

The Dead Beat



The Caregiver's Soapbox



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

Spring, 2011

www.thedead-beat.com

Volume 11 Issue 5

Funeral History Tidbits– Part 1 Colonial Times

By Joanne Howard

Lowell and I presented a historical perspective of the funeral practices in our county to the Historical Society. When we finished we thought it would be relevant to present some of our historical research in a series of articles. Though funeral customs existed before colonial times, there were several historical aspects that were found interesting to present in this first installment.



Keeping in mind that the colonists brought with them a set of beliefs and institutions from the countries they had come from, some changes happened in the new world. The Puritans actually impacted their funeral practices when they dis-involved the clergy from certain ceremonial functions, including funerals. This broke with the Old World source of regulations. But

truly this lack of clergy involvement didn't last, funerals eventually moved back into the church and prayers were said at the graveside ceremonies.

Early New England felt that death was "a natural, inevitable, commonplace reality." Graveyards were familiar places to the living as well as resting places for the dead. The gravestones not only identified the body remains, but had epitaphs which served as a "medium of popular literary expression." Root searchers of today would find the epitaphs useful. Today's memorialization of stones with pictures of hobbies or interests and many other things seems similar to the epitaphs of the past, visual instead of literary.



The early funerals were described as "models of simplicity and quiet dignity." At the burial nothing was read or any sermon given. The people came together at the tolling of the bell and the dead were solemnly carried to the grave and stood by as the burial took place. At the end of the 17th century the sermons had returned after the burial.



Mourning took on a social character with "rings, scarves, gloves, verses and products of needlecraft all used to pay tribute to the dead" and given out to the attendees. The custom of making gifts to the living to announce funerals was brought to the colonies from England and a reflection of the past feudal system. The amount and quality of the gloves received became a symbol of social status. One example of excess was shown when a governor gave 1,000 pairs of gloves at his wife's funeral. The excesses of these gifts lead to law prohibiting "Extraordinary Expense at Funerals."

(Continued on page 24)

Other Articles in this Issue



Publisher Lowell's granddaughter,
Captain Samantha Spears and her
son Hayden
Pg 17



Amanda Jane Gooden
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Powell Funeral Home
Searcy, Arkansas
Pg 29

Amy Howard Art Gallery



The editor's daughter Amy, who was mentioned in our previous issues, was quite the artist and we've decided to display some of her artwork every issue in her memory. This particular artwork was made with pieces of colored paper.



Amy Howard

Thoughts shared by "Undertaker Jim"

A Christian says, "Good Morning God." A Non-Christian says, "Good God, it is morning."

 "It is never too early to give a hug, but you never know when it might be too late to give a hug."

 "A friend is a rare book of which but one copy is made."

 "It is not easy being perfect, but somebody has to do it."

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1. Everything you do will always leave a mark.
2. You can always correct the mistakes you make.
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4. In life, you will undergo painful sharpening, which will only make you better.
5. To be the best pencil, you must allow yourself to be held and guided by the hand that holds you.

We all need to be constantly sharpened. This parable may encourage you to know that you are a special person, with unique God-given talents and abilities. Only you can fulfill the purpose which you were born to accomplish.

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In Praise of the Limousine Coach

By Brian Simmons

Having read the very interesting article by Steve Holben in the last issue, it brought to mind an opinion that I have had forming for some time.

It's no secret that the public perception of funerals and memorialization is changing. Most younger to middle-aged people have had little or no exposure to funerals except possibly movies or television. One of the few vestiges of our business which is visible to the general public is the funeral coach.

Having said that, let me explain my enthusiasm about the return of the limousine-style coach.

I have been in Europe and even parts of the Caribbean where the European style glass hearses are used. We all remember Princess Diana's funeral and the exposure that hearse got going to the cemetery.

As they elegantly drive down the street, you cannot help but notice the polished wood coffins and flowers in the back.

Why not show off our caskets, urns, and flowers here. Let the public see the merchandise. Get that in their minds. Also, knowing that people will see the casket or urn, perhaps, the consumer might opt for a more attractive purchase.

It may be just subliminal marketing, but, hey, why hide our light under a bushel (or a pair of landau bows).



About the Author:

Brian Simmons a native of Ft. Scott, KS is a Vietnam veteran and attended MSU in Springfield. He owned and managed funeral homes in Missouri and Arkansas before founding Springfield Mortuary Service, Inc.

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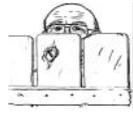
Funeral Director Tools and Briefcase
owned by Jim Wenburg of
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National Cemetery Administration display



Inside Horse-Drawn Carriage Coach
owned by Lynn Pederson of Gary, SD,
sponsored by Batesville Casket Co, built
sometime between 1960-1864 inside has
original casket rollers, five of the six deco-
rative wooden urns on top of origin.
Carriage Lamp is original



Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell & Joanne

I received a notice from a continuing education provider that my Texas license was up for renewal and they would provide me with the six hours of mandatory CE— on funeral service ethics, mortuary law and vital statistics— for \$125. I thought I had retired my license the last time around, but a few days later I got a reminder from the Texas Funeral Commission. TFDA goes to a lot of time and expense to bring CE to their meetings throughout Texas to help the licensees fulfill their renewal requirements.

Though it was convenient for a non-resident to take the mandatory six hours online or by mail. It doesn't seem quite right to get six hours credit for an exercise that probably took me less than an hour to complete. Does a provider certification process really meet the same standards for all CE providers?

Oh well, for me it is a moot point. Time and wear and tear on the body says it is time to leave the license on the shelf. I still do a fair job of opening the front

door.

Longtime Springfield, Missouri funeral director John Cox (see obituaries) thought by some of his colleagues/competitors to be a relentless adversary, occasionally came up to Cooky's Café for lunch in our town.

He often got a haircut at the shop next door to the restaurant. John and I had a few — well interesting discussions about funeral service. We appreciated the fact that John was an ardent moral supporter of The Dead Beat.

About the third issue we published, we received two or three rather harsh letters criticizing our lack of professionalism. A few days later John sent us a note of encouragement and referred to our harsh critics as a bunch of sanctimonious s.o.b.'s.

Thanks for the support John and we know you will be missed.

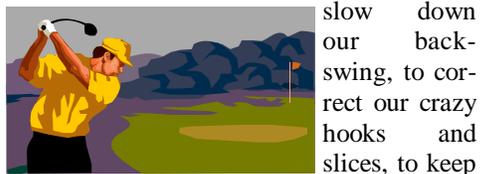
About the Author: Lowell Pugh has had funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the family funeral home which started in 1904. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.

A Golfer's Prayer

“Oh Lord, in the game of life You know that though most of us are duffers, we all aspire to be champions with plenty of birdies and eagles. Help us, we pray to be grateful for the course—including both the fairways and the rough.”

“Thank You that You have made it possible for us to tee off. Thank You for the thrill of a solid, soaring drive, the challenge of the dogleg, the trial of the trap and the discipline of the water hazard, the beauty of a cloudless sky, and the exquisite misery of rain and cold.”

“Thank You, Lord, our Pro, who shows us the how to get the right grip on life, to

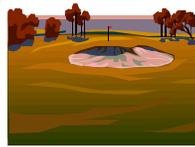


slow down our backswing, to correct our crazy hooks and slices, to keep our head

down in humility, and to follow through in self control.”

“May You teach us also to be good sports who will accept the roll of the green, the penalty for being out-of-bounds, the reality of lost balls, the relevance of par, the danger of the 19th Hole, and the authority of our special rule book, the Bible. Impress upon us that the Rules are for US too, that no one is exempt.”

“And, Lord, when the last putt has dropped into the cup; the light of our last day has faded into darkness of death; though our trophies be few, our handicap still only a dream; may we be able to turn in to You, our tournament director, at the great clubhouse, an honest scorecard to show we did our best.”



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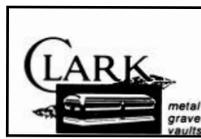
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(If you would like to find someone in the funeral industry, let us know—editor@the-dead-beat.com)

After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

Reinvestments

(Published in Alive Alone Newsletter)

Over the years there have been many reinvestments we (my husband Claude and I) have made for our daughters Amy and Laura. Laura died in 1997 at the age of one month shy of her 11th birthday from bacterial meningitis and Amy died in 2003 at the age of 19 from an automobile accident. My husband and I have remembered each girl on their birthday and death anniversary by performing specials at our church. I sing and he plays the organ. We do not always acknowledge that we are



doing it for that purpose but the church members that know of our situation with the girls know we are doing it for them.

After our second daughter died, we started presenting a scholarship at the local high school in their memory. We give \$250 to a deserving senior for their continuing education in college. We contribute to the fund on their birthdays and death anniversaries. We have also contemplated making prints of our daughter's artwork and sell them to generate additional funds. There is one meeting at the school of the scholarship committee that interviews all the students interested in scholarships for that school year. The committee determines who gets the particular scholarships. A representative for each scholar-

ship attends and some other individuals comprise the committee. Some representatives have particular characteristics that they are looking for in the students. In reference to our daughters, we like to support those that might be going into art or music or if they show strong feelings toward our Lord. We started the scholarship with the class of 2004. At the high school graduation we present our scholarship to the individual we selected. One of the hardest times of presentation was when our youngest daughter



Laura would have graduated. At that particular graduation we also presented a rose to every graduate in her memory after the service. Her graduating class was only 15 students.

I am a funeral director and editor of a magazine for funeral directors called "**The Dead Beat-The Caregiver's Soapbox.**" This magazine is sent mostly to 3,900 funeral directors in eleven states, but we also have a loyal following of non-funeral home individuals and we have been doing this bi-monthly for 11 years. I have a column in this publication called, "Afterthoughts." In this column I have discussed many issues I have dealt with in relation to grief and the girls and other grief related issues. Hopefully I have assisted people when I have de-

scribed what I have gone through or what I am feeling.

In this publication I have a couple more reinvestments in relation to my girls. The publication is supported

by advertisements and one of the advertisements is our funeral home's scattering in a natural setting and it has a picture of



my youngest daughter, Laura in a prairie setting. Her sister, Amy is also represented in the magazine by displaying a piece



of her artwork in every issue. Amy was an art major in college when she died and in addition to her artwork from high school she has had her own

on-going art show in the magazine.

These are just a few ways that we have remembered our girls and allowed them to continue to help even after their deaths.



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 aftercare 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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Mortuary Muse*

*to think or consider deeply; meditate
By Lowell

I related to the Ken Doka reference about reconnection in our last issue. An elderly man, about my age, came into the funeral home looking for cemetery records. Unlike many roots searchers, he did not try to bore me with Uncle Henry's life story. There was an authenticity about his manner that telegraphed a sense of personal urgency. The local cemetery records yielded nothing. He described an area a few miles from town and mentioned a name his mother had spoken of as a friend. I pulled out our earliest funeral record book and with a slight difference in spelling we found the name of his grandfather.

He learned the date of death, funeral and burial information and the cemetery. Events seemed to fall into place for him. The grandfather had immigrated from Swit-

zerland as others in the neighborhood and the funeral was at a German Methodist Church. In his memory he had reconnected with his mother by finding where his grandfather was buried. I made a copy of the record for him and he left to go to the cemetery.

The day before the gentleman had come in, I had just proofed Ken Doka's article on people's need to reconnect. This had been a perfect example and it had occurred after 107 years to the week from the grandfather's funeral.

Perhaps there is a reminder here for families that are unsure of how to dispose of their loved one's remains. When there isn't a tangible place of remembrance many years later how do you reconnect?

Oh, by the way, the coffin cost \$30, robe \$6 and hearse \$5, not bad for 1904 and our seventh call.



Noah's Ark Lessons

1. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
2. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something Really Big.
3. Don't listen to critics. Do what has to be done.
4. Build on the high ground.
5. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
6. Two heads are better than one.
7. Speed isn't always an advantage. The cheetahs were on board, but so were the snails.
8. If you can't fight or flee—float.
9. Take care of your animals as if they were the last ones on earth.
10. Don't forget that we're all in the same boat.
11. When the doo-doo gets really deep, don't sit there and complain, shovel!
12. Stay below deck during the storm.
13. Remember that the ark was built by amateurs & the Titanic was built by professionals.
14. If you have to start over, have a friend by your side.
15. Remember that the woodpeckers INSIDE are often a bigger threat than the storm outside.
16. No matter how bleak it looks, there's always a rainbow on the other side.
17. DON'T MISS THE BOAT!!!!

About the Author:

Lowell Pugh has had funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the family funeral home which started in 1904. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.



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The Importance of Self-Care

By Ken Doka

Grief is hard work. In fact, the work of mourning can sometimes be the hardest work we can do.

Since grief can be so difficult, we need to consciously monitor and retain our strength as we cope with our grief. It is sometimes said that "aging is not for sissies." Grief is not for sissies either!

Sometimes grief can even be physically painful. We may experience all sorts of aches and pains. Our stomachs may hurt, our muscles ache, and our heads may throb. These are normal reactions in grief as our loss can affect us on many levels, influencing not only our emotions but the ways we feel, think, believe, and behave.

Even though physical reactions to a loss are normal, taking care of yourself means that you ought to have such reactions checked by your physician. While these may simply be an aspect of your grief, you do need to remember that a loss can adversely affect your health. So, it is critical to monitor your health. Let your physician know about your recent loss.

There are a number of reasons for this. First, grief is highly stressful and stress negatively affects our health. Stress not only creates a whole series of problems—affecting, for example, our heart, blood pressure or digestion—it also suppresses our immune system, making us less likely to fight off other infections. Second, often when someone

we love dies, our own health practices suffer. We may not adhere to our medication regimen. We may ignore basic needs: failing to eat well, exercise, or get sufficient sleep. We also have to recognize that when a spouse dies, we may share some of the risk factors that negatively influenced our partner's health. For example, if our spouse smoked for 40 years, we may have been exposed to second-hand smoke. Watching our health is an essential element of self-care as we cope with loss.

Since we are under such stress in grief, we need to minimize additional stress as much as possible. That is why it is helpful not to make any significant changes after a loss such as moving or quitting a job. Any change brings additional stress at an already difficult time. Moreover, it removes us from our natural systems of support.

It is also helpful to assess your health habits, reviewing how they may have been affected by the loss. Are you sleeping well? Has your diet changed? Are you exercising enough? Are you taking medications in the prescribed way? Are you avoiding practices such as the excessive use of alcohol that can negatively influence your health and well-being? Once we examine our own health and life practices, we can begin to make the essential changes. When necessary, you can discuss any concerns, such as an inability to sleep, with

your physician.

We can be proactive as well. Are there things we can do to reduce stress? Each of us has our own ways to deal positively with stress. It may be listening to music, taking a walk in the woods or on a beach, or getting a massage. Reaching into our own spirituality, whether it is prayer, meditation, or any other spiritual discipline, often helps to reduce stress. Practicing ways to "de-stress" makes good sense in grief.

Grief is hard work. Like any hard work, you have to acknowledge that you need time off. Going out with friends, seeing a movie, or enjoying a concert offers temporary respite from your loss. It empowers you to deal with your grief.

Because grief is hard work, we need to face it as physically fit as possible. Taking care of ourselves is the first step as we cope with our loss.

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 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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Chuckles

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

Airborne

A doctor, a lawyer, a little boy and a priest were out for a Sunday afternoon flight on a small private plane. Suddenly, the plane developed engine trouble, in spite of the best efforts of the pilot the plane started to go down. Finally the pilot grabbed a parachute, yelled to the passengers that they had better jump, and bailed out. Unfortunately there were only three parachutes remaining. The doctor grabbed one and said, "I'm a doctor. I save lives, so I must live," and jumped out. The lawyer then said, "I'm the smartest man in the world, I deserve to live!" He grabbed a parachute and jumped. The priest looked at the little boy and said, "My son, I've lived a long and full life. You are young and have your whole life ahead of you. Take the last parachute and live in peace." The little boy handed the parachute back to the priest and said, "Not to worry, Father. The smartest man in the world just jumped out with my back pack."



Gynecological Visit



A middle-aged woman seemed sheepish as she visited her gynecologist. "Come now," coaxed the doctor, "you've been seeing me for years. There's nothing you can't tell me." "This one's kind of strange," the woman said. "Let me be the judge of that," the doctor replied. "Well," she said, "yesterday I went to the bathroom in the morning and heard a plink-plink-plink in the toilet. When I looked down, the water was full of pennies." "I see," commented the doctor calmly. "That afternoon, I went to the bathroom again and plink-plink-plink, there were nickels in the bowl," the woman continued. "That night," she went on, "I went again, and plink-plink-plink, there were dimes. This morning, there were quarters!" "You've got to tell me what's wrong with me!" she implored. "I'm scared out of my wits!" The gynecologist put a comforting hand on her shoulder, "There, there, it's nothing to be scared about," he said. (Ready for this?) (I'm warning you....) "You're simply going through the change!"

Even God Laughed!

Dear God:

I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that OK? Neil

Dear God:

Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you just keep the old ones you've got now? Jane

Jane

Dear God:

In Bible times did they really talk that fancy? Jennifer

Jennifer

Dear God:

I think about you sometimes even when I'm not praying. Elliott

Elliott

Dear God:

I am American. What are you? Robert

Robert

Dear God:

I bet it is very hard for you to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are four people in our family and I can never do it. Nan

Nan



Comments

"He loves the Dead-Beat!"

Associate of Kevin Czachor, ASD Answering Service

"I was recently introduced to your website by a funeral director in New Jersey. I found some educational and entertaining information on the site....."

David Robison, LDI Corporation

"Your article made me smile"

Rainy Day Miller, ZONTEC , International, Inc.

I just read your After-Thoughts article. Really liked the poem. ... My heart goes out to you over the loss of your Mother and two daughters. Both way too young to be living this old world.

Reatha Gooden, Zoeller Funeral Home, New Braunfels, TX

Three friends from the local congregation were asked, "When you're in your casket, and friends and congregation members are mourning over you, what would you like them to say?" Artie said, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man." Eugene commented, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful teacher and servant of God who made a huge difference in people's lives." Al said, "I'd like them to say, 'Look, he's moving!'"



Frank was on his death bed and gasped pitifully. "Give me one last request, dear," he said. "Of course, Frank," his wife said softly. "Six months after I die," he said. "I want you to marry Art." "But I though you hated Art," she said. With his last breath Frank said, "I do."

The Job

Early one morning, Pete, who worked at a funeral home, woke up complaining of severe abdominal pains. His wife rushed him to the emergency room, where they gave him a series of tests to determine the source of pain. When the results came back, the nurse informed the couple that Pete was suffering from a kidney stone. Pete's wife turned to her husband and asked, "Would you like me to call the funeral home now?" With an alarmed look, the nurse quickly said, "Ma'am, he's not THAT sick!"

Lexiphiles

Lexiphiles i.e., you can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish or I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me, etc.

- ◆ To write with a broken pencil is pointless.
- ◆ When fish are in schools they sometimes take debate.
- ◆ A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.
- ◆ When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U.C.L.A.
- ◆ The professor discovered that her theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.
- ◆ The batteries were given out free of charge.
- ◆ A will is a dead giveaway.
- ◆ With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- ◆ Show me a piano falling down a mineshaft and I'll show you a A-flat miner.
- ◆ You are stuck with you debt if you can't budge it.

(Continued on page 11)

Chuckles (Cont.)

- ◆ A boiled egg is hard to beat.
- ◆ When you seen one shopping center you've seen a mall.
- ◆ A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
- ◆ Police were called to a day care where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.
- ◆ Did you hear about the fellow whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.
- ◆ If you take a laptop computer for a run you could jog your memory.
- ◆ In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, its your Count that votes.
- ◆ When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
- ◆ The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine was fully recovered.
- ◆ He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
- ◆ Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.
- ◆ When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she though she'd dye.
- ◆ Acupuncture: a jab will done.
- ◆ And then there was the guy who fell into the lens grinding machine and made a spectacle of himself.

(You can groan now, if you haven't already.)

Blind Man and His Dog On A Plane

I was flying from San Francisco to Los Angeles. By the time we took off, there had been a 45-minute delay and everybody on board was ticked. Unexpectedly, we stopped in Sacramento on the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be another 45-minute delay, and if we wanted to get off the aircraft, we would re-board in 30 minutes. Everybody got off the plane except one gentleman who was blind. I noticed him as I walked by and could tell he had flown before because his Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of him throughout the flight. I could also tell he had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached him and, calling him by name, said, "Keith, we're in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?" Keith replied, "No thanks, but maybe my dog would like to stretch his legs?" Picture this: All the people in the gate area came to a completely quiet standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with the Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried

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to change planes, they also were trying to change airlines!

The Elderly Couple

A young man saw an elderly couple sitting down to lunch at McDonald's. He noticed that they had ordered one meal, and an extra drink cup. As he watched, the gentleman carefully divided the hamburger in half, then counted out the fries, one for him, one for her, until each had half of them. Then he poured half of the soft drink into the extra cup and set that in front of his wife. The old man then began to eat, and his wife sat watching, with her hands folded in her lap. The young man decided to ask if they would allow him to purchase another meal for them so that they didn't have to split theirs. The older gentleman said, "Oh, no. We've been married 50 years, and everything has always been and will always be shared, 50/50." The young man then asked the wife if she was going to eat, and she replied, "Not yet. It's his turn with the teeth!"

Laughter

"Laughter cannot mask a heavy heart, When laughter ends, the grief remains." (Proverbs 14:13)
"A happy face means a glad heart; a sad face means a breaking heart."

Laugh a little; it is the hand of God on the shoulder of a troubled world.

Lighten up. Don't sweat the small stuff, and remember, it is all small stuff.

He who laughs, lasts.

Give me a sense of humor, Lord;
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some happiness from life
And pass it on to other folk.

(From Wacky Wit by Vernon McLellan)



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“Dear Counselor....” By Bill Stalter

Dear Counselor,

I purchased a NPS preneed contract through a funeral home that has gone out of business. How do I transfer it another funeral home?

If you are not familiar with the circumstances of the failure of National Prearranged Services and its sister corporation Lincoln Memorial Life, a special deputy receiver was appointed by the Texas courts for those companies, and she maintains a website that can be located by Googling “Texas NPS Lincoln”.

The failure of these companies has impaired the benefits to be paid on all NPS preneed contracts. It is a very confusing situation, but many funeral homes have been forced to deal with the situation, and are attempting to help NPS consumers the best they can.

You should anticipate that the funeral homes you contact will seek information about your NPS contract. Some NPS preneed contracts are “orphaned”, which means they may not have any payment benefits. The review of “orphaned” contracts is ongoing. But, what this means to a funeral home is that there is a risk of payment to honoring an NPS contract, and that they may be reluctant to make any promises about performing the contract.

When you contact funeral homes, determine whether they are familiar with the NPS situation, and how to obtain information from the appropriate entities. This may differ from state to state.

Anticipate that the funeral home may want to determine what the prearranged funeral would cost at current prices. The funeral home will need to make inquiries to determine what will be paid on the NPS contract. It will be important to understand that the amount paid to the funeral home on the NPS contract will not increase.

Depending upon how much will be paid on the contract, the funeral home may be willing to “assume” the contract (or perform it according to its terms without additional payment). The funeral home may want to limit its promises or to require additional payment. Whatever the arrangement may be, it would be in everyone’s best interests to get the new arrangement in writing.



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.

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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 or bill@stalterlegal.com or editor@thedead-beat.com
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Batesville’s Abraham Lincoln Casket Replica Display



Batesville Casket Company has four traveling displays. This information and picture were forwarded from a friend at the Nebraska Funeral Directors Association Convention.

Authentic down to the smallest details (except for being lined with lead and the silver plate), Batesville’s replica is 6’6” long, constructed of solid walnut and completely covered in black broadcloth with a white satin interior. The outside is adorned with silver colored handles and silver tacks, or pearls, extending the entire length of the coffin’s sides. Lincoln’s original coffin included a silver plate in the center of the lid inscribed with Lincoln’s date of birth and death. This plate is not included in the replica.

The Director of Research & Development, Iljia Rodex, led Batesville’s effort to create the replica of Lincoln’s coffin as early as 1984. The project was in response to a request from an Illinois museum to manufacture the coffin for an exhibit. There is currently a waiting list for the Lincoln Replicas all the way into 2015.

Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

ARKANSAS



Billy Joe "B.J." Emerson, 81, of Jonesboro died March 8, 2011. He was owner and operator of Emerson Funeral Home which his father founded in 1932. He was a long-time operator of Emerson Ambulance Service, the oldest continuous ly-owned ambulance service in Arkansas. He served as Craighead County Coroner from 1960 until 1980. He was a U.S. Navy veteran where he served in the medical corps. Arrangements were under direction of Emerson Funeral



ARIZONA

Robert Michael "Mike" Warren, 56, of Tucson died April 2, 2011. He had been licensed funeral director since 1976. He worked for Green Valley Mortuary for 18 years and formerly worked for Chapel of Chimes in Glendale, AZ.

IOWA



Paul L. Chapman, 93, of Clarence died February 25, 2011. He was Honorary Member and Past President of IFDA and the father of IFDA member Paul L. (Chip) Chapman, Jr. and grandfather of IFDA member Daniel Chapman, both of Chapman Funeral Home in Clarence and Wheatland. He was a graduate of St. Louis College of Mortuary. And served in the U.S. Army for 4 years. In 1947 he established Chapman Funeral Home in Clarence and in 1955 in Wheatland. He was member of Iowa Board of Mortuary Science Examiners in 1976-1983. Arrangements were under direction of Chapman Funeral Home.



William J. "Bill" Kraus, 94, of Keokuk died February 23, 2011. He was Honorary Member of IFDA and the father of member and FSI Vice President Bob Kraus. He was owner of Greaves Mortuary and had been a licensed funeral director for 74 years. His services were under the direction of DeJong-Greaves Celebration of Life Center.



MISSOURI

Marjorie J. Bowles, 85, of Piedmont, passed away on March 27, 2011, 2010. She and her husband Marvin owned and operated Gish-Bowles-Coder Funeral Home of Piedmont for several decades. Services were under direction of Ruegg Funeral Homes, Inc. of Piedmont.

Jean Elinor Bryson 78, of Fredericktown passed away March 12, 2011. She was the wife of the late Dr. William Bryson DVM. They were owners of Bryson Funeral Home in Pilot Knob. The mother of Allison, Tracy and Mark and Allison operates the funeral home. Arrangements were under the direction of Bryson Funeral Home.

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

MISSOURI (Cont.)



John Cox, 85, of Springfield passed away March 16, 2011. He was U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII and the Korean Conflict. He was an employee of Klingner Mortuary from 1943-1964, at which time he became Manager of Greenlawn Funeral Home North, in 1966 when operations began. In 1981, he assumed managerial duty, as manager of Greenlawn Funeral Home South, where he worked until his retirement in 2005. Services were under the direction of Greenlawn Funeral Home South.



Joyce Oliphant Goddard, 90, of Grandview passed away on April 28, 2011. Her husband Sterling and her became partners in the E.K. George & Sons Funeral Homes in 1950s, Joyce played the organ for most of the funeral services. Services were handled by McGilley & George Funeral Home in Grandview.

Anthony J. Roth, died March 29, 2011. He is the father of Chris Roth, current president of MFDEA. Services were directed by Bopp Chapel in Kirkwood.



Carleen Schurman, 90, of Joplin, passed away on March 14, 2011. She was a licensed funeral director and along with husband Kenneth had owned and ran Schurman Funeral Home of Baxter Springs until retirement in 1977. Arrangements were handled by Derfelt's Baxter Chapel in Baxter Springs.

Donald H. Slater, 86, of Trenton, passed away on May 5, 2011. He graduated from the California College of Mortuary Science in Los Angeles, CA. He worked in Casa Grande, Arizona and started Slater Funeral Home on December 15, 1951. He was Grundy County Coroner from 1964-1980. Services were directed by Slater Funeral Home.

NEW MEXICO

Velten Frank Fritz, 96, of Albuquerque died March 12, 2011. He was a funeral director and embalmer at Strong-Thorne Mortuary until retiring in 1987. He was a graduate of the California College of Mortuary Science in 1941. He was in U.S. Navy during WWII as a Naval Armed Guard Radioman. He also had worked at memorial Chapel in Santa Fe.



TEXAS

Joan Adkins, of Commerce, died May 12, 2011. She is the mother of Pam Swindling, the owner of Commerce Funeral Home and Cremation Service. Arrangements were under the direction of Commerce Funeral Home and Cremation Service.

Mary Borel, of Gilmer, died February 26, 2011. She is the mother-in-law of Steve Murray and grandmother of Troy Murray of Croley Funeral Home. Services were directed by Croley Funeral Home.

Paul David Driggers, of Grand Prairie, died May 8, 2011. He was father of Gregg Diggers the funeral director and general manager of Grand Prairie Memorial Gardens. Arrangements were directed by Guerrero-Dean Funeral Home.



Gerald Paul "Jerry" Estes, of Sulphur Springs, died February 27, 2011. He was step-father of Montgomery Todd Hedgecoth of West Oaks Funeral Home. Arrangements were handled by West Oaks Funeral Home.



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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues (Cont.)

TEXAS



Robert L. "Bob" Fewell, 60, of Ft. Worth, passed away on March 22, 2011. He began his career in funeral service with Biggers Funeral Home, Meissner-Brown Funeral Home, Ray Crowder Funeral Home and then for 35 years with Greenwood, Mount Olivet and Arlington funeral homes. Services were directed by Greenwood Funeral Home.



Jack L. Fleming, 73, of Paris died April 1, 2011. He former funeral director in Paris area. He graduated from Dallas Institute of Funeral Service with degree in Funeral Directing and Embalming. Arrangements were handled by Fry & Gibbs Funeral Home.

Ira B. Smith, of Pittsburg, died on May 17, 2011. She was the widow of Erman L. Smith and former co-owner of Erman Smith Funeral Home.

Barbara J. Keller, of Houston, TX died April 17, 2011. She was the mother of Lois Keller Nelson of Cremate Texas in South Houston, TX. Her services were handled by Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Service.



Teddy A. Klein, 87 of Tomball, passed away on May 6, 2011. He was the owner of Klein Funeral Homes and Memorial Parks in Tomball, Champions, Magnolia and CyFair, which was founded by his father in 1922. He served as a member of the Board of National Selected Morticians serving as Secretary Treasurer I 1983. He served in the Navy and was assigned to gunner officer serving 18 months in the Pacific and participating Iwo Jim and Okinowa campaigns during World War II.



A Reminder

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush to catch the plane home, with tickets and briefcases, one of these salesmen inadvertently kicked over a table which held a display of apples.

Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they almost all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly missed boarding.

ALL BUT ONE! He paused, took a deep breath, got in touch with his feelings, and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned.

He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain his taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the terminal floor. He was glad that he did.

The 16-year-old girl was totally blind! She was softly crying,
(Continued on page 21)



Lou Kubena, 76 of Hallettsville, passed away on March 18, 2011. She was the wife of Robert "Bob" Kubena, owner of Kubena Funeral Home. Arrangements were under the direction of Kubena Funeral Home.



Porter "Porti" Loring, Jr., 82, of San Antonio died on January 14, 2011. He owned Porter Loring Mortuary after his father died in 1955. He had served two years in the U.S. Navy. He created a Bereavement Care Program in 1986, served as trustee or director in many funeral service organizations, both locally and nationally. He was Past President of National Selected Morticians (later renamed Selected Independent Funeral Homes), a member of the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice and TFDA. Services were directed by Porter Loring Mortuaries.



Vivian Grace Owen, 79, of Lubbock passed away on April 4, 2011. She was the mother of Mark A. Owen, the regional sales vice president of Funeral Directors Life Insurance. Services were under the direction of Sanders Funeral Home.



Farrell Rhine, of Early died on April 4, 2011. He was the father of Clarine Kellum, vice president of West Texas Funeral Directors Association and funeral director at the Heartland Funeral Home in Early who handled the service.

Eric Summers, 53, of DeSoto passed away April 22, 2011. He attended Dallas Funeral Institute and became a licensed funeral director and embalmer in 1990. He took over the family business Summers Professional Vehicles after his father's retirement over 20 years ago. Jaynes Memorial Chapel directed the funeral services.



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Publisher Lowell's granddaughter, Captain Samantha Spears, her son Hayden, husband Sean, mother Ivy Douglas (Lowell's daughter), brother Aramis Douglas and father Marshall Douglas. U. S. Army National Guard Oklahoma 45th Regiment

Captain Samantha Spears, husband Sean and her son Hayden



Publisher Lowell's granddaughter, Captain Samantha Spears and her son Hayden

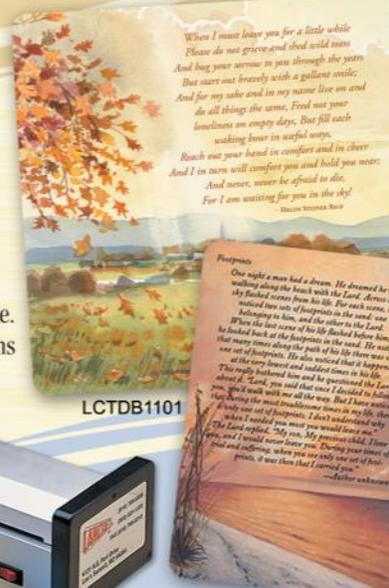
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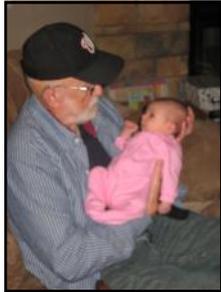
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**Publisher's
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Lynlee Carol Ingraham**



**11:30 AM, March 31st, 2011
7 lbs 8 oz
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**Great Grandpa
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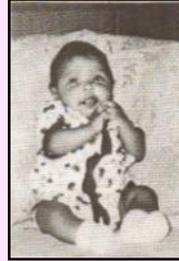
**From L to R—Papa Daniel Ingraham, Great
Grandma Betty, Lynlee, Great Grandpa
Lowell and Mama Lydia Ingraham**

What is a Grandparent?

Taken from papers written by a class of 8-year-olds:

- ◆ Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other peoples.
- ◆ A grandfather is a man & a grandmother is a lady!
- ◆ Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them. They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run. It is good if they drive us to the shops and give us money.
- ◆ When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars.
- ◆ They show us and talk to us about the colors of the flowers and also why we shouldn't step on "cracks."
- ◆ They don't say, "Hurry up."
- ◆ Usually grandmothers are fat but not too fat to tie your shoes.
- ◆ They wear glasses and funny underwear.
- ◆ They can take their teeth and gums out.
- ◆ They have to answer questions like "Why isn't God married?"

**Amanda
By Reatha M. Gooden
(Mamaw to Amanda Jane Gooden)**



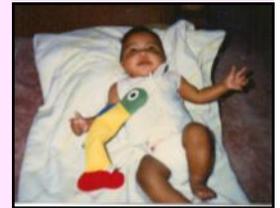
Amanda Jane Gooden

Sometimes, on a quiet, calm
Monday morning, I weep,
Because it was on such
A day Amanda went to sleep.

The days are oh, so empty.
As empty as my heart and arms.
She was cute and funny,
A little spoiled, that was her charm!

She was different, she was
Special, unique in a thousand ways.
She was giving, she was loving
And we'll miss her all our days.

Today, Heaven has a stronger
Pull from my heart-
Someday, when God calls me home
I'll know this time we'll never part.



God has promised in His word
To heal the broken in hear.
To give beauty for ashes,
When those we love depart.

Amanda was born Jan. 4, 1996

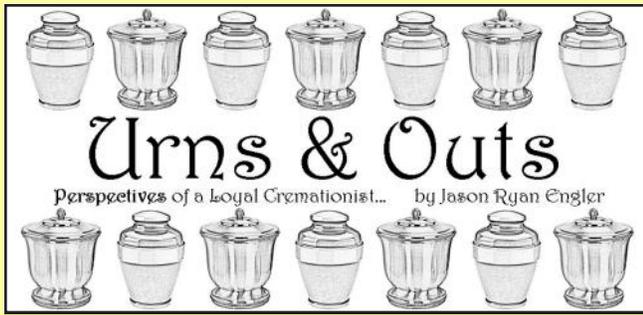


Reatha Gooden works at the Zoeller Funeral Home in New Braunfels, TX. She wrote this poem after her first granddaughter passed away from SIDS. Amanda shared four months with her family before leaving on May 6, 1996 in New Braunfels. Her mother was Tanya Maria Diaz and her father was Walter James Gooden.

and "How come dogs chase cats?"

- ◆ Everybody should try to have a grandmother, especially if you don't have television because they are the only grownups who like to spend time with us.
- ◆ They know we should have snack time before bed time, and they say prayers with us and kiss us even when we've been bad.

A six-year old was asked, "Where does grandma lived?"
"Oh," he said, "She lives at the airport, and when we want her, we just go get her. Then when we're done having her visit, we take her back to the airport."
Grandpa is the smartest man on earth! He teaches me good things, but I don't get to see him enough to get as smart as him!



This edition of Urns & Outs is a bit more personal, so please indulge me as I open my heart to you, my friends and colleagues.

I recently read the valedictory address by legendary Cremationist Dr. Hugo Erichsen, given during his exit as the president of the Cremation Association of America after serving as its president for over three years. In the address, he related the tale of a grief-stricken mother who came to her religious leader holding the lifeless body of her son and begged for him to be awakened from death. The master nodded gently. "First you must procure a mustard seed. Anyone will gladly give it to you, but it must come from a home in which neither father nor mother, or son nor daughter, or servant nor friend has seen death." So the woman departed and trudged hopefully from home to home, palace to shack, and everywhere she knocked the mustard seed was forthcoming. But when she asked, "Did a son, daughter, father or mother, friend or servant die in this house?" they all regarded her with boundless surprise and replied: "How foolish of you to ask woman, when so many have departed and but comparatively few remain." Thus she went from door to door, and received the same response wherever she went. She grew weary and silent. Finally, she retraced her steps back to the master from whose arms she withdrew her darling child. With a brave heart, she carried his body to the funeral pyre.

This story teaches that no one can live life free from the effects of death. Those of us who deal with the grief of others on a daily basis often get to the point where we feel immune to the sting of death, until death becomes personal through one we know and love. We know that death is part of life, and we must realize that death is only a separation of the body from the spirit. That which we know and love the most in our friends and loved ones, the spirit, lives on. Flesh and blood are not materials of the spirit, and it is only these that can die. Knowing and believing this, death loses its horror. Just last week, I said farewell to a dear friend. His death came suddenly and out of time with what seemed to be the logical order that one would consider for someone of his age. And as I spoke over his casket, just before he was gently committed to the purifying flame, I came to the raw and painful remembrance that death is going to happen to us all. Now I've had the opportunity to consider my own life, and I have realized once again that it is often the memories of our lives to the ones we love that give them the most hope and comfort when it's time to say goodbye.

With that realization, life becomes more virtuous and there is the means to focus on what truly matters on this side of the veil of death. And when my time comes for the veil to be dissolved and I cross to that region where life is eternal and peace everlasting, it is my hope that it is as easy for someone to speak about my life as it was for me to speak about my friend's. Until then, may I never take for granted that life is precious, and now is the time to love and live and laugh...

At least, that's my perspective.

Jason Ryan Engler is a Funeral Director in Northwest Arkansas. He has studied cremation and its history throughout most of his life. He can be reached at:

arcremationist@hotmail.com.



Murfreesboro, TN- Mor-bid.com has launched its multi-functional, fully automated website developed to facilitate the sale of new and used industry specific products. With nearly 30 years of combined funeral and cemetery experience, the staff at Mor-bid.com has a complete understanding of items needed to fulfill the obligations of the funeral professional.

Mor-bid.com offers a fun and safe place for funeral professionals to come and shop for both new and used items. Everything needed to equip your funeral home, transport-company, trade service, or cemetery is all conveniently placed on one website. Inventory will change frequently, so check the site often.

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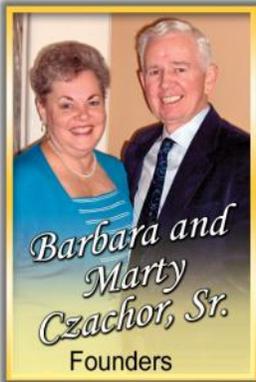


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ASD's Patching Feature Saves Business for Funeral Homes



Media, PA (March 25, 2011)—In today's economic climate, it is not uncommon for families to contact several funeral homes looking for price and other relevant information before choosing a provider that best suits their needs. The loss of a funeral service opportunity has a negative effect on all funeral homes' bottom line. ASD - Answering Service for Directors has responded to this "price shopping" phenomenon with a customizable "patching" option to ensure that funeral home clients never miss an opportunity to work with a family.

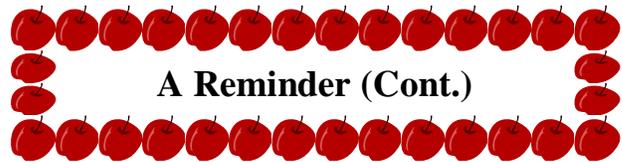
Family members frequently contact several funeral homes in search of one that meets their financial, religious and personal needs. Most do not have time to wait for answers to their pressing questions. Patching through these urgent calls gives family members peace of mind knowing they will be able to speak to a funeral director.

ASD's "patching" feature is completely customizable, allowing funeral homes to decide which calls are to be "patched" through to them. Based on the criteria selected, ASD will patch the call directly through to the funeral home or appropriate cell phone. "ASD is always working to increase our clients' ability to make the most of their business opportunities. Patching lets us protect these opportunities while meeting the needs of callers who want answers quickly at a stressful, difficult time", says Kevin Czachor, ASD Vice President and Family Member Owner. "ASD will continue to expand our portfolio of features to embrace emerging technology and the needs of our funeral clients."

About ASD

ASD is the leader in answering service and call support for funeral professionals. As a full service provider, ASD empowers directors and staff of funeral homes to offer the highest caliber of service, both at and away from the office. ASD's innovative technology and call support expertise have made it a national leader in the death care space. Headquartered in Media, Pennsylvania the firm offers comprehensive call support for funeral homes and funeral related businesses of all sizes. For more information about ASD's Patching feature, visit www.myasd.com or call the 24-hour customer service hotline at 1-800-868-9950.

Contact: Kevin Czachor, Vice President
 Kevin@myasd.com
 800-868-9950



A Reminder (Cont.)

(Continued from page 15)

tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her, no one stopping and no one to care for her plight.

The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them back on the table and helped organize her display. As he did this, he noticed many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket.

When he finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, "here, please take this \$40 for the damage we did. Are you okay?" She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, "I hope we didn't spoil your day too badly."

As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, "Mister..." he paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued, "Are you Jesus?"

He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with the question burning and bouncing about his soul: "Are you Jesus?"

Do people mistake you for Jesus? That's our destiny, is it not?

(Continued on page 28)

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Comment on “What is Happening to Us”

By John H. Carter

Edgar Funeral Home, Burnet, TX

What happened to service, the caring hand up when folks are hurting? I have been around this business sixteen years, licensed thirteen years of them. I have worked for three establishments; one of them being SCI and two family owned. People still look at me and ask “How do you do what you do?” I just smile and say...I was brought up in an environment conducive to this work.

My father is a church of Christ minister and has been for nearly fifty years. I was the son that would get up and get dressed and go with him to the homes of members of the church and sit with them especially when they had kids my age that had experienced loss. This I did because I genuinely cared about their well being. I was a being a true friend, I guess you could say that I was raised to be of service to individuals when in happy times and those times of hurting and loss.



In the sixteen years that I have been involved with the funeral business I have seen some good changes...but I have also seen some very bad changes creep into this business. I have seen where some establishments have gone from providing choices in product and services to sell, sell, sell mentality, saying to grieving families this is your choice and this is what you will do.

You ask, what are you talking about? I am saying that we are getting away from the ministering side of our profession, being a trusted friend. Some are worried about the almighty dollar more than the grieving families they serve.

One of the reasons I did not stay with the corporate owned funeral home was this very problem. Now that said, I am not singling out the corporation owned homes. Some family owned establishments have gone to these extremes also. We all are falling into this. I remember when I received a phone call from a regional manager telling me I was not selling enough of the Packages Deals. We all know them. The services, the Casket, the Vault and a bonus on your next paycheck based on what you talked the family into spending. I am not knocking it, it works just fine for increasing profits. But not everybody wants or can afford the high priced packages. I could have tried harder to push my families into expensive caskets and vaults and limos that the funeral that was offered by the funeral home I was with. But I knew that they had to go on with their lives after the funeral and make ends meet.



Folks, it is like this, if a waitress asked you upon finishing your meal, would you like some bread pudding?, and

you think about it for a moment and you would really like some but said no because it would cost more, or you were full, or you are trying to keep your girlish figure. Well you and I say that that is the waitress's job to get you to entertain the idea of spending more money by offering the bread pudding which would increase her tip, maybe you will indulge, maybe you won't, but it is wrong for the manager to jump on the waitress at the end of the night because you did not indulge in the extras you were offered.

This is where I drew the line. I really appreciated my current employer and friend Pauline Berry who died four years ago, when she interviewed me, she asked me “What kind of caskets do you prefer to sell?” and I said I do not sell caskets, I offer the choices to the families and let them pick what they want. I respectfully said “Mrs. Berry, I am not a salesman”. She smiled and said that that's what I wanted to hear young man...You are hired! We are a business yes and profit is not a cuss word. But we are ministers, comforters and we are sometimes considered like a family member. Families are trusting us to be above board, honest and ethical. I hear funeral directors utter the words “Why do we need Ethics as a part of our continuing education?” Short, we are becoming unethical in our practices. Folks.....families need to know that they can trust us to be ethical! We are a Christian-based business because God is the general theme in all funeral services. The funeral business is in for rude awakening. We are already seeing this in our cremation rates and casket stores that have popped up. People are getting more money conscience, they are shopping around more now than ever before. If the funeral business ceases to exist in the future it is our own greedy fault.



We all need to take a step back and examine ourselves and practices from time to time.

*Parting word; John M. Grimes, A well respected and successful Funeral Director and Funeral Home owner in Kerrville, Texas and one whom I hold in high regard once said to me “John, If you will just take good care of your families needs, The business will always take care of itself.”

That I believe, that I practice, and I encourage everyone to do the same.

John H. Carter
FDIC Edgar Funeral Homes
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Something to Think About

Provided by a newsletter from a church, someone has written these words. One must read and try to understand the deep meanings in them. They are like the Ten Commandments to follow in life all the time.

1. Prayer is not a "spare wheel" that you pull out when in trouble;  it is a "steering wheel" that directs us in the right path throughout life.

2. Do you know why a car's windshield is so large and the rear view mirror is so small? Because our past is not as important as our future. So, look ahead and move on.

3. Friendship is like a  book. It takes a few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.

4. All things in life are temporary. If going well, enjoy it, they will not last forever. If going wrong don't worry, they can't last long either.

5. Old friends are like Gold! New friends are Diamonds!  If you get a Diamond, don't forget the Gold! Because to hold a Diamond, you always need a base of Gold!

6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, God smiles from above and say, "Relax, sweetheart, it's just a bend, not the end!"

7. When God solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities; when God doesn't solve your problems, He has faith in your abilities.

8. A blind person asked St. Anthony: "Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?" He replied: "Yes, losing your vision."

9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them; and sometimes, when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has  prayed for you.

10. Worrying does not take away tomorrow's troubles; it takes away today's peace.

Pass these on to others which may brighten their day.




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Colonial Funerals (Cont.)

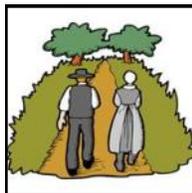
(Continued from page 1)

These gift giveaways began to eliminate entire estates and laws were passed to prevent that happening.

In the middle of the 18th century there was a basic pattern to the New England funeral. Upon death the body was washed and laid out by neighbors, a local carpenter or cabinet maker would build the coffin and in special cases “Coffin Furniture” or metal decorations were imported from England for the caskets. It was not customary for the body to lie in state.

The funeral service began in the church with prayers and sermon. This was an opportunity for some of the minister’s most inspired remarks and the sermons were printed and circulated among the public. Procession to the grave was on foot, underbearers carried the coffin on the bier, while pallbearers, men of dignity held the corners of the pall. If the distance was far, several sets of underbearers were used or the procession was marked by numerous rest stops.

Usually neighbors dug the graves and provided food and place to stay for the relatives and friends that had traveled



various distances. Besides food there was also a generous supply of liquors provided. The funerals became a social function and a public event.

New York and Virginia were known for different variations of the funeral due to the Dutch influence. They did include the lavish food, tobacco and liquor usage and some actually made provision in their will for how behavior was to be at their funerals. Was this the beginning of preneed and including the hospitality?

In the colonies during the 17th century there was little evidence of the undertakers as a profession. There has been research into records that record occupations, but undertaking was not noted until the first quarter of the 19th century.

Hearses were introduced in 1776 in Boston. The town bought and stored it for use in the city according to records.

Stay tuned for the continued historical tidbits in the next issue.

This material has been extracted from “**The History of American Funeral Directing**” by Robert W. Habenstein and William M. Lamers, Bulfin Printers, Inc. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1955.



NatureEarth® by LDI

Portsmouth, NH: LDI Corporation announces the launch of its new NatureEarth® brand of environment friendly and health safety products for the Death Care industry. This new initiative provides a convenient, one-stop source for innovative “Green” Funeral and Tissue Bank supplies.

There is a growing trend in the industry to seek out and offer green products that are better for the environment and human health. Whether it is the ability to offer green burial options to families, or a desire to be protected from exposure to toxic chemicals in the prep room, more and more people are interested in learning what they can do to make better choices. NatureEarth® by LDI provides a wealth of information and products to help with those choices.

At NatureEarth® by LDI’s website, www.greenmortuary.com, Funeral Homes and Tissue Banks can shop for green Burial Products and Prep Room Supplies. Customers can also read about Health & Safety Topics, including information related to formaldehyde exposure and the potential for toxic emissions due to PVC (vinyl) use.

LDI Corporation is an industry leader in providing environmental, health and safety solutions. “We feel there is a lot of confusion surrounding how Death Care professionals should approach sustainability. Our goal is to bring clarity and offer trusted solutions that can help improve employee health and safety while doing something better for the environment.” said Joshua Dame, Vice President for LDI.

For further information, please call LDI at 866-332-0700 or visit their web site at www.greenmortuary.com.

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Angels Among Us

Condensed from Rural Missouri, Feb, 2011
By Heather Berry



Michael Stephens had a message from God to make an angel and give it to a 20-year-old niece that was dying and it launched a mission to provide angels to terminally ill children and families that have had a child that passed away.

Interesting thing was that Michael knew nothing about sewing, let alone making an angel when he started. As he put it, “so I had to sit down and just figure it out.”

He did his first angel in 2001. Michael is a teacher in Sedalia, Missouri. He makes what he calls, “Divine Darlings.” He feels like his niece is still touching lives through the angels since the idea started with her. His niece was a special person who prior to her death had said, “It’s worth having this disease if one of you will walk down and come to know the Lord today.”

Michael mostly gives his angels away, but has sold some angels at craft shows to help subsidize the angels he gives away. It took him 13 hours to make the first angel, but now has it down to about 2 1/2 hours.

He’s know as the “Angel Man” around Sedalia. He feels that it truly is a ministry for him. Michael likes to deliver the angels when he can to see the recipient’s face. He’s drove as far as 200 miles to deliver one. The farthest one he’s sent is to Afghanistan in a camouflage material.

People have been quite generous in donating fabric and lace to him. He has made many angels, 12-inch, 17-inch and 22-inch tall but he had a special one that was donated to auction for a lady’s son who had leukemia and it brought \$600.

He’s made 6,000 to 8,000 so far and he’s adding memory quilts.

Michael says, “Whenever you think your life is bad, look at someone else’s battle. Yours usually doesn’t look as bad anymore.” Contact Michael at divinedarlings@yahoo.com.

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First Green Cemetery in Oklahoma

(Information from Central Rural Electric Co-op Magazine— by Jon Billman)

Bill Bernhardt, funeral director and cemetery owner, is the founder and president of Green Haven Cemetery Inc.—the first “green” cemetery in Oklahoma.

“A green cemetery is one that impacts the land and resources as little as possible.” From the Casket and Funeral Supply Association of America several statistics were given that may be reasons to consider green burial:

- ◆ Every year in the United States standard burials require roughly 30 million board feet of hardwood for caskets.
- ◆ Over a hundred thousand tons of steel are used in caskets and vaults.
- ◆ Nearly 2,700 tons of copper and bronze are used in caskets.
- ◆ Over 1.5 million tons of reinforced concrete goes into building burial vaults.

The Bernhardt family has been associated with funeral trade in Stillwater since the 1930s. He had his new plan approved by the Payne County commissioners last fall.

Green Haven rests against the Indian Meridian on an old farm. This particular county is not known for good water

which was why it wasn't heavily settled.

The cemetery will be atop a formation of shale and limestone with no threat of water. Most of the cemetery is an open meadow and the cemetery will be fenced. It will be mowed once a year to maintain the meadow habitat and they will try to over-seed with wildflowers.

The body needs to be prepared environmentally-friendly. Most of the people will not be embalmed and wrapped in a “shroud that is not synthetic.” The bodies will be transported by traditional coach to the cemetery, but carried inside by pallbearers and lowered into the ground by lowering board. Graves will be dug by hand and graves will be “36-45 inches deep,” and low enough to “keep the critters away.” There will also be no tombstones.

Green Haven will break with Green Burial Council and offer option of embalming. This will allow a service with the body present more easily.

The cemetery will be run as a not-for-profit endeavor and the \$600 plot price will go toward offsetting management and upkeep.

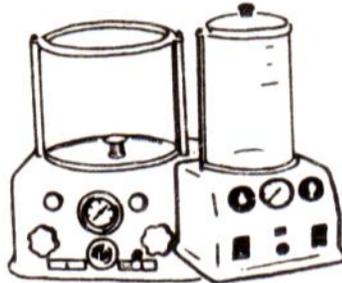
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“Let Go”

To “let go” does not mean to stop caring; it means I can’t do it for someone else.

To “let go” is not to cut myself off, it’s the realization that I can’t control another.

To “let go” is to not enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences.

To “let go” is to admit powerlessness-which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To “let go” is not to try to change or blame another; it’s to make the most of myself.

To “let go” is not to “care for,” but to “care about.”

To “let go” is not to judge, but to allow another to be a human being.

To “let go” is to not be in the middle, arranging all the outcomes, but to allow others to affect their own destinies.

To “let go” is not to be protective; it’s to permit another to face reality.

To “let go” is not to deny, but to accept.

To “let go” is not to nag, scold or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

To “let go” is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it.

To “let go” is not to criticize and regulate anybody, but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To “let go” is to not regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.

To “let go” is to fear less and love more.

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Reminder (Cont.)

To be so much like Jesus that people cannot tell the difference as we live and interact with a world that is blind to His love, life and grace. If we claim to know Him, we should live, walk and act as He would. Knowing Him is more than simply quoting Scripture and going to church. It’s actually living the Word as life unfolds day to day.

You are the apple of His eye even though we, too, have been bruised by a fall. He stopped what He was doing and picked you and me up on a hill called Calvary and paid in full for our damaged fruit.

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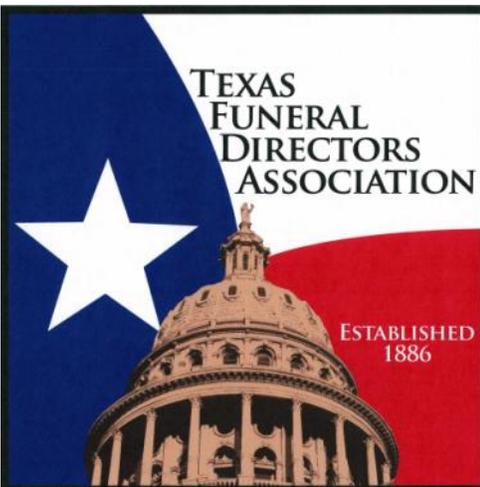
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