitting on the front row at funerals, and leading the procession to the cemetery. Some tell that in his later years he would stop a procession at an overpass if a train happened to be coming by. He didn't want to take a chance of the train falling through and hurting people in the procession."



He loved riding his horses and shared them with all

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Award  
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Epting  
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# Mortuary Muse\*

\*to think or consider deeply; meditate  
By Lowell

## We Are All On Page 436...But What Book?

I hate to bore our readers in states other than Missouri with our preneed problems...so if you are not in this leaky boat skip on over to the chuckles...again. I know—you looked there first.

Missouri Preneed regulations are covered under statute #436 which was under fire before the National Prearranged Services plunge into a Texas Insurance Department instigated receivership. Legislators considered revising, 436, the preneed law, during the last session but there wasn't time before the session's mandatory end.

Representative Tim Meadows and Senator Delbert Scott spoke at the MFDEA convention in June and asked all concerned parties to get together and submit a list of recommendations and revisions. They warned that all participants should be on the "same page"

before presenting their wish list to the legislative committee that will take up the issue in the next session. At this point (mid-July) the group has some common concerns, but it remains to be seen if they can agree on issues like the amount to be trusted, and how, portability, cancellations or even who should be selling preneed.

The committee includes several people each from the Attorney General's office, Division of Finance, Director of Legislation/Budget, Professional Registration, Department of Insurance/Financial Institutions, several insurance companies are represented by attorney or lobbyist or their own people. The State Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers are there including the public member and an inspector/investigator along with Funeral Consumers Alliance's (FCA) Josh Slocum, AARP, silver-haired legislators group,

SCI, preneed marketers, actual funeral directors that can spare the time to leave their business and the Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association (MFDEA). The committee needs to forward their recommendations to the legislative committees by August. I find it hard to believe that all of those committee members are even reading from the same book much less the same page.



About the Author:  
Lowell Pugh has funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the 104-year-old family funeral home. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.

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**Kimberly A. Sabella, CFSP—  
Mentor of the Year & Outstanding Partner Initiatives  
Wolfersberger Funeral Home—  
O’Fallon, Illinois**

**Mentor of the Year & Outstanding Partner Initiatives – Kimberly A. Sabella, CFSP**, owner and funeral director of **Wolfersberger Funeral Home, O’Fallon, Illinois**, was recognized as the Career Mentor of the Year by Southwestern Illinois College, Belleville, Illinois, at the 2008 Business, Industry, Labor and Education Partnership Breakfast.



Pictured from left are SWIC Trustee Eugene Verdu, Kim Sabella, Wolfersberger Funeral Home co-owner Jim Sabella and SWIC Trustee Philip L. Smith.

Kim is a native of Midwest City, Oklahoma and a graduate of Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma. She is the daughter of Rev. Forest & Patricia Weast of Ada, Oklahoma. Also, **Wolfersberger Funeral Home** was honored by SWIC at the partnership event for a long-standing commitment to helping students with career exploration. The

contributions that Kim has made over the past several years in her commitment to helping students with career exploration has earned her and the business this recognition. Kim regularly participates in career fairs for young people and area Girl Scouts. She represents her vocation at scholastic conferences, workshops for non-traditional career choices, faith-based seminars, and consults one-on-one with young people who express a genuine interest in Funeral Service as a career. It has been a valuable opportunity for Kim to be involved with the community and to share her experiences with young people.

**Batesville Trip**

On June 9th and 10th the Batesville Casket Company took a group of funeral directors from Missouri, Kansas and Illinois to the Batesville Plant in Indiana. For a new funeral director and old one alike it was an eye-opening time. The information that we received about the manufacturing of the caskets and the detail that goes into each and every one gave us knowledge to inform the consumer. Then the consumers can make an informed decision. Steve and James Carver from Walnut Lawn Funeral Home in Springfield, Missouri and 13 others from around the three states had a wonderful and educational time.



Group traveling to Batesville Casket Company.

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**Colleagues Lost or Found**

(If you would like to find someone in the funeral industry, let us know-  
[editor@thedead-beat.com](mailto:editor@thedead-beat.com))

**Meric Wood Products**  
Andover, Ohio



Meric Wood Products is a wholesale and manufacturing company headquartered in Andover, Ohio. They are proud to announce the introduction of a new line of Human and Pet urns. "Over the Rainbow" Urns by Meric Wood Products are handcrafted from the finest Appalachian and Northern hardwoods available. No composite wood products are used in the construction of their urns.

Their unique urn designs are available in various shapes, sizes and price ranges, in Cherry, Hard Maple and Red Oak. They are also pleased to announce a very special series of wood-burning designs by their artist Robin Leigh. He has thirty-four years of wood-burning experience. All of Robin's designs are done free hand; and he can customize a special photograph of a loved one.

Meric Wood Products is a family-owned business with over fifty years of experience in the woodworking industry. Meric has been supplying the kitchen, bath and furniture industries with quality wood components for years. Their factory is equipped with up to date CNC machinery, including milling machines capable of doing rope, flute and reed spindles, which you will find on many of their urns.

They can custom design an urn or pet casket to your specifications. The employees at Meric Wood Products stand by the American way, and take great pride in the quality and care that goes into every one of their urns.

They also do custom plant stands, candleholders, desk and furniture items. Visit their websites: [www.urnsbymericwood.com](http://www.urnsbymericwood.com) or [www.overtherainbowpetcaskets.com](http://www.overtherainbowpetcaskets.com) or [www.mericwood.com](http://www.mericwood.com).

**Behind the Back Fence**  
By Lowell



Robby Bates of DeKalb, Texas was catching me up on TFDA's convention which we unfortunately missed. He said they had a really good attendance. Robby will be running for a position on NFDA's policy board at the next convention. I called him to ask if the NPS affair drew a lot of attention at the meetings.

At the Missouri convention I looked out over the exhibition hall at the number of insurance and pre-need-related companies and wondered how much do we really know about any of them, other than what they tell us? All of us have friends among their reps, but do they always know what's happening? I think not. Are the rating companies competent... how would we know? Who checks on them? Do these companies have their own association/ethics monitoring groups? Perhaps the industry needs to take a closer look at themselves to build back consumer confidence.

We funeral directors are way too trusting or else our vision becomes clouded with images of dollar signs. Back in the early '90's when the attorney general and the state board won their case against NPS for 80% trusting, who among us would have thought that some division of government would never follow up to make sure that they did trust the required amount. I was surprised to read that the elected attorney general has to ask the politically-appointed insurance director for permission to investigate an insurance company.

Looking over the committee working on suggested revisions of MO#436, I get the feeling that the state government divisions will be posturing for their turf claims while trying to make up for the failure to enforce a flawed preneed law. Did some of the industries on the present committee have undo influence with the lawmakers in the original version? A colleague told me the other day that when he took his insurance exam, while he was a funeral director practicing in another state, he was told, "...the insurance company always wins."

This my antiquated, narrow-minded and unrealistic view of what the new preneed law should include: 100% trusting with easy portability and cancellation procedures compatible with family services; preneed contract and sales made only by licensed funeral directors employed by the selling funeral home; insurance company salespeople should focus on selling a good product that is not tied to a preneed contract

(Continued on page 30)

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# After-Thoughts— A Different Kind of Loss

By Joanne Howard

Loss— The fact of no longer having something or of having less of something. "Encarta Dictionary"

This publication started after the loss of my first daughter and my column was oriented to thoughts after a loss. But six years later, I lost my second daughter so I've talked about many things related to those losses. Many things are lost in relation to a death, but what about the other losses: broken relationships, divorce-loss of marriage, losing a job, moving- loss of close friend relationships and many other things.

Well, I had another type of loss lately. A tornado, straight wind, microburst or whatever took the cover off of my house's front porch. We had added it a few years ago when we had to have our roof replaced. It was held up by four posts and was a red metal roof supported



House without porch roof

by underlying wood structures. The sides of the porch were open over the concrete steps and small landing leading to the house. The roof mostly kept the weather off of us as we entered our front door.

So at 3:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 28 my husband and I awoke. I said, "I think something hit the house." He said, "We just lost the porch." After I got up and turned on the light, sure enough, the porch roof was gone. But where had it gone??

As we turned on the television and got no signal, we thought, "Oh boy, we're in trouble." But eventually we got a signal and a picture of the radar in our area was

showing. The radar showed a little hook over us which could have been a tornado. As the rain poured after the wind, we just stayed put in the house, but eventually my husband Claude went out to see if he could find the porch cover. It was in the far east side of our backyard. (We think an old electric wire caught it.) Backyard is not exactly a good description because we live on a farm and the metal structure was found on the east side between the grain bin and shed. It had a big hole in



Porch roof in back yard and underlying structure

the middle and seemed to be caught by an inactive electric line. One of the posts holding up the porch roof got pulled out of a concrete base and the other three poles were still standing without their cover. The cover was nailed to the house but had been ripped off, along with the vinyl siding and other overhanging parts.

Now the really scary part of this was it all took place only a few feet from our bedroom. But the sound we heard was the porch roof actually hitting the house roof and leaving a hole and several scrape marks. Several limbs were down and fescue stalks were laying everywhere, even in the wood that had attached the porch roof covering to the house.

But speaking of loss, I just felt so bad that we had lost our porch cover. Granted we will rebuild whenever the insurance is settled, but it was such a void like any



Damage from being ripped off

other loss. Though truthfully we should be very thankful we didn't lose more, but we have gone many years without the porch cover. We had only had it a couple of years but we still miss it, especially when it is raining and you are trying to open the door with no cover. The house looks so different and lost with just the three poles and nothing to hold up.

Isn't that how we feel when we lose someone to death too? That loss has left such a void. Of course, we can't replace that loss, but we can try to rebuild our lives. We know it won't be the same.

I questioned my husband if this possibly weakened the whole house. He didn't think so. But when someone dies, our whole lives do become weakened and will never be the same.

Hopefully we will get our porch rebuilt, but we wondered if we should do anything different. (I guess that depends on the insurance.) When we try to adjust to a lost person it will always be different because we can't replace that person and what they added to our lives.

Life goes on and we all adjust to our losses even though we miss everything that happened before our loss. But what would life be like if we never had any loss????

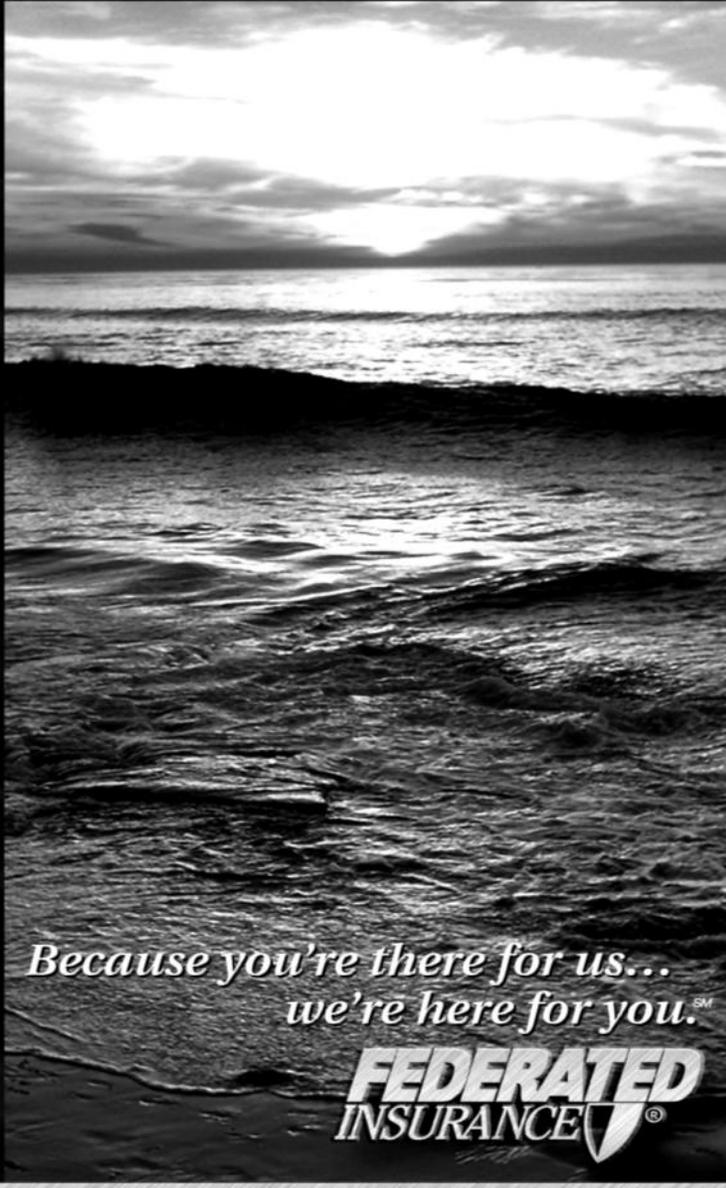


About the author: Joanne Howard is the editor of **The Dead Beat**. She has been a licensed funeral director since 1992 with Pugh Funeral Home in Golden City, MO and also the after-care coordinator. Much of her writing in this column is influenced by her loss of her two daughters Laura at age 10 in 1997 and Amy at age 19 in 2003. Any comments or questions can be directed to 417-537-4412, P.O. Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748 or email Joanne@thedead-beat.com.

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For additional information, please contact Midwest Autopsy Services, 9616 Jarboe, Kansas City, Missouri, 64748, phone/fax: 816-941-3200, email: [midwestautopsy1@aol.com](mailto:midwestautopsy1@aol.com); website address: [www.midwestautopsy.com](http://www.midwestautopsy.com)

## New Catalog and CD for Cherokee Child Casket Company

January 21, 2008, Griffin, GA: Cherokee Casket Company, Inc. announces the release of the new 2008 edition of the Cherokee Child's Casket catalog and CD.

The CD was created to allow funeral directors to show the child casket line on the computers now found in most selection rooms.

Many personalization options are now available such as pop-in panels, urns and memorial boxes. For a new catalog and CD call 800-535-8667 or email [c\\_casket@bellsouth.net](mailto:c_casket@bellsouth.net).



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## Holland Supply Expansion

Holland Supply, Inc. (<http://www.hollandsupplyinc.com>), a leading manufacturer of Cemetery, Burial Vault, and Funeral equipment and supplies has recently completed construction on a 12,000 sq. ft. addition to its facility. Holland Supply has experienced continued growth and the addition will be used for increased manufacturing, assembly and storage. Randy DeWilde of Holland Supply explains, "The expansion will enable us to continue our customer driven focus. With a greater variety of quality manufactured products offered directly to our customers, and shortened lead times, we will be meeting our goal of improved customer satisfaction."

## Outlook Group Holds Hawaii-Themed Sales Conference

Chicago, IL. On June 3-6 the Outlook Group had a company wide meeting with a theme "Aloha—We're Headed to Hawaii!" This was in recognition of the group's efforts to qualify all their affiliated Advance Funeral Planning Professionals (AFPP's) to attend Homesteaders Life Company –2009 Leaders Conference in Waikoloa, Hawaii. Meeting activities focused on celebrating the significant achievements of AFPP's, education, training seminars, interactive and motivational exercises.

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## It Is Fine to Remember

By Ken Doka

Whenever I walk by the park—I remember how my husband and I would walk there every day when we were dating. Even when we were married, it was still a special place. Now that he has died, I sometimes find myself drawn to it. When I walk in the park, I sort of feel close to him. I guess I just need to move on with life.



Evelyn's comments reflect the popular notions in grief that somehow it is problematic to remember. They reveal an idea that somehow living without a person's physical presence means that it is necessary to purge all memories of that individual.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The end of grief is not the end of memory. In fact, as the pain of our loss eases, our memories become more vivid. One of the first signs of healing is that now we can recollect and laugh at stories once too painful to recall.

Memories are natural, even unavoidable. Think how often a sight or a place, or even a taste or a smell, will evoke a remembrance long forgotten. We can no more control what we remember than what we feel.

Memories are often comforting.

They remind us of the person who died—bringing her or him closer, even as we struggle with loss.

Memories, too, connect us with others who are living. As we share facets of the person we knew, we learn more about that individual. I loved when my mother shared stores of her courtship with my dad. These stories revealed another side to my father. His sensitivity and love came through but in a different way than I knew as his son. These stories complemented our own, leading to a richer understanding of the man, not just the father, that he was.

Even the funny and amusing stories have their role. They provide a respite from our grief. They remind us of the joys evident in relationships. We can revel in these memories. They are the home fires that warm the chill of loss.

Memories can be a double-edged sword. Some memories may be painful. Reminding us of troubling times or difficult relationships. We can be obsessed by certain memories, reviewing time and again, actions or words that we regretted or wished we had done.

These painful memories, too, need to be confronted. Only when we fully

explore them can we truly understand them and find ways to release these problematic recollections.

Memory is part of the journey of grief. And as we journey, we simply need to choose which of these memories we will take with us and what memories we will examine and leave along the way.

\*\*\*\*\*  
This article was originally printed in *Journeys: A Newsletter to Help in Bereavement*, published by Hospice Foundation of America. More information about *Journeys* can be found at [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org) or by calling 800-854-3402 and is published monthly by the Hospice Foundation of America, 1621 Connecticut Ave., NW, #300, Washington, DC 20009. Annual subscription-\$12.00.

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 Grieve; AIDS, Fear & Society; Aging and Developmental Disabilities; and Children Mourning, Mourning Children.**

In addition to these books, he has published over 60 articles and chapters. Dr. Doka is the associate editor of the journal **Omega** and editor of *Journeys*, a newsletter of 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.

(And a heck of a nice guy— Editor & Publisher)



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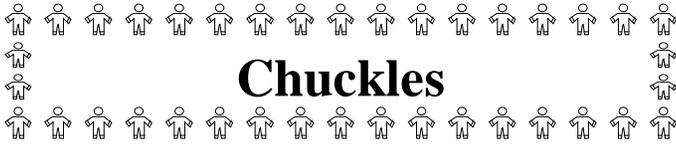
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Comments



Chuckles

Editor Note: My apologies if anyone has been offended by jokes in this column
Seniors

Just before the funeral services, the undertaker came up to the very elderly widow and asked, "How old was your husband?" "98," she replied. "Two years older than me." "So you're 96," the undertaker commented. She responded, "Hardly worth going home, is it?"

Reporters interviewing a 104-year-old woman: "And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?" the reporter asked. She simply replied, "No peer pressure."

The nice think about being senile is you can hide your own Easter eggs.

I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded and subject to blackouts. Have bouts of dementia, poor circulation, hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends. But, thank God, I still have my driver's license.

I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

An elderly woman decided to prepare her will and told her preacher she had two final requests. First, she wanted to be cremated, and second she wanted her ashes scattered over Wal-Mart. "Wal-Mart!" the preacher exclaimed. "Why Wal-Mart?" "Then I'll be sure my daughters visit me twice a week."

The Senility Prayer

Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

Nun at Hooters

A nun, badly needing to use the restroom, walked into a local Hooters. The place was hopping with music and loud conversation and every once in a while "the lights could turn off." Each time the lights would go out, the place would erupt into cheers. However, when the revelers saw the nun, the room went dead silent. She walked up to the bartender, and asked, "May I please use the restroom?" The bartender replied, "OK, but I should warn you that there is a statue of a naked man in there wearing only a fig leaf." "Well, in that case, I'll just look the other way," said the nun. So the bartender showed the nun to the back of the restaurant. After a few minutes, she came back out and the whole place stopped just long enough to give the nun a loud round of applause. She went to the bartender and said, "Sir, I don't understand. Why did they applaud for me just because I went to the restroom?" "Well, now they know you're one of us," said the bartender, "Would you like a drink?" "No, thank you, but, I still don't understand," said the puzzled nun. "You see," laughed the bartender, "every time someone lifts the fig leaf on the statue, the lights go out. Now, how about that drink."

Billy Graham was returning to Charlotte after a speaking engagement and when his plane arrived there was a limousine there to transport him to his home. As he prepared to get into the limo, he stopped and spoke to the driver. "You know," he said, "I am 87 years old and I have never driven a limousine. Would you mind if I drove it for a while?" The driver said, "No problem. Have at it." Billy gets into the driver's seat and they head off down the highway. A short distance away sat a rookie State Trooper operating his first speed trap. The long black limo went by him doing 70 in a 55 mph zone. The trooper pulled out and easily caught the limo and got out of his patrol car to begin the procedure. The young trooper walked up to the driver's door and when the glass was rolled down he was surprised to see who was driving. He immediately excused himself and went back to his car and called his supervisor. He told the supervisor, "I know we are supposed to enforce the law, but I also know that important people are given certain courtesies. I need to know what I should do because I have stopped a very important person." The supervisor asked, "Is it the governor?" The young trooper said, "No, he's more important than that." The supervisor said, "Oh, so it's the president." The young trooper said, "No, he's even more important than that." The supervisor finally asked, "Well, then who is it?" The young trooper said, "I think it's Jesus because he's got Billy Graham for a chauffeur!"



For twenty years four old friends had been playing golf every Sunday morning promptly at 8:15. One Sunday morning they noticed a guy patiently watching and waiting as they teed off. At every tee he seemed to catch up to them and waiting as they teed off. As they got to the fourth tee, the guy walked up to the foursome and handed them a handwritten card. The card read, "I am deaf and mute. May I play through your group this morning?" The players were enraged by the gesture and told the guy that nobody was playing through them and that he had just better get used to staying behind them. Two holes later, one of the foursome was in the fairway preparing to hit his second shot. As he was addressing the ball, he was suddenly struck in the back of the head with tremendous force by a golf ball, which sent him to his knees in agony. After a few seconds the player regained his balance and looked back up to the tee. There stood the deaf-mute, waving his arm in the air, holding up four fingers.





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## State Boards in the Media

The **Oklahoma** Funeral Board dismissed a complaint alleging the Moore's Eastlawn Funeral Home Chapel in Tulsa failed to remove a body from St. John's Hospital in Tulsa. The deceased was not removed for six days and he didn't receive his funeral until 15 days after his death. The city established a rotation schedule among local funeral homes to receive bodies when a family cannot be contacted. Moore's Eastlawn had no record of being called and the hospital refused to release phone records on privacy grounds. The body was received by Jack's Memorial Funeral Home on the day the rotation schedule changed. The board said none of their rules were violated and they did not have jurisdiction. The City Council has agreed to tighten their guidelines and the Funeral Board will offer advice about upgrading communication between hospitals and funeral homes.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Texas** Funeral Commission has recommended the revocation of the funeral license of the Griffen-Roughton Funeral Home of Corsicana and the licenses of two funeral directors. The story involving charges about preneed/insurance contracts was related in Mortuary Muse, the Early Spring issue. The Griffin-Roughton attorney claims the complaint is competitor driven as there were no consumer complaints.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Missouri** Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers announced an agreement with the FTC whereas the Board would not interfere with businesses selling funeral merchandise that did not do embalming or funeral directing. Apparently the funeral director licensing law passed in 1965 did not include purveyors of funeral merchandise that were not involved in embalming or funeral directing. With casket stores and internet sales several state's laws regarding their licensing have been struck down. Oklahoma's laws still remain in effect despite several challenges. (I think that is still correct.)



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## WB Morris Bram, Former owner of Bram Funeral Homes Hamilton and Kingston, Missouri Receives 70-Year Pin for Masonic Service



Brothers Jim Martin, David Swafford and Ben Martin present WB Morris Bram (seated) with his 70-year award and certificate.

On Saturday, January 26, 2008 WB Morris Bram was joined by WB James C. "Jim" Martin, WB T. David Swafford and Bro Benjamin C. Martin at his residence in Lee's Summit, Missouri for the purpose of presenting the prestigious honor and award of 70 years of Masonic Service. He entered the fraternity on October 5,

1937 and received his 25-year pin from WB J.C. Penney in 1962, later receiving his 50-year Masonic Service Certificate and Jewel in 1987. All of his service has been with the Hamilton Masonic Lodge #224 where he was a member of that Lodge's traveling Third Degree Team in the late 1930's through the 1950's, and where he began his line advancement.

He received a framed certificate and lapel pin issued by the Grand Masonic Lodge of Missouri. Karyl Thomas accepted the honor of placing the 70-year pin on her grandfather. He responded with a sharp remembrance of many Brothers of the past that he served with on the Third Degree Team and remembering the many good deeds that WB J.C. Penney did for the Hamilton community and especially for our Lodge.

WB Morris Bram has been long retired as a Funeral Director, former owner of the Bram Funeral Homes in Hamilton and Kingston, Missouri but continues to be a shining light to not only in our Community, but also, to the Hamilton Masonic Lodge #224.

# Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

## Industry Associate



**Kenneth Lee Farmer**, 86, died June 12 at Missouri Veteran's Home in Mt. Vernon, MO, but he was from Sarcoxie, MO. Mr. Farmer was the father of Betty Moss with Baxter Vault Company in Baxter Springs, KS. Services were directed by Housh-Goodwin of Sarcoxie, Missouri.



## IOWA



**Harold L. "Short" Petersiem**, 83, died June 23 of Kalona. "Short" was a funeral director for 61 years, owned Peterseim Funeral Home and held IFDA and NFDA memberships. Services were under the care of Petersiem Funeral Home of Kalona.



**Darrell Judson Veren**, 67, of Barre, VT, formerly of Cedar Rapids, died June 22. Darrell worked as a funeral director in Osage, Cedar Rapids and Monroe, Iowa and Columbia, MO.

## KANSAS

**Charles W. McNeese**, 61, died May 16. He had been a funeral director in Missouri and Kansas. Charlie was an OSHA consultant and frequent contributor to **The Dead Beat**.

## MISSOURI

**Ruby Leona Debo**, 84, died July 14. She was the mother of Robert L. Debo, Jr., formerly of Fulton. Services were directed by Debo Funeral Home of Fulton.

**Helen M. Lohmeyer Bacon**, 74, of Springfield died June 9. Her first husband was Herman H. Lohmeyer, Jr. Services were directed by Herman H. Lohmeyer Funeral Home, Springfield.

**Ella Lee Sterne**, 78, wife of David Sterne, died June 13. Services were directed by Sterne Funeral Home in Louisiana, MO.

## TEXAS

**Lon Bruce Bates**, died May 21. A 50-year licensee, he was an uncle of Robby Bates. Services were directed by Bates-Cooper-Sloan Funeral Home in Mt. Pleasant.

**Ronald Francis Bradshaw**, 49, died June 2. he was a co-owner of Bradshaw-Carter Memorial and Funeral Services in Houston.

**William T. "Bill" Ernest**, died May 30. He was the son of Michael and Marilyn Hurtt of West/Hurtt Funeral Home in Desoto who directed the service.



Denotes Veteran of Military Service

## TEXAS



**Ernestina D. Guajardo**, 86, died June 23. A licensed funeral director for over 50 years, she was president of Guajardo Family Investments, Inc. which owns Guajardo Funeral Homes. Services were directed by Don's Funeral Chapels of Lubbock.

**Bob Haynie**, died July 18. Bob was president of Woodlawn Funeral Home in Houston. Services were directed by Woodlawn Funeral Home.

**Joseph M. Jackson, Sr.**, died June 12. He was the father of Joseph M. Jackson, Jr., owner of Joe Jackson Funeral Chapels, Inc. in Laredo. Services were directed by Joe Jackson Funeral Chapels, Inc.

**Lucille Martinez**, of Victoria, died July 24. She was the mother of Adrian Fulton of Victoria Mortuary Service in Victoria. Services were under the direction of Charlie Marshall Funeral Home in Aransas Pass.

**Lena Murden**, died May 29, she was the mother of Richard D. Murden who owns and manages Wise Funeral Home in Bonham. Funeral arrangements were under the direction of McCaleb Funeral Home in Weslaco.



**Jess Navarre**, 76, of Baytown died July 13. He was owner of Navarre Funeral Home and Cremation Services. He was a 50-year licensed funeral director in Texas. His services were directed by Navarre Funeral Home.



**Joseph V. Osterhage**, died April 11. He was a funeral director for Laird Funeral Home. Services were directed by Laird Funeral Home, Nacogdoches.

**Patsy Robertson**, died June 7. She was the wife of Delbert Robertson, mother of Patrick Robertson and grandmother of Chuck Robertson and Cameron Word. Services were directed by Robertson Funeral Directors, Inc., Clarendon.

**James T. Wilson** of Harker Heights and licensed for over 50 years died June 16. He worked in San Antonio, Austin, Seguin and Georgetown. Arrangements were under the direction of Crawford-Bowers Funeral Home, Killeen, TX.

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If you know of a fellow funeral service colleague that has died that we have not included, please send the information and picture if available (The Dead Beat, P.O. Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748) or fax it to us (417-537-4797) or E-Mail to [Joanne@thedead-beat.com](mailto:Joanne@thedead-beat.com)



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## Reeder-Davis (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

the kids around town. He often sponsored unusual local events, a practice the Hughes Springs Chamber of commerce has brought back in recent years. "The Eubanks and Reeder building, which still stands, has two levels," Schindler recalls, "Often before Thanksgiving, he would release a live turkey from the top of the building. The bird would fly and the person who caught it would get to take it home for their Thanksgiving dinner." The local Chamber's revival of that event involved turkey replicas, cotton-filled, with coupons attached."

"Through the years, my granddad did a lot of things that weren't common," she continued, "several times a year, Grandpa would invite the public to an all-day picnic on his farm, located 10 miles southwest of town. He would bring out his horses and mules and donkey-cart for free rides. People would swim and fish from his homemade barge on the Fourth of July, Mother's Day and his birthday. He made certain there was a June 19th picnic and celebration for his African-American friends. At the last one—around 1960—more than 1,000 people came to his remote farm to spend the day and his picnics were written up in the Dallas Morning News."

"He was known for unique gifts. He bought his wife a parrot originally purchased during the Spanish-American War and later a monkey," Schindler recalls. "Some years, he planted a field of turnip greens and invited the community to come and get what they wanted. He was always giving things away."

When he made funeral arrangements, Reeder would often tell a family, "All you need is that \$300 cloth-covered wood casket," a price that included all services by the funeral home. "That frustrated my dad," Schindler said. Charles Davis had wanted to update the business and provide classy new cars and equipment and facilities, and the \$300 funeral made that very difficult."



**Jim Reeder getting ready for Christmas parade—1967**

The long-time merchant, funeral director, insurance salesman and preacher died at 88 in 1967, a few weeks after riding his horse in the local Christmas parade. He died without a whole lot of money because he continually gave away what he had.....

Reeder's son-in-law, Charles Davis, went to mortuary school in Dallas after the War and earned his funeral director's and embalmer's license in December, 1947. During Davis's term heading up the family business, the local steel mill began providing funeral insurance, which resulted in families wanting nicer funeral merchandise. The 2nd generation leader in the Reeder family



**Charles by new funeral home and hearse**



**Charles, Ruby, Ed and Jim Reeder With ambulance**

business built the funeral home facility now in use by Reeder-Davis, and he upgraded the fleet for the people he served. "My dad contributed tremendously to building our business and like most funeral directors of the day he worked very long hours between embalming, funeral directing and the insurance company, plus in early days he ran the city's ambulance service," Schindler said.

Charles and Leita Reeder Davis died in 1993 and 1994, respectively. Their son Jim gained a keen interest in genealogy, and helped maintain historical records on the family business. Their daughter Betsy Davis Schindler earned a degree in journalism at The University of Texas and then worked in the public information office of criminal justice in Austin.



**Charles, Betsy, Leita and Jim Davis—1969**

Until one October day at a NSM convention in Chicago, she told that she would never work in the funeral industry. "While I was always very proud of my parents and grandfather, I saw clearly the long hours and emotional toll involved in the funeral business," Schindler said. "My dad or grandfather had never been active in the state funeral directors association and it wasn't until I met my husband and other amazing funeral directors from all over the country through National Selected Morticians (NSM) that I began to realize just how special the funeral service is," said Betsy. "Our four children have grown proud of our business, although none have chosen to follow our footsteps," she continued. "All plan to be on hand for our centennial celebration from their homes in the Northwest and for that we are very pleased."



**Lyle H. Schindler Family-2007**  
Eden Milan, front row, From left Chelsea Schindler, Steven and Elizabeth Schindler, Betsy and Lyle Schindler, Lauren Milan, Kim holding Reagan, and Harold hold Harrison Lloyd. Not pictured are John and Hailey Milan

The unlikely meeting of the Schindler couple occurred on a street corner in Chicago, "In 1976, when my father was

(Continued on page 17)



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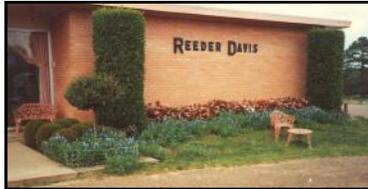
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## Reeder-Davis (Cont.)

*(Continued from page 16)*

selected for membership in NSM, he was told he was required to go to conventions. But, since my parents were the only licenses in our funeral home, both couldn't leave for an entire week. He asked me to go and I said, 'NO!' But then guilt set in and I reluctantly took a week of leave and agreed to meet him in Chicago," tells Betsy. "When I flew from Austin to meet dad, the airport shuttle couldn't get through because of the big Chicago Columbus Day Parade, so it dropped me off three blocks from my hotel



Reeder-Davis Funeral Home—  
Hughes Springs TX

and I had three heavy bags. Lyle, who had recently filed for divorce and was managing a mortuary in California at the time, happened to be there to meet his boss at the convention. He saw my plight and offered to carry my luggage. We were both embarrassed about meeting on a city street corner and did not exchange names. Later that day, though, we were formally introduced at the NSM meeting. And one year later, we were married," Schindler said.

Lyle, a native of rural Wisconsin, continued his job at Coleman Mortuary in La Habra, California, after the two married. In 1978, Lyle and Betsy came back to Hughes Springs and work for her overworked parents in the growing family business. Lyle who had completed California School of Mortuary Science 10 years prior earned a reciprocal license in Texas and thus began the third generation.



Lyle Schindler at work at  
Reeder-Davis

Betsy has since become licensed, after completing her studies online at Amarillo college while working at the family business. She said she would have earned her license much earlier if it had then been possible without moving from home to attend mortuary school.

During most of that 30 years since the third-generation joined the business, Lyle has been at the helm of Reeder-Davis Funeral Home, building himself a perpetual care cemetery adjacent to the facility and later buying out Hanner-Caver Funeral Service and Haaland's in neighboring Linden, where Milton and Romie Caver make certain things go right



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"Under Lyle's leadership, embalming in our business has been raised to a higher level. The closed casket here

is almost never necessary, unless it is just the family's desires. Lyle and his employee Ken Wade have reconstructed noses, ears, and entire faces to assist our families in dealing with tragic loss and to lessen their pain of dealing with tragedies."

Betsy commented.

Lyle has also become involved in the East Texas community, serving 18 years on the local school board, president of the local Chamber of Commerce, a term as East Texas Funeral Directors Association president, and member of Texas Funeral Directors Association state board.

"In our funerals, we've involved 18-wheelers and fire trucks, motorcycles and helicopters in funeral ceremonies. There have been saddles and chaps, lakeside cremation memorials, airplane flyovers and 21-gun salutes. We've buried a blues singer who was a Grammy-winner and we've had Grammy-winners perform at funerals. We've buried people with their pet's remains and with family heirlooms. One little boy tenderly insisted on putting his proudest possession, his newly-earned "All-Star" shirt in the casket with his granddad," Schindler commented.

Betsy emphasizes that her dad and grandfather and husband have

*(Continued on page 18)*



Reeder-Davis-Schindler Funeral Home—  
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**Reeder-Davis (Cont.)**

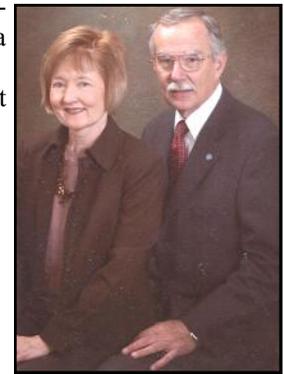
*(Continued from page 17)*

all run their business differently, but they were all dedicated to serving the needs of grieving families, without discrimination for race or any other reason. In Reeder's day especially, racial discrimination was practiced by most other white-owned funeral homes, especially in East Texas.

"Funeral service has been a wonderful calling for three generations of my family, a wonderful way to serve," Schindler pointed out. "Sometimes, the long hours are difficult but people are so appreciative of kindness... The sad situations we witness in the business don't allow us to feel sorry for ourselves. We encounter so many people who are suffering excruciating emotional pain."

They had a centennial celebration on Sunday, July 6 and they had lots of memorabilia on display and free souvenirs. As a special treat, American Idol's "Singing Funeral Director" Jason Horn performed a few songs in their chapel.

"And," quips Betsy, "as we say in East Texas, 'Y'all come!'"



**Betsy & Lyle Schindler (Above)  
 100-year Certificate from  
 House of Representatives (left)**



**Weird Facts**

- \*\*\*If you yelled for 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, you would have produced enough sound energy to heat one cup of coffee. (Hardly seems worth it.)
- \*\*\*A cockroach will live nine days without its head before it starves to death. (Creepy)
- \*\*\*Banging your head against a wall uses 150 calories an hour. (Don't try this at home, maybe at work)
- \*\*\*The catfish has over 27,000 taste buds. (What could be so tasty on the bottom of a pond?)

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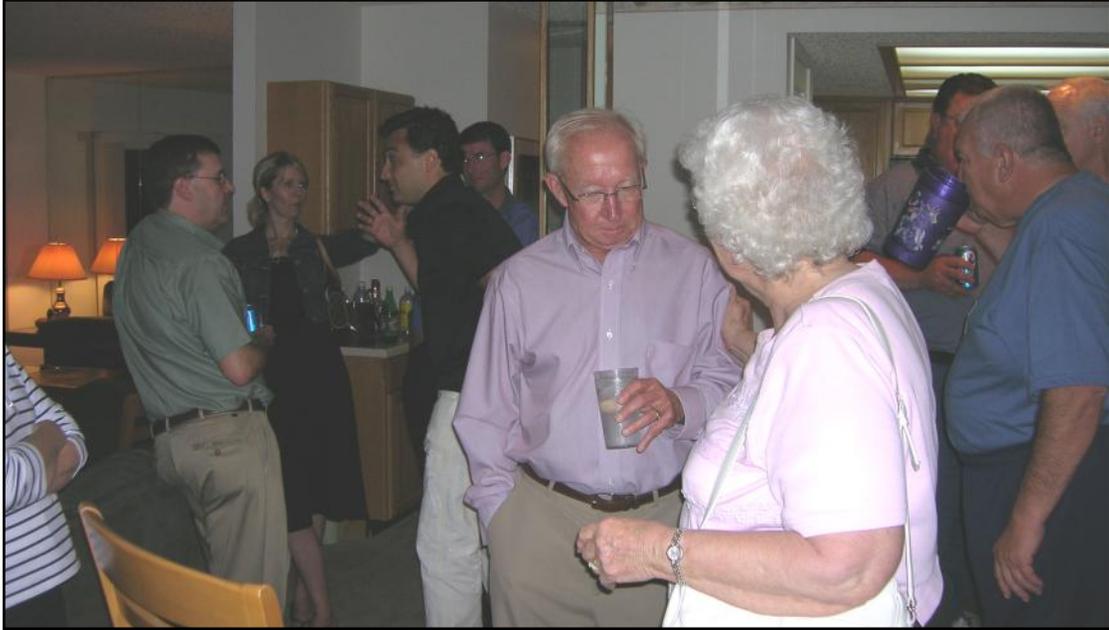
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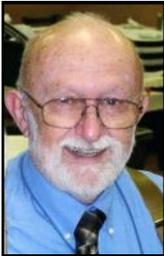
## MFDEA Convention—Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri



Web publisher's note:

“This page mostly blank. They just took too many pictures for my dual-core 2gig Dell to handle.”

**Lowell Pugh  
Received  
the Robert Knell Award at  
The MFDEA Convention**



Lake of Ozarks, MO: Lowell Pugh, owner of Pugh Funeral Home, Golden City, Missouri and The Dead Beat publisher received the 2008 Robert Knell Award.

**Lowell's Thank you  
To Officers, Directors and Members of the  
Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers  
Association**

Lowell Pugh,  
Owner of  
Pugh Funeral  
Home,  
Golden City,  
MO and  
The Dead  
Beat  
Publisher

With deep appreciation I thank you for honoring me with the Robert Knell Award for 2008. It is a privilege to be included with the past recipients of this award named in honor of our friend and colleague Robert "Bob" Knell.

I believe a piece of this award is shared by every funeral professional that has left a family celebration, answered the phone at 2:00 a.m., held a widow's hand in a hospital waiting room or breathed a solitary prayer by a lonely grave.

Thank you friends, may God's blessings surround you all.

Sincerely,  
Lowell Pugh

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**Don Freeman Retires  
After Long Career**



After 45 years of service as a funeral director, Don Freeman has formally retired effective June 3, 2008.

Freeman has served as managing director of Owens & Brumley Funeral Home in Burkburnett for the last 22 years. He began his career in the funeral service profession after graduating from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service in 1963. He enrolled in the Institute after earning a Bachelor of Business Administration from Texas Tech University at Lubbock in 1960.

Active locally in church and civic organizations, Freeman has held many leadership positions during his years in Burkburnett. As a member of the Burkburnett Rotary club, he holds the organization's Paul Harris Fellowship. He has served on the

Board of Directors of the Burkburnett Chamber of Commerce, Burkburnett Housing Authority, and Burkburnett Legacy Foundation. He is a charter member of Central Church of Christ of Burkburnett where he serves as elder.

Freeman said he plans to stay busy in his retirement. "I'm looking forward to spending more time with my wife Carol traveling and doing projects around the house," he said. Freeman added that he plans to continue selling cemetery monuments as he has done for many years. "I will also be filling in on a part-time basis at the funeral home when needed."

Freeman and his wife have two children, Chris and Lisa, and seven grandchildren.

"Over the past 22 years—in a business that is demanding in many ways—Don Freeman has been a steady and dependable friend to many, providing hundreds of families in the Burkburnett community and surrounding area the benefits of his sincere care, compassion and service." said Steve Mendenhall, owner of Owens & Brumley Funeral Homes.



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# “Dear Counselor....”

By Bill Stalter

**Dear Counselor,  
“Are my preneed funds protected  
by FDIC coverage?”**

FDIC coverage is provided for depository accounts maintained at banks and credit unions. While this would include joint bank accounts or certificates of deposits that funeral homes use to fund preneed contracts, there are certain limitations. FDIC coverage is not provided for other types of securities that might be held by a preneed trust.

Funeral homes that rely on bank accounts or certificates of deposit for preneed funding should consult with their attorney if the aggregate balance of those accounts exceeds \$100,000. The FDIC has special rules about joint accounts (including a requirement that joint accounts must be held by natural persons).

The security requirements imposed on banks by the USA Patriot Act have made it very difficult for funeral homes to set up joint accounts for preneed contract funding. Most banks now require all parties to the account to be present at the bank when the account is opened. Some banks may interpret the Patriot Act to prohibit a joint account between funeral homes and individuals. If the funeral directors circumvent the Patriot Act by having the account or CD titled in their name, the FDIC coverage is capped by \$100,000 per bank, and the funeral director will bear the responsibility of any uninsured losses.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Bill Stalter answers our questions for educational purposes only. It is *The Dead Beat's* intent to give the reader general information about legal issues, not to provide legal advice. If a reader needs legal advice, he or she should hire an attorney. Reading *The Dead Beat* should not be used as a substitute for legal advice from an attorney. When Bill provides legal advice he does so for Stalter Legal Services in Overland Park, Kansas. Bill also provides consulting services through Preneed Resource Consultants, which can be found at [www.prenneedresource.com](http://www.prenneedresource.com).



## Butler Funeral Home—Bolivar, MO Celebrates 50 Years of Service to Community

On June 21, 2008 from 11:00 a.m. to 2 :00 p.m. Butler Funeral Home in Bolivar, Missouri had a “Community Appreciation Celebration.” They had food, prize drawings and entertainment by “Lindley Creek Bluegrass” -The Greer Family Band. Honorable Michael J. Parson, 133rd District, Missouri House of Representatives presented the Butlers with a proclamation.



Kent Franklin and Steve and Jarolyn Butler



Tent with food and entertainment



Butler Funeral Home



Lindley Creek Bluegrass—The Greer Family Band



Special Guest



Receiving Proclamation

See article on next page

We need some questions for the “Dear Counselor....” column. Please send your questions to Bill’s e-mail or The Dead Beat’s and we will get some answers in future issues.  
email: [wastal@swbell.net](mailto:wastal@swbell.net)  
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**Butler Funeral Home—50 Years of Celebrating Life**

For five decades Butler Funeral Home has provided the very finest in arrangements to residents in the Bolivar and Polk County area.

Through those five decade of service, Butler Funeral Home has established itself as the premier funeral provider always within the financial means of every family.

Paul and Mary Lou Butler established a firm foundation of service that has been enhanced by their son and daughter-in-law, Stephen and Jarolyn Butler. Stephen joined his parents' in business in 1969 and Jarolyn joined the firm in 1989.

Paul D. Butler began his funeral service career with Erwin and Blue Funeral Home. In 1958, he and his wife, Mary Lou (Trogden) Butler, purchased the funeral home where they continued to work together until her death in 1988. Paul passed away in 2007.

Butler Funeral Home continues to be a leader in "personalization" where each family is afforded the opportunity to "celebrate" the life of their family member with photos and memorabilia.

For many years the Butler Ambulance provided a valuable service to Bolivar and Polk County

The staff of Butler Funeral Home pledges to continue to always better themselves and their facilities and to continue to offer the finest to the area's residents.



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#### PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

1. Lettuce be faithful
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3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another



#### NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another



#### TO CONCLUDE OUR GARDEN WE MUST HAVE THYME:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends



WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE

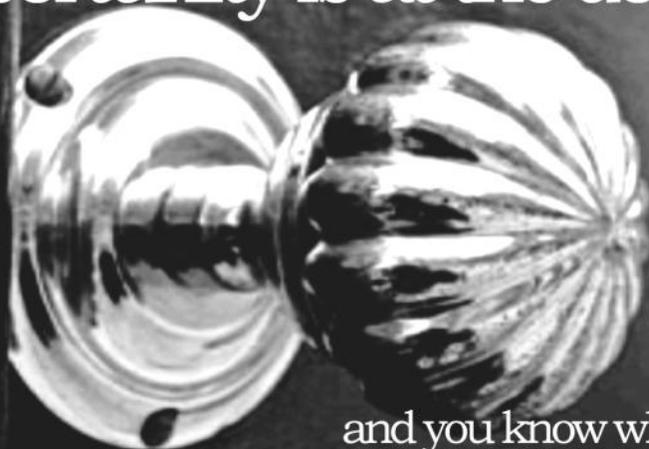
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2000 Lincoln Eureka Coach	Blk/Blk Ext/Blue Int	42,200 mi
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2003 Cadillac Eureka 6-Dr (2)	Silver Ext/Gray Int	29,000 mi
1999 Cadillac Eureka 6-Dr	Wht/Wht Ext/Blue Int	39,000 mi
1997 Cadillac M & M 6-Dr	Blk/Blk Ext/Black Int	68,000 mi
1991 Cadillac S & S 6-Dr	BlkTop/Silv Ext/Blue Int	63,100 mi

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# My Daughters' Passings

By Betty R. Chamberlain



It is hard and mighty lonely  
with this hurt no one can fix.  
Down the valley—lonely valley,  
'cross the river known as Styx.

Journey's over—then came dawning  
of the morning's brightest stars.  
They have made the trip to Heaven;  
I just marvel from afar.

Gone forever from the sadness  
of this world with all its pain.  
Oh, I miss them, always miss them,  
but my losing was their gain.

Joy forever and everlasting  
as they entered through the gate.  
In due season I will join them;  
all I need to do is wait.



Wait with keen anticipation;  
wait with Faith, and Hope, and Love,  
Wait to join them in that Glory  
with our Father up above.

I rejoice and feel most thankful  
that their pain is there no more.  
Praising God for all his mercy  
and the blessing held in store.

Yes, we all will cross that valley  
and the lonely river Styx.  
It's a trip we make once only  
and the time our Savior picks.

Let's be ready when He calls us;  
keep our eyes upon the prize.  
Heaven's just ahead and glorious  
that's a fact no one denies.

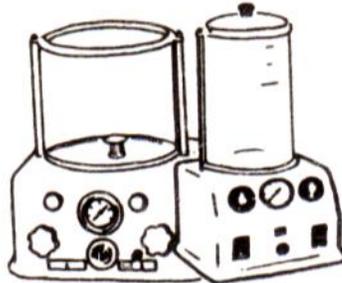
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**The Ghost Map:  
A Mini Book Review  
By Lowell Pugh**

For history buffs and those interested in pandemic disease disasters—readers might turn to Steven Johnson’s, **The Ghost Map**, Riverhead Books. Johnson details the story of the 1854 London cholera epidemic. The combined efforts of Dr. John Snow and the Reverend Henry Whitehead changes the course of scientific inquiry, the understanding of contagion and city planning.

Snow and Whitehead battled the unknown in one of the world’s first modern cities with two million people. They struggled with dense population amid overwhelming garbage, lack of clean water and sewers. Health practitioners and city administrators at the time did not even have rudimentary knowledge of how these factors interacted as the death toll mounted.

See how the conclusions eventually started saving lives and the relationship to our present pandemic studies.

**SCI Thrusts, Stewart Parries**

Under a Jefferson, Louisiana dateline, the **Houston Chronicle**, July 14 said the Stewart Enterprises’ board of directors had turned down SCI’s offer of \$9.50 per share (about \$1.3 billion) for all of Stewart’s outstanding shares. Stewart owns and operates 221 funeral homes and 139 cemeteries. SCI operates more than 2,000 funeral homes and cemeteries.

The article quoted a Banc of America Securities analyst as saying a merger between the two “would make strategic sense.” Sounds like the fencing may continue.

**Interesting Fact**

A funeral home in Lake Charles, Louisiana, J.E. Hixon & Sons Funeral Home has such a wonderful sweeping staircase that it has become quite the backdrop for photographs dealing with prom, homecoming and even brides. Only one rule, “Call the morning of a planned shoot to be sure a funeral hasn’t been scheduled.” The funeral home doesn’t charge to be used as a backdrop.

**New Funeral Home  
in Bentonville, Arkansas—  
EPTING FUNERAL HOME**

Ricky Epting and his wife Iris opened a new funeral home in Bentonville, Arkansas. The home is called Epting Funeral Home and is located at 709 North Walton.



They are Bentonville’s only locally owned and operated funeral home. They offer complex full-service funerals to basic cremations to fit each of their families’ needs. Their philosophy is “rather than doing the same service over and over, we make the specific service one-of-a-kind, just like the individual was.” They also feel that their affordability comes from providing a variety of services “that will fit into all budgets.”

Ricky moved to Rogers in 1990 from West Memphis. He graduated from Rogers High in 1996 and then graduated with a Business Management Degree from the Northwest Arkansas Community College. He has over 10 years of licensed experience serving for many years with Rollins Funeral Home and Stockdale Funeral Services respectively both in Rogers, Arkansas. Also he worked with Richard “Dick” Boles at Ozark Embalming Services also in Northwest Arkansas on evenings and weekends. Iris grew up in Rogers and graduated in 2004 from Ouachita Baptist University with a degree in accounting. She is currently employed by Cooper Homes in their accounting department. They are members of the First Baptist Church of Rogers.

Ricky has been the past president of the Northwest Arkansas Funeral Directors Association and is on the Board of Directors for the Rogers Noon Lion’s Club.

Ricky and Iris are now serving Bentonville, Rogers, Bella Vista and all the surrounding areas in Northwest Arkansas. They welcome visitors to tour their facilities that have made them very proud.

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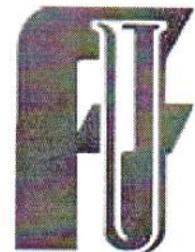
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Roger Richie, owner and Emily Stricklin, Hanley Coach Sales

## Behind the Back Fence (Cont.)

*(Continued from page 5)*

(and insurance companies should stop setting the prices of funerals in their TV ads); companies or folks who just want to sell preneed for a commission should find another line of work or check into a mortuary school. I guess that will do for a start. Express your views to the committee or your representative or senator and hope for the best.

**Reality Check: Funeral directors are going to have to find a compromise with the insurance and preneed marketing people because they are the only ones with enough influence (or money) to offset the pressure of AARP, FCA and others who would prefer us to vanish altogether. Heaven only knows what the state agencies want.**

About the Author: Lowell Pugh has funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the 104-year-old family funeral home. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.



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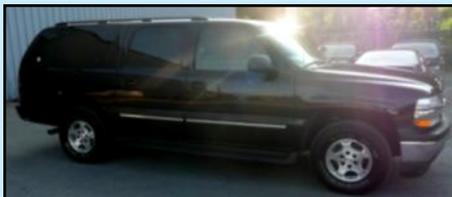


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