

The Dead Beat



The Caregiver's Soapbox



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

Late Fall/Early Winter, 2011

www.thedead-beat.com

Volume 11 Issue 4

Times are Changing

Contributed by Steve Holben

Fleet Systems, Inc.
Fremont, Nebraska

As a supplier of premium hearses and limousines for over 25 years we can tell you that there has never been a more tumultuous time in the industry. Coachbuilders and dealers are going by the wayside and automobile manufacturers as a whole are upside down which trickles down to our little segment of the industry. While there is not a lot of predictability, the Federal brand is maintaining its quality, features, size and design advantages through the 2011 model year.

Recently, Cadillac announced that 2011 was the last model year for the DTS, with production ending in May of this year. "While Cadillac hasn't officially named a replacement for the DTS, they are committed to releasing a new luxury sedan for the retail market, as well as for the professional vehicle industry," said Randy Garner, Federal Coach brand sales manager. "We have worked closely with Cadillac and the Professional Vehicle Team, for over twelve months now, to get ready for this transition, and Federal has purchased a large number of chassis to carry us through this gap in Cadillac production."



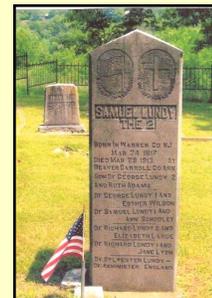
"Funeral directors, who appreciate the size and styling of the current DTS, will want to seriously consider buying a 2011 model now, and not wait for the next generation platform," noted Garner. "If the professional vehicle chassis follows the retail sedan trends, I believe that it is safe to assume that the DTS replacement will be smaller than the current model. For 2011 and 2012, Federal will continue to offer the Cadillac Renaissance and Heritage coaches with spacious and functional rear compartment, all at competitive prices."

Some of us witnessed the turmoil that occurred during the last major downsizing in 1997. It was a period where no one wanted "smaller" and the sales of the last of the "biggies", the 1996 Fleetwood, exploded. Most manufacturers ran out of chassis early on



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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

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Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell & Joanne

You Think You May Have a Problem When:

- ◆ Twelve hours after the hospital removal you still have not been able to reach the decision maker, but a purported relative keeps calling making service suggestions from green burial to traditional church.
- ◆ Same caller postpones arrangement conference another hour because mother-in-law is irritable.
- ◆ A clan arrives to make arrangements along with a bystander that stiffed you on his account.
- ◆ After three hours consultation nothing affordable is good enough for the deceased.
- ◆ Family does not want embalming, but wants an open casket visitation and church funeral three days later.

- ◆ Decision maker signs off on modest traditional service conditional on down payment and family assumes responsibility for cemetery expense. They leave without making the down payment claiming they have money in their pocket for the cemetery.
- ◆ You have to run the fresh air machine in the arrangement room for three hours.
- ◆ You start receiving phone calls from other relatives wanting to know why the funeral is so expensive.
- ◆ Charitable organizations and churches call to find out if this guy is really dead?
- ◆ Second day of arrangement counseling begins with a call from the cemetery manager during breakfast, to tell you the amount to make your check to them

for the cemetery expense.

- ◆ Family insists that cemetery was taken care of at 10:30 the night before until told of the cemetery manager's call.
- ◆ Family displays negative attitude when told nothing further is going to happen without the down payment. They leave still claiming to have money in pocket for cemetery.
- ◆ More phone calls and visits by non-decision making relative.
- ◆ More phone calls.
- ◆ Clan reassembles for another two-hour session. Other relatives arrive and concur that the funeral home alternatives sound reasonable, but a son maintains that the church constitution guarantees the family's right to bury their dead.
- ◆ Funeral director pares the services and down payment by 20%. No response. Newcomers think this is reasonable, but no movement by decision maker.

(Continued on page 4)

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Preserving Memories in Stone

By Al Walden

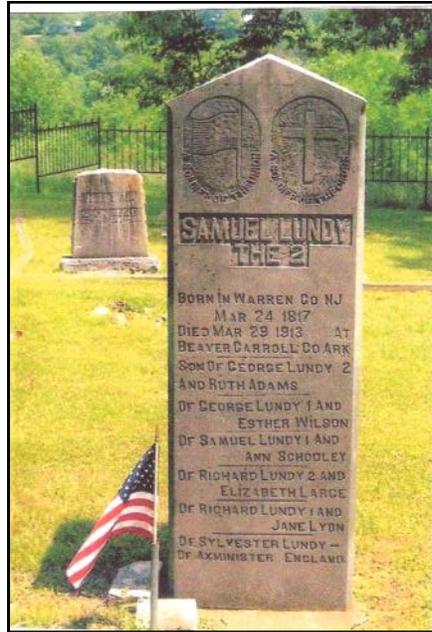
How would you like to be remembered? Most of us want some tangible object to commemorate our time here on Earth. Famous people are memorialized by impressive monuments, such as pyramids, statues, etc. For most of us, a marker or headstone on the gravesite, or elsewhere, provides information about our lives for future people to read. Preserving these small pieces of history can be very important to future generations, especially those of us who trace our ancestors through genealogy. You may find this interesting.

After retiring from 40 years in funeral service, I took up the hobby of family research. I had some charts from long ago, and had been to a few family reunions. Much information about the ancestors was verbal, and as a child, I could have not cared less for the stories about Aunt this and Grandpa that. This new hobby required some research, including a search of cemeteries. Some older stones were either missing, or in such bad repair, that the information was lost.

My wife and I attended a seminar summer before last at a small cemetery near Springfield, Missouri and learned a lot about caring for markers and monuments, including cleaning, leveling, resetting, repairing, and preserving these symbols of a past life. It was given by Mr. Jonathan Appell, New England Cemetery Services. He travels the country, sharing his knowledge with anyone who wishes to help restore memorials for future generations. He charges a small fee, per person, but we felt it was money well spent. We stood most of the day in the rain, and learned something every few minutes. A lot of the good information was how NOT to try cleaning a stone. The three most common things someone would use (bleach, scouring powder, and a wire brush) are the most harmful. My wife took many pages of notes, in addition to the printed material provided. Contact him at info@gravestoneconservation.com or 860-588-2785. Very educational. I would recommend it to cemetery workers and historians.

Included here is a photo of a memorial

in Beaver Cemetery, Beaver, Arkansas (near Eureka Springs). It shows the an-



cestry of the Lundy family back to English soil. My grandmother on my father's side was a Lundy. Of course, not all stones are this detailed, but all are worth preserving. I would like to add a few final comments about memorials.

Two years ago, I became acquainted with some new relatives. They were the twin granddaughters of my aunt, Mom's sister. They were unknown to me, until they traced our side of the family through internet research. It is a long story, but their mother was cremated and scattered near the California monument for their mother. We all need to remember our loved ones, and it helps to have a place and an object to focus on. Memories define us. Families create their own memories throughout a lifetime, and the last memories they have are of the funeral service. May all of us in this profession strive to make those lasting and special.

About the author: Al Walden worked for several funeral homes in Southwest Missouri, retiring in 2004. He is licensed in Missouri and previously was licensed in Oklahoma and Arkansas. He is a graduate of the Kentucky School of Mortuary Science, Louisville.

Behind the Back Fence (Cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

- ◆ Funeral home owner loses cool and raises voice. Arrangement director winces when owner proposes forgetting two-thirds of charges already incurred, allow family only viewing followed by cremation or turn to another funeral home. Proposal rejected.
- ◆ Owner again states that nothing further is going to happen without the down payment. Decision maker tells the arrangement director, "Look me in the eye—I always pay my bills." Leaves without initialing service changes.
- ◆ You receive more questioning phone calls from relatives about the charges and down payment. Husband of last caller claims the funeral home is holding the body hostage and the arrangement director should get a real job. Owner loses cool again. Explains that they may have any funeral director remove the body from the mortuary service. Owner states the family has worn the funeral home staff down and they will not serve them for any amount of money.
- ◆ You have to run the fresh air machine overnight.
- ◆ You know you were in trouble when two days later you see the picture you scanned for the newspaper obituary at the grocery checkout on a can for donations—after the service went to another funeral home.
- ◆ You also know you are in trouble when you can no longer keep your cool.
- ◆ You learn there was a wedding and you weren't invited.. Just kidding.
- ◆ The prosecuting attorney calls to see which guy died.
- ◆ All these things happen with your first potential case of the new year.

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.

To My Funeral Service Friends

By Jim Brown,
Mid-States Professional Services

My name is Jim Brown and for those of you who might not know me, I have been repairing mortuary equipment and selling Ferno Mortuary Products for 27 years. When I started my company, I thought it would be appropriate that I learn as much as I could about what my customers needed and expected from the type of service and products that I would provide. I attended seminars, conferences and subscribed to trade publications. One of the most recurring topics was the value of the remains at the servicesviewing ...open casket... memory picture, etc. I always politely nodded my head in agreement because it made sense to me. This concept became exceptionally clear to me with the death of my father on New Years Eve.

Dad passed away just a month short of his 102nd birthday. I had taken care of him and Mom at my house for the past three and a half years until September when their needs simply got to be more than I was able to provide. They entered a local skilled-care facility and actually did pretty well until Dad was found unresponsive on Christmas Day. After being hospitalized for five days, his condition had not improved and we brought him back to the facility so that he could be with Mom and his friends a little

longer. He passed away at approximately 4:00 a.m. Friday morning.

The services were to be on Monday morning with a family visitation on Sunday evening. When I approached Dad's casket I was instantly overwhelmed by how wonderful he looked. You would never think that he had been sick a day in his life. No painted-looking skin..... no "clown looking" lip make-up his suit, shirt ,and tie were crisp and aligned perfectly as were his glasses. My dad was absolutely the "king of the comb overs" and the nursing home had pretty much butchered his hair, but the director had found a way to put it in perfect order. The director pointed out to me that dad had a couple of noticeable age spots on his right cheek. He said "Jim, I can cover those spots up, but they will look covered up." I told him not to worry, my dad looked fine as he was. Dad looked completely at rest... at peace... and with dignity that hid the burdens that 101 years of living brings.

My family and I were very impressed with all the kind comments that we received during visitation and services about how wonderful my dad looked. People who know me, know that I am generally not lost for words and yes...I know that my dad is in a better place and

those were his mortal remains that I and others were looking at. However, I have searched and searched and I cannot find the words to express the amount of comfort that this experience brought or the exact reason why. You know what? It doesn't really matter. The fact is that a month has gone by and when I think about my Dad's passingThe very first image that comes to my mind is when I first walked up to the casket and saw how grand my wonderful Dad looked. Everything else during that week , I have to mentally reach for, but this "Memory Picture" is what I will have for the rest of my life.

In light of all the cremation, "immediate this and immediate green that " and all other modes of disposition that you have to deal with now. I would think that at times it might get frustrating to try to provide your families with the experience that I had. And to guide some of them where they need to be, but for what my opinion is worth, I encourage you to stay the course and continue as you have. After modern medicine and life has done all it can do, the fact that you have the ability to provide comfort and help alleviate suffering and grief for the families is of the highest order of noble callings. My sincere gratitude to you all for what you do.

See Jim Brown's advertisement on page 27 of this magazine.

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

After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

You've come to your final resting place.
It's by one of your loves.
We'll scatter you by another
The first one your children came from.

If everything has taken place
The way we have been promised.
You're with those loved ones we only see
buried.
But you now see in person

We miss you, but know you are happy
God would not have it any other way
Give everyone who has passed before you
A hug and kiss from us.

I know we'll see you later
But it may be awhile.
Just hold our place in Heaven
Until God calls us home.

Joanne Howard 6-12-2010

In continuing with my mother's funeral story, I found this poem I wrote for her service folder at the cremains burial and thought I'd share. This memorial service took place about a month after the funeral service in June.

In November we made a trip to Quincy, Illinois for a family Thanksgiving and we made a stop in St. Louis to scatter some of my mom's cremains over my father's grave.

We had previously buried the majority of her cremains next to her second hus-



band's grave, but now we were scatter-

ing instead of burying her on top of



my father. This is where she had planned when she had buried him in 1965. Forty-five years later my



brother and his family, me and my husband put flowers and our last family picture on his grave because



they are back together again.

The scattering was accomplished with a scattering tube which had been purchased from L. J. Enterprises (see page 2). The tube was very easy to transport without drawing a lot of attention to it. It's covering was a black velvet bag

and after I did the scattering I had somewhere to put the tube back in.

It was very easy to do the scattering and I offered my family the opportunity, but they felt I could do it. I guess my funeral director background was an influencing factor.

Well, with the scattering I had completed the dispersal of my mom's ashes except for the small urn I keep on my desk. So exactly how has this left me feeling....

I still miss her, as her first birthday since her death, first Christmas without her and just lately my first birthday without her.

You wouldn't think that it would bother you that much, especially with her being in the nursing home for three years prior to her death. But even in the nursing home you could tell her it was your birthday and she'd still care.

With my girls and my mom gone, my birthday happiness is left to my husband to fulfill. Add some really crummy winter weather and a husband who had been sick all week, this was a birthday that I really missed my girls, my mom and being able to have a good time with my husband.

Yes, we make our own happiness, but your loved ones add so much to your life that it hurts and you're sad when people are gone and life still goes on.



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

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Mortuary Muse*

*to think or consider deeply; meditate
By Lowell

During the past two years I have contacted 15 embalming supply companies and an equal number of mortuary schools about industry issues related to body presentation, the decline of services with the body present, green embalming and the research that green burial advocates may or may not have conducted.

Ken Whitaker affiliated with Pierce Companies and the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service and Pierce sales associate Randy Emmert have contributed information freely on these issues. Champion's sales department commented on their products, but all others failed to reply. Apparently I am a non-person or they are afraid to have an opinion.

The green burial may not become much more than a discussion, but shouldn't we be prepared to offer it as an option? At least we should be able to provide complete information about the history of the current movement.

A friend living in another community had recently asked me about green burial. He is very environmentally conscientious about managing his land and property owned by the Missouri Prairie Foundation in which we both have been longtime members.

My friend had read about formaldehyde being dangerous and thought this especially bad if it was getting into our groundwater. I agree that it would be

bad if it indeed was and expressed my view that the green folks are misleading the public on this point. It seems to me that some of the green advocates would have you believe that an entire year's production of embalming chemicals is going directly into the ground where it will infiltrate our water supplies.

Briefly I explained to my friend about the amount of formaldehyde in the bottle concentrate, the further dilution with water, the relatively small amount retained in body and the fact (as I understand it) that by the time a body is buried the formaldehyde is likely inert. And, of course, many containers would prevent any infiltration, but most containers themselves are another issue in the green debate. I also mention that in a phone conversation with the executive director of the Green Burial Council, he agreed that they had no data about what was going on underground.

What is the consumer motivation for green burial? Regardless of this motivation, the funeral home can still serve a family's needs and make a profit. Our experience revolves around good communication. Make sure the funeral director and the family understand that there may have to be some adjustments in the time of when events occur. This would be in relation to specially ordered containers arrival, outside of the possibility of extra refrigeration/cold gel packs, green embalming and biodegrad-

able containers you have to order. Outside of those adjustments most regular GPL charges will apply.

You would probably be dealing with a graveside or direct burial charge but you would have to make sure of the availability of a cemetery that would allow a green burial. Then your special green related products could be added where needed in your arrangements. The suppliers of biodegradable products are not wanting to be less expensive, but more environmentally safe. A side note: We have three plain wooden boxes that were made up for cremation or burial 10 years ago and that may be an option for us.

So take the Boy Scout motto to heart and "Be Prepared."

Oh, one more thing. If you are near a green burial plot three years later — careful where you back up the hearse!!



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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As Betty (Lowell's wife) was looking through some late aunt's paperwork, she found a newspaper clipping. Interesting how this is still relevant for today, but maybe the countries could be changed— Think China.....

"The Marionville FreePress wants to know if we've heard about the American who sips Brazilian coffee from an English cup while sitting on Danish furniture after coming home in a German car from an Italian movie—and writes his Congressman with a Japanese ballpoint pen demanding he do something about all the gold that's leaving the country." Hmmm.....

Keeping The Connection By Ken Doka

One of the myths of grief is that we should slowly forget the past and move on with our lives. We are often told that we need to bring "closure."

In other words, we need to close this chapter of our life before we begin another. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Grief is not about letting go; grief is about finding ways to continue the connection even as we live a different, now changed life.

Understanding that is important. Sometimes we hold on to the pain of grief believing that if we lose the pain, we will lose the connection. We may believe that the end of grief is the end of memory, the ceasing of any sense of connection.

In fact, grief is far more complicated. We live, or journey with, our grief. One of the first signs we are doing better is when we can laugh at memories and remembrances now too painful to recall.

Even if we wished to, we could not sever the connection. We are tied in too many ways to the person we loved. They still live in our memories—memories that are constantly evoked as we live our life. For Gina, this is a constant comfort. As she gardens or shops, she constantly remembers her conversations with Paul, the flowers he cherished, and the foods he liked. For me, another event evokes memories years after my father's death. Every time I go to the airport, I get my shoes shined. It reminds me of a Sunday

morning ritual. Before church every Sunday, my Dad and I used to go to a shoeshine stand. It was a very special father-son time, remembered each time I sit for a shine.

There are always the legacies the person left. For Lydia, it is a special grin that her young son Keith has—one that evidences his dad's. Every morning, when I write my list of things to do that day, I know that this was a habit taught by my dad.

Moreover, the people we love are part of us and part of our own biography. Glenda laughs at this, noting "I am so much my mother's daughter." Our parents, our siblings, and our spouses have left an indelible mark on who we are. They are inevitably part of us.

We may have unusual moments when we feel this connection. For some, it is in dreams. One young boy told me that while his grandma had died, she was still alive in his dreams. For others, it may be an experience where they feel someone's presence or even have an occurrence where they seem to smell, hear, see, or feel the touch of someone who died. Others may have a more symbolic experience. For Maria, the sight of butterflies is a visible connection to her sister. "They seem to come at moments when I need or miss her the most." Still others may find the sense of someone they love in the comments of others. All of these

experiences, however they occur, reaffirm a sense of connection.

Finally, our spirituality, however we understand it, offers a sense of connection. To my young granddaughter, her maternal grandmother is now "grandma in heaven." Others may see the person living on in memory or perhaps in a different form. Yet, each of us finds connection in our own beliefs.

These connections sustain us even as we struggle with living life without the person we love. That is difficult enough. We need not burden ourselves with the thought that we now have to forget what was—and is—so important a connection.

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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

He Said to Me

He said to me... What have you been doing with all the grocery money I gave you?

I said to him... Turn sideways and look in the mirror?

He said to me... Why don't women blink during foreplay?

I said to him... They don't have time.

He said to me... How many men does it take to change a roll of toilet paper?

I said to him... I don't know; it has never happened.

He said to me... Why is it difficult to find men who are sensitive, caring and Good-looking?

I said to him... They already have boyfriends.

He said ...What do you call a woman who knows where her husband is every night?

I said... A widow.

He said to me... Why are married women heavier than single women?

I said to him...Single women come home, see what's in the fridge and go to bed. Married women come home, see what's in bed and go to the fridge.

Real Life Chuckle—Doe-reen & Her Suitor

A friend had a deer stand and also had an artificial doe named Doe-reen. As Doe-reen was doing her job a buck approached. He looked, he smelled as the friend took pictures with his phone camera and he put the phone away, Doe-reen did her job too well. The buck mounted Doe-reen and broke her leg. As he nudged the now damaged Doe-reen, he still didn't realize who he was messing with and finally departed.



From Carl Singer.....

How do crazy people go through the forest?

They take the psychopath

How do you get holy water?

You boil the hell out of it

What do fish say when they hit a concrete wall?

Dam!

What Do Eskimos Get from sitting on the ice too long?

Polaroids

What do you call a boomerang that doesn't come back?

A stick

What do you call Santa's helpers?

Subordinate clauses

What do you call four bullfighters in quicksand?

Quarto cinco

What do you get from a pampered cow?

Spoiled milk.

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

Frostbite

What lies at the bottom of the ocean and twitches?

A nervous wreck.

Comments

Hello,

I am a faithful reader to your dead beat publication and I look forward to every issue. Joanne, I just wanted to thank you for sharing Amy's art with us. She was obviously so very talented and this issue's painting (Vol. 11 Issue 3) is really amazing. Even though I won't have the pleasure of getting to know her in this lifetime—through her art-work I catch a glimpse of what a beautiful person she must have been.

Many hugs, Annie Owen, Funeral Director

I, Bob Byrd, sent you a letter requesting information concerning a book written by a retired funeral director. I stated that I had forgotten the name of the book plus the name of the man who wrote it. I had loaned my copy of the book about 11 years ago. The party did not return it. I thought to myself maybe the editor or publisher at The Dead Beat could find me a copy of the book. After you had published my name and address, I received a letter from a funeral director in Canton, Texas who works for the Eubank Funeral Home. He stated that he owned a copy of a book that I was wanting. He wrote that he had only one copy that was given to him by his deceased mentor. He gave me an address and phone number he thought could help me. The widow of the author called me after I called and left a message. She said she was 94 and had several copies of the book. Her husband's name was Edward O. Frederick Sr. The book was the "The Last Laugh—Fifty Years of Unusual Undertaking." She can be reached at 8877 Lauderdale Court 22 E., Hunting Beach, CA 92646, phone: 714-374-7966.

Once again thanks a million for your help and Brian Bass the funeral director at Eubanks Funeral Home in Canton, TX.

I believe every funeral director can relate to events that happened to Mr. Frederick has happened to them. If you know of any other books that someone else has written, please let me know. Keep up the good work and I would love to receive The Dead Beat. Mrs. Frederick said the cost and shipping would be \$12.95.

Thanks, Bob Byrd, 3826 Zion Hill Rd, Weatherford, TX 76088

On his envelope was:

"WARNING: If you throw this in your waste basket unopened, a capsule of water inside will break, spilling onto a dehydrated gorilla. He will then jump out and hug you to death."

What is the difference between roast beef and pea soup?

Anyone can roast beef.

Where do you find a dog with no legs?

Right where you left him

Why do gorillas have big nostrils?

Because they have big fingers

What kind of coffee was served on the Titanic?

Sanka

What is the difference between a Harley and a Hoover?

The location of the dirt bag

Why did pilgrims' pants always fall down?

Because they wore their belt buckles on their hats.

What's the difference between a bad golfer and a bad skydiver?

A bad golfer goes, whack, Dang!

A bad skydiver goes Dang! Whack.

How are a Texas tornado and a Tennessee divorce the same?

Somebody's gonna lose a trailer.

Now admit it ... at least one of these made you smile!

Support bacteria. They're the only culture some people have.

(Continued on page 11)

Chuckles (Cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

Spoons

A lesson on how consultants can make a difference in an organization. Last week, we took some friends to a new restaurant, 'Steve's Place,' and noticed that the waiter who took our order carried a spoon in his shirt pocket. It seemed a little strange. When the bus-boy brought our water and utensils, I observed that he also had a spoon in his shirt pocket. Then I looked around and saw that all the staff had spoons in their pockets. When the waiter came back to serve our soup I inquired, 'Why the spoon?' 'Well,' he explained, 'the restaurant's owner hired Andersen Consulting to revamp all of our processes. After several months of analysis, they concluded that the spoon was the most frequently dropped utensil. It represents a drop frequency of approximately 3 spoons per table per hour. If our personnel are better prepared, we can reduce the number of trips back to the kitchen and save 15 man-hours per shift.' As luck would have it, I dropped my spoon and he replaced it with his spare. 'I'll get another spoon next time I go to the kitchen instead of making an extra trip to get it right now.' I was impressed. I also noticed that there was a string hanging out of the waiter's fly. Looking around, I saw that all of the waiters had the same string hanging from their flies. So, before he walked off, I asked the waiter, 'Excuse me, but can you tell me why you have that string right there?' 'Oh, certainly!' Then he lowered his voice. 'Not everyone is so observant. That consulting firm I mentioned also learned that we can save time in the restroom. By tying this string to the tip of our you-know-what, we can pull it out without touching it and eliminate the need to wash our hands, shortening the time spent in the restroom by 76.39%. I asked quietly, 'After you get it out, how do you put it back?' 'Well,' he whispered, 'I don't know about the others, but I use the spoon.'



Super Bowl

A woman had 50 yard line tickets for the Super Bowl. As she sat down, a man came along and asked her if anyone is sitting in the seat next to her. "No," she said, "the seat is empty." "This is incredible," said the man, "Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the Super Bowl, the biggest sporting event in the world, and not use it?" Somberly, the woman says, "Well...the seat actually belongs to me. I was supposed to come here with my husband, but he passed away. This is the first Super Bowl we have not been together since we got married in 1967." "Oh, I'm sorry to hear that, that's terrible. But couldn't you find someone else—a friend or relative or even a neighbor to take the seat?" The woman shakes her head, "No, they're all at the funeral."





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The Baptist White Lie Cake

Have you ever told a white lie? You are going to love this, especially all of the ladies who bake for church events. Alice Grayson was to bake a cake for the Baptist Church Ladies' Group in Tuscaloosa, but forgot to do it until the last minute. She remembered it the morning of the bake sale and after rummaging through cabinets, found an angel food cake mix and quickly made it while drying her hair, dressing and helping her son pack up for Scout camp. When she took the cake from the oven, the center had dropped flat and the cake was horribly disfigured and she exclaimed, "Oh dear, there is not time to bake another cake!" This cake was important to Alice because she did so want to fit in at her new church, and in her new community of friends. So, being inventive, she looked around the house for something to build up the center of the cake. She found it in the bathroom—a roll of toilet paper. She plunked it in and then covered it with icing. Not only did the finished product look beautiful, it looked perfect. And, before she left the house to drop the cake by the church and head for work, Alice woke her daughter and gave her some money and specific instructions to be at the bake sale the moment it opened at 9:30 and to buy the cake and bring it home. When the daughter arrived at the sale, she found the attractive perfect cake had already been sold. Amanda grabbed her cell phone and called her mom. Alice was horrified—she was beside herself! Everyone would know! What would they think? She would be ostracized, talked about, ridiculed! All night, Alice lay awake in bed thinking about people pointing fingers at her and talking about her behind her back. The next day, Alice promised herself she would try not to think about the cake and would attend the fancy luncheon/bridal shower at the home of a fellow church member and try to have a good time. She did not really want to attend because the hostess was a snob who more than once had looked down her nose at the fact that Alice was a single parent and not from the founding families of Tuscaloosa, but having already RSVP'd, she couldn't think of a believable



(Continued on page 23)

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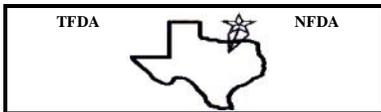
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“Dear Counselor....” By Bill Stalter

Dear Counselor,

How do the services provided by my preneed trustee differ from what a typical trustee provides? The preneed trust fees seem so much higher than what a bank or trust company quotes on their standard fee schedules.

There are two reasons for a preneed trustee to charge a higher fee: preneed trusts are more labor intensive and they expose the bank to greater liability risks. A trustee’s duties can be boiled down to three main functions: asset/investment management, distribution oversight and tax reporting. Most of a bank’s trust business involves estate planning accounts where a large account is established for a small number of beneficiaries. These trusts are governed by uniform trust acts that are very similar from state to state. In contrast, preneed trusts involve a large number of beneficiaries. The state laws that govern the trusts vary substantially (which requires special training for the trust officer). And then, the Federal laws that also govern these trusts take a different view about who the beneficiary of the trust is. The Securities Exchange Commission tends to view the funeral home as the beneficiary, while the Internal Revenue Service views the purchaser as the beneficiary. Preneed reform laws passed in recent years have adopted the view of the IRS by expanding the rights of the purchaser.

When providing asset management, the bank cannot simply rely upon the instructions of the funeral home. As evidenced in lawsuits in Illinois and California, the preneed trustee is being held accountable by purchasers. Preneed regulators are also scrutinizing preneed assets in terms of whether the portfolio is in the best interests of the purchasers. When the bank follows the funeral home’s instructions, and an investment goes sour, the bank may have liability exposure to the consumer (particularly when the preneed contract is non-guaranteed).

State regulators expect the bank to provide oversight of the amounts distributed on a performance or cancellation. With a large number of monthly transactions, the bank is forced to spend more time reviewing small distributions.

With regard to tax reporting, special rules apply to preneed trusts that require individual income and expense allocations. Banks are subject to accuracy penalties of \$50 when reporting income and expenses to a purchaser. If a preneed trust consists of hundreds of contracts, the penalty for a simple allocation error can more than wipe out the fees charged that trust.

It is the extra work and liability that the bank or trust company factors into the equation when setting the fee it will charge to serve as a preneed trustee.



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

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We need some questions for the “Dear Counselor....” column. Please send your questions to Bill’s e-mail or The Dead Beat’s and we will get some answers in future issues.

email: wastal@swbell.net or bill@stalterlegal.com or editor@thedead-beat.com
Or Fax: 1-417-537-4797

Trinity Fluids LLC Adds Fraley Funeral Supply to Sales Team

Trinity Fluids, LLC is proud to announce the addition of Fraley Funeral Supply to their sales team. Both companies share a belief that their customers’ needs are paramount. Trinity Fluids’ technical advancements and Fraley’s regional/industry expertise combine to bring state-of-the-art products and services to the funeral service industry. “We are very excited to have the knowledge and service coverage in the Southern United States with Eric and Beth Zentner. Our current and future customers will truly benefit from our expanded team,” said Mike Wessels, President of Trinity Fluids.

Trinity Fluids, LLC formulas are designed to enable funeral homes to better manage inventory and reduce costs while improving quality. Trinity Fluids formulas come ready to use in recyclable cube packaging, a first of its kind in the industry. The full line of arterial, cavity and pre-injection fluids are cost-effective premium products in innovative and recyclable cube packaging.

Fraley Funeral Supply also offers a wide variety of products that will enhance the operation of funeral service establishments. Fraley Funeral Supply is based out of Joplin, Missouri.

To discover the advantages of Trinity Fluids and Fraley Funeral Supply, visit them at www.trinityfluids.com or contact Eric Zentner 800-641-4666.

Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

MISSOURI

John Bowlin, 75, of Kansas City, passed away on December 13, 2010. He served in the U.S. Navy in 1954. Then joined his father and brother operating the Bowlin Funeral Home in California, Missouri after graduating from mortuary school in 1960. In 1987 he moved to Kansas City area and was employed at Park Lawn Funeral Home until his death. His arrangements were handled by Park Lawn Northland Chapel.



Sue B. Thomas Clark, 73, of Neosho, passed away January 8, 2011. She was a licensed funeral director and wife of Fred L. Clark of Clark Funeral Home. She was especially proud of the Neosho Widow to Widow program that she helped establish in 1988. Services were under the direction of Clark Funeral Home, Neosho.

Forrest Donald Coldsnow, 82, of Kansas City, passed away December 26, 2010. He graduated from Kansas City Mortuary School in 1949 and began his career as a mortician for many local funeral homes and eventually became the owner of Kansas City Mortuary Service. He was president of the Missouri Funeral Director's Association from 1973-1974.

Martha Lou Paul, 73 of St. Peters passed away December 12, 2010. She was the wife of the late F. Lee Paul, owner of Paul Funeral Home in St. Charles, MO. Arrangements were under the direction of Paul Funeral Home.



Julia Lee (McClanahan) Rupp, 94, of St. Joseph passed away January 25, 2011. She started Rupp Funeral Home with her husband John E. Rupp on October 6, 1939. She is the grandmother of J. L. Robertson, MFDEA president-elect. Arrangements were handled by Rupp Funeral Home.



Mark A. Scott, of Florissant passed away October 1, 2010. He worked as a funeral director for Stygar Funeral Homes for 20 years. His services were handled by Stygar Funeral Homes.



Barbara Ann Simpson, 80, of Webb City passed away on January 12, 2011. She was the wife of Jack C. Simpson and they owned the Simpson Funeral Home in Webb City and Carl Junction until Jack's death. Services were handled by Simpson Funeral Home.



Ruth Dillon Stewart, 96, of Joplin passed away January 14, 2011. She was the widow of David E. Dillon, Sr. who with Cecil Thornhill established the Thornhill-Dillon Mortuary. She was active in the business assisting with services and visitations. She is mother of David Dillon Jr. who was past president of the Missouri Funeral Directors Association and the National Funeral Directors Association.

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

TEXAS

Richard J. Charles, of Houston, died November 11, 2010. He was well known among funeral, cemetery and pre-need providers in Houston. He was pre-need and cemetery sales counselor, sales manager, general manager and corporate officer for Woodlawn Funeral Home and Cemetery.

Howard E. "Gene" Clements, 94 of Burnet, died February 20, 2011. He was former owner and operator of Clements Funeral Home in Burnet. Services were arranged by Clements-Wilcox Funeral Home.



Willard Carl Cooper, Jr., 84, of Seguin, passed away on December 25, 2010. He was a 63-year licensee and was with the Tres Hewell Mortuary. He served in the US Navy during WWII and was a plank owner on the USS Wichita. Services were directed by Tres Hewell Mortuary.



Linda Horton Evans, of Victoria, passed away on December 17, 2010. She was the mother of Kim Evans-Phillips, funeral director at Colonial Funeral Home in Victoria who handled the arrangements.

M. Watson Frazar, of Arlington, died February 6, 2011. He was past president of the Texas Funeral Directors Association and past president of the State Board of Morticians and associated with the Moore Funeral Home in Arlington, Texas. Arrangements are being handled by Moore Funeral Home in Arlington.

Leonzo Guerra, of Elsa passed away on January 1, 2011. He was father of George Guerra of Guerra Funeral Homes in Elsa and Brownsville. Arrangements were under the direction of Guerra Funeral Home.



Charles Wall Hamilton, 87, of Weatherford, passed away on December 28, 2010. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII, and went to mortuary school in Dallas. He worked for a time for Shannon Northside Funeral Chapel in Ft. Worth. After he married he began with White's Funeral Home staff for over 50 years. Arrangements were handled by White's Funeral Home.



Garry D. Janssen, 73, of Yorktown, died January 22, 2011. He was a licensed funeral director and embalmer for 53 years. He owned and operated with his wife, two funeral homes: Lamprecht-Janssen Funeral Home in Yorktown for 28.5 years and Janssen Funeral Home in Runge for 23 years. He graduated from the Commonwealth College of Sciences in Houston. He worked at Alamo Funeral Home in San Antonio for 21 years. Finch Funeral Home handled the arrangements.



Lillian JoAnn Martin, 65, of Odessa, passed away on Sept. 12, 2010. She was the mother of Tammy Martin Vallie and her son-in-law Bill Vallie, is a past president of TFSA and serves as director-at-large. Memorial services were handled by Sunset Memorial Gardens and Funeral Home in Odessa.

Rose Martindale, of Weimar, died on February 18, 2011. She was mother and mother-in-law of Carol and David McCoskey, Hubbard Funeral Home in Weimar. Her services are under the direction of Hubbard Funeral home.



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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues (Cont.)

TEXAS



Robert William Massey, 54, of Freer, died February 2, 2011. He was a licensed funeral director and former owner of Massey Mortuary Service in Houston. Arrangements were handled by Garza Funeral Home in Freer.

Janet E. Roberts, 59, of Killeen, passed away on January 14, 2011. She was the wife of Tom Roberts, the location manager of Harper-Talasek Funeral Home in Killeen who handled the arrangements.

Marlene Richburg, of Snyder passed away on Oct. 10, 2010. She was the mother of Quaid Richburg of The Dodge Company in McKinney. Arrangements were handled by Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home.

Rickey Lee Stacy of Goldthwaite died on Aug. 18, 2010. He was owner of Stacy-Wilkins Funeral Home for many decades and the arrangements were handled by them.

W.C. "Dub" Stokes, 83, of Odessa, died on December 23, 2010. He is the father of Eric Stokes of Bean-Massey-Burge Funeral Home of Grand Prairie. Eric is a past president of the West Texas Funeral Directors Association. Arrangements were under the direction of Hubbard Kelly Funeral Home in Odessa.

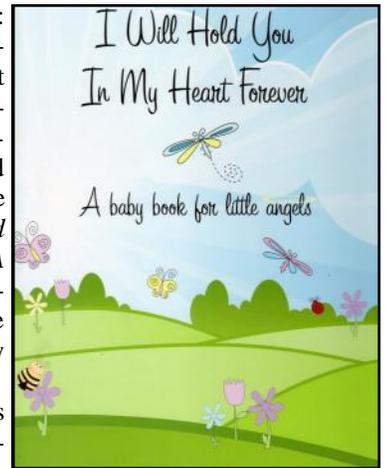


O. Thomas Welch, Jr., 82, of Longview, passed away on Jan. 7, 2011. He was the owner of Welch Funeral Home, Inc. in Longview. Welch Funeral Home handled the arrangements.

Jesse Dennis (Jerry) Woods, Jr., 73 of Nacona, died Feb. 19, 2011. He was the owner of Jerry Woods Funeral Home who handled the arrangements. 

Cherokee Child Casket Company Introduces Baby Memory Book

November 4, 2010, Griffin, GA.: During the International Conference on Perinatal and Infant Death in Washington DC. Michael Mims, President of Cherokee Child Casket, was introduced to the Canadian author, Michelle Murray, of the book *I Will Hold You In My Heart Forever - A baby book for little angels*. Beginning January 2011 Cherokee will proudly offer this baby memory book to funeral homes.



This baby book gives parents who have experienced miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death a place to record special memories and keepsakes for their little angel. There are custom designed chapters for pregnancy through first year are in three ring binders. Also included are folders for keepsakes and sympathy cards. A journal section *Holding You In My Heart* is included. Additional journal sections *Unforgettable Years 2 to 15* are also available.

Northwest Arkansas Funeral Directors' Association Meeting



Joe Lindley (left) is presented an award for service by Grant Siemens and Jason Engler at the annual meeting of the NWAFA

The Northwest Arkansas Funeral Directors' Association (NWAFDA) held its annual meeting and Holiday party on Friday, December 18, 2010, at the Whole Hog Café in Bentonville, Arkansas. Approximately 40 funeral professionals, suppliers and guests were present for the program "Funeral Directors:

The Guardians of Heritage, Legacy and History" given by Mr. Daniel Hocklander. Sponsors were the Melton Casket Company of Little Rock, Arkansas, Selected Funeral & Life

Insurance Company of Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Baxter/Hull Burial Vault Company of Gentry, Arkansas. Joe Lindley, 2010 NWAFDA President, was presented with an award for his years of service in the association; 2010 Vice President Grant Siemens moved through the ranks and became 2011 President. Forest Hinderliter was elected Vice President for the year 2011, and Jason Engler remained Secretary/Treasurer for the second year of his three-year term.

The NWAFDA is an Association of Funeral Professionals throughout Northwest Arkansas. Their gatherings serve as fellowship and facilitation of continuing education for its membership.



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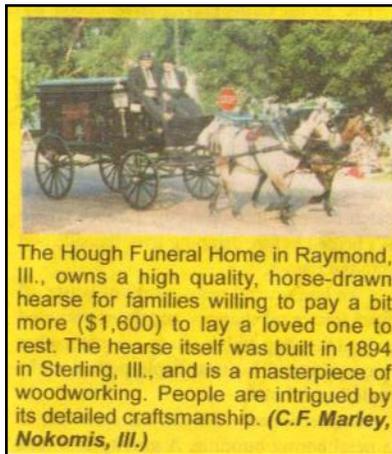
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Nation's Largest Funeral Answering Service Support Clients with Free Texting Features

Media, PA (October 8, 2010)—Last month, Answering Service for Directors (ASD) provided a special texting feature to all of its clients, free of charge. Although ASD typically charges for this premium feature, management chose to provide the service at no cost to all clients as an expression of gratitude. This is just one example of ASD's commitment to using technology to help its clients run their businesses.

ASD provides an exclusive level of answering services to funeral homes in North America, providing call services for more than 25% of U.S. funeral homes. Over the past several months, ASD has added numerous features to support their clients' businesses in an effort to maximize business opportunities for funeral home clients.

During December 2010, all urgent messages, including messages regarding the passing of loved ones, were texted to funeral home clients for immediate attention. Many ASD clients already take advantage of this feature. Those that were not using the texting feature were able to enjoy the benefits firsthand. The promotion was extremely successful and received universal positive reviews from funeral directors.

According to Vice President and Co-Owner, Kevin Czachor, "These texting features are one of the many ways ASD is using technology to help support funeral directors. The fact is, we have built our systems to ensure that clients never miss an important call. We have been working with funeral homes for 38 years and understand their unique needs. In today's environment of lean staffing, taking advantage of texting technology allows our clients to be mobile without missing any opportunities."

Based on the excellent reception of this free trial, ASD will begin a free trial period for its "text with reply" feature on December 28. This feature has two major benefits - it alerts clients of an urgent call via text and gives the client an opportunity to respond to the text. This eliminates the need for ASD to call out to the client, a time and money saving feature.

ASD Becomes First to Offer Patent Pending "First Call" Feature New Feature Guarantees Unmatched Immediacy

Media, PA (October 28, 2010)—First Calls are the lifeblood of any funeral business. ASD's new, patent-pending "**First Call Connect**" feature makes real-time, First Calls available to funeral professionals instantaneously while the caller is still on the line. With First Call Connect, clients are notified via text or email message as soon as an operator begins to take first call information. Only ASD provides this new real-time communication option.

After the First Call text message has been sent advising a client that someone is in the process reporting a passing, Directors are given the option to take part in the call using **First Call Connect**, or to listen in on the call in a muted mode.

According to Kevin Czachor, family member owner and Vice President, "ASD's unparalleled combination of funeral exclusive systems and staff gives clients the ability to really customize how their calls are handled. With First Call Connect, we truly become an extension of our clients' businesses without ever putting their caller on-hold or making them wait for a call back."

Funeral Director Thomas Gale agrees. "What I like about First Call Connect is that it gives us the flexibility to either enter the call immediately and attend to the situation at hand, or allow ASD to handle it. The call is still recorded. You can listen in on the conversation, and I have the option to immediately take care of the family. If I'm not able to, I'm aware that there is a death call and am prepared in advance for it."

First Call Connect benefits families by reducing the time it takes it to speak with someone about final arrangements. And for funeral home directors and managers, this feature significantly decreases the possibility of a lost business opportunity. First Call Connect joins ASD's other innovative features that allow funeral professionals to stay connected with their customers 24/7.

About ASD

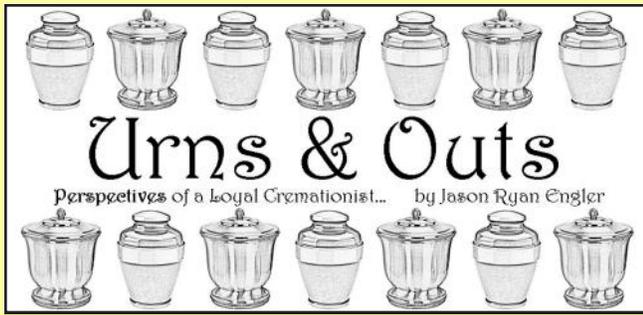
ASD is the leader in answering service and sales support for funeral professionals. As a full service provider, ASD empowers directors and staff of funeral homes to offer the highest caliber of service, both at and away from the office. ASD's innovative technology and customer service have made it a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

Contact: Kevin Czachor, Vice President

Kevin@myasd.com

800-868-9950





For many ancient civilizations, cremation represented the rebirth of the soul. The flame was said to be the beginning and end of life, and at death, the flame purified the body and released the immortal spirit from the mortal remains. I read sometime back, in a cremation urn catalog, I believe, about tales of an angel, sweeping down from the heavens and gathering the soul in a mystical urn—with the glowing fire lighting the way. The angel would carry the soul in the urn to its place of rest.

Whether a body is buried, entombed or cremated, those that we love and whose lives we interact with deserve the utmost respect when they die. These remains are not refuse or fertilizer, and as civilized people we would never dream of simply “discarding” our loved ones on the lawn or in the garbage. These remains deserve what they received in life: care and respect.

It is very important to realize that the cremation urn that a family selects isn’t just a piece of wood, metal, or other material. Rather, it is a sacred vessel that contains one of the greatest possessions there is—the physical remains of one whom they’ve loved—one whose life they touched and who touched theirs. It seems that this is discounted in many ways. But make no mistake about it—a cremation urn serves the very same purpose that a casket does.

In my years of studying cremation and its history, I’ve learned of the many options that are available for the final disposition of cremated remains. From fireworks, to diamonds, to sending them into space, the ideas and expressions are plentiful. Each has its own merit, and as I’ve said before, those faced with this decision should follow their heart and choose what they appreciate, or what suits their needs; but for this author, there is no other memorial that could be as beautiful as the cremated remains of a loved one at rest in a sacred urn.

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.



Signet Supply® Wins Design Award

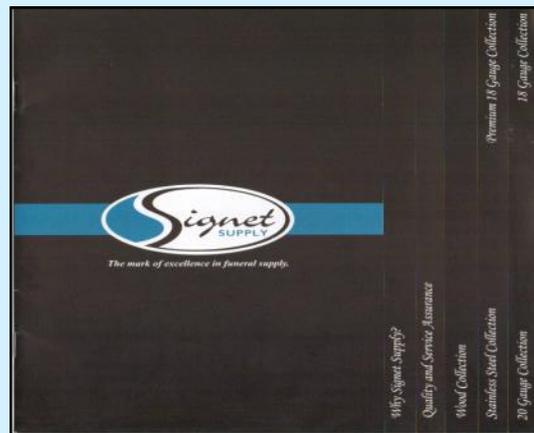
OVERLAND PARK, KS (September 10, 2010) Suhor Industries announced that its newest division, Signet Supply, has been recognized as a 2010 American Graphic Design Award winner from Graphics Design USA. Signet Supply was recognized with the award for their 12-page, full color casket brochure featuring the full line of Signet Supply caskets. You may visit Signet Supply online at www.SignetSupply.com.

About the Award

The three-decade-old competition is presented by Graphic Design USA and open to advertising agencies, graphic design firms, and in-house creative departments at corporations and institutions. It honors outstanding new work in print and collateral, advertising and sales promotions, packaging and point-of-purchase, Internet and interactive design, broadcast and motion graphics, corporate identity and logos. The in-house art director of Signet Supply’s submission was Katrina Williams. The photographer was Steve Wiberg.

About Suhor Industries

Suho Industries, Inc., a privately held company, has been in the burial vault business since 1933 starting in Kansas City, Missouri. Today Suhor’s primary business remains as a burial vault manufacturer operating in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oregon, Arkansas, New York, Pennsylvania and now Washington. Signet Supply currently supplies caskets in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, Oregon and Washington. In 2009, Suhor Industries touched over 100,000 families with our services.



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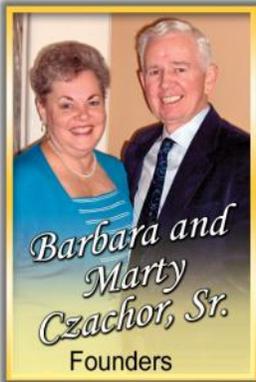


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Global Mortuary Affairs Expands Service Throughout Mexico



David Patterson

Dallas TX: David Patterson, CFSP, owner/operations director of Global Mortuary Affairs (GMA), and its affiliate Global Mortuary Logistics (GML), announces today the expansion of their repatriation service, which now includes shipping and ground transportation throughout Mexico. Patterson believes that in order to maintain our reputation built on personalized services and a relentless pursuit of excellence, we must continue to offer superior service our clients have come to expect, and with the changing economy, offer them the ability to deliver human remains door to door in Mexico.

Funeral directors have found that shipping into Mexico presents logistical problems due to embargoes, available cargo space, limited airlines/airports, and the lack of reliable ground transport into Mexico. Global Mortuary Affairs and its affiliate Global Mortuary Logistics have established a network throughout Mexico, allowing ground or air shipping anywhere into the country of Mexico, or out of Mexico back into the United States.

“Mexico is our neighbor, so repatriation service has always been a part of our business,” Patterson explained, “and with ground transportation to and from Mexico, we can now better serve the funeral directors needs.” Patterson emphasized, “funeral directors will find arranging funeral services in Mexico will become less cumbersome to plan for final disposition in Mexico with our door to door service. Also, funeral directors will find fewer travel delays, faster delivery time, no worries about reserving space on an aircraft, nor spending additional travel time to and from any airport in Mexico. The result of the door to door delivery is a savings of time and money for the family”.

Global Mortuary Affairs/Global Mortuary Logistics also offers repatriation services to many other countries, including, El Salvador, Philippines, Cambodia, Canada, Greece, South and Central America and Israel, to name a few. A call to GMA will begin the process of collecting the proper paperwork, translation, acquiring any apostilles, and handling all consulate matters, setting flights and/or arranging for ground transportation worldwide.

For more information about International Shipping and more pleases contact us at 877.216.2708 or via email at drpatterson@globalmortuaryaffairs.com or on the web at www.globalmortuaryaffairs.com.

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Times are Changing (Cont.)

and our sale of new vehicles was almost double the preceding year. Whether this will happen in 2011 is unpredictable but we do know that the manufactures have to make an attempt to forecast and order the number of chassis needed and once those are gone, that's it.

The Lincoln changeover will come even quicker and be on a new professional vehicle chassis, the MKT crossover. Federal Coaches' MKT funeral coach model is expected to entice many traditional Cadillac buyers to switch to Lincoln. Federal's new design is scheduled to be released in the 2nd quarter of 2011.

Our advice if you are planning on purchasing a new funeral vehicle in 2011 and if you want to maintain a “full size” fleet as long as you can—get an order in for a new vehicle now. Our feeling is that prices will continue to increase, demand is going to be high for the last of the DTS cars, and chassis and choices are going to become rapidly limited. While this is going to be true of all manufacturers, we know that Federal has tried to predict the market for their superior product as closely as they can and will hopefully have the vehicle that meets everyone's needs available.

For more information contact: Fleet Systems, Inc. at 1-800-776-9444 or email: bestcars@fleetprocars.com. Also see ad on page 30 for more details.

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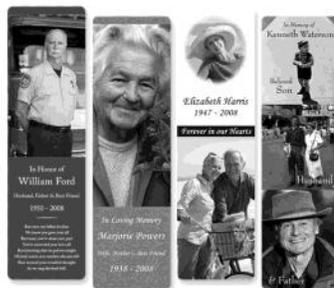
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Chuckles (Cont.)

(Continued from page 11)

excuse to stay home. The meal was elegant, the company was definitely upper crust old south and to Alice's horror, the cake in question was presented for dessert! Alice felt the blood drain from her body when she saw the cake! She started out of her chair to tell the hostess all about it, but before she could get to her feet, the Mayor's wife said, "what a beautiful cake!" Alice, still stunned, sat back in her chair when she heard the hostess (who was a prominent church member) say, "Thank you, I baked it myself..." Alice smiled and thought to herself, "God is good."

The new clerk in the men's department was a fantastic salesperson. A woman came in for a suit in which to bury her husband, and the clerk sold her one with two pairs of pants.

After I retired, my wife insisted that I accompany her on her trips to Target. Unfortunately, like most men, I found shopping boring and preferred to get in and get out. Equally unfortunate, my wife is like most women—she loves to browse. Yesterday my dear wife received the following letter from the local Target.

Dear Mrs. Samuel,

Over the past six months, your husband has caused quite a commotion in our store. We cannot tolerate this behavior and have been forced to ban both of you from the store. Our complaints against your husband, Mr. Samuel, are listed below and are documented by video surveillance cameras.

1. June 15: Took 24 boxes of condoms and randomly put them in other people's carts when they weren't looking.
2. July 2: Set all the alarm clocks in Housewares to go off at 5-minute intervals.
3. July 7: He made a trail of tomato juice on the floor leading to the women's restroom.
4. July 19: Walked up to an employee and told her in an official voice, "Code 3 in Housewares. Get on it right away!" This caused the employee to leave her assigned station and receive a reprimand from her Supervisor that in turn resulted in a union grievance, causing management to lose time and costing the company money.
5. August 4: Went to the Service Desk and tried to put a bag of M&Ms on layaway.
6. August 14: Moved a "CAUTION- WET FLOOR" sign to carpeted area.
7. August 15: Set up a tent in the camping department and told the children shoppers he'd invite them in if they would bring pillows and blankets from the bedding department to which twenty children obliged.
8. August 23: When a clerk asked if they could help him he began crying and screamed, "Why can't you people just leave me alone? EMTs were called.
9. September 4: Looked right into the security camera and used it as a mirror while he

picked his nose.

10. September 10: While handling guns in the hunting department, he asked the clerk where the antidepressants were.
11. October 3: Darted around the store suspiciously while loudly humming the 'Mission Impossible' theme.
12. October 6: In the auto department, he practiced his 'Madonna look' by using different sizes of funnels.
13. October 18: Hid in clothing rack and when people browsed through, yelled 'PICK ME! PICK ME!'
14. October 21: When an announcement came over the loud speaker, he assumed a fetal position and screamed, "OH NO! IT'S THOSE VOICES AGAIN!" And last, but not least:
15. October 23: Went into a fitting room, shut the door, waited awhile, then yelled very loudly, 'Hey! There's no toilet paper in here.' One of the clerks passed out.

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“One with the Sky” Open Air Cremations Taking Place in Colorado By Ivan Moreno -On Connecting Directors Website

CRESTONE, Colo. - Belinda Ellis' farewell went as she wanted. One by one, her family placed juniper boughs and logs about her body, covered in red cloth atop a rectangular steel grate inside a brick-lined hearth. With a torch, her husband lit the fire that consumed her, sending billows of smoke into the blue-gray sky of dawn.

When the smoke subsided, a triangle-shaped flame flickered inside the circle of mourners, heavily-dressed and huddling against zero-degree weather.

"Mommy, you mean the world to me and it's hard to live without you," called out Ellis' weeping daughter, Brenda, 18. "It's hard to breathe, it's hard to see and it's hard to think about anything but you."

The outdoor funeral pyre in this southern Colorado mountain town is unique. Funeral and cremation industry officials say they are unaware of any other place in the nation that conducts open-air cremations for people regardless of religion. A Buddhist temple in Red Feather Lakes, Colo., conducts a few funeral pyres, but only for its members.

Ancient Vikings lit funeral pyres to honor their dead, and it is accepted practice among Buddhist and Hindu religions. But the practice is largely taboo in the U.S.

The pyre harkens to references in the Christian and Hebrew Bibles equating rising smoke with the ascent of the soul, said David Weddle, a religion professor at Colorado College. It can be seen as honoring a natural cycle, reducing the body to ash and the elements of which it is composed. It also can be a protest against traditional funerals, which some view as a denial of death, Weddle said.

While Belinda Ellis "did not have a religious bone in her body," according to her husband, Randy Ellis, she had attended a Crestone funeral pyre and told her family it was what she wanted. Ellis, 48, died of a massive heart attack Jan. 9 and was cremated three days later.

The Crestone End of Life Project conducted its first open-air cremation in January 2008 and has performed 18 since. Each pending cremation sets in motion phone calls to the Saguache County Sheriff's Office, the fire department and the coroner. State and local agencies have given permits to the group to conduct the cremations.

Some residents initially opposed the idea, worried about pollution, smells and heavy traffic. The group addressed every worry, said project director Gaines.

(Continued on page 25)

“One with the Sky” (Cont.)

(Continued from page 24)

The project asks \$425 per cremation, though families can give more. Volunteers counsel grieving family, help arrange the deceased to repose at home before a cremation, and prepare the hearth with kindling the day before the ceremony.

The service is offered only to the small number of people who live in the area. Crestone proper has about 100 residents, but some 1,000 others live in the adjacent development of Baca Grande, who also qualify for the service, as do the residents of the nearby town of Moffat, population 112.

It takes up to four and a half hours for a body to burn completely. Since there's no way of separating human ashes from those of the wood the family receives about five gallons of ashes.

By all accounts, Belinda Ellis was a free spirit. During the last years of her life, she lived with her husband and her boyfriend, Skip Benson, 59. "We had a friendship between the three of us that very few people could share," said Randy Ellis, 51.

Belinda's relatives described her as a giving and stubborn person who loved motorcycles, the outdoors, and smoking pot. Amid the scent of juniper and burning wood was a smell of marijuana from a bag that someone dropped into the pyre. Someone joked that perhaps they also should have poured in some Pabst Blue Ribbon.

Quiet, otherworldly chimes sounded from crystal bowls that a woman played at the beginning of the service. On a table were flowers and pictures of Belinda Ellis and her family. Other ceremonies are more elaborate, with as many as 200 people attending, or even featuring a New-Orleans style funeral march.

Her relatives carried her from a car on a wooden stretcher and placed her on top of the steel grate. The site is encircled by a bamboo fence. Crestone is nestled at the foot of the Sangre De Cristo mountain range, some 200 miles southwest of Denver.

"Being in this setting, you realize that we're all just part of nature," Randy Ellis said. "And she's just rejoined nature in another form. It's all that's going on here."

Weird Funerals

Excerpted from *Connecting Directors - "San Antoino Uncovered :Weird Funerals*

Have you ever thought about what's going to happen right after you die? Not whether you're going to the great beyond or wherever, but your funeral, burial or cremation? What you want at any services? How you want to be dressed? What kind of casket?

I discovered some weird—no, let's call them 'unique exits' - ways to go out in style that'll make you think, "Maybe I want to do that."

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One of the weirdest burials in the world was right here in an East Side cemetery (San Antonio). Sandra West was the young widow of Texas multimillionaire oilman Ike West. When she died in 1977 the Beverly Hills socialite left a handwritten will saying she had to be buried in her lacy nightgown sitting in her 1964 powder blue Ferrari 330 America in a comfortable reclining position.

If she wasn't buried as instructed, her brother-in-law would get nearly nothing. A court battle lasted two months before she finally rode off into the ground. Hundreds showed up at the Alamo Masonic Cemetery to see the spectacle, but the funeral director kept West all crated up. The onlookers couldn't see West inside the crate, even though she was dressed in her nightgown in the car. The court had ordered it to be respectful and discrete.

Don't think about digging up West and her Ferrari. They're covered in tons of cement. There's no sign of anything unusual today. Just a little extra space near the modest headstone.

As baby boomers started to die off, the choices for their funerals and burials, caskets or urns, grave markers—have skyrocketed.

Dick Tips owns Mission Park Funeral Chapels and Cemeteries. "If someone wants to be buried in their car, we welcome that. We encourage that! Whatever it is that that individual wants us to do, we want them to think about it ahead of time," explains funeral home owner Tips.

It's a family business started by Tips' great grandfather more than 100 years ago. The services offered now might have great grandfather spinning in his old fashioned mausoleum.

"We've had somebody who was not in the casket—quite frankly—and on a horse. We walked the horse because they wanted him to ride the horse one last time.

So have you ever thought about it? How are you going to go out?

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Bring Funeral Home, Inc. Receives Induction into NFDA Hall of Excellence for Outstanding Service to Families, Community

Tucson, Arizona – On October 11, 2010, Bring Funeral Home, Inc. was honored with the 2010 *Pursuit of Excellence*® Award by the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) during its International Convention & Expo in New Orleans, La. Only 166 firms from around the world received this prestigious recognition, placing Bring Funeral Home among an elite group of funeral service professionals. *Pursuit of Excellence* Award recipients raise the bar on funeral service excellence by adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards and providing unsurpassed service to families and communities.

In addition to receiving the 2010 *Pursuit of Excellence* Award, Bring Funeral Home was inducted into the NFDA Hall of Excellence for its long-standing participation in the *Pursuit of Excellence* program and consistent display of service excellence. NFDA-member funeral homes are inducted into the Hall of Excellence upon receiving their tenth *Pursuit of Excellence* Award. Only 94 funeral service providers nationwide and abroad have been inducted into the Hall of Excellence since its inception in 2006.

To achieve the *Pursuit of Excellence* Award, NFDA-member

funeral homes must evaluate components of their business against standards set forth by the *Pursuit of Excellence* program and demonstrate proficiency in key areas of the funeral service profession. Participants are required to fulfill criteria in six categories of achievement that demonstrate commitment to: complying with state and federal regulations; providing ongoing education and professional development opportunities for staff; offering outstanding programs and resources to bereaved families; maintaining an active level of involvement within the community; participating and actively serving in the funeral service profession; and promoting funeral home services through a variety of marketing, advertising and public relations programs.

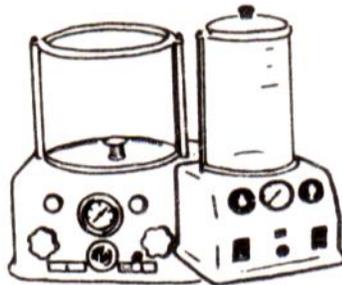
“Bring Funeral Home’s voluntary participation in the *Pursuit of Excellence* program reflects a clear determination to exceed the expectations of those they serve,” said NFDA Chief Executive Officer Christine Pepper, CAE. “This prestigious recognition assures families of the high-quality, compassionate service they will receive the moment they walk through the funeral home’s front door.”

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Comments on the book David Copperfield

by Ivy Douglas (Publisher's Daughter)

It is in Chapter 9 of the Dickens classic "David Copperfield" where you first meet Mr. Omer – "Draper, Tailor, Haberdasher, Funeral Furnisher &c." From looking at various reviews of the book, it appears that only a child of a funeral director would appreciate this character's portrayal. It is an interesting snap shot of the funeral profession in the 19th century. Each time they meet, Mr. Omer's services are needed but his good hearted nature and the attention he gives the grieving David is a gratifying read compared to the examples of the funeral profession often displayed in this day and age.

Young David comes home from school after receiving word of his mother's death. Mr. Omer is there to pick him up from the coach and brings David to his shop. There David waits for his funeral clothes to be made by Mr. Omer's daughter and 2 other seamstresses. He sits in quiet grief while Mr. Omer chats about the business and recollects his experience with the burial of David's father. In the background is heard the RAT-TAT-TAT of the hammer building the coffin for David's mother. An awkward moment arrives when Mr. Omer cheerfully starts to ask David if he would like to go with him to see the finished product. His daughter Minnie diplomatically intervenes but David somehow knows what they are going to see. Finally David rides with them to his home in "a kind of half-chaise cart, half piano-forte van, painted a somber color and drawn by a black horse with a long tail". The Omer's may appear to be a bit too jovial for the lonely, grieving boy to take in light of his circumstances but their kindness stays with him enough that he seeks them out when an apparent need for their services arises again.

David is much older and prefers to stop by Mr. Omer's shop first when back in town to inquire about the health of his old nurse's husband. This time Mr. Omer declares "It's one of the drawbacks of our line of business. When a party's ill, we *can't* ask how the party is." Many times when I was growing up I heard my mother say the same thing! But he does fill David in on all the various

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people in town and his kindness to David once again leaves an impression.

What did I take from this? Perhaps just that some things never really change when it comes to the needs of those who mourn. Funeral directors have a special and important job to do. In this fast paced age when the funeral profession is being pushed to move into the 21st century; to put aside the "traditional" service for one that caters to the whim of the moment; to update from calendars and pew fans to websites and Facebook pages; let's remember to maintain the timeless aspect that is often lost on the general public and transcends current trends and business plans...the personal touch, care and concern for those who grieve.



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The Dash



I read of a man who stood to speak
At the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on his tombstone
From the beginning to the end

He noted that first came his date of birth
And spoke the following date with tears,
But he said what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years.



For that dash represents all the time
That he spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved him
Know what that little line is worth.



For it matters not how much we own:
The cars, the house, the cash;
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend the dash.

So think about this and hard:
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
That can still be rearranged.



If we could just slow down enough
To consider what's true and real,
And always try to understand
The way other people feel.



And be less quick to anger,
And show appreciation more,
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before

If we treat each other with respect,
And more often wear a smile,
Remembering that his special dash
Might only last a little while



So, when your eulogy's being read
With your life's actions to rehash,
Would you be proud of the things they say
About how you spent your dash?



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Dolly Parton

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"Always forgive your enemies— nothing annoys them so much."
Oscar Wilde

"Most of us have trouble juggling. The woman who says she doesn't is someone whom I admire but have never met."
Barbara Walters

"Before I had my child, I thought that I understood the limits of my heart. It's extraordinary to have all those limits thrown out."
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"Age is just a number. It's totally irrelevant unless, of course, you happen to be a bottle of wine."
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"If you always do what interests you, at least one person is pleased."
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