

# The Dead Beat



## The Caregiver's Soapbox



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

Volume 12

[www.thedead-beat.com](http://www.thedead-beat.com)

Issue 4

### Crazy Coffins

Info from [crazycoffins.co.uk](http://crazycoffins.co.uk) and Besancon Exhibition

A friend was visiting Ireland and he saw something interesting in an Irish newspaper (*Irish Independent*, January 20, 2012) on Crazy Coffins and we did some investigating. It turns out that "Crazy Coffins" is a subsidiary of Vic Fearn and Co., Ltd. in Nottingham, England. After contacting the company they sent us some information from an exhibition in Besancon, France and some wonderful examples of their work. Also there were many frequently asked questions on their website that gave insight into this unique business.

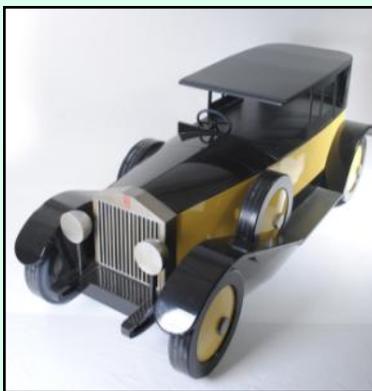
As described in the exhibition material, the coffins were "not the product of an 'English' sense of humour." They "could not speak for other coffin-makers" but those requesting unique coffins were "not in the mood to joke."



Guitar Coffin

For example, "An aunt rings up, the mother and the father being too distressed to speak; but a boy has died in tragic circumstances and they wish to inter him in a coffin shaped like a guitar. A guitar, that is, which is an accurate, though larger, reproduction of the guitar which he himself played."

The making of these individual coffins was a result of "the phenomenon of people designing their own rituals for funerals, and of commissioning special coffins to play a central part, is not the outcome of anything which Vic Fearn & Company has done." They were "no more than simple joiners; joiners making boxes for a humble, and sometimes humdrum, trade. And, in our own case, one hundred or more years of commitment to the trade had led us, by the year 1990, to have fallen practically asleep. We were woken, in that year, by Corinna Sargood, an illustrator and engraver. She ordered a conventionally-shaped coffin, with an oak veneer, then painted it in traditional canal-boat fashion, in order to accommodate her aunt.



Rolls Royce Coffin

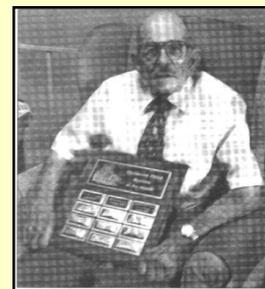
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### Other Articles in this Issue

Editor Note: The last lines of the cover article on Martha Raye in the last issue was missing. In case you were wondering: **For more information on her Vietnam experience:** [www.vietnameexp.com/morestories/MarthaRaye.htm](http://www.vietnameexp.com/morestories/MarthaRaye.htm)



Chisholm Trail Burial Park - Pg 4



Floyd Greenwood Pg 22



Funeral Home Landscaping Pg. 29



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Pugh Funeral Home—Golden City, MO

### Amy Howard Art Gallery



Amy Howard

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.

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## Mortuary Muse\*

**\*to think or consider deeply; meditate  
By Lowell & Joanne**

“Our bombs are smarter than the average high school student. At least they can find Afghanistan.” said by Whitney Brown.

This was sent to us in an e-mail from a friend giving cute sayings in November, 2002.

This isn't very funny at this time ten years later. Those high school students mentioned as not knowing where Afghanistan is probably now know only too well where it is located. There were many back in 2002 that joined the military or were called up in units which have now had two to three tours of duty in the country.

How many other things of the past that were humorous are not very funny now? How many things in the funeral profession have changed over the years? The evolution of the profession from regular services in churches with



the funeral home with the body present to the cremation and proliferation of the non-funeral home memorial services to more than ever frequency of the lack of services altogether.

How are you adjusting to the changes? How is the profession adapting to the various changes— socially and economically?

They are issues that we deal with on a daily basis or at least that is the impression we get from media. Are you really doing things differently than from the past? If you are isn't that the evolution of any profession? Something to think about.....

About the Authors:

**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.

**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. She is the FDIC of the funeral home and after-care coordinator.

They can be contacted at [editor@thedead-beat.com](mailto:editor@thedead-beat.com)

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## Announcement of Chisholm Trail Burial Park



Bill and Amy Stittsworth with the Amy Stittsworth Funeral Service and Cremation Directors of Enid, Oklahoma, announced the opening of the Chisholm Trail Burial Park. The green burial park is located Northeast of Enid, Oklahoma. With the growing demand for green burials, Bill and Amy decided it was time to venture outside the box, per se, and open Chisholm Trail. The burial park is open to all funeral homes servicing the needs of families requesting green burial. Upholding part of the tradition, burial in a shroud or approved wrapping is the only option. No caskets of any kind, vaults, or wood boxes allowed. Although the burial park will not allow embalming, there are certain circumstances that deem the necessity to yield to this policy. A special exemption will need to be received from Bill and Amy before scheduling a burial. Chisholm Trail Burial Park is available for scheduling 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can accommodate just about any burial time frame. "We have people we contact locally that are available on a minimum notice to open the grave or, you can schedule with either the family or one of your contractors to open the space. We do allow flat stones to mark the burial space, but require the purchase of the stone from our vendor." Bill and Amy are still available to provide full service funerals, cremation, as well as trade services for funeral homes. Please visit [www.chisholmtrailburialpark.com](http://www.chisholmtrailburialpark.com) or contact Bill and Amy at 580-233-9500 or toll free, 855-233-9500. See our ad in the Nomis Yellow Book on page 722.

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## John P. Donohue Funeral Home Marks Progress with New Website

**Fort Lauderdale, FL--**May 16, 2012-- [John P. Donohue Funeral Home](http://www.jpdfh.com), a greater Philadelphia funeral home, launched its new website yesterday at <http://www.jpdfh.com>. The dramatic redesign of the site by Funeral Home Resource, online marketing specialists for the funeral industry, represents John P. Donohue Funeral Home's vision and commitment to serving the greater Philadelphia community.

Bart Cavanagh, Jr., owner of the John P. Donohue Funeral Home, praises the new site for its soothing and uncluttered design, and for its user-friendliness. Cavanagh wanted to create a site that made it easy for people to get information about funeral services and cremation in Philadelphia, particularly those that prefer to begin funeral planning online rather than with a phone call.

With design input from the Funeral Home Resource team, Cavanagh created a funeral home website that

Is beautiful and calming?

Is easy to navigate?

Answers client questions about Philadelphia funeral planning?

Makes it easy for visitors to request more funeral service information without making a call.

A special feature of the site is the online memorials. John P. Donohue Funeral Home's Philadelphia area clients now have substantially more options for creating a unique online obituary posted on this funeral home website. Clients enjoy a full-page obituary with individualized background and icon elements as well as memorial photos and messages posted by family and friends.

Mr. Cavanagh is thrilled to present his new website, "At John P. Donohue Funeral Home, our focus has always been providing funeral services that best meet each client's individual needs. Our fantastic new website is a way for us to better serve our community, making sure the information they need is easy to find, and that we are easy to reach for assistance." Cavanagh is looking forward to using the new site's blog feature to share funeral and cremation information and answer visitor's funeral questions.

### About Funeral Home Resource

Funeral Home Resource, the outsourced online marketing department for funeral homes, grows market share for funeral homes through on-line marketing to families in need of funeral home and cremation services. Funeral Home Resource develops industry-leading websites at [FHRwebsites.com](http://FHRwebsites.com) and operates [FuneralHomeResource.com](http://FuneralHomeResource.com), the premier on-line directory of funeral homes. FHR is trusted by the most established, most respected names in the funeral industry, handling all their online marketing efforts and overseeing the creation, capture, delivery, and conversion of thousands of online inquiries for them each month. Funeral Home Resource specializes in no-risk performance marketing arrangements.

Contact: Ron Browning, CEO and President

Phone: 866.468.7968 x801

Address: 333 Las Olas Way

Suite 2708

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Website: <http://www.FuneralHomeResource.com>

<http://www.FHRweb.com>



# Behind the Back Fence



By Lowell and Joanne

We recently attended an annual cemetery meeting. The previous years they had complained about declining revenue and increasing expenses.



Suggestions to raise the space price was dismissed because they didn't want it to become an economic hardship on the local people.

So last year we proposed possibly designating an area for green burial that they could demand a higher space cost for the uniqueness.

Obviously our suggestion fell on deaf ears. Since this year they came up with a set of rules for the cemetery. Not only had they not taken to the green burial idea, they actually banned it in the rules, along with banning burying animals in addition to no kite flying. They are restricting ashes burials of four per grave space and the ashes were to be in metal containers. Maybe cremations have had an impact on their selling of new spaces?

Where are these restrictions com-

ing from, we haven't figured out yet. But our distinct impression is that it's not going to increase revenue.

Where have all these misconceptions come from? What are they so scared of? Is this a pattern in other cemeteries? Has the recent cemetery catastrophes and mishandling of cremains encouraged these rules? Did they watch "60 Minutes" in the recent past?

Well, I guess we have to put our kites away for now.....



About the Authors:

**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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They can be contacted at editor@thedead-beat.com

## Thanks to God

*Hello God,  
I called tonight  
To talk a little while  
I need a friend who'll listen  
To my anxiety and trial.  
You see, I can't quite make it  
Through a day just on my own..  
I need Your love to guide me,  
So I'll never feel alone.  
I want to ask You please to  
keep  
My family safe and sound.  
Come fill their lives with  
confidence  
For whatever fate they're bound.  
Give me faith, dear God, to face  
Each hour throughout the day,  
And not to worry over things  
I can't change in any way.  
I thank you God for being home  
And listening to my call,  
For giving me such good advice  
When I stumble and fall.  
Your number, God is the only  
one  
That answers every time  
I never get a busy signal,  
Never had to pay a dime.  
So thank you, God, for listening  
To my troubles and my sorrow.  
Good night, God, I love You too,  
And I'll call again tomorrow!*



## Colleagues Lost or Found!!!



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

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# After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

I recently sang at a funeral of a friend's mother. I was a last minute replacement and my husband was playing piano/organ for the service too. It was not at our funeral home, so it was a unique experience to only have to sing.



The minister doing the service was a past minister of our church. He happened to be the one who had done the funeral service of our oldest daughter.

When we first saw him, he asked for permission to talk about our daughter in the service. We, of course, said it was okay. He incorporated our daughter's life and contributions with a nephew of his and then ended talking about the deceased woman's impact.

It was wonderful that our daughter is still remembered almost nine years after her death. Obviously our daughter had made a big impression on this minister that he was still talking about her. He had mentioned to us that he didn't save his sermons so he would be fresh every time. But he had kept our daughter's funeral service and when he was down, he re-read it.

During the current service, he started off by mentioning the two people who had just done the music had lost two daughters and then preceded to talk about our daughter's service. I'm really not sure why he had to draw attention to us, but it kind of made me feel weird. Like the people would wonder how I

could get up and sing and my husband play if we had gone through this tragedy.

Well, my husband had mentioned he had to try hard not to get too choked up since he still had to play a solo. I luckily had already finished mine. But everything went fine because the minister had discussed much more about the woman the funeral was for.

So are you wondering where I am going with this? Your loved ones are not forgotten. Granted those close to deceased loved ones never forget. But there were many others that were impacted by their life/death and many years can go by and they still remember.

It makes you wonder how you are impacting those around you now. Will we be remembered long after our deaths? Will people fondly remember and even draw strength from our lives? I hope so. I hope that I care enough and truthfully am positive enough to be helpful to people even after I'm gone.

\*\*\*\*\*

Other on-going things like graduations, weddings, newborn babies, friend's grandchildren, etc; I think that I'm handling everything okay and then the, "Boy, I miss the girls, my mom, my dad, ...." I guess it will always be that way, but it becomes a bummer.



Remembering the things that you're missing is just something all who have lost loved ones go through. So, if you go on and on about things about kids and grandkids that are causing problems, keep in mind that if you are talking to someone who might have lost children wishes they had them still with them to experience good or bad experiences. Don't be surprised if you are reminded that at least you have the kids and grandkids. Not that people don't want you to have descendents, it's just that it makes those that won't, feel sad. Just something to consider.

\*\*\*\*\*

Also we have just celebrated Memorial Day. I hope you are able to remember your loved ones' great times with you and try to enjoy life until you meet them again no matter how long it takes.



In reference to Memorial Day may we remember those that lost their lives serving our country in the Armed Services too.



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 manager of the funeral home and 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](mailto:Joanne@thedead-beat.com).



Amy -3 yrs



Laura -2 yrs Amy -4 yrs



Laura -2 yrs



Laura (black) & Amy (red) Monuments

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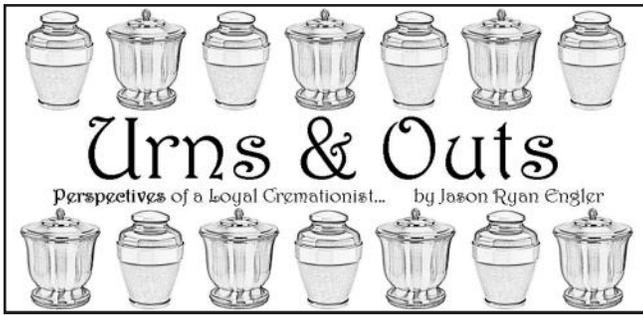
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“Let’s get this right for future historians.”

Do you know your history? The quote above was by Dr. Hugo Erichsen during the ninth annual convention of the Cremation Association of America, stressing the importance of accurately portraying what went on in the meetings. Philosopher George Santayana made a bold statement in his *Life of Reason* saying “those who are unaware of history are condemned to repeat it.”

Too many times have I walked into funeral homes or crematories, eager to learn history from the dubious workers, toiling onward to the goal of furthering the future of their place of employment. How unfortunate when the only thing learned is that they don’t know (and often don’t care about) the strife and troubles their forefathers dealt with, how they operated and worked on a daily basis, how they reveled in their moments of happiness.

On the other hand, another quote, this one attributed to writer Thomas Carlyle, calls recorded history “a distillation of rumor.” Sadly, this is often the case when looking back at the past. Perhaps it is because oftentimes history is only known by observing the traces that others have left behind.

On a recent vacation to the beautiful cities of Seattle and Tacoma in Washington, I had the opportunity to visit and pay homage to three of the oldest crematories in the country. Ironically, these three were typical examples covering the spectrum of what I have seen countless times in other historic Crematories I’ve visited.

First, was a crematory built in 1905, the pioneer crematory in the state of Washington, and only the 31st in the entire country. Here was an example of a location

where the staff knows some history, a lot of which, though, is based on rumors. For instance, in the basement columbarium rested the cremated remains of many early and prominent Seattleites in some of the most beautiful and unique urns I’ve ever seen. The community vault where cremated remains were placed by families who didn’t purchase a niche, had large bronze doors on the front. The space is labeled “Gold Vault: Original Retort” – yet is placed under a set of stairs that appear older than the vault itself. And is located in an area where it would be impossible to introduce a casket. Upon sharing information I have learned, their eyes, maybe, were opened.

The original retorts of this historic crematory were located on the main floor and were removed in the late 1930s to accommodate a new, larger building that was built around it. The staff knows the facility is historic, but it isn’t fully known or acknowledged. Luckily, a couple of members of their staff have shown some interest.

The second crematory in Washington, and the 35th in the US, is in a small cemetery in Tacoma. Under the care of a corporation, the columbarium, with its beautiful stained glass dome and exquisite display of cinerary urns, is one of the most beautiful examples in our country. The original crematory, located in an adjacent building behind the chapel, is exactly as it was when the facility was built in 1908.

The resident historian, Bill Habermann, has taken the time to learn the history of not just the cemetery (as is usually the case) but the crematory and columbarium as well. His research has been shared with the publisher of the book *Cemeteries of Tacoma* who have a nice space set aside in its pages. Through Bill, many residents of Tacoma have learned about the history of cremation in their city, and many members of the staff have been enlightened as well.

The third crematory I toured, which dates to 1921, is an example of the company who knows, loves, and appreciates their history. The staff of the funeral home, cemetery, crematory, columbarium and mausoleum is encouraged to learn about their history – and this history is embraced and treated as an overall asset to the organization. The columbarium is attended at all times and the crematory is kept spotless and is operated with the highest ideals of cremation’s code of practice. There is a thriving business, and will remain that way partly because their history is real-

*(Continued on page 22)*

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# Life Changes

By Ken Doka

One of the biggest problems we experience in grief is that we often become extremely frustrated with a person. This person simply is not operating as we have come to expect. He does not work as efficiently. She seems unable to concentrate or focus. Often the person claims not to be feeling well. Yet, we tire of the constant excuses. This person seems emotionally unstable even at times—crying or lashing out in anger at the most inappropriate times in the most unfortunate ways.

We are this person.

Grief affects us in all kinds of ways. Sometimes, grief upsets our physical health. We experience all sorts of aches and pains. We seem listless, devoid of any energy. Grief may influence our emotions. We may struggle with guilt. We may fume with anger. We may experience sadness, withdrawing into our shells.

We may be unable to concentrate. Tasks once readily accomplished now become tedious and burdensome. Our behaviors may seem out of control. We may cry at any occasion. We may feel empty spiritually.

This is the experience of grief.

The problem is that we become impatient with ourselves – resenting our inability to bounce back. We expect more of ourselves. Perhaps others share the same expectation that once the funeral is over that we can return to the way we were be-

fore the loss.

That simply cannot and will not happen. We are in a process that has its own time.

The first step is simply to acknowledge that process. We are grieving. This process has no discernable timetable. It is often unpredictable. We may have good days and bad days.

We need to accept that we cannot perform yet at our old levels of efficiency and feeling. This loss has changed us. We are in a stressful difficult period as we discover who we now are after this loss. We need to give ourselves time to cope with all the changes and to readapt to a world now different.

We need to nurture ourselves. We have to concentrate on taking care of ourselves. The basics become important once again. Are we eating right, sleeping well, exercising regularly, and monitoring carefully any medications we may be taking? Are we avoiding destructive habits such as isolating ourselves from others, ignoring our spiritual selves (however we define spirituality), or escaping into alcohol or frantic, meaningless activity.

More than simply avoiding bad habits, we need to cultivate self-care. What has helped us in the past? Do we need to walk in the woods, listen to soothing music, talk with a confidante or counselor, pray or meditate?

We need to be patient with ourselves.

A colleague, Jim Miller, once described grief in a series of photographs that depicted the seasons. Grief seems like a long wintertime. We seem to hibernate, feeling little progress or warmth. Everything seems dead.

Yet, this belies the slow subtle progress we may not see. Spring and the promise of a new, changed life seem so distant. But in its time, it will come.

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Kenneth J. Doka, Ph.D., is a Professor of Gerontology at the College of New Rochelle. Dr. Doka's books include: **Disenfranchised Grief; Living with Life**

**Threatening Illness; Living with Grief: After Sudden Loss; Death and Spirituality; Living With Grief: When Illness is Prolonged; Living with Grief: Who We Are, How We 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*

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### Copper Wire Discovered

After having dug to a depth of ten feet last year outside of New York City, New York scientists found traces of copper cable dating back 100 years. They came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 100 years ago. Not to be outdone by the New Yorkers, in the weeks that followed, a Los Angeles, California archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet somewhere just outside Oceanside. Shortly after, a story in the LA Times read: "California archaeologists report a finding of 200 year old copper cable, having concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network a hundred years earlier than the New Yorkers." One week later, a local newspaper in Warrenton, Missouri reported the following, "After digging down about 30 feet deep in his pasture in Missouri, Bubba (Dr. J.), a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely nothing. Bubba has, therefore, concluded that 300 years ago, Missouri had already gone wireless."



\*\*\*\*\*

A three-year-old went with his dad to see a litter of kittens. On returning home, he breathlessly informed his mother that there were two boy kittens and two girl kittens. "How did you know?" his mother asked. "Daddy picked them up and looked underneath," he replied. "I think it's printed on the bottom."



\*\*\*\*\*

### A priest, A minister, A rabbi

A minister, a priest, and a rabbi went for a hike one very hot day. They were sweating and exhausted when they came upon a small lake. Since it was fairly secluded, they took off all their clothes and jumped in the water. Refreshed, the trio decided to pick a few berries while enjoying their "freedom." As they were crossing an open area, along came a group of ladies from town. The men ran for cover, with the minister and priest covering their privates and the rabbi covering his face. After the ladies were gone and the men had retrieved their clothes, the minister asked the rabbi why he covered his face and not his privates. The rabbi replied, "I don't know about you, but in MY congregation, it's my face they would recognize."



\*\*\*\*\*

### Cute Sayings

"The problem with the designated driver program, it's not a desirable job, but if you ever get sucked into doing it, have fun with it. At the end of the night, drop them off at the wrong house."

*Jeff Foxworthy*

"A study in the Washington Post says that women have better verbal skills than men. I just want to say to the authors of that study: "Duh"

*Conan O'Brien*

"Remember in elementary school, you were told that in case of fire you have to line up quietly in a single file line from smallest to tallest. What is the logic in that? What, do tall people burn slower?"

*Warren Hutchenson*

## Comments

"Dad had given me one of his issue of The Dead Beat and I was enjoying looking through it when I noticed the section that asked if your funeral home has received an honor from the community and I thought of Dad's recent recognition and I wanted to share with you."

Janet Arnold, Topeka, KS

(Editor note: Thanks for info and everyone remember to send us things related to your funeral home and it's personnel)

Joanne,

I just finished reading your article, it really touched me. I have never read a "Dead Beat" magazine before. It comes to the office, but I've just never picked it up until today. I'm sorry for your loss of both of your daughters, I cannot even imagine...

Kim Tankersley, Bristow, OK

### "Holy Humor"

There is the story of a pastor who got up on Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

\*\*

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage. The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humor, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign..."Energy efficient vehicle. Runs on oats and grass. Caution: Do not step in exhaust."



\*\*

A Sunday School teach began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?" A hand shot up in the air. "He's an artist!" said the kindergarten boy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked. "You know—Our Father, who does art in Heaven...."

\*\*

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he puts a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES." When he returned, he found citation from a police officer along with this note. "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket, I'll lose my job. LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."



\*\*

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments." answered the lady.

\*\*\*\*\*

### This Won't Happen to Us

Two elderly women were out driving in a large car, both could barely see over the dashboard. As they were cruising along, they came to an intersection. The stoplight was red, but they just went on through. The woman in the passenger seat thought to herself, "I must be losing it, I could have sworn we just went through a red light." After a few more minutes, they came to another intersection

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Chuckles (Cont.)

and the light was red again. Again, they went right through. The woman in the passenger seat was almost sure that the light had been red but was really concerned that she was losing it. She was getting nervous. At the next intersection, sure enough, the light was red and they went on through. So, she turned to the other woman and said, "Mildred, did you know that we just ran through three red lights in a row? You could have killed us both!" Mildred turned to her and said, "Am I driving?"



\*\*

An elderly Floridian called 911 on her cell phone to report that her car had been broken into. She is hysterical as she explains her situation to the dispatcher, "They've stolen the stereo, the steering wheel, the brake pedal and even the accelerator! She cried. The dispatcher said, "Stay calm. An officer is on the way." A few minutes later, the officer radios in. "Disregard," he says, "She got in the back seat by mistake."



\*\*

As a senior citizen was driving down the freeway, his car phone rang. Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him, "Herman, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on Interstate 77. Please be careful!" "Wow," said Herman, "It's not just one car. It's hundreds of them!"



\*\*

Three sisters ages 92, 94 and 96 live in a house together. One night the 96-year-old draws a bath. She puts her foot in and pauses. She yells to the other sisters, "Was I getting in or out of the bath?" The 94-year-old yells back, "I don't know. I'll come up and see." She starts up the stairs and pauses. "Was I going up the stairs or down?" The 92-year-old is sitting at the kitchen table having tea listening to her sisters. She shakes her head and says, "I sure hope I never get that forgetful, knock on wood." she then yells, "I'll come up and help both of you as soon as I see who's at the door."



\*\*\*\*\*

### Punographics

- ◆ When chemists die, they barium.
- ◆ Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- ◆ I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop any time.
- ◆ How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.
- ◆ I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.
- ◆ This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.
- ◆ I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- ◆ I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- ◆ They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type O.



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- ◆ PMS jokes aren't funny; period.
- ◆ Why were the Indians here first? They had reservations.
- ◆ We are going on a class trip to the Coca Cola factory. I hope there's no pop quiz.
- ◆ I didn't like my beard at first. The it grew on me.
- ◆ Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- ◆ When you get a bladder infection urine trouble.
- ◆ Broken pencils are pointless.
- ◆ I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- ◆ What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- ◆ England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- ◆ I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.
- ◆ I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.
- ◆ All the toilets in New York's police stations have been stolen. The police have nothing to go on.
- ◆ I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.
- ◆ Haunted French pancakes give me the creapes.
- ◆ Velco what a rip off!
- ◆ A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- ◆ Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
- ◆ The earthquake in Washington obviously was the government's fault.
- ◆ Be kind to your dentist. He has fillings too.

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**“Dear Counselor....” By Bill Stalter**

**Dear Counselor,**

*One of our local cemeteries now offers a ‘second interment right.’ What is a second interment right?*

The most common meaning of a ‘second interment right’ is the right to inter cremated remains within a grave space that has already been used. The purchase of a grave space is for the interment of a single body. Ownership of the grave space does not convey any right to use the plot for additional interments. When one spouse outlives the other by several years, cremation is a frequent option. Rather than purchase another grave space (or use a previously purchased space) the family will often want to place Mom’s ashes with Dad. To accommodate this practice, the cemetery will sell a second right of interment to Dad’s grave space. One issue families will want to ask about is whether the ‘second right of interment’ is subject to an endowed care contribution requirement. Most states’ cemetery laws base their endowed care contribution requirements on the sale of an interment right. Some cemeteries consider the second interment right to be a service, rather than an interment right. A less frequent meaning of second interment right is where a cemetery will allow the grave to be dug twice as deep to accommodate two burials. Most cemeteries refer to this as double depth spaces. However, some do refer to the deeper burial as a second interment right.



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).

**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.**

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**Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC (GMA), and Global Mortuary Logistics (GML) Acquire Weatherford Mortuary Services, in Weatherford, Texas**

DALLAS, TX: David Patterson, owner of Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC (GMA), and Global Mortuary Logistics (GML) announced today the acquisition of Weatherford Mortuary Services, in Weatherford, TX. Weatherford Mortuary Service will be renamed Global Mortuary Affairs and be staffed by personnel that have worked in the GMA system for many years and available 24 hrs, 7 days a week.



**David Patterson**

With this acquisition GMA will have full service in Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Hood, Jack, Kaufman, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise Counties. Our East location has easy access for funeral directors who wish to avoid traffic congestion of the Metroplex area. Our newest location just west of Fort Worth can now offer the same convenience of accessibility. Global Mortuary Affairs was founded in 2006 as a military contractor to provide mortuary affair services in and out of theaters of operations. GMA received their license from the Funeral Service Commission in 2007 to operate a full service commercial embalming establishment, offering removals, embalming, cremation and transportation. In 2009 GMA was the first funeral establishment in Texas to be recognized as a Certified Cargo Screening Facility by the Transportation Security Administration. In 2010 GMA began Global Mortuary Logistics to better serve our clients with international shipping, consulate paperwork, and overland transportation to Mexico. David Patterson has been licensed since 1987, serving the Dallas/Ft. Worth market since 1984, and a former instructor with the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service.

For more information please visit our websites at: [www.globalmortuaryaffairs.com](http://www.globalmortuaryaffairs.com), or [www.globalmortuarylogistics.com](http://www.globalmortuarylogistics.com) or call David Patterson or David Escamilla at 877.216.2708.

# Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

## ARKANSAS

**William Eldred Rice**, 89, of Fordyce died February 22, 2012. He was retired Manager of Benton Funeral Home of Fordyce. He was a funeral director and embalmer for over 50 years. He served his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Arrangements were under direction of Benton Funeral Home of Fordyce.

## IOWA



**Kevin P. Larkin**, 65, of Sioux City died May 28, 2012. He attended San Francisco School of Mortuary Science. He served in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War being stationed in Guam. He worked for the family business, The Larkin Funeral Home. Kevin and his brother Dennis owned and operated the funeral home for many years until the business was merged with the Christy-Smith Funeral Homes in 2006. Kevin stayed until his retirement in October, 2011. Arrangements were under direction of Christy-Smith Funeral Homes.



**Mark K. Ross**, 62, of Jefferson died April 24, 2012. He was a third generation funeral director. He received a degree of Mortuary Science from John A. Gupton College. He worked in several funeral homes in Nashville, TN and served an internship with Kuba Funeral Home in Cedar Rapids before starting his career with Slininger Funeral Home in Jefferson in 1975 and later purchased and owned the business from 1985 to 2008. Services were under the direction of Slininger-Rossow Funeral Home.

## KANSAS



**Ralph A. Holland**, 73, of Fredonia, passed away on June 1, 2012. He became a licensed funeral direction in 1995 and worked at Timmons Funeral Home. He established Holland Monuments in Fredonia. Arrangements were under the direction of Timmons Funeral Home.



**Robert P. "Bob" Hoover**, 65, of Junction City, passed away March 20, 2012. He attended Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science and started his funeral service career in 1968 at Danner Funeral Home in Abilene. He later moved to Topeka where he worked for the Parker-Price Mortuary. He left funeral service to pursue a career as EMT but returned to funeral service working for Penwell-Gabel Funeral Home. He later became an over the road salesman for Clark Vault Company, Artco Casket Company and the Funeral Director's Life Insurance

Company. He returned to Penwell-Gabel working as funeral director and embalmer retiring in 2010 in Junction City. One of his greatest accomplishments was his involvement with the Disaster Mortuary Operations Team assisting in flood of 1993 in Harden, MO, 1997 Korean Airlines 747 crash in Guam, the World Trade Center Sept. 11, 2001 Terrorist Attack and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster. Services were handled by Penwell-Gabel Johnson Funeral Chapel.



**Margie "Marge" Roderick**, 75 of Independence died May 31, 2012. She was the wife of Larry Rodrick, former owner of Webb & Rodrick Funeral Home in Independence.

## KANSAS (Cont.)



**Dale F. VanCampen**, 72 of Wichita (formerly of Haven), passed away on February 29, 2012. He managed Resthaven Mortuary in Wichita for 18 years, he was the owner/operator of VanCampen Funeral Home in Haven from 1985 until he retired in 2007.

## MISSOURI



**Mrs. Dorothy M. Akerson**, 95, of St. Louis died April 4, 2012. She was the mother of Brian R. and Sharon Akerson, former owners of John L. Ziegenhein & Sons Funeral Home. Services were directed by John L. Ziegenhein & Sons Funeral Home.



**Kevin Craig Kordes**, 51, of Bethany passed away on April 26, 2012. He graduated from Worsam College of Mortuary Science in 1984. He worked at Hope Funeral Home and moved to Rolla in 1986 when he bought Atkisson-Swinford Funeral Home and renamed it Kordes Funeral Home. He later obtained the Long Funeral Homes in Vienna, Dixon and Crocker. He served on several committees of the Missouri Funeral Director's Association and was past President of the board of the Missouri Funeral Trust. He was the owner-operator of Rolla Monument Company and Elite Concrete Engraving. Services were directed by Long-Kloepfel Funeral Homes.



**William J. Mahn**, 89, of DeSoto, passed away on April 30, 2012. A relative to Todd Mahn, owner of Mahn Funeral Home and Peaceful Ridge Cemetery and current chairman of the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. William served in WWII in the First Army Infantry 104th Timberwolf Division. His funeral arrangements were under the direction of Mahn Funeral Home.



**Dr. Barry Murphey**, 74, passed away on April 26, 2012. Dr. Murphey was the Embalming Chemistry instructor at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park Mortuary Science program. He also taught many OSHA classes at funeral homes in the St. Louis area.



**Robert N. Nash**, 68, of St. Joseph died May 21, 2012. He was the father of MFDEA member Mike Nash. His arrangements were directed by Meierhoffer Funeral Home & Crematory.

**Ricky W. Purdy**, 61, of Greenfield, died April 25, 2012. He was a retired funeral service director. Arrangements were under the direction of Lakin Funeral Home, Pierce City.

*Continues on Next Page*

**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**



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## Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues (Cont.)

### TEXAS



**John Tilden Bailey**, 97 of Ft. Worth, died April 25, 2012. He earned his law degree and then joined the Texas National Guard 36th Infantry Division and served in World War II as an assistant to the adjutant general of the 79th Infantry Division and the Ninth U.S. Army Headquarters. In 1945 he accepted a position with Mount Olivet Cemetery. He assumed management of Greenwood and Mount Olivet Cemeteries in 1950 and remained in capacity for over 50 years. His services were arranged by Greenwood Funeral Home.



**Ed B. Caudle**, 92, of Lindale died April 10, 2012. He began his funeral career on October 11, 1939 with the York Family at York's Hardware Store and Funeral Home in Lindale. After the death of Leon Punk York, he acquired the funeral home and was currently serving as chairman of Caudle-Rutledge Funeral Directors. In 1991 he received appreciation from the TFDA for 50 years of service as a funeral director and currently has been a licensed funeral director for 71 years. Services were under the direction of the Caudle-Rutledge Funeral Home.



**Biff Wells Doughty**, 53, of Georgetown, died June 7, 2012. He graduated from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service serving as a licensed professional for more than 30 years. He worked for A.L. Moore Grimshaw in Phoenix, Harper-Talasek Funeral Home in

Temple and most recently served as Operations manager for The Gabriels Funeral Chapel in Georgetown. He moved to Texas in 2001. Arrangements were under the direction of The Gabriels Funeral Chapel and Crematory.

**Hilda Lawrence**, 84 of Centreville, Mississippi, died April 24, 2012. She is the wife of Ronald Lawrence. They had lived in Texas for many years where Ronald worked for Niday Funeral

Home for many years and they also owned and operated Lawrence Funeral Home in Ennis and Heritage Funeral Home in Bowie.



**Don McElroy**, 73 of Tyler, passed away on June 8, 2012. He was the senior funeral director with Stewart Family Funeral Home. He started funeral home business in Alice as an ambulance driver for his family's funeral home while attending high school. He is a graduate of Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science. He spent two years in Germany in the Army Mortuary Service.

While working in Dallas area he found himself providing mortuary services after several historic events, the death of President John F. Kennedy, the plane crash of Ricky Nelson, 1985 crash of Delta Flight 191 at DFW Airport that killed 137 people and the Branch Davidian fire in Waco. Last year he received his 50-year service pin from TFDA. Arrangements were directed by Stewart Family Funeral Home.



**Terry L. McEnany**, 59, of Marshalltown (formerly of Winthrop and Nichols Hills, Oklahoma), died May 11, 2012. From 1996 until 2007 he was the Executive Director for the Oklahoma Funeral Board. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy. His funeral service began in Waterloo and Des Moines, Iowa in 1981 he joined Pierce Colleges serving from professor to college president at 29 years old. He was founding President of Commonwealth College in Houston, Texas. In 1992 he served as founding regent of the funeral museum in Houston. He also was involved in developing several of the professions textbooks. His funeral was directed by Fawcetts Funeral Home in Winthrop, Iowa.



**James Sullivan**, 89, of Vernon, died on May 21, 2012. He was a veteran of World War II, a member of the 2nd Armored Division "Hell on Wheels.". In 1953 he and his brother Charles purchased Underwood Funeral Home. In 1975 he built the current building. He has co-owned and operated Sullivan Funeral Home, Wilbarger Memorial Park and Sullivan Service Insurance for over 30 years. Services were directed by Sullivan Funeral Home.



**Will Chambers Tips**, 91, of San Antonio died March 14, 2012. He served during WWII in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He took over with his brother the family business (Mission Burial Park) of his grandfather Will Harry Chambers. They created a full-service, multi-branch enterprise that integrated complete funeral and burial services. His brother is Frederick Julius Tips, Jr. and Uncle is Robert D. "Dick" Tips owner of Mission Park Funeral Homes who directed the service.



**Curtis Lee Wyant**, 49 of Temple, passed away on April 24, 2012. He graduated from the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in 1985. He spent 23 years of service in Houston, San Antonio and Dallas working for SCI Care Centers and most recently for Central Texas Mortuary Service. His services were under the direction of Heartfield Funeral Home.

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## Crazy Coffins (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Corinna's gesture seemed isolated at that time. Before long, though, other customers came forward, with similar requests; until, without fully understanding what had taken place, we had been led into a world of decorated coffins. Into a world of coffins, that is, conventional in shape, but adorned with artwork showing animals or flowers or Chelsea Football colours or the slogan 'Elvis Lives.' We built these coffins because, one by one, members of the public approached us and ordered the coffin they required. We were not artists, and shrank from ever claiming that we were; we simply painted on to the sides and lids of coffins the images which these customers desired."



Angel of the North Coffin

In 2000 another "change came tapping at the door." "A lady had inspected our shop window, but couldn't see the coffin which would satisfy her needs. She wanted, not a conventional coffin, not a decorated coffin, she wished to commission a coffin constructed to a new and individual shape. So, once again, it

was pressure from an outsider which pushed us down this path. It led us to build guitars and ballet shoes and rubbish skips—it thrust us into a world of concepts and ideas, ideas which have refreshed our staff, our management and indeed have rekindled our commitment to the trade."

*The Sun*, Europe's biggest selling daily newspaper, picked up a story and put the coffins with a pin-up girl on the Page 3 with catchword—"Crazy Coffins" and it stuck.

Some unique requests to the company have come from "Michael Wood, England's champion town crier, has ordered a giant handbell, in which, on death, his body is going to be interred. He had no problem in arranging this with the clergyman in the village where, he, Michael Wood, was born. The bell is large and so Michael, quite simply, has bought a double graveyard plot." Showing that the clergy have no problem with the unique graves.

"In the England of the 1950's, discussions about death, and the rituals of funerals, were hardly commonplace. When the bell tolled, it hushed not only people's voices, it left no scope for their imaginations to weigh up how best their loved ones should be cremated or interred. Fifty years later, England is perhaps a



Gothic Coffin

(Continued on page 18)

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## Crazy Coffins (Cont.)

(Continued from page 17)

different place. The desire for style, for making statements about what one thinks and is, has eroded inhibitions. Notions of 'fashion,' of 'designer' items and of 'personalized' procedures, have gained admittance to the ante-room of death."

"Perhaps the majority of the population seeks for itself, or for its loved ones, a funeral no more elaborate than that which its grandparents enjoyed—although, recordings of popular songs are supplanting hymn sheets in the cremations of today. Beyond that majority, though, lies a growing fringe of respectable, middle-aged people who intend arranging funerals which will reflect something of themselves and of their individual taste."

The exhibit literature continued, "Shortly before Christmas, 2004, *The Sun* published an article under the headline, 'Dying for a laugh.' It stated, 'More and more people are putting the fun in to funerals.' The article went on to describe some 'wacky' funeral arrangements including a fan of a well-known science fiction series was buried in a replica of a time-machine, an elderly New Yorker being buried in her car, conventional cremations being given an unusual end. The ashes of a dead man was propelled by a rocket into outer space and some were mixed with gunpowder and ignited in spectacular and celebratory ways.

Interestingly the article in *The Sun* gave a long list of strange coffins, but only one had been made by Vic Fearn & Company Ltd., so the assumption is that Crazy Coffins is only a "fraction of the total built, planned or impending and that the world of the English (and other) funerals has irreversibly moved on."



Owl Urn



Crazy Coffins Shop—Photo by Roger Bamber

On the Crazy Coffins website there were numerous "Frequently Asked Questions" and I'll try to summarize some of the facts they shared.

- ◆ The first Crazy coffin happened like this: "One day, a lady knocked on the door. This lady had a half-built coffin in the back of her van. It was in the form of an aeroplane fuselage. She asked us to finish it off. Other people heard about this and a trickle of orders came in. *The Sun* picked up the story and they used the term "crazy coffins" and that was how the name was born.
- ◆ There have been very few Crazy Coffins made but they have had numerous inquiries. For example when a family learns that a Ferrari-shaped coffin could take two weeks to build and might cost five thousand pounds (\$7600), they often buy a conventional coffin with a Ferrari design painted on the sides or lid which takes 3 days and costs five hundred pounds (\$760). They have made coffins for those who want to have it waiting.
- ◆ They build only to order. When ordering the coffin usually the customer has specific requests about color or model of say a car. Therefore the coffins are custom built.
- ◆ The cost of the coffins vary from amount of time required to build and materials used. They have usually been made from medium density fiberboard and flexi-ply. Materials are from sustainable forests and their finishes are from water-based products.
- ◆ Their favourite Crazy Coffin is usually the one they are working on. It's a puzzle. All of them ponder the drawings and play with ideas. The coffin that is in the centre place is the most interesting one. As they were answering this question they were in the midst of making a beer bottle coffin, mounted on a brewer's delivery truck.
- ◆ They really feel there is no Crazy Coffin they cannot make.
- ◆ As far as people who purchase Crazy Coffins there is no age bracket, it's just people who want to decide on their final journey, what and how to celebrate their life. The coffin can say a lot about the person's lifestyle, hobbies, or interests or even "to cause a stir at my funeral" carries some weight.
- ◆ They have a catalogue of what they have done, but encourage clients to create one of their own personal identity
- ◆ They have yet to have orders from other countries outside of the UK. This may be due to time constraints and possibly additional cost, but they stated what helps to sell a crazy coffin in the UK is "the English sense of humour."

For more information check out: [www.crazycoffin.co.uk](http://www.crazycoffin.co.uk)

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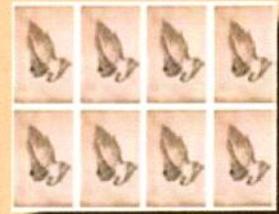
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Media, PA—This year, **ASD – Answering Service for Directors** is celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. To commemorate this milestone, ASD has recently updated their logo to reflect the company's growth and evolution over the years. The new logo, which will most commonly be presented with photos of ASD employees, marks the official retirement of the ASD waiter who has served the company well since the 1970s when he was designed by the first generation of the Czachor family.

When Martin Czachor and Barbara Czachor began helping funeral homes with their phones in 1972, they never dreamed their company would one day grow to become the leading funeral home exclusive answering service in the country. At the time, ASD was just a small business with a handful of employees and local clients. During these crucial early stages, ASD's owners recognized a void in the market for an answering service that catered to the specific needs of funeral professionals.

“ASD has answered our calls since the 1970s and at the time there were services that answered for doctors, freight companies, all different types of business, but nothing that was just for funeral homes. ASD was the first specialized service,” says Funeral Director Hank Griffith with Griffith Funeral Home in Norwood, one of ASD's first clients. “We have stayed with ASD because of their professionalism, patience, accuracy, and how well they have kept up with technology.”

ASD is a prime example of a company that has expanded exponentially by continually exploring new solutions for their clients. By investing heavily in state-of-the art technology without sacrificing the personal touch of a small, family-owned business, ASD is now the leading answering service for funeral professionals. More than one quarter of funeral homes in America trust ASD to answer their calls professionally and compassionately. ASD has developed and customized solutions to meet the diverse telecommunication needs of their clients. The company's technology team creates programs capable of serving both small, independent funeral homes and large, multi-location corporations. This flexibility complements ASD's advanced features and patented mobile tools that are often imitated, but never duplicated.

“ASD is always looking for ways to improve their service for funeral professionals with technology. Over the years, ASD has added features the online service, the text-messaging, and the ASD Mobile application, eliminating my need to carry around a pen and paper all the time” Griffith says. “I remember the old days of having to pull off to the side of the road and how in-

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convenient it was. Everything is right there for you on the phone now.”

Like Griffith, nearly half of ASD clients have used the service for over a decade. Much of their clients' loyalty stems from the fact that ASD was the first funeral home exclusive service to allow directors to listen to their calls. This helped establish ASD's reputation and for the first time, Funeral Directors could hear the difference between ASD and other answering services. ASD's team of empathetic and patient Call Specialists possess a high level of understanding of the funeral process. This is reinforced through the company's comprehensive, six month training program and continual call monitoring.

“In addition to the state-of-the-art technology we have in place, ASD's call handling depth is one of the key differentiators between us and any other businesses out there,” says ASD Vice President and Family Member Owner Kevin Czachor. “Since ASD doesn't deal with any business other than funeral homes, we make sure every employee who has call taking abilities is fully trained. Every department within ASD assists during busy times. Just like the funeral directors we serve, ASD doesn't leave anything to chance.”

ASD's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year will bring more advanced options to funeral professionals. ASD Mobile, the sophisticated iPhone application launched in late 2011, has already been downloaded by over 2,000 funeral homes. This year, ASD will introduce the ASD Mobile app to Android users.

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## Urns & Outs (Cont)

(Continued from page 8)

ized by those who create it for future generations.

Sometime back, I read an article in a public periodical about the amazing San Francisco Columbarium, the only active cemetery within the limits of that city. The article focused on the caretaker and “unofficial historian” of the columbarium who had been there a number of years. I took great offense to one of his statements, when speaking of the number of “residents” of the facility that dates to 1897, “in the old days everybody got dumped into the same container. So you may have five, 10, 15 people sharing the same space.” This statement is based on conjecture and speculation – and goes against all ethical codes set by the national associations of our profession. My thoughts go to those who have loved ones inurned in the columbarium there – hopefully their doubts have been soothed.

So where do you fall in this spectrum? Do you appreciate the history of your firm or your profession – or do you even care that there is a history? Did you know that your history is an asset to you and your funeral home? Maybe it’s time to look into the past, so that everyone – owners to groundskeepers – can know where they came from, and thus, know where they’re going. And we, who are in this profession of celebrating the history of lives lived, should know better than anyone that the past is so important – not just here and now, but for those in the future of the profession. “Let’s get this right for future historians.”

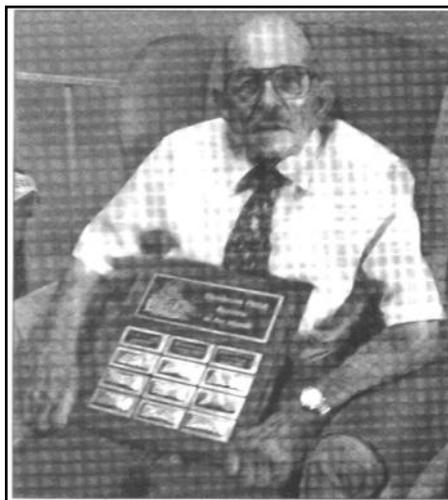
At least, that’s my perspective...

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](mailto:arcremationist@hotmail.com).



## Floyd Greenwood’s Greenwood-Roberts Funeral Home-Overbrook, KS Gets Award



**Floyd Greenwood holding his Overbrook Pride Business of the Month Award**

Information and picture in *The Osage County Herald-Chronicle* on March 15, 2012

Overbrook PRIDE has named Greenwood-Roberts Funeral Home, as March business of the month. The funeral home is located at 730 Western Heights Drive in Overbrook, Kansas in Osage County.

Floyd Greenwood has been serving the Overbrook area since 1971. He has been in the funeral business since the late 60’s and is currently in his 41st year at the Greenwood-Roberts Funeral Home.

Congratulations, Floyd and Greenwood-Roberts Funeral Home!!!



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## The Perfect Mistake (Unknown Origin)

My mother's father worked as a carpenter. On this particular day, he was building some crates for the clothes his church was sending to orphanages in China.



On his way home, he reached into his shirt pocket to find his glasses, but they were gone. When he mentally replayed his earlier actions, he

realized what had happened. The glasses had slipped out of his pocket unnoticed and fallen into one of the crates, which he had nailed shut. His brand new glasses were heading to China!



The Great Depression was at its height and Grandpa had six children. He had spent \$20 for those glasses that very morning. He was upset by the thought of having to buy another pair.

"It's not fair," he told God as he drove home in frustration. "I've been very faithful in giving of my time and money to your work, and now this."

Months later, the director of the orphanage was on furlough in the United States. He wanted to visit all the churches that supported him in China, so he came to speak one Sunday at my grandfather's small church in Chicago.

The missionary began by thanking the people for their faithfulness in supporting the orphanage.

"But most of all," he said, "I must thank you for the glasses you sent last year. You see, the Communists had just swept through the orphanage, destroying everything, including my glasses. I was desperate. Even if I had the money, there was simply no way of replacing those glasses. Along with not being able to see well, I experienced headaches every day, so my coworkers and I were much in prayer about this.

Then your crates arrived. When my staff removed the covers, they found a pair of glasses lying on top." The missionary paused long enough to let his works sink in.

Then, still gripped with the wonder of it all, he continued, "Folks, when I tried on the glasses, it was as though they had been custom made just for me! I want to thank you for being a part of that."



The people listened happy for the miraculous glasses. But the missionary surely must have confused their church with another, they thought. There were no glasses on their list of items to be sent overseas.

But sitting quietly in the back, with tears streaming down his face, an ordinary carpenter realized the Master Carpenter had used him in an extraordinary way. There are times we want to blame God instead of thanking Him! Perhaps it is something we ought to try more often. I have to remember this in any times of trial with my own family.

May God bless you. Look for the perfect mistakes.



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### Tax Depreciation Changes Coming in 2013

By  
Rick Klahsen [rklahsen@bkd.com](mailto:rklahsen@bkd.com) &  
Jim Ashley [jashley@bkd.com](mailto:jashley@bkd.com)

In the past several years, funeral directors and funeral home owners have experienced many income tax planning opportunities for their businesses. If you work with a qualified CPA that understands the funeral home business, you most likely have taken advantage of these tax-saving and planning opportunities. However, it is equally important to know when these opportunities are set to change or even expire.

Much of the discussion regarding upcoming tax law changes has focused on increased individual income tax rates, higher capital gains tax rates and taxation of dividend income at ordinary income tax rates—all scheduled for 2013. This focus makes sense; the expiration of the “Bush tax cuts” would impact personal income tax liabilities for millions of taxpayers.

There are, however, other tax law changes pending for 2013 that will significantly revise favorable business tax provisions.

#### **Bonus Depreciation**

For most of the past decade, Congress encouraged taxpayers to invest in the expansion or modernization of their businesses by purchasing new property and equipment. To encourage investment, tax laws have allowed business taxpayers to accelerate recovery of the costs of purchasing certain assets by providing accelerated depreciation deductions or immediate expensing opportunities, thereby reducing the business’ federal tax liability and initial costs of acquiring the assets.

Additional first-year depreciation—bonus depreciation—was first introduced by the *Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002*. The law provided an accelerated first-year depreciation deduction equal to 30 percent of the qualifying property’s cost, for property placed in service after September 10, 2001, and before September 11, 2004. Qualifying property generally included new assets with a tax useful life of 20 years or less purchased pursuant to a contract entered into after September 10, 2001. In 2003, federal legislation increased the first-year depreciation deduction to 50 percent, expanded the definition of qualifying property and extended bonus depreciation through December 31, 2004.

Most recently, the bonus depreciation provisions were again extended and expanded by the *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010*. This law allowed first-year depreciation equal to 100 percent of the cost of qualifying property placed in service after September 8, 2010, and before January 1, 2012. A deduction of 50 percent of the asset’s cost is

*(Continued on page 25)*

**Additional Chuckle—Note to Son**  
(Sent from Funeral Director)

Dear Son,

I am writing this letter real slow cause I know that you don't read real fast. We have moved since you were last here. Pa read in the paper where most accidents happen just a couple of miles of one's house. So he dislodged the tree logs that were keeping the house parked and we rolled down the hill a ways. I won't be able to send you the address on account that the last folks that lived here took the number with them so that they would not have to change their address.

Grandpa fell in the hog trough last week trying to feed them, and was half chomped to death by those silly happy hogs.

Those crazy geese that your Pa just had to have, got to pecking at the barrel of our Muskadine Wine and pecked a hole in it and those crazy geese drank it all. The way we found out what they did was, we came home from the church house and found them out in the yard on their backs with their webbed feet stiff up in the air. We couldn't eat them naturally since we did not know how or why they died, so we did what we thought was right, we went in the house and got some potato sacks and sat and plucked them poor dead geese naked. Then we took them down to the creek and threw them in, it was kinda sad though, there they were floating down the river with their little webbed feet straight up in the air. Upon returning to the house we smelled that Muskadine Wine and saw what they had done. Oh well, Pa said, that's what they get! So we went in the house and started stuffing our mattresses and pillows with them feathers. Directly we heard some racket so we went outside to see what was going on and low and behold there came them crazy naked geese up the path.

Went to see your cousins in the city, they have a real nice house with green grass, but not much yard to park a car on though. They had a fancy room with a machine to wash your clothes. The first day we were there, I put in four of your pa's shirts and pushed the lever and have not seen 'em since.

It rained twice that week, two days the first time and four days the next time.

You know that coat you wanted me to send you? Well, Aunt Sue said that it would be too heavy with all those large heavy buttons on it, so we cut them off and put them in the pockets, it should be there shortly.

We got a letter, while we were gone, from the funeral home. It said that if we don't make the last payment on grannies funeral bill... Up She Comes!

Your sister had her tenth kid yesterday morning. Have not heard what it was yet, so I don't know if your are an aunt or uncle.

Your uncle Johnny fell in the hold vat out at the still last week. Some men tried to get him out, but he fought them off and drowned. They cremated him...he burned for three days.

Got word a little while ago that three of your school chums went off the old Opossum Creek bridge in a pick-up truck. One was driving, the others were in the back. The driver cranked his window down and got out, and swam to save the others, but failed to save them and they all drowned, it was said that it was on account that they couldn't get the tailgate down.

Well there's not much going on here, so I will say bye for now.

Ma

P.S. I was gonna send you some money, but I already sealed the letter.

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**Tax Depreciation Changes (Cont.)**

*(Continued from page 24)*

allowed for qualifying property placed in service after 2011 and before January 1, 2013.

The favorable bonus depreciation provisions are scheduled to expire December 31, 2012. After expiration, business taxpayers acquiring machinery, office equipment and other depreciable assets will revert to the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) or other alternative depreciation methods for determining annual depreciation deductions.

This will significantly reduce the first-year depreciation deduction on most business assets, extending the time over which the business will realize the benefits of reduced tax liabilities via cost recovery deductions, which increases the initial costs of acquiring business assets.

For example, assume a business purchased \$10,000 of new office furniture in 2011. Under the favorable bonus depreciation provisions, all of the \$10,000 cost could be deducted on the business taxpayer's 2011 tax return. A purchase of \$10,000 of new office equipment in 2012 would result in bonus depreciation of 50 percent, or \$5,000, and depreciation of the remaining \$5,000 over a seven-year period beginning in 2012.

Under the MACRS depreciation provisions, office furniture is generally depreciable over a seven-year recovery period, with first-year depreciation limited to 14.29 percent. So, the total depreciation deduction in 2012 for the \$10,000 of office furniture purchased would be \$5,715 (\$5,000, plus \$5,000 x 14.29%).

However, assume the same \$10,000 of new office furniture is purchased in 2013. Without bonus depreciation, the \$10,000 purchase only would provide a first-year depreciation deduction of \$1,429 under MACRS.

**Elections to Expense Costs to Acquire Business Assets**

*(Continued on page 28)*

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## A Perspective on Grief By Reatha M. Gooden

If it has been several years since the death of your loved one or just recently; this is something to think about.

First off, remember that people grieve differently. There are **stages**, but we don't grieve by the book! We may all actually go through each stage, but certainly not in any order.

Also, know that women and men grieve differently and we need to respect that fact. My youngest son is the father of the baby we lost in 1996 to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). I had to get out there and get all the information I could on SIDS. And I talked with anyone whose lives had been touched by SIDS, as ours was; and attend National/International Conferences and nearby support groups.

I met a young father my son's age, willing to talk one-on-one, if he preferred. But he chose to talk to his friends and go through this journey another way.

It was at a National Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah

in a session for couples, that I finally saw that I had to respect **his** way. That it was 'different' than the way I was going through my journey, and that did not make his way wrong!

Let's think about the most difficult/challenging aspect of dealing with the sudden loss of a loved one. What emotion/feelings did you experience? How did you face it? What was the most helpful thing someone said or the most hurtful? How long has it taken you to get to where you are now?

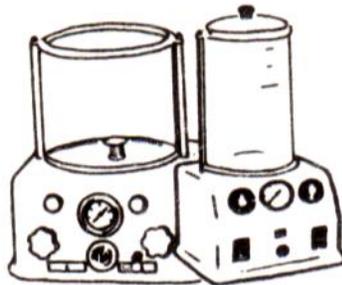
I hope this is helpful, because we are all on the same journey. We just travel this road at different times.



About the Author: Reatha M. Gooden. A life-long resident in New Braunfels, Texas and employed at Zoeller Funeral Home since September, 2010 as part-time worker with general/transitional duties.

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## Tax Depreciation Changes Coming in 2013 (Cont.)

(Continued from page 25)

A similar cost recovery provision in place for many years allows certain small business taxpayers to deduct some or all of the costs of acquiring certain depreciable assets. Commonly called Section 179 expense, for the Internal Revenue Code section that provides for the deduction, this cost recovery provision also has been expanded and revised in recent years to provide taxpayers with additional incentive to invest in depreciable business assets.

Prior to the economic downturn following the 9/11 tragedy, Section 179 allowed for a deduction of up to \$25,000 of qualifying depreciable personal property used in trade or business activities. The Section 179 deduction is elective, made annually and generally available only in the year the property is first placed in service. Unlike bonus depreciation, which is generally available to all business taxpayers regardless of size and without limitation on the amount of business property acquired during the year, Section 179 is subject to several limitations that generally result in Section 179 expensing only for smaller and less capital-intensive businesses.

Similar to the multiple revisions to the bonus depreciation provisions discussed above, Section 179 also has been revised in recent years to further encourage investment in depreciable assets. *The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Act of 2003* increased the Section 179 deduction limit, from its historical annual limit of \$25,000 to \$100,000 for property placed in service after 2002 but before 2006. In 2007, the annual deduction limit was again increased, to \$125,000, for property placed in service after 2006; increased again in 2008 to allow an annual deduction of up to \$250,000 for property placed in service in 2008 and 2009; revised again in 2010 to allow a maximum annual deduction of \$500,000 for property placed in service in 2010 and 2011; and finally revised again by the 2010 law to allow for an inflation-indexed deduction of up to \$139,000 for property placed in service in 2012. After 2012, the annual deduction limit under Section 179 is scheduled to return to its pre-2003 level of \$25,000.

The bonus depreciation provisions and increased annual Section 179 deduction limits have reduced the after-tax costs of acquiring depreciable business property by accelerating the tax deductibility of some or all of the costs of acquiring the assets. As a result, these provisions have proven very popular



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with business taxpayers. With favorable bonus depreciation and Section 179 expensing still in place for 2012, business taxpayers should contact their tax advisor to discuss the after-tax costs of acquiring depreciable business assets in 2012 versus 2013.

If you have additional questions, or if you have general accounting or tax questions for your funeral home, see our advertisement in this publication for information on how to contact a BKD advisor.

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**About the Author:** Jim Ashley provides tax, accounting and consulting services for individuals and closely held businesses with a special emphasis on funeral homes. His experience includes eight years of finding tax solutions for small businesses in the service and retail industries. Jim is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants and Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association.





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