

The Dead Beat

The Caregiver's Soapbox



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



Volume 14

www.thedead-beat.com

Issue 3

5th Grader's Perspective of Funeral Directing

By Bryanna Cunnyngham

"Joanne, I am attaching a copy of my daughter's 5th grade report on becoming a Funeral Director. She asked that it be mentioned that she was 11 at the time and thought she knew it all.

Sincerely, John Cunnyngham, Funeral Director."

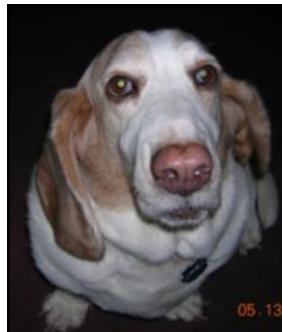
Have you ever heard of a funeral director? Well, if you have then you would know it is very different from most jobs. If you would like to know more about funeral directing then this paper says it all. There are six things I am going to be talking about. Read more if you would like to know more.

First, I will be talking about what kind of education you will need for this job. You will need a college degree. You are required to have at least 2 years of college. One year is for apprenticeships. In addition, you have to pass a qualifying assessment to become an apprentice. You must have a license for embalming. There is also another type of degree which I don't know what the name of it is. You get both licenses after you graduate college.

There are three main things for this job you need to know. One, you must know how to do math. Two, you have to know how to work a computer for the information to be typed. Third, you need to know how to do science. Funeral directing is almost exactly like a science experiment. Except maybe not as much fun as an experiment. Second, you will need to know what skills to study. One skill is embalming. When you embalm a body of a dead person you have to drain the blood of the body and refill the cells with embalming fluid. Isn't that CREEPY??? Anyway, another skill is cremating. When you cremate someone, you burn them until their bones and flesh are ASHES!!!! So when you take the ashes out and put them in a special container to hold the ashes for the family you don't have to bury the body when its ashes because you give it to a family member. You have to burn the body in a very special furnace though, to turn them to ashes... otherwise the body won't burn. Third, you need to know how to make an autopsy. When you make an autopsy, you take tests on the body. The tests for example sometimes never show up. When you make an autopsy you have to test what killed

(Continued on page 29)

Other Articles in this Issue



Baby—Pg 6 & 23



Elliott Funeral Home
Pg. 17



One of the reasons **The Dead Beat** is running late. My smashed Kia.

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As We Drive By We love to take pictures as we go by funeral homes and interesting places, but we'd welcome pictures, if you send them to us.

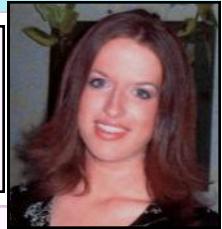
**Shipman Funeral &
Cremation Service
Pryor, OK**



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.



Amy Howard



Stephens Memorial Chapel—Pryor, OK





Mortuary Muse By Lowell

A question raised by a prominent marketing professional was either a "Eureka" moment or a "Deer in the headlights" confusion stare. He was discussing ways traditional full service firms could compete with discount funeral firms and cremation societies for the price sensitive customer. The key, according to him, is lower overhead with online pricing and arrangements. "... After all online arrangements utilize no overhead costs (facilities and staff) and payment is made in full via credit card, so maybe an online arrangement should cost less?"

Cost less? I don't think so. That website and someone operating and processing the information cost something. This might be somewhat easier, but knowing how challenging in person arrangements can be, I'm not sure it can all be done so easily that won't involve more staff than you think. And where do you think that staff will be, probably in your facilities. Therefore, I think "less" versus "no" overhead should be considered and how much savings will this amount to?

If memory serves me correctly, in the days of primar-

ily casketed burial services, Newcomer's Publication, PPM (Progressive Mortuary Methods) advocated the following method to determining overhead (non-declinable charges).

All annual operating costs when combined were divided by the number of full service clients only. Revenue from indigent or other less than full service clients were treated as other income and may have been used to defray some overhead charges.

Today it looks to me like every service in person or online should carry its fair share of overhead expense. I guess it could be offered slightly less, but time will tell if it truly has less overhead as suggested and collecting it via credit cards is still going to cost from the credit card companies.

Are online arrangements less expensive?



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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**Meyers Funeral Chapel -Blue Springs Chapel,
Blue Springs, MO**

Some information about the staff at these funeral chapels. **Marty Meyers, President**, is a licensed Funeral Director, Embalmer and Pre-Need Agent. He began serving families in this area at our former location, Webb-Freer Funeral Home nearly 20 years ago. We later purchased the Webb-Freer business on December 21, 2008. **Dennis Meyers, Vice President** is a licensed Funeral Director and Pre-need Agent. Dennis is Marty's younger brother and he also began serving families nearly 20 years ago at our former location, Webb-Freer Funeral Home. **Todd DeMint, Vice President & Managing Partner** is a licensed Funeral Director, Pre-Need Agent and National Board Certified Embalmer. He is licensed in both Missouri and Kansas. Todd began working with Marty and Dennis at Webb-Freer Funeral Home back in high school. He manages our Northland location and helps oversee the operations in Blue Springs as well. **Kourtney Meyers** is attending John A. Gupton College of Mortuary Science in Nashville, TN. Kourtney is a very hard worker and prior to mortuary school, she worked as an assistant to the Jackson County Medical Examiner. Kourtney is Marty and Kim's daughter and is looking forward to joining the family business. The Meyers Funeral Chapel Northland, formerly Heritage Funeral Home, was founded in 1929 by Leland H. Francis. In 1942 Mr. Francis constructed the current facility which is located at 401 Main Street in downtown Parkville, Missouri. Mr. Francis and his wife Sadie, reared their three children, Haddon, Roland

and Sandra in the living quarters above the funeral home. On September 12, 1981 Mr. Francis passed away. Sadie Francis and her son Haddon, continued the family business until Sadie's health began to fail in the late 1980's. In 1989 Bill and Joanne Carson purchased the funeral home from the Francis family. Over the years Bill and Joanne became very active in the Parkville community and helped to raise the bar for the expectations of the funeral service in the Northland. Bill is often seen around the funeral home even today as he still drives for funeral services on occasion and assists with visitations as well. In January of 2008, Todd and Nikki DeMint became partners in Meyers Funeral Chapels .



**Meyers Funeral Chapel –Northland Chapel,
Parkville, MO**

Some info from their website:
www.meyersfuneralchapel.com

****For Your Information****

Received an interesting e-mail (2/21/15) from mrdavidbrown@aol.com:

Calling all Funeral Homes and past ambulance services from the 40's and up. On facebook they are looking for OLD photos from old funeral home type ambulances and I know several from West Plains to Seymour and North like the strangest ambulances (Montgomery Viets) with the lightbar over the windshield to The 2 matching Tan Ford station wagons from Wright County. Look on Facebook "Missouri History of EMS" a table book copy. Soon they will make a handbook with pictures and stories that will be printed. DO NOT GET LEFT OUT.

Editor: Guess anyone interested - I guess can check it out

Have you had an OPEN HOUSE, built a NEW ADDITION to your funeral home, developed a new PROGRAM FOR GRIEVING CLIENTS, RECEIVED AN HONOR from your community, have an interesting HOBBY or DONE SOMETHING THAT WAS JUST PLAIN FUN? If so, tell us about it. We want to tell your story (WE LOVE PICTURES, TOO) call us 800-575-2611, fax us 417-537-4797 or e-mail us: editor@thedead-beat.com.



Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell

Recently I've read of a few colleagues stating that grief study presentations at conventions and seminars are a waste of time. However, these same folks are striving for personalization and memorialization in their services. Doesn't survivor grief motivate the need for personalization and memorialization? Duh!!

I enjoy phone calls from colleagues, and just recently talked with Tom Peebles from Ripley, Mississippi.

Does anyone remember when there were actual appliance stores?

The other day I was listening to an interview on public radio via the internet. A New York University professor's new book, "Mourning Lincoln" was being discussed. Sorry, I don't remember the names of either the author or the substitute host of the Diane Rheem show.

They were comparing communication and public relations of the Lincoln and J. F. Kennedy deaths. The similarities included public concern for the two widows, the gatherings related to the transportation of the bodies, and the various ceremonies in eleven cities.

For example: the progress of the Lincoln train by telegraph, newspapers or word of mouth allowed thousands to gather beside the railroad tracks to grieve and honor the slain president.

In reference to President Lincoln there was interesting aside given. Those viewing the dead president may have been grieving those that had been lost in the Civil War. Those deceased that had been unable to be brought home to honor and grieve. Their personal grief was being projected on the dead president.

From a personal viewpoint, a friend from England had been going through her dead mother's things and came across letters from a relative in the United States during the Civil War and after. The letter received described how hard the war was in the States and how she had thought that she was over the death of her husband, but upon the president's death, it brought back everything all over again.

Back to the interview, the guest host commented that she was in college when JFK was assassinated. Families gathered around their TV or a neighbor's TV. The guest author also explained that in those days (1963) there were appliance stores that sold television sets (like there aren't any more of them). TV's were displayed in the store windows and people gathered on the sidewalk outside the appliance store to watch the ceremonies.

Are we nearly to the point in time when some author will say, "There used to be businesses called funeral homes or mortuaries? People could go there and see for the last time a deceased relative or friend and honor their memory with some kind of ceremony." And then the program host (or blogger) will ask, "Why would anyone want to do that?"

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 and editor@thedead-beat.com.



Friends

Friends...They love you, But they're not your lover.

They care for you, But they're not your family.

They're ready to share your pain, But they're not your blood relation.

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Dear Lord: It's me again. Please keep Your arm around my shoulders and Your hand over my mouth! Amen.

Sent by faithful reader.



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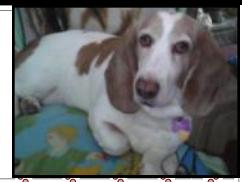
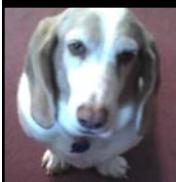
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After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

Boy, has this been a trying few months! In case you were wondering what has been so challenging, let me explain. Around the time of our last publication in November, 2014 we had to put down our Bassett Hound dog, Baby, which I will go into more details later. Then I tackled doing a church cookbook from designing to typing to publishing it at the church. That took care of the month of December besides the holiday.

Then hoping the new year would be good, but I'm afraid that wasn't the case. I ended up with a bout of flu (and yes, I had gotten a flu shot), in mid January. Then the infamous dam broke as far as funerals were concerned. We had the equivalent of a half a year in about a month.

So I was just finished with all the funerals and I got caught in a freak snowstorm on my way home. After sliding in front of a car I ended up with a totaled car and injuries from the airbag and seat belt. That was the conclusion after being taken by ambulance to the hospital after the accident. The other car didn't have as much of a problem, but you can see my car on the front page of this magazine.

To say the least, I'm glad March has been mostly a month of recuperating except for another funeral. You can see why the magazine got delayed a bit.

The next few afterthoughts columns will be dealing with some of these challenges starting with the loss of our dog, Baby.

My story was written on the day that we had to put her down and bury her—November 24, 2014.

The tears cannot stop flowing today. We had to put Baby, our Bassett Hound and faithful friend for eight years down today. It's been a few months of wondering what was going on. But after tremendous weight loss and total loss of appetite for anything offered, it just seemed time. I had prayed a lot for direction. I kept asking are You going to take her or should we do something. Today for some reason I felt it was the time to help her.

I called my husband Claude, he agreed and headed home from work. I then called the vet to find out what we needed to do. I got an appointment. From a funeral point of view, they asked me if we planned to stay with her and if they would be taking care of her after-

ward. I responded that I would ask my husband. They said that was okay to tell them when we came.

Baby and I spent most of our time that morning outside. She couldn't stand very long and then would lay down. I'd just let her enjoy being in nature. She got a bit far from the house (we live in the country on a farm), and I didn't think she would make it back. It was cold and she started shaking, so I got a wheelbarrow and brought her back to the house. She came into the house and rested some and then we went back out.

My husband showed up and we loaded her up in the car. She sat taking it all in and of course her last ride had air blowing on her even in the back seat. In my haste to leave I forgot her leash, which we are supposed to have on to take her into the vet, but Claude said don't worry because he would carry her.

That's exactly what he did, but what was interesting was when Baby got in the lobby of the vet and heard the assistants she started wagging her tail. She walked back on her own, they wanted to weigh her and she patiently sat on the scale and then went to the room she had been in many times in the past for her checkups.

They put her on the table on the blanket that we brought her in. She was very passive and the doctor said it was probably because she wasn't feeling very good. Baby was challenging to the vet to the end, since she had great difficulty finding a vein to inject, but after Baby had been tranquilized, another drug was given and the doctor listened to her heartbeat until it was no more and she said, "She's gone." I seem to remember how Baby just lay there breathing like she was sleeping and then she was gone. It was very peaceful and I thought that is the way I would like to go when the time came. But in addition to those thoughts I prayed that my girls in heaven would help her. The vet asked if we were going to take her and we said yes.

We had brought a body bag and they carried her from the room to prepare her. They had a cardboard box that was like a little casket. One of the assistants came back to ask if we wanted to keep her collar and tags, but we decided to let them go

with her. We went to the lobby, to pay and though I was having difficulty writing the check and noting in the check, "Baby's final visit", the receptionist said there would be no charge and we were to get her at their garage door. We pulled around to the door and they loaded her in the car for us in the back seat. They put a heart at the head of the casket in case we wanted to know when burying her. Tears flowed as all the assistants and doctor hugged us, we then left for Baby's final trip home. After we got home and we tried to decide where to bury her. Claude, my husband was going to dig the grave, but his back wasn't cooperating. I decided to contact my regular grave digger and see if he had any time to do it. He said he'd be over around 4. We took Baby out of the car to the garage to wait and moved her on the same wheelbarrow I had used earlier to move her from the far side of the yard. I thought that the wheelbarrow was an interesting church truck. I forgot to take pictures, I was too busy crying. You will have to use your imagination.

It was interesting that Baby is now gone and just a few weeks ago I was wondering how long I was going to be here. Had a bit of a scare with a follow-up mammogram, but so far it's turned out okay. To say the least Thanksgiving will never be the same, since this all took place the Monday before the holiday, I will probably always think of Baby at this time. Rest in peace our faithful friend and pet, you gave us a great 8 years!!



05.13

8/1/2005—11/24/2015



About the author: Joanne Howard is the editor of **The Dead Beat**. She has been a licensed funeral director since 1992 with Pugh Funeral Home in Golden City, MO and also the after-care coordinator. Much of her writing in this column is influenced by her loss of her two daughters Laura at age 10 in 1997 and Amy at age 19 in 2003. Any comments or questions can be directed to 417-537-4412, P.O. Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748 or email: jhHoward53@yahoo.com



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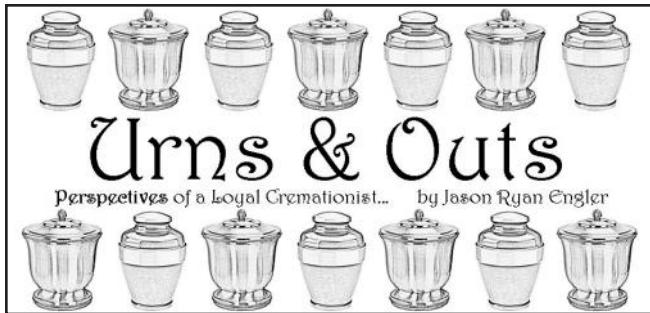
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"Nobody wants to be forgotten" is a truism that bears repeating for those in the funeral profession. At worst, it is a cliché that many may consider over used. At best, it is an admonition and reminder of the possibility of our own existence being forgotten when we depart from this life.

As a cremationist by personal conviction, I often come in contact with funeral professionals who dislike what cremation creates – or, more realistically, does NOT create. As the historian for the Cremation Association of North America, I have done extensive research into our association's past – and have realized a few ideas that cremationists have struggled with since cremation has been practiced in the US. To name a few: Unclaimed cremated remains; How to prevent scattering of cremated remains; Permanent Memorialization following cremation; Pricing.

Do any of these sound familiar? Obviously, cremation's past was plagued with the same issues as cremation's present and future. In reading the proceedings of almost 40-years-worth of annual conventions of the Cremation Association, I have learned some very important lessons that I can use in my daily dealings with families choosing cremation.

In my opinion, one of the biggest enemies cremation has ever seen is scattering. In cremation's past, the crematory operators of the day frequently combatted scattering by refusing to pulverize cremated remains

after they were removed from the cremation chamber. In other words, bone fragments were placed into the memorial urn rather than the reduced powder that is common in modern cases. This prevented the facilitation of scattering. Removing yourself from being a funeral professional, how would you like to be called upon to discard the human remains of someone that you have known and loved? The scattering process places undue grief on those called upon to do it. And, going a step further, once it is done – there's no changing one's mind.

The permanent cremation memorial is a necessity for future generations. Think of what has been learned about civilizations in ancient history by the study of their death practices! Scattering or keeping a loved one's remains at home obliterates the possibility of future archaeologists and anthropologists learning about our culture. Paper dissolves, computers crash, but when a name is engraved on a permanent memorial urn made of material that will last, or on a stone marking a place of rest, these permanent, tangible signs provide stepping stones for future generations.

This doesn't even take into account the importance of a family having closure during the grief process – giving their minds peace that there is finality to the death of someone they love.

It is the duty of the funeral professional to explain this importance to the families who are in our care. We must do all that we can do to maintain the heritage of our ever-changing culture. To do so is to fully serve those who call on us in times of need. It is, after all, what our life's work is all about.



Jason Ryan Engler is a funeral director and cremation historian in Northwest Arkansas. He is the unofficial historian for the Cremation Association of North America and is a frequent contributor of cremation information to trade journals and organizations.

Read his blog at <http://urnsandouts.blogspot.com>.
He can be reached at cremationhistorian@hotmail.com.

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Keeping Healthy Even as We Grieve

By Ken Doka

Grief is fundamentally bad for our health. It is a painful process to deal with the loss of someone we love. We suffer so much emotional turmoil. The physical pain seems to go with the emotional pain.

And we do experience physical pain. Grief can affect us in so many ways—the ways we think, the ways we feel, or even our beliefs. Our bodies may evidence the loss. We may experience all sorts of aches and pains. Our stomachs may hurt, our muscles ache, and our heads may throb.

While these physical reactions are common in grief, they do have to be monitored by a physician. We need to be very mindful of our health as we experience a loss. It goes beyond simply the physical manifestations of our grief. A loss can have an insidious effect on our health and even our survival.

There are a number of reasons for that. 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 but, 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 become negligent in adhering to a mediation regimen. We may ignore basic needs-failing to eat well, exercise, or get sufficient sleep.

Good self-care then is a essential piece as we deal with our loss. We need to monitor our stress levels and do all that we can to reduce unnecessary stress. That is why it is helpful to not make any significant changes, such as a move or job change, after a loss. Any change brings additional stress at an already difficult time.

It is also helpful to assess our own health habits, reviewing how they may have been affected by the loss. Are we sleeping well? Has our diet changed? Are we exercising enough? Are we taking medication in the prescribed way? Are we avoiding practices that can negatively influence our health and well-being, such as the excessive use of alcohol? Once we examine our own health and life practices we can begin to make the essential changes. When necessary, we can discuss any concerns, such as an inability to sleep, with our 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. Often, reaching into our own spirituality, whether it is prayer, meditation, or any other spiritual discipline, can help reduce stress. Practicing ways to de-stress makes good sense in grief.

Grief is hard work. Like any hard

work we have to acknowledge that we need time off. Going out with friends, taking in a movie, or enjoying a concert offers temporary respite from our loss. It empowers us to deal with our grief.

And 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

Baby's diapers are named for affection, such as Huggies, Luvs, and Pampers. Everyone wants to hug, love, and pamper little ones. Diapers for older folks, however, are called Depends. Maybe older folks get these perks DEPENDING on who is in their will?

Sent from Al Walden



Funny story sent by fellow funeral director, Mike Kemp from Schmitt Funeral Home, WaKeeney and Quinter, Kansas

A funny thing happened...

Brian, my assistant funeral director, and I were working a Catholic funeral together. Brian was conducting the service, and I was assisting him. After the funeral there was to be a luncheon at the religious education center, located just across the street from the church. Everyone was invited. As usual, immediately after the mass we went in procession to the local cemetery for the graveside committal and burial portion of the service. When the priest was done with all the prayers involved in the committal, Brian stepped forward to prepare to announce the conclusion of the service. In doing so, he removed the crucifix that had been placed on the casket, handed it to the priest to present to the next-of-kin. He proceeded to announce to the crowd, "This concludes the services at the graveside. The family has invited everyone back to the religious education center for lunch." Upon Brian's return to his original position next to me in the crowd, a nearby friend of the family asked him, "Is that across from the church?". Brian, without a doubt, answered, "No, it's just a crucifix." Wondering what in the world Brian thought the man was asking, I immediately helped out with the correction, "Yes, it is across from the church." Shaking his head, Brian looked at me with a confused look, and the man walked away, also with a confused look on his face. When what had just happened, hit both of us, we laughed for a good five minute solid! What Brian had heard the man say was, "Is that a CROSS from the church?" He thought the man was talking about the crucifix he had just handed the priest.

A mild-mannered man was tired of his wife bossing him around so he went to a psychiatrist. The doctor told him to work on his self-esteem and gave him a booklet that he read on the way home. When he walked through the door, and his wife came to greet him, he said, "From now on, I am the master of this house and my word is law. When I come home from work, I want dinner on the table. Now, get upstairs and lay my clothes out on the bed because tonight I will be going out with the boys. Then, draw my bath. When I get out of the tub, guess who is going to dress me and comb my hair?" The wife, without batting an eye, answered, "The undertaker."



Comments

Mrs. Howard,

Just a note to let you know how much we appreciate receiving and enjoying the articles in the publication...think your magazine is better than The Missouri Funeral Director and Mortuary Management. You and Mr. Pugh tell it like it is when it comes to the articles that you write. We are a small funeral home in rural northeast Missouri and each year we are having less earth burials and more direct cremations....changing times we don't have to like!

We can relate to Kasey's obituary...been there...done that...2 Golden Retrievers, but we rescued 2 more and of course they are family now.

I admire you being able (you are such a strong lady) to share things about the loss of your 2 daughters, but I know it has to be heart-breaking for you to do so. We as funeral directors have feelings just like the families we serve..we are humans, too. Some don't think so!

We were lucky to be audited by the IRS this year for 6 months...NOT! By the way, they will find something to make you pay. Our auditor (nice lady) told us that they were auditing small funeral homes. Told her they needed to go after the BIG ones. We had to pay quite a bit, but was not penalized the 20%. It won't be long that the small funeral homes will be a thing of the past.

Thank you for sending "The Dead Beat"....enjoy it so much and if there is a charge, please send a bill. Another thing, I think it is totally ridiculous that we have to buy a music license through MFDEA, since we are members of MFDA since 1978.Keep up the great work.

Elliott Funeral Home, Atlanta, MO
(From Editor, Mrs. Howard— Thank you!)

"Ah, yes, divorce, from the Latin word meaning to rip a man's genitals through his wallet." Robin Williams

Recently I took a group of widows to a showboat lunch and show. The boat was crowded and our table had an empty chair. I jokingly made the comment that maybe we could find an eligible older man to join us. Quickly one of the ladies snapped, "Men of that age are only looking for a nurse with a purse!" Enough said.

Submitted by Karen Williamson

Ole was fed up with Lena's bad hearing so he decided to show her one day just how bad it was getting. She was in the kitchen. He stood out in the front hall and said, "Lena, what are we having for dinner?" No answer. He moved closer, standing in the dining room. "Lena, what are we having for dinner?" No answer. He moved out into the kitchen, stood right behind her, and said loudly, "Lena, what are we having for dinner!?" Lena turned and looked him in the eye. "You darned fool, Ole! I already told you twice we're having chicken!"

(Continued on page 11)

Chuckles (Cont.)

My grandson was visiting one day when he asked, "Grandpa, do you know how you and God are alike?" I mentally polished my halo while I asked, "No, how are we alike?" "You're both old," he replied.

Church Bulletin Bloopers

- ◆ Evening Massage—6 p.m.
- ◆ Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Please use the back door.
- ◆ Ushers will eat latecomers.
- ◆ The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
- ◆ During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs took over the pulpit.
- ◆ Next Sunday Mrs. Vinson will be soloist for the morning service. The pastor will then speak on "It's a Terrible Experience."
- ◆ Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.
- ◆ The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 p.m. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- ◆ Potluck supper: prayer and medication to follow.
- ◆ Pastor is on vacation. Massages can be given to church secretary...
- ◆ The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.
- ◆ Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

No Nursing Home for Me

(written in 2005)

About a month ago, my sister and her husband went on a Mediterranean cruise. At dinner they noticed an elderly lady sitting alone along the rail of the grand stairway in the main dining room. They also noticed that all the staff, ship officers, waiters, busboy, etc. All seemed very familiar with this lady. When asked who this lady was, expecting to be told she owned the line, the waiter said he only knew that she had been on board for the last four cruises, back to back. As they left the dining

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room one evening, they caught her eye and stopped to say hello. They chatted and said, "We understand you've been on this ship for the last four cruises." She replied "Yes, that's true." "I don't understand," they said, and she replied without a pause. "It's cheaper than a nursing home."



So I just want you to know that there will be no nursing home in my future. Now, when I'm old and getting feeble, I'm going to get on a cruise ship. The average cost for a nursing home is \$200 a day. Checking on reservations, someone can get a long term discount and senior discount price on a cruise ship for around \$135 per day. That leaves \$65 a day for:

1. Gratitudes which will only be \$10 per day.
2. I will have as many as 10 meals a day if I can waddle to the restaurant or I can have room service (which means I can have breakfast in bed every day of the week).
3. Princess has as many as three swimming pools, a workout room, free washers and dryers and shows every night.
4. They have free toothpaste, razors, soap and shampoo.
5. They will even treat you like a customer, not a patient. An extra \$5 worth of tips will have the entire staff scrambling to help you.
6. I will get to meet new people every 7 to 14 days.
7. TV broke? Light bulb need change! No? Need to have the mattress replaced? No problem! They will fix everything and apologize for your inconvenience.
8. Clean sheets and towels every day and you don't even have to ask for them.
9. If you fall in the nursing home and break a hip, you are on Medicare. If you fall and break a hip on the Princess ship, they will upgrade you to a suite for the rest of your life.
10. Now hold on for the best. Do you want to see South America, the Panama Canal, Tahiti, Australia, New Zealand, Asia or name where you want to go. A cruise line will have a ship ready to go. So don't look for me in a nursing home, just call shore to ship.

P.S.S.: And don't forget when you die, they just dump you over the side at no charge.



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Price Lowered-FOR SALE: Funeral Home in west New Mexico; Located near Mountains with beautiful surroundings. Only Funeral Home in City and County. 8000 square feet building, chapel seats 250, ample parking. Complete fleet with all equipment. Average 150 calls per year. With over \$650,000.00 in preneed. Owner wanting to retire and will sign non-compete contract. Also available, 4300 square foot house with 4 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, indoor Salt Water Swimming Pool with Diving Board, Bathroom and Exercise Room. Send inquires to: nmfuneralhome@yahoo.com

FOR SALE: Rural Oklahoma family-owned funeral home for sale. Please send serious inquiries to: Business Purchase Request, 5830 NW Expressway, Box 175, Oklahoma City, OK 73132 or contact molly.helm@wymerbrownlee.co

FOR SALE: 10-15 casket display trucks, 1-metal dressing table, 135 metal, padded folding chairs, 1-yellow oak podium. ST & M F.H. 620-221-2211 will e-mail pics.

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"Dear Counselor...." By Bill Stalter

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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



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.preneedresource.com.

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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues



ARKANSAS



The Rev. Andrew Jackson "A.J." Parish, 78, of Fort Smith passed away Oct. 3, 2014. He was a veteran of the US Air Force where he served as an Air Policeman, first African American to serve in the Selected Service, graduate of Arkansas Baptist College and the Jackson Theological Seminary, a licensed Mortician and Funeral Director, owner-operator of Rowell-Parish Mortuary, the first African-American resident in Arkansas to be elected to the office of County Coroner, an Affiliate Member of the National Association of Medical Examiners, former Vice President of Arkansas Coroner's Association. Under the direction of Rowell-Parish Mortuary.

IOWA



Roger Martin, 91, of Waukon, passed away Dec. 20, 2014. He enlisted in the U.S. Army where he served from 1943-1946 and attended the St. Louis Mortuary College of Mortuary Science. He joined the family business and started operating Martin Brothers Furniture Store and Funeral Home. He had been a licensed funeral director since 1952. Arrangements were handled by Martin Funeral Home.

KANSAS

Jerry Lynn Robson, 73, of Hugoton, died Jan. 2, 2015. He worked for Phillips Funeral Home in Garden City, while in college. He later worked at Garnand Funeral Home. After moving to Liberal in 1966 he worked at Miller Mortuary. In 1958 he and his wife opened Haskell County Funeral Home in Sublette. In 1976, they bought a funeral home in Ottawa, the Robson Towner Funeral Home. In 1979, they repurchased Haskell County Funeral Home and returned to Sublette. They later opened Montezuma Funeral Home, Grant County Funeral Home and purchased Paul's Funeral Home in Hugoton who handled his services.



Edward Tuggle, 63, of Topeka, passed away Dec. 29, 2014. In 1981, he relocated to Indiana to continue his career in sales with Batesville Casket Co. After terms as both regional and divisional directors, in 1989 Ed was appointed vice president of the sales organization. In 1994 he left Batesville Casket to join Newcomer Funeral Service Group as executive vice president and chief operating officer. His services were arranged by Penwell-Gabel Southwest Chapel.



Charles L. "Chuck" Wirth, Jr., 86, of Shawnee passed away, Feb. 10, 2015. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He attended Williams Institute of Mortuary Science in Kansas City, Kansas and was a licensed funeral director and embalmer in Kansas and Missouri. Chuck's career in the funeral industry spanned 40 years with Wall-Diffenderfer Mortuary in Topeka, the Amos Family Funeral Home in Shawnee, and Bruce Funeral Home in Gardner. His services were under direction of Amos Family Funeral Home.

MISSOURI



"Liz" Maureen Elizabeth Berg, 72, of Olathe, KS (formerly of Concordia, MO) passed away March 22, 2015. Liz was married to Ron Berg, past president of MFDEA and owner of Berg Mortuaries in Concordia. Liz and Ron moved to Concordia in 1967. She obtained her Missouri Funeral Director license and Kansas Assistant Funeral Director License. She was active with her husband in the MFDEA, NFDA and Missouri funeral legislation. She continued her funeral career at Mt. Moriah & Freeman Funeral Home for 7 years. Her services were handled by McGilley & Frye Funeral Home in Olathe, KS.



John Thurman Britton, 86, of Cuba, MO (formerly of Steelville, MO) passed away Jan. 21, 2015. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1951, spending a year in Korea. John took early retirement from ITT and he and his family returned to Crawford County, Missouri in 1974, where they became active in the family businesses with his two brothers, Alfred and Don. John ran Franklin Variety in Cuba and worked actively in the Britton Funeral Homes. His services were conducted by Britton-Bennett Funeral Home in Steelville.



Richard E. "Gene" Carroll, Sr., 88, of Kansas City, MO passed away Feb. 23, 2015. Gene was a licensed Funeral Director and embalmer for over 50 years. He was a former owner of Sheil Funeral Homes, Inc. Gene was a proud World War II veteran of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Marine Corps Reserve. He served with the Coast Guard in the Atlantic during WWII. Services were directed by McGilley & Sheil Chapel.



Nancy Jane Clary, 88, of Alton, MO passed away Nov. 20, 2014. She and her late husband J. Q. (longtime Oregon County coroner) founded the Clary Funeral Home in Alton, MO in June, 1948 and later, opened funeral homes in Mammoth Spring, AR and Thayer, MO. Survivors son Tom (Oregon County Coroner), wife Diana and sons Robert and Jonathan, manage the three funeral homes. Her services were conducted by Clary Funeral Home, Alton, MO.



Robert E. "Sugar" Cukrowicz, 88, of Sullivan, formerly of South Bend, IN. Father of Mary Ann Eaton and husband Jim who are owners of the Eaton Funeral Inc. in Sullivan and Bourbon, MO and Meramec Regional Crematory in Sullivan. He honorably served his country during WWII with the U.S. Army in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater. One of his life's passions was washing and detailing cars at his son-in-law's and daughter's family funeral home, who handled his services.

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



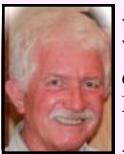
Denotes Veteran of Military Service

MISSOURI (Cont.)

Walter J. "Shorty" Haines, Jr., 89, of Versailles, passed away Jan. 3, 2015. He was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of World War II. He was a 1947 graduate of the College of Mortuary Science in St. Louis. He was a licensed embalmer and funeral director for over 50 years. He owned and operated Haines Funeral Home from 1956 until his retirement in 1983. He was a past member of MFDA and NFDA. His funeral was directed by Weiker Funeral Home in Slater, MO.

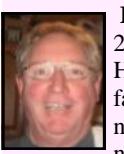


Irma L. Koch, 83, of Sedalia, passed away on Feb. 24, 2015. Irma and her late husband Bill Koch owned and operated Heisel-Koch Funeral Home in Brunswick for 31 years until her retirement. She had been a funeral director/receptionist at McLaughlin Funeral Chapel in Sedalia since 1998 who directed her services.



William J. "Billy", Jr., 66, of Jupiter, FL, passed away on March 2, 2015. He was cousin of Todd Mahn, Mahn Funeral Home, DeSoto, MO.

Kenneth L. Meisenheimer, 65, of Pilot Grove passed away Nov. 5, 2014. He graduated from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Science. He and his brother owned and operated the Meisenheimer Funeral Homes in Tipton, Pilot Grove and Otterville. Arrangements were under the direction of Meisenheimer Funeral Home in Pilot Grove.



Robert A. Ortmann, passed away on Nov. 22, 2014. He was the owner of Ortmann Funeral Home in Overland Park, established in 1935 by his father Alphonse C. Ortmann. In 1998, he and his partner/brother-in-law Sam Stipanovich, expanded the business by opening Ortmann-Stipanovich Funeral Home located in Creve Coeur, MO. His services were handled by Ortmann Funeral Home in Overland.



Kathy I. Patton, 69, of Moberly, formerly of Huntsville, passed away Jan. 3, 2015. She was co-owner of Patton Funeral Home in Huntsville. Arrangements were under the care of Patton Funeral Home.



Clair "Cy" Schulz, 85, of Pierce, NE passed away Jan. 20, 2015. He was the father of Randy and Lorrie Schulz co-owners of Cotrell Funeral Services, Poplar Bluff, MO. Stonacek Memorial Chapel of Pierce, NE were in charge of his arrangements.



Hattie Sanders, 94, of Farmington, MO, passed away on Nov. 10, 2014. She was the mother of Conita and Chris Follis of Follis & Sons Funeral Home and grandmother to Collin and Chad Follis. Follis & Sons Funeral Home handled her services.

OKLAHOMA



Thomas Arthur Welsh, 72, of McAlester, passed away Jan. 11, 2015. He worked for the Mills Family of Funeral Homes for more than 30 years as a district manager; serving 12 funeral homes and one cemetery. As a senior in high school, he participated in the distributive education program, obtaining his first job in the funeral business at the age of 16. He was a member of NFDA. He attended the Dallas School of Mortuary Science and was the youngest graduate in school history. Brumley-Mills Funeral Home Chapel handled his services.

TEXAS



Odie Emily Beaver, 93, of Kerrville, passed away Dec. 9, 2014. She was the grandmother of Ann Singer, Executive Director of TFDA. Her arrangements were under the direction of Grimes Funeral Chapels.



Michael Hayes Branion, 61, of Lamesa, passed away on Jan. 7, 2015. Mike graduated from the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science and owned and operated Branion Funeral Home. He served on the Board of Directors of Funeral Director's Life Insurance Company in Abilene since 1989 and held a seat as a member of the Executive Committee. His arrangements were under the direction of Branion Funeral Home, Nalley-Pickle-Welch Funeral Home and Horizon Funeral Home.

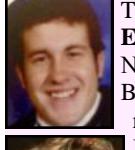
Eleanora (Parker) Crofts, 74, of Houston, passed away on Nov. 13, 2014. She was mother of Beth Ann Carpenter, director of Sales Development of Funeral Directors Life Insurance Co. Her arrangements were directed by Klein Funeral Home, Spring, TX.



Violet "Vi" Marshall Duncan, 88, of Rockport, passed away Nov. 22, 2014. She was former co-owner of the Charlie Marshall Funeral Homes in Aransas Pass and Rockport. Her services were directed by Charlie Marshall Funeral Home in Rockport.



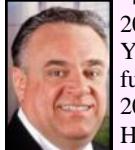
Robert D. "Bob" Goodwin, 79, of Marble Falls, passed away on Jan. 19, 2015. He was past president of TFDA in 1974, Past Board member of NFDA, 2013 recipient of 50-year licensee award. In 1960, he attended and graduated from Dallas Institute of Funeral Services. He served his apprentice with Starbuck Funeral Home, Merkel. Bob and Paka owned and operated Goodwin Funeral Home, Sinton from 1963 until 1977. In 1978 they moved to Gladewater where they owned and operated Goodwin Funeral Home until their retirement in 1997. His services were directed by Clements-Wilcox Funeral Home, Marble Falls and Cottle Funeral Home in Troup.



Eric Anthony Hansard, 24, of San Antonio, passed away on Nov. 7, 2014. He was the son of John C. "Dusty" Hansard of Blackwell-Mullins Funeral Home who handled the funeral arrangements.



Rebecca Lynn "Becky" Harper, 62, of Fort Worth, passed away March 30, 2015. She was the wife of E.C., "Trey" Harper, III with Robertson Mueller Harper Funeral Directors which handled her services.



Stephen M. Mack, 63, of Houston, passed away on March 19, 2015. His exposure to funeral service began in his teens in New York, after college he served as manager at many New York SCI funeral homes and worked up the ranks in the organization. In 2002 he was appointed Sr. Vice President of Eastern Operation. His services were directed by Geo. H. Lewis & Sons Funeral Directors.

(Continued on page 17)



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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues (Cont.)

TEXAS (Cont.)

(Continued from page 15)



Ernest A. McKnight, 69, of Lufkin, passed away Dec. 14, 2014. He worked as a Funeral Director Assistant at Carroway Funeral Home, who handled his services.



James "Howard" Morris, 89, of Nocona, passed away Dec. 25, 2014. He was a funeral director and embalmer for 65 years, starting his career at Owens and Brumley Funeral Home in Bowie. He also worked for Hampton Vaughn in Wichita Falls before moving his family to Nocona in 1950. He then started working at the Scott-Morris Funeral Home with locations in Nocona and Saint Jo, as well as a hardware store. In 1971, he was offered a partnership and gained full ownership of the firm after W.L. Scott passed away in 1985. He retired in 2004. His arrangements were under the direction of Scott-Morris Funeral Home.



Jesse Olmos, 74, of Houston, passed away Feb. 21, 2015. He was the father of Ariel Olmos. His services were directed by Carter Funeral Home.



Esther Ramos, 95, of Del Rio, passed away Jan. 22, 2015. She was mother of Joe Ramos, owner of Sunset Funeral Home, El Paso and grandmother to Jose Amezcuia and Michael Ramos of Sunset Funeral Home, Funeral Directors and Managers. Sunset Memorial Oaks Funeral Home directed her funeral services.



Patrick Wayne Robertson, 59, of Clarendon, passed away Dec. 22, 2014. He attended the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science, graduating in 1975. He was former Texas Funeral Service Commissioner, son of Delbert Robertson and father of Chuck Robertson or Robertson Funeral Directors of Clarendon, Claude, McLean, Memphis and Shamrock. He was awarded funeral director of the year by Panhandle Funeral Directors Association for the year 2011-2012. Robertson Funeral Directors in Clarendon handled his services.



Johnnie B. Rogers, Sr., 89, of Austin, passed away March 8, 2015. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. He was the Texas Funeral Directors Association's former general counsel. His services were directed by Cook-Walden Funeral Home.



Oscar "Oskie" Rosas, Jr., 43, of Alice, passed away Nov. 23, 2014. He was co-owner and FDIC of Rosas Funeral Home. He was a funeral director and embalmer for 24 years. Rosas Funeral Home directed his funeral services.

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William Donald Schoolcraft, 79, of Dallas, passed away on Nov. 24, 2014. He was a former funeral director for 40 years with the Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home in Dallas, who directed his services.



Betty Jean Shive, 70, of Yoakum, passed away on Nov. 5, 2014. She was the wife of Jerry Shive, a funeral director at Crosley Funeral Home in Gladewater, TX. Thiele-Cooper Funeral Home and Croley Funeral Home directed her services.



Billy Wayne Turrentine, 76, of Allen, passed away Nov. 7, 2014. He started working at the age of twelve and served for over 64 years. He was funeral director and partner with Turrentine-Jackson-Morrow Funeral Home in McKinney, Allen and Plano, Texas, they handled his services.



Alfredo (Fred) Velasquez, 56, of Lubbock, passed away Feb. 22, 2015. He attended Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. He served his apprenticeship at Gonzalez Funeral Home of Dallas 1985-1987 before taking a job at Resthaven Funeral Home in Lubbock 1987-2000 where he later served as general manager. Beginning in 2001, Fred worked for Grupo Deco in the McAllen and Harlingen area and later for White Mortuaries in Lubbock, Texas. In 2004, Fred accepted a job with Pierce Chemicals where he worked as a sales representative in the funeral industry. He was a sales director for Pierce Companies in Lubbock. His services were directed by Combest Family Funeral Home in Lubbock.



Mary Lynn Welch, 86, of Big Spring, passed away on Oct. 31, 2014. She was the wife of Ernest A. Welch, mother of Tommy L. Welch and grandmother of Kasi Welch-Baker associated with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring, Stanton and Midland, who directed her services.



As We Drive By

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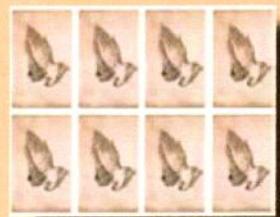
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NFDA Members to Urge Congress to Pass Legislation to Help Social Security Recipients and War Heroes

Brookfield, Wis. - When members of the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) were in Washington, D.C., they were urging their elected representatives to pass legislation that will help the families of social security recipients and fallen service members honor their loved ones with meaningful funerals. The association hosted its annual Advocacy Summit in the nation's capital March 3-5.

When an individual who was receiving Social Security benefits dies, his or her spouse or surviving dependent children is entitled to a lump-sum death benefit (LSDB) of \$255. The LSDB was capped at \$255 in 1954, and since 1982 all payments have equaled \$255.

NFDA worked with Rep. Mimi Walters, R-Calif., to introduce the "Social Security Lump-Sum Death Benefit Improvement and Modernization Act of 2015" (H.R. 1109) <<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr1109>>, which would increase the value of the LSDB to \$1,000.

Although the LSDB was once linked to burial expenses and is sometimes still referred to as a "funeral benefit," it no longer has any legal connection with funeral expenses; however, many families truly need the LSDB and are often faced with the heartbreaking situation of not being able to provide a dignified funeral and burial for their loved ones.

NFDA members will also be advocating in support of legislation introduced by Reps. Gerry Connolly, D-Va., and Tom Rooney, R-Fla., "The Families of Fallen Service-members First Act" (H.R. 250) <<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr250>>, which would ensure the immediate payment of military death benefits to survivors of fallen service members when federal spending authority lapses.

The longstanding purpose of the federal death benefit is to assist families of deceased service members in meeting their financial needs during the period immediately following a service member's death and before other survivor benefits become available. Payments are delivered within three days of the service member's death and cover expenses such as flying to meet their loved one's remains at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and arranging funeral and burial services. "Every person deserves a dignified funeral and burial or cremation," said NFDA Senior Vice President Lesley Witter, MPA, CAE. "Our members are excited to have been in Washington, D.C., on behalf of the families we serve. By passing these bills, Congress will ease the stress and hardship that so many grieving families face and enable them to honor their loved ones in meaningful ways."

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Interesting Interpretation of Ancient Gravestone

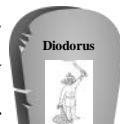
Many things can be gleaned about people from their gravestones, an interesting article was sent to me about a Roman Gladiator's gravestone.

This information was from LiveScience and the author was Owen Jarus. The epitaph and art was on the tombstone of Diodorus, the gladiator. He had lost a battle and his life, but it was possibly due to a referee's error according to a professor at Brock University in St. Catharines, Canada, Michael Carter.

Mr. Carter's studies of gladiator contests of the Roman Empire led to his connection with the tombstone. It was donated to a Museum in Brussels, Belgium, and it showed a gladiator with two swords standing above his opponent which is signaling his opponent's surrender.

Now what is interesting is that there were specific rules of the gladiators and they actually had referees to enforce the rules. Specific rules allowed surrender or accidental falling to be interpreted by the referee. In this particular case, whether by accident or sinister reasons, the surrender was said to have been an accident by the referee. The person surrendering killed the real winner, Diodorus who had thought he'd won the battle due to the opponent's surrender and had stopped fighting. All this from a tombstone of a man holding 2 swords (his and the one who surrendered sword).

Interesting.....



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OKLAHOMA FUNERAL SUPPLY SALES CLUB AWARDS TWO SCHOLARSHIPS

The Oklahoma Funeral Supply Sales Club has awarded two \$500.00 Scholarship Awards to deserving students at the University of Central Oklahoma and Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. The recipients were chosen from a number of applications submitted from both schools. The selection process included visiting with instructors at each school, talking with firms where they have been serving apprenticeships and a written application and resume.

Each recipient exhibited financial need, academic excellence and a desire to remain in Oklahoma once becoming a Licensed Funeral Professional. Their dedication to the profession was clearly evident.

The 2014 Oklahoma Funeral Supply Sales Club Scholarship Recipients are:

Katelyn Magruder is from Seminole, Oklahoma and is attending the University of Central Oklahoma where she is President of Sigma Phi Sigma. Ms. Magruder also holds an Associates Degree from Seminole State College. Katelyn is currently serving her apprenticeship with the Smith-Gallo Funeral Home in Guthrie, OK.

Benjamin Cawley, is from Idabel, Oklahoma and attends The Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. Mr. Cawley also holds an Associates Degree from Cochise Community College. Benjamin is a U.S. Army Veteran and served his country as Military Intelligence Analyst which included service in Afghanistan.

Congratulations to both these fine funeral professionals.

Current Oklahoma Funeral Supply Sales Club officers are:

President: Randy Emmert, Pierce Chemicals

Vice President: Jim McCray, Matthews Casket Company

Secretary/Treasurer: Mike Carter, Lynch Supply/Heartland Casket Company

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Mike Carter 1-800-777-3151

Updates from Center for Loss & Life Transition and Dr. Alan Wolfelt's Training

Fort Collins, CO... Companion Press announces the publication of a new book entitled *Healing Your Grieving Heart After Miscarriage: 100 Practical Ideas for Parents and Families* by renowned grief educator Dr. Alan Wolfelt. While as many as half of all pregnancies end in miscarriage, the profound grief experienced by the parents and families affected by early pregnancy loss is rarely recognized. In this compassionate book, Dr. Wolfelt affirms the significance of miscarriage loss and offers guidance to help families as they grieve and mourn. Author, educator, and grief counselor Dr. Alan Wolfelt serves as Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. The author of *Understanding Your Grief* and many other books for grief caregivers and mourners, Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well so they can live well and love well. He is available for interviews on grief after pregnancy loss. Part of Dr. Wolfelt's popular 100 Ideas series, *Healing Your Grieving Heart After Miscarriage* is priced at \$11.95 U.S. To order and to learn more about Dr. Wolfelt's books on grief and loss, visit www.centerforloss.com or call (970) 226-6050.

Fort Collins, CO... The Center for Loss and Life Transition announces two upcoming training sessions for funeral directors: June 23-25, 2015, in Fort Collins, Colorado, and February 2-4, 2016, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Entitled "Opening Your Community's Eyes to WHY We Need Funerals," the three-day workshops, facilitated by educator Dr. Alan Wolfelt, will review why humans have had funerals since the beginning of time and explains how each of the elements of the ceremony—from visitation to music to the gathering after—are essential components of the funeral. The purpose of the training is to educate and motivate funeral directors and other end-of-life caregivers so they can in turn educate families, which will help ensure the creation of complete, meaningful funeral experiences. A companion workbook, posters, and brochure, also written by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, are included in the materials for the seminars.

Participants will be encouraged to rethink their roles and responsibilities, focus on educating families, overcome common objections that families have to funerals, and reinvigorate funerals in their communities. In addition, this seminar is designed to immerse participants in the content so thoroughly that they'll be well-prepared to return to their funeral homes or other organizations and, using the workbook and their newly practiced skills, train the rest of their staff in this inspiring and practical model. An essential element of this training provides a model for integrating the WHY of meaningful funerals into the arrangement conference.

For more information or to reserve a seat in the seminar, call (970) 226-6050 or visit www.centerforloss.com.



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Baby Wilkins Howard
Aug. 1, 2005—Nov. 24, 2015
Her Life and My Reflections on It
By Joanne Howard

A faithful dog and companion to Claude and Joanne Howard. Baby didn't join our family until December, 2006. The last of her litter to find a home. She was a lemon-colored full-pedigree Bassett Hound. Tresa Wilkens' (a co-worker of Claude's), daughter Victoria was raising Bassett Hounds and Baby was last of her last litter.

She became a walking buddy and companion for Delilah, our family dog for 19 years. After Delilah passed in April, 2007, Baby alone became our kid.

She had her own condo cage, middle size cage opening to large cage, thus early dog kennel décor in our living room. At night she would go in to sleep, she even learned to open the door with her nose if it happened to close.

Baby was a very smart dog understanding many things, when I said ears, she knew she was going to get them cleaned, which with Bassett's ears that's done weekly. Being inside, she was bathed monthly and she knew the word "bath" too.

Her first vet visit was prompted by infected cat scratch. Thus starting her long relationship with "Critters and Pals" and Dr. Martin and staff. They not only were her medical caretakers, but kennel we boarded her in when we traveled. As far as going to the vet or kennel she always enjoyed going. Mainly for the car rides with fan blowing in her face. She had numerous cysts situation which required visits until I figured out she was allergic to Febreze. One time after a long trip we came back and she was with the receptionist up front as if she joined the office staff.

Another weird thing, it was months before we ever heard her bark. She barked very infrequently mostly when people came to the door she didn't know.

Baby was very spoiled with many toys which I assumed she played with when we were gone. Though she ripped out every toy's eye that she could. She may have gotten bored and maybe hungry and we found holes in blankets that were kept

over her cage. This may have been the reason for her stomach trouble. She enjoyed laying on top of the couch in front of the window looking outside. She had outside cat friends that she kept track of, ending up with just one black cat that rubbed against her all the time,



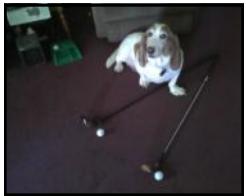
07/16/2007

whether comfort on behalf of the cat or just friendship, I don't know, but now that Baby's gone—the cat knows something is different.

Baby also liked to hop on our bed in the bedroom to look outside when I was out there. She also got to the point of laying outside the door of the bathroom until I came out. She always knew I was leaving when I brushed my teeth and she would go back into her cage and waited for me to lock the door. When we were gone we always left the radio on for her for companionship. She heard many hours of a religious radio station.

Her last year she had an issue with her right eye. Don't really know what happened, but it swelled up and doctor thought glaucoma, but she lost sight in it, didn't seem to bother her though. As her appetite diminished toward the end, she didn't seem to have much stamina and mostly slept. She didn't really whimper in pain or anything but you knew life was becoming a struggle. I felt like I was Baby's hospice worker her last week of life.

The last time at the vet's when we had been on short business trip, she gave her 3-6 weeks to live. Ten days later we put her down. Claude and I were with her to the end and it was very peaceful. Though it was hard to lose her, it was harder watching her suffer. On the same table that had given her healing in the past, was the table that gave her final comfort and peace. It's hard to say goodbye, but as with the girls, I hope to see her again someday and hopefully she might be playing with them now.



(Editor: Thanks for letting me share.)

Seven Good Ways to Deliver Bad News

By Joe Wiegel

Nearly everyone has to be the bearer of bad tidings from time to time. Maybe it's a layoff. Perhaps it's a cutback in hours at the funeral home. Or the termination of a popular associate.

How you communicate bad news will have a significant impact on your firm and its reputation. In fact, handling one piece of bad news effectively may be more powerful than sharing ten pieces of good news.

Be frank. Human nature leads people to try to camouflage bad news with all sorts of soft expressions and weasel words. Guess what? People see right through that stuff. Being candid builds trust and pays long-term dividends. Besides, it's easier to keep track of what you've said when you've told the truth in the first place.

Be confident. Confidence inspires more confidence. If your employees see you reacting with poise and self-assurance (no matter how much you're quivering inside), they'll worry less. Your language, your voice, your posture—all of those things must convey the impression that you're in control and that you're already moving past the bad news.

See it through their eyes. You know the full story behind the bad news and how it will impact the organization. Focus your messages on what matters to your employees. Consider how whatever happened may affect their working relationship with you, and start your message there.

Don't exaggerate. It's very easy to turn that proverbial molehill into a mountain. Odds are good that whatever happened or is about to happen is not on a par with the Black Plague, Pearl Harbor, 9/11, or the end of the world, so don't react as though it is. If you present the news as something bigger than it really is, they'll overreact, too.

Take the blame. It's easy to shift the guilt to someone else or a situation. People in charge don't hesitate to take credit for the good things that happen to their companies. They should also be willing to take the blame for the bad ones—even if they really aren't at fault!

Find good news in the bad. Okay, you've had to cut some of your staff because calls are down. Positives may not be easy to find, but there are probably some lurking somewhere in that bad news. Put the emphasis there. "yes, this happened, but it was a good lesson for us."

Move on. Businesses have a tendency to be so concerned about the bad news that they keep repeating it. Or they leave messages announcing the bad news on signs in their workplaces for weeks. Don't do that. People have short memories, and if you don't remind them about your bad news, they'll shift their focus to other things.

After you've shared the bad news, you can go back to delivering the kind of messages everyone enjoys.



Joe Wiegel is the owner of Weigel Strategic Marketing, a communications firm delivering expertise and results across three interrelated marketing disciplines: strategy, branding and communications. For more information, he can be reached at 317-260-8515 or joseph.wiegel@gmail.com.

God Knows the Desires of Our Hearts Before We Do.....

I don't know if the story below is even true or not, but the missionary that came and talked to a Sunday School class a few months ago (who had been in Siberia, Russia) had a very similar experience to the following.

Something they desperately wanted suddenly arrived in a shipment from a friend back in the U.S. The friend said while he was at a Sam's Club he felt moved to pick up the particular item and ship it to his missionary friends, even though it wasn't on his shopping list and he didn't know if they would need it or not. (And this of course was several weeks prior, because it takes awhile to ship something overseas, especially to third-world countries).

Then, those many weeks later, when the couple was desperately wanting the item, it just appeared on their door step. God knows the desires of our hearts before we do...so don't ever underestimate Him..... Be more concerned with what GOD thinks about you, than what other people think about you.

This beautiful story was written by a doctor who worked in Africa. One night I had worked hard to help a mother in the labor ward; but in spite of all we could do, she died, leaving us with a tiny, premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter. We would have difficulty keeping the baby alive, as we have no incubator (we had no electricity to run an incubator). We also had no special feeding facilities. Although we lived on the equator, nights were often chilly with treacherous drafts.

One student midwife went for the box we had for such babies and the cotton wool that the baby would be wrapped in. Another went to stoke up the fire and fill a hot water bottle. She came back shortly in distress to tell me that in filling the bottle, it had burst (rubber perishes easily in tropical climates). "And it is our last hot water bottle!" she exclaimed.



As in the West, it is no good crying over spilled milk, so in Central Africa it might be considered no good crying over burst water bottles. They do not grow on trees, and there are no drugstores down forest pathways. "All right," I said, "put the baby as near the fire as you safely can, and sleep between the baby and the door to keep it free from drafts. Your job is to keep the baby warm."

The following noon, as I did most days, I went to have prayers with any of the orphanage children who chose to gather with me. I gave the youngsters various sug-

God Knows the Desires of Our Hearts Before We Do..... (Cont.)

gestions of things to pray about and told them about the tiny baby. I explained our problem about keeping the baby warm enough, mentioning the hot water bottle, and that the baby could so easily die if it got chills. I also told them of the two-year-old sister, crying because her mother had died.

During prayer time, one ten-year-old girl, Ruth, prayed with the usual blunt conciseness of our African children. "Please, God," she prayed. "Send us a hot water bottle today. It'll be no good tomorrow, God, as the baby will be dead, so please send it this afternoon." While I gasped inwardly at the audacity of the prayer, she added, "And while You are about it, would You please send a dolly for the little girl so she'll know You really love her." As often with children's prayers, I was put on the spot. Could I honestly say, "Amen?" I just did not believe that God could do this.

Oh, yes, I know that He can do everything; the Bible says so. But there are limits, aren't there? The only way God could answer this particular prayer would be by sending me a parcel from the homeland. I had been in Africa for almost four years at that time, and I had never, ever, received a parcel from home. Anyway, if anyone did send me a parcel, who would put in a hot water bottle? I lived on the equator!

Halfway through the afternoon, while I was teaching in the nurses' training school, a message was sent that there was a car at my front door. By the time I reached home, the car had gone, but there on the verandah was a large 22-pound parcel. I felt tears pricking my eyes.

I could not open the parcel alone, so I sent for the orphanage children. Together we pulled off the string, carefully undoing each knot. We folded the paper, taking care not to tear it unduly. Excitement was mounting. Some thirty or forty pairs of eyes were focused on the large cardboard box.

From the top, I lifted out brightly-colored, knitted jerseys. Eyes sparkled as I gave them out. Then there were the knitted bandages for the leprosy patients, and the children looked a little bored. Then came a box of mixed raisins and sultanas—that would make a batch of buns for the weekend. Then, as I put my hand in again, I felt thecould it really be: I grasped it and pulled it out. Yes, a brand, new, rubber hot water bottle. I cried.



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I had not asked God to send it; I had not truly believed that He could. Ruth was in the front row of the children. She rushed forward, crying out, "If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the dolly, too!" Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out the small, beautifully-dressed dolly. Her eyes shone! She had never doubted! Looking up at me, she asked: "Can I go over with you and give this dolly to that little girl, so she'll know that Jesus really loves her?" "Of course," I replied.

That parcel had been on the way for five whole months, packed up by my former Sunday School class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God's prompting to send a hot water bottle, even to the equator. And one of the girls had put in a dolly for an African child—five months before, in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year-old to bring it 'that afternoon.' "Before they call, I will answer." (Isaiah 65:24)

As you read this, think about praying. An awesome prayer to pray: "Heavenly Father, I ask You to bless my friends reading this. I ask You to minister to their spirit. Where there is pain, give them Your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubting, release a renewed confidence to work through them. Where there is tiredness or exhaustion, I ask You to give them understanding, guidance, and strength. Where there is fear, reveal Your love and release to them Your courage. Bless their finances, give them greater vision, and raise up leaders and friends to support and encourage them. Give each of them discernment to recognize the evil forces around them and reveal to them the power they have in You to defeat it. I ask You to do these things in Jesus' name. Amen"



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The Dead Beat -The Caregivers Soapbox

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The Train of Life Thoughts

At birth we board a train and meet our parents. We believe they will always travel by our side. However, at some station, our parents will step down from the train, leaving us on this journey alone.

As time goes by, other people will board the train, and they will be significant-siblings, friends, the love of your life, children, and many others. Some will step down and leave a permanent vacuum. Others will go so unnoticed that we don't realize they vacated their seats.

The train ride will be full of joy, sorrow, fantasy, expectations, hellos, good-byes and farewells. A successful ride requires having a good relationship with all passengers. We must give the best of ourselves.

The mystery to everyone is, we do not know at which station we ourselves will step down. So, we must live the best way, love, forgive and offer the best of who we are. It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty we should leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue to travel on the train of life.

I wish you a joyful journey on the train of life. Reap success and give lots of love. More importantly, thank God for the journey.

Lastly, I thank you for being one of the passenger on my train.

Forwarded e-mail

Interesting Thoughts

"I hope they never find life on any other planet-because sure as h*** our government will start sending them money."

Landscape sign: "Spring is here. I'm so excited I wet my plants."

"I ate 4 cans of alphabet soup, and just took probably the biggest vowel movement ever." -Jewelz Gemz

"For the rich there's therapy for the rest of us there's chocolate."

"Once you lick the frosting off a *cupcake*, it becomes a muffin....and muffins are *healthy*. You're welcome!"

"I have come to the conclusion that dryer lint is the cremated remains of all of my missing socks."

"Unless you hear it from the horse's mouth, don't listen to a Jackass."

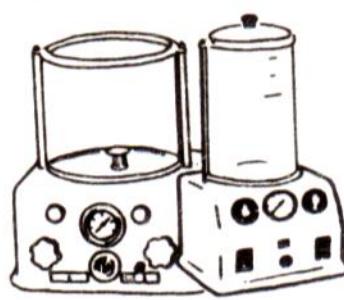
"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned." Buddha

"The Invention of the word"

B oo b

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How They All Began

According to an E-mail sent to us

A SHOT OF WHISKEY:

In the old west a .45 cartridge for a six-gun cost 12 cents, so did a glass of whiskey. If a cowhand was low on cash he would often give the bartender a cartridge in exchange for a drink. This became known as a "shot" of whiskey.

THE WHOLE NINE YARDS

American fighter planes in WWII had machine guns that were fed by a belt of cartridges. The average plane held belts that were 27 feet (9 yards) long. If the pilot used up all his ammo he was said to have given it the whole nine yards.

BUYING THE FARM

This is synonymous with dying. During WWI soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died you "bought the farm" for your survivors.

IRON CLAD CONTRACT

This came about from the ironclad ships of the Civil War. It meant something so strong it could not be broken.

PASSING THE BUCK/THE BUCK

STOPS HERE

Most men in the early west carried a jack knife made by the Buck knife company. When playing poker it was common to place one of these Buck knives in front of the dealer so that everyone knew who he was. When it was time for a new dealer the deck of cards and the knife were given to the new dealer. If this person didn't want to deal he would "pass the buck" to the next player. If that player accepted then "the buck stopped here."

(Editor: Not sure how to check these out, but interesting interpretations otherwise.)

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Something to Ponder

By Lydia Ingraham

"Sometimes you just have to allow yourself to be sad and grieve. Seeing some Facebook friends grieve over their recent loss of parents really hits home. Especially as we enter the holiday season. I wish them peace and happiness. I hope they continue to feel and miss and think about that empty chair at the table. That empty stocking hung on the fireplace. Because time may lessen the pain, but there is always that empty space. Don't try to forget. Don't try to just move on. Remember! Every detail. Good or bad. Don't bury the sadness. You may bury the memories as well. Share with others. Let others know you are hurting. Let someone comfort you. Share your memories. Be ever grateful for each moment you had. And remember, you will be okay."

(Editor's note: Lydia lost her mother to cancer when she was 11 and now is a young woman of 28 with a family of her own and is Lowell's granddaughter.)

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5th Grader's Perspective of Funeral Directing (Cont.)

the person. Like, for example maybe someone died from cancer the computer would say "cancer". An autopsy takes a lot of time and patience. So you have low self a steam this not the job for you.

Another thing to say for this job, actually this is a good idea for any job GET GOOD GRADES all through school. When you get good grades, you are showing you really would like to get what ever job you are shooting for. When you go through school you have to really care about your grades because if you don't you will FLUNK and have to retake that grade level all over again. No matter what you have to try your hardest to become what ever you want to be.

If you read all this paper thank you. Thank you for your time.

In November of 2004, my family moved into the Stumpff Funeral Home in Galena, MO. Ethan our oldest son was 8 and Bryanna was 6. I started doing clean up and yard work for Rick Stumpff, the owner of Stumpff Funeral Homes. January 01, 2005 I started doing transportation and removals for the funeral home. By July of 2015 I started my apprenticeship. Living in the back of the funeral home was interesting. The embalming was not done at that location, however visitations and funerals were held there. My son had no interest in the funeral part of living there, Bry-

anna was fascinated. The first lady that had a service after we moved in, Bry wanted to "see her". She came into the chapel and I raised her up so she could see into the casket. Her comment was "She's old!" I replied, "Yes, they're supposed to be." She then asked if she could touch her. She did and replied, "She's cold." I explained why and she said, "Okay." And went on about playing whatever game she and her brother were playing. She often wanted to help with visitations, saying hello to people as they came in the door and telling them where the registry book was at.

As with most small community funeral homes, Rick Stumpff was also the county Coroner. In a couple of years I was asked to be the deputy coroner. So she got to hear about embalming, cremation and of course when an autopsy had to be performed. She had seen the crematory and knew what its purpose was. So at the time of this report, she had read about what was required for funeral directors, but also heard about it from me, for about five years. When my wife and I got to read her report, we found it comical as to how her eleven year old brain had put it together. After reading it again the other night, she said, "Oh dear, I thought I knew it all. Didn't I?" And we got a great laugh again.



Bryanna, now 16 and in the 10th Grade.

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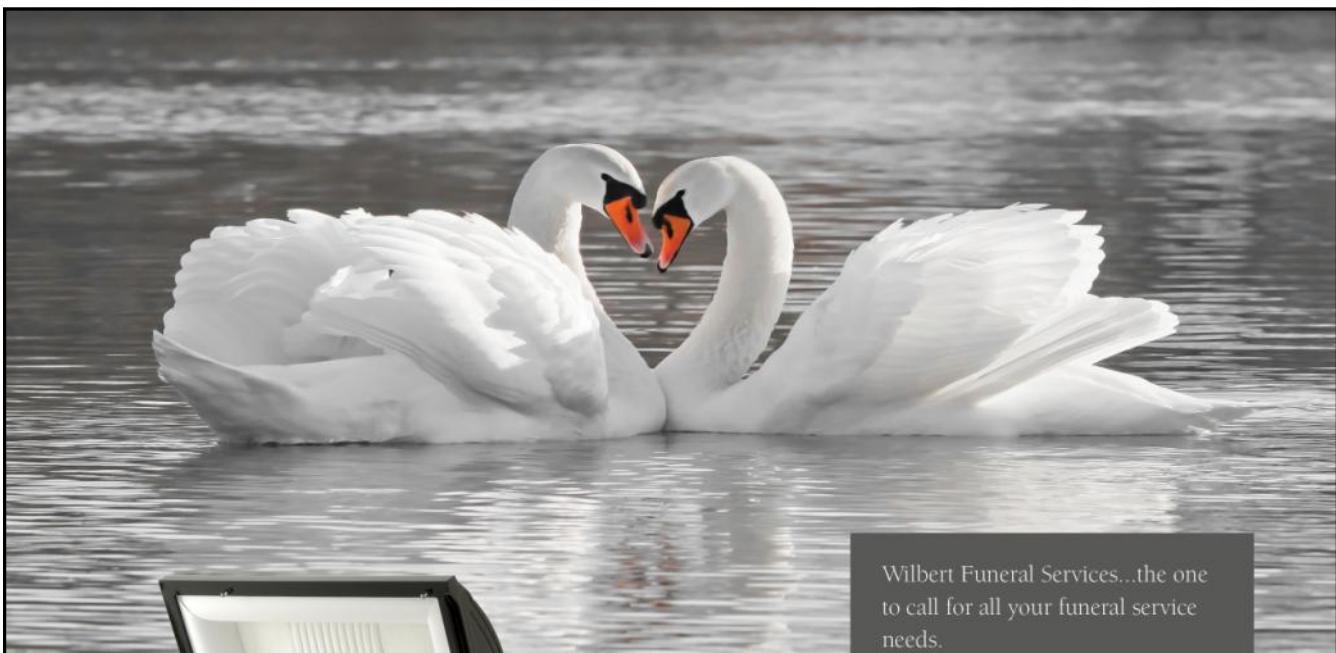
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H.L.Pugh & Associates Consulting
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Toll Free (800) 575-2611 Fax (417) 537-4797
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