

# The Dead Beat



## The Caregiver's Soapbox



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

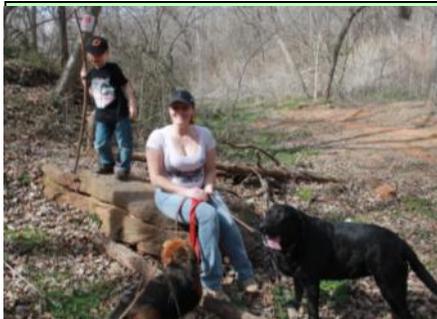
Volume 14

www.thedead-beat.com

Issue 1



### Scooter's Death Mom and Grandma's Versions By Mom-Samantha (Douglas) Spears and Grandma Ivy (Pugh) Douglas



#### Mom's Version

A couple of weeks ago I got a phone call from my vet's office, the vet tech there informed me that my Boston Terrier Vader was found running down a very busy road right off our neighborhood. The vet tech gave me the phone number of the person that found him which I gave to my husband Sean as soon as I called him.

A few minutes later Sean called me back and said that the news was worse. Our beagle Scooter had gotten hit by a car and he was in very bad shape. I immediately left work and rushed to the vet's office. Sean beat me there by a matter of minutes.

Scooter had severe internal injuries that we had no choice but to have the vet euthanize him. After a tearful goodbye his suffering was over. A vet tech wrapped up Scooter in the blanket that Sean had carried him in with and then secured it with safety pens.

I took Scooter and Vader home to where my Labrador Lucy was waiting. She was extremely anxious and she could tell that something was wrong. I put Vader in the house and then carried Scooter inside. I set him right



outside the patio door so Lucy could try to understand what happened. She sniffed, pawed and bit at him seeming as if she was trying to wake him up.

After several minutes I put Scooter back inside and headed to the school to go get my six-year-old son Hayden. As soon as I picked him up he knew something was wrong. The moment he asked me what was wrong I started to cry again.

He started to panic and asked me again what was wrong. I told him that there was an accident and Scooter got hurt. He immediately asked me if he died. I told him that Scooter had gotten hit by a car and that



his injuries were so severe that we had to take him to the vet and the vet had to

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Pictured

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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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**Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association Convention**



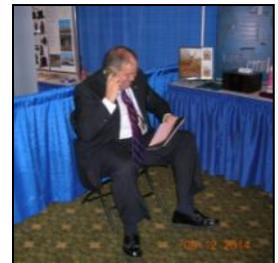
Tom Doty & Daughter—First Guaranty



Michael Suthoff—Messenger



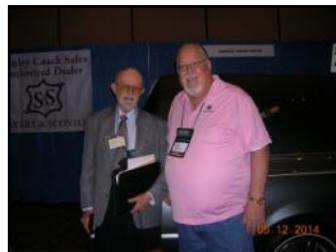
Cal Mickelson—United Heritage Insurance



Randy Emmert—Pierce Chemical



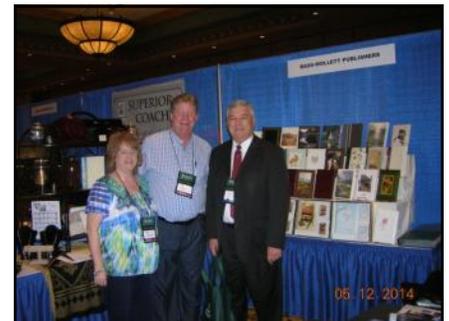
Jim Brown  
Mid-States Professional Services



Lowell Pugh with Don Bucholtz  
Hanley Coach



Lamcraft Inc.



Fraley Funeral Supplies & Bass-Mollett Publishers  
Beth and the late Eric Zentner and Chuck

# MFDEA Convention (Cont.)



Tom Havranek—SI Memorials



Rick Rork—Pierce Chemicals



Wilbert Caskets



Nate Stroup—Federated Insurance



Darlene Russell and Cindy Hartman —CFL Preneed



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# Eatin' On the Road Sirloin Stockade—Carthage, MO

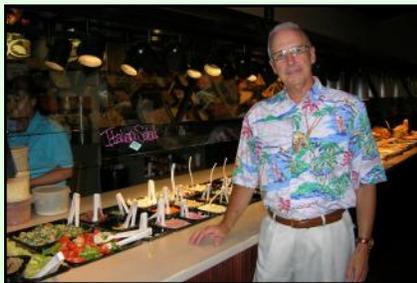
By Joanne & Lowell



We haven't written about any restaurants lately, but had a great conversation with the owner of a restaurant that we frequent often in Carthage, Missouri. Terry McDonald is the owner of Sirloin Stockade in Carthage. He's been the owner of the franchise restaurant since 1986. After 28 years he had many interesting aspects to share with us.

The restaurant was originally a steak house several years and but was closed for a year before Terry got involved. He was selling food service after he had been in the service in Vietnam, but that company quit doing business. Since Sirloin Stockade had been one of Terry's clients with his previous position, he got a job with them. He helped with opening restaurants all over the country, but as his children became school age he decided to settle down in Carthage and bought the Carthage restaurant franchise.

His restaurant presents a buffet by itself or with several meal selections of steaks and other items. Terry's proud of the fact that most of the food is prepared from scratch or more like home cooking. The basic food items are purchased through a commissary that provides food for several restaurants. In the summertime some fresh items such as tomatoes, squash and melons are purchased at an Amish auction location for the restaurant.



Terry by his main buffet

He is very appreciative of his staff which he can trust to complete the job of providing the best service and food to his customers. Many have been with him for a long time, in fact, one person has been with him since he started. He also has provided many jobs for local kids and some he had some association with

their parents. He tried to instill in those children the work ethic that is needed to succeed in this world. Many have come back to him and thanked him for that training. These children became doctors, lawyers, and many other professions.

As far as funeral connections in this restaurant, he has many. His restaurant provides food for funeral dinners in local churches, mostly pieces of chicken and rolls. This happens on average once a week. He has a regular group that consists of widowers that provide support for each other. It's a dynamic group that changes as it needs to, but these are regular customers that need the socialization as much as food and truly are more like family. The waitresses know them so well that when they don't show up they actually check on them. An example of how well that Terry is thought of, comes from the question Terry's wife asked, "Exactly how many times have you been a pall bearer?" Obviously many times that he couldn't even count. So not only does he provide food, but throws in a little grief support too.

We asked about his family and if they considered taking over for him. He said, "No." Though they worked for him when they were younger, his daughter is a nurse and his son works for the Hyatt Regency in Maui, Hawaii. But Terry is confident that if he wants to take off or wind things down that his staff is up to the task.

In relation to the future, he commented that he's seen the most change the last 10 years. After speaking at the school, he has asked the school to send someone to help him with social media. He knows that how to reach some of his customer base, but he's still working on that. His largest base of customers is the senior citizen group, next is followed by the young families with kids, that his buffet provides many alternatives for young children, macaroni and cheese, chicken, mashed potatoes, etc. The professional population in the late 20's and early 30's is a customer base that he is working on. He does provide wi-fi and there is good cell phone reception in his restaurant, which is important.

When asked about his future he feels confident eating at restaurants is still a popular thing to do, but that there are a lot of offerings in the field now. As far as buffets and restaurants in general, government regulation has had its impact as well as potential health factors.

After 28 years, many people know about the quality of his restaurant and make it a regular stop. He has good access from a major highway and in the summer it brings many tourists in. The best way of summing up this restaurant and its owner is his feeling, "It's not really like going to work." He enjoys it that much.

We enjoyed our food and conversation and wish him well for the future.

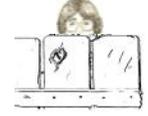


Lowell & Terry

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# Mortuary Muse & Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell & Joanne



## Personalization

I just read a press release by one of the purveyors of personalization stuff. The company has many nice remembrance products, software, etc. Everything that “modern” funeral directors need to change the way they have been doing business to a personalized funeral format.

To the casual observer the external trappings of the funeral did not vary a great deal for many years. With the one-on-one level to survivors and empathetic funeral directors, there has always been a flow of personalization.

From the removal scene to the arrangement conference to the ceremony and cemetery, each family’s grief has been recognized and personalized and remembered long after the remembrance candle has burned out.

Some intangibles can not be ordered by the click of a mouse.

\*\*\*\*\*

A press release last spring told how a dozen U.S. companies had come together to make a digital catalog of “made in the USA” urns and funeral products.

The release stated they had sent the catalogs to 500 funeral homes. I wondered how they chose 500 firms so I called the identified spokesperson’s 800 number three times and left a message that was never returned.

At the same time another company put out a press release about their new Sports team branding license of funeral products. Three calls to that company concerning additional products had the same result. No return call. Are we totally rejecting verbal communication?

Exactly what happens if you would want to purchase something, if the

same thing resulted, don’t you think that many sales would be missed.

Why on funeral home websites, are the “contact us” alternatives mostly e-mailing? Are people going to have to start e-mailing that they need the deceased persons picked up?

Now that may be an interesting start to personalization.

About the Authors:

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

**Joanne Howard** is the editor of **The Dead Beat** since 1999. She has been a licensed funeral director since 1992 with Pugh Funeral Home in Golden City, MO and now manages the funeral home. They can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address and [editor@thedeadbeat.com](mailto:editor@thedeadbeat.com)

## Kind of New Words and Meanings

The Washington Post’s Style Invitational asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting or changing one letter and supply a new

definition. Here are some recent winners:

**Intoxication:** Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

**Reintarnation:** Coming back to life as a hill-billy.

**Giraffiti:** Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

**Sarchasm:** The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn’t get it.

**Inoculate:** To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

**Hipatitis:** Terminal coolness.

**Osteopornosis:** A degenerate disease ( this one got extra credit)

**Karmageddon:** It’s like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it’s like, a serious bummer

**Glibido:** All talk and no action.

**Dopeler effect:** The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

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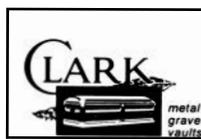
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# After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

Well, in the realm of unique experiences in a funeral, I had an interesting funeral last week. Regretfully it was a 30 year old man that had been a paraplegic for 13 years. He had been in an automobile accident when he was 17. He had lived locally until the last few years when he had moved to Colorado and then to an area in New Mexico close to family. His existence was mostly on his back, but he still lived independently.

After he passed his mother contacted us about getting him from New Mexico and having services locally. We went through the waiting of the autopsy and then the shipment from New Mexico to Missouri. We had great help with our New Mexico support in getting him back to Missouri. The question was how would he look because the family felt strongly that his family and friends could see him. Thankfully, a local funeral home that assists us in final preparation and casketing were successful in making him look presentable for viewing.

The next challenge came in trying to find a place to have the funeral. He had been Catholic, but there were no churches available in his local town. So they decided to have a mass at the funeral home and then have a visitation and graveside funeral at the cemetery. The family felt that there would be many people and so they arranged and had 100 chairs set up at the cemetery in a grove of trees in the front of the cemetery, not by the grave. They set up music and tried to set up a microphone for the priest, but that didn't work.

After the mass at the funeral home mostly attended by the family and a few friends, we got ready to load the

casket into the hearse. The family approached me and said he had made a pact with his good friend not to be taken to the cemetery in a hearse, but in a pickup. They asked if that was okay. I said sure



and we took the roller out of our van and put it into the pickup and loaded him. Because of the length of the casket they had to leave the tailgate down and it was just held in by a strap. I warned the driver to not put the brakes on very hard because the casket would come rolling back against the strap.

Well, we made it to the cemetery without incident. They unloaded the casket at the area the chairs had been set up. The chairs were set up in a horseshoe pattern with three rows. During the visitation people came and visited with family and viewed the body as the music played.



At the beginning of the service, which began at 6:00 p.m., the priest had some difficulty with sound and he just moved closer to the crowd's semi-circle. The service was mostly the obituary and letters written by friends and family. One especially detailed letter was from his mother giving everyone specifics of what

her son's life had been like. At the end of the service, the priest called the family forward and they stood at the edge of the casket and we passed the crowd by the casket.

After the crowd had done the last viewing and final visit with the family, the family had their final goodbyes. The casket bearers loaded the casket in the pickup and we drove to the grave in the back part of the cemetery. The family and a few friends attended the committal at the graveside. The mother stayed at the grave until he was in the ground and covered by dirt and then spent some time alone with him.

This was a personalized service that the family and funeral home worked together to give a final goodbye that met all the family's needs. It was one of those situations that emphasized the flexibility aspect of being a funeral director and having a funeral home be adaptive to any request.



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: [jfhoward53@yahoo.com](mailto:jfhoward53@yahoo.com)



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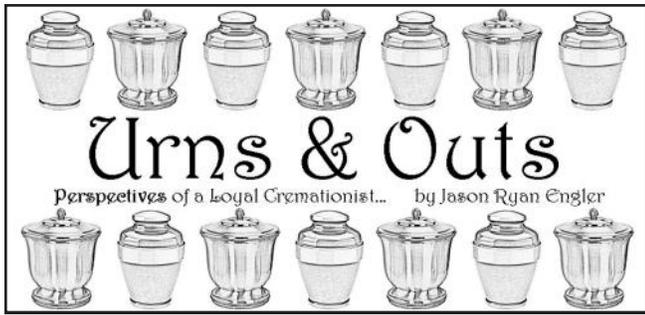
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It has been my experience that opponents of cremation have often been the initiators of any number of degrading remarks since cremation's modern movement beginning in 1874. Statistics show, though, that for every one person against cremation, there is another one who agrees with its practice. The south is certainly no exception. While we in the "bible belt" have significantly lower numbers than our northern, western, and eastern neighbors, the fact that the practice of cremation is on the increase is obvious.

What are the reasons that cremation is becoming popular? Through surveys conducted by the Funeral and Memorial Information Council along with the Cremation Association of North America it is discovered that the primary reason people choose cremation is for financial reasons. However, I find it interesting that in some markets there are funeral homes with direct cremation fees over \$2000 and others with fees under \$800, and that the funeral homes with the higher price conduct as many cremations as the ones with the lower price. Perhaps other cited reasons could explain this fact: consumers appreciate the flexibility, range of options, simplicity, found in choosing cremation.

In funeral service, all funeral homes sell caskets and urns, most have hearses, some have limousines, all provide embalming, but what sets our funeral homes apart – what makes each of our firms unique is the way that we serve the families that call on us. Each firm has their own signature way of conducting funerals, and each have an experience that their client families receive. So many times, we can see that families are interested in the *experience*. Some appreciate the experience of a no-frills storefront funeral provider, others want the experience of a larger facility

with more plush amenities. As long as all of these firms are truly caring for families in their times of grief, each has their place in funeral service.

Still there are other opponents of cremation. The survey I mentioned earlier reveals that the third reason families choose cremation is attributed to environmental concern. But this is also a reason that cremation, and new crematories in particular, face opposition. It is perceived that a crematory built near a school or neighborhood will be harmful to people in those nearby places; or, for the more fiscal-minded, that property values will decrease due to a crematory in the vicinity. Sadly, these perceptions are, in my opinion and research, based largely on fear and lack of knowledge. Many opponents quote some study by some other equally-fearful opponent of a crematory being built who got erroneous information to begin with, causing further fear and confusion. To add to the drama, the unnecessary use of words and phrases cause further hysteria. "Mercury Gas" and "Human Incinerators" conjure images of cesspools of toxic waste and Nazi concentration camps.

When funeral professionals set out to build such facilities to more fully serve their families, they are often the subject of media controversy and even attacks on the professions they have spent their lives building. The very care they have given the families of their communities is often turned against them, their words of comfort returned with words of accusation and contempt. In the end, unfortunately, there is no winner – for layers of compassion are easily removed with a small douse of anger – like layers of paint are removed with a small douse of turpentine.

What we must do, as professionals who are all in the same boat, though in different parts of the ocean, is to support one another. When we give our support to others in our profession, we are in turn supporting ourselves and the meaning of the ideals we vow to uphold, and most importantly, we encourage the value of our profession.

At least, that's my perspective...

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Jason Ryan Engler is a funeral director and cremation historian in Northwest Arkansas. He is the official 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

[www.cremationhistorian.com](http://www.cremationhistorian.com) ; or follow him on Twitter (@MrCremation). He can be reached at [cremationhistorian@hotmail.com](mailto:cremationhistorian@hotmail.com)

## Not the person I knew By Ken Doka

When we love someone we mourn their death. Yet sometimes after a loss we find out information about the individual who died that makes us doubt whether we ever knew the person really. Then our grief can be very complicated as we wonder about the relationship we had and the person we knew.

Jan had such an issue. After her husband Jack died she found out he had children from a prior marriage—a marriage she never even knew existed. For Matt, it was the realization that his wife had a longstanding affair—one that caused him to doubt his wife’s truthfulness throughout the marriage.

It does not always have to be a spouse. After his death, Tom’s adult children realized that their Dad had been deep in debt because of a gambling problem. “All his life, Dad presented himself as an upright, even uptight kind of guy. Now we wonder who he really was.” Cindy and Vic felt the same about their son. He had been the kind of son they had taken great pride in—an honor student and athlete. His death from a drug overdose belied that image of a clean cut kid they thought they had.

These changes in our perception of the person’s identity after death can be troubling. In the midst of mourning the person we knew, we now have to encounter information that not only shows another side of the person—but even casts doubt on the relationship we

thought we had.

There are no easy answers to handle such situations. Sometimes we can find ways to express the unresolved feeling that emerge as these new facts are disclosed. It might be writing a letter to the person or speaking to an empty chair. Matt chose to read his letter at his wife’s graveside—expressing both his disappointment and continuing love.

Others may find it useful to speak to a counselor to sort out their many mixed emotions and feelings. Cindy and Vic felt it useful to go to counseling. “She helped us explore what we knew, what we expected, what we feared and what was a total surprise. She helped us end the cycle of blame and recrimination that was tearing at our relationship.”

And sometimes it simply helps us to realize that human beings are complex and that we never really know or fully understand another human being. That all we have is to search our own spiritual roots and beliefs to find the source of our own forgiveness. For both forgiveness and love sustains any and all meaningful relationship.

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This article was originally printed in *Journeys: A Newsletter to Help in Bereavement*, published by Hospice Foundation of America. More information about *Journeys* can be found at [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org) or by calling 800-854-3402 and is published monthly by the Hospice Foundation of

America, 1710 Rhode Island Ave NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org).



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*)

## Quotations From Women About Women

Who ever thought up the word “Mammogram?” Every time I hear it, I think I’m supposed to put my breast in an envelope and send it to someone—Jan King

A male gynecologist is like an auto mechanic who never owned a car.—Carrie Snow

My second favorite household chore is ironing. My first being—hitting my head on the top bunk bed until I faint—Erma Brombeck.

A man’s got to do what a man’s got to do. A woman must do what he can’t.—Rhonda Hansome

Whatever women must do, they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult.—Charlotte Whitton.

Thirty-five is when you finally get your head together and your body starts falling apart.—Caryn Leschen.

## Chuckles

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

Funeral Home Funny -Submitted by Karen Williamson  
karenwilliamson620@gmail.com

Our small town YMCA has an active exercise program that is well attended by adult members of all ages. Naturally when exercising you want to wear comfortable shorts and a tank top, so you can imagine the various clothing worn. A middle aged minister of a large church was one of the members that exercises.



Recently at a funeral service this minister was officiating. It was a traditional service and the minister was dressed in the usual dark suit, white shirt and tie. When the service was over he was standing by the casket as the guests were passing by. He spoke to a lady as she approached. Loudly she exclaimed "Oh, hi. I didn't recognize you with your clothes on!" His face turned from several shades of red to a pure white.

\*\*\*\*\*

The child was a typical four-year-old girl. Cute, inquisitive, and bright as a new penny. When she expressed difficulty in grasping the concept of marriage, her father decided to pull out his wedding photo album, thinking visual images would help. On one page after another, he pointed out the bride arriving at the church, the entrance, the wedding ceremony, the recessional, the reception, etc. "Now do you understand?" he asked. "I think so," she said. "Is that when mommy came to work for us?"



\*\*\*\*\*

Taxiing down a runway, the jetliner abruptly stopped, turned around and returned to the gate. After an hour-long wait it finally took off. A concerned passenger asked a flight attendant, "What was the problem?" "The pilot was bothered by a noise he heard in the engine," the flight attendant explained, "and it took us a while to find another pilot."



\*\*\*\*\*

A little girl climbed into the lap of her grandfather and studied his white and balding head. She ran her fingers along the deep wrinkles on his face and neck. "Did God make you?" she asked. "Yes." "Did God make me, too?" "Yes," he replied. "Well," she shrugged, "don't you think he's doing a better job now than he used to."

\*\*\*\*\*

After giving his sermon, the minister walked to the back of the church to greet the parishioners. After shaking a few adult hands, he came upon the 7-year-old son of a deacon of the church. "Good morning, Jonathan," the preacher said as he reached out to shake the boy's hand. As they shook, he felt

## Comments

To All of Amy's Family,

We may not tell you that we feel your pain because we have no way of knowing what your pain is. We may not have talked to you in person, but we have enjoyed your words. We have enjoyed Amy's artwork. May we say a prayer for you today. May the Lord give your strength and comfort. May I personally tell you, you have lightened my day. The road we travel is different than yours. Our goal is to be reunited with the ones we love. May the Lord Bless You, May his Son give you peace and the Holy Spirit give you strength. In Christian Love.

*(Editor note: I received this wonderful note and felt the need to share and to thank the lovely people who sent it again. I'm sure Amy would thank you for the appreciation of her work and the kind thoughts and prayers for her family.)*

something in the palm of the boy's hand. "What's this?" the preacher asked. "Money," Jonathan said with a big smile on his face. "It's for you." "I don't want to take your money, Jonathan," the preacher answered. "I want you to have it," the boy said. "My daddy says you're the poorest preacher we've ever had so I want to help you."

\*\*\*\*\*

Want to protect your home from a burglary? Tape this note to your front door before you leave: "Steve, the python got loose again. Don't go in until I return. He's too big for one person to handle alone. I'll be back soon."

\*\*\*\*\*

Poem submitted by reader  
Here lies John Racket  
In his wooden jacket.  
He kept neither horses nor mules..  
He lived like a hog.  
He died, like a dog.  
And left all his money to fools.

This man seems to be alright;  
Yet the Lord called him a fool.  
This man gave all of his thought to himself,  
And he was covetous.

\*\*\*

I had a little tea party  
This afternoon at three.  
Twas very small  
Three guests in all.

Just I, Myself and Me.  
Myself ate all the sandwiches,  
While I drank up the tea.  
Twas also I who ate the pie  
And passed the cake to Me.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Chuckles (Cont.)

An avid golfer hit his tee shot on the first hole 300 yards right down the middle of the fairway. When the ball came down, however, it bounced off a sprinkler head and headed into some trees. The angry golfer went into the trees, found his ball, and hit a very hard 2-iron. The ball struck a tree and bounced straight back at him. It nailed him in the temple and killed him instantly. The man was at the Pearly Gates; St. Peter looked at the Big Book and said, "Hmm. I see you were a golfer, is that correct?" "Yes, sir," he replied. "We have some pretty good courses up here. Are you any good?" "Am I good!" beamed the man. "I got here in two, didn't I?"

\*\*\*\*\*

### New Pasta Diet

- ◆ Just walk pasta bakery without stopping.
- ◆ Walk pasta candy store without stopping.
- ◆ Walk pasta ice cream shop without stopping.

\*\*\*\*\*

In my old age I've come to the conclusion that we all take life too seriously. The words to an old song echo in my head.

### Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries

*Life is just a bowl of cherries,  
Don't take it serious.  
Life's too mysterious.  
You work, you save, you worry so,  
But you can't take your dough when you go, go, go.  
So keep repeating "It's the berries.  
The strongest oak must fall."  
The sweet things in life, to you are just loaned  
So how can you lose what you've never owned?  
Life is just a bowl of cherries,  
So live and laugh at it all.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### Truisms

- ◆ If you're too open-minded, your brains will fall out.
- ◆ Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.
- ◆ Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, if he gets angry, he'll be a mile away—and bare-foot.

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- ◆ Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic.
- ◆ Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
- ◆ A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
- ◆ A closed mouth gathers no feet.
- ◆ If you must choose between two evils, pick the one you've never tried before.
- ◆ My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.
- ◆ Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious.
- ◆ It is easier to get forgiveness than permission.
- ◆ For every action, there is an equal and opposite government program.
- ◆ If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.
- ◆ Always yield to temptation, because it may not pass your way again.
- ◆ Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.
- ◆ A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel good.
- ◆ Men are from earth. Women are from earth. Deal with it.
- ◆ ...A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
- ◆ Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.
- ◆ Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.
- ◆ There is always one more imbecile than you counted on.
- ◆ Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.
- ◆ By the time you can make ends meet, they move the ends.
- ◆ Thou shalt not weigh more than thy refrigerator.
- ◆ Someone who thinks logically provides a nice contrast to the real world.





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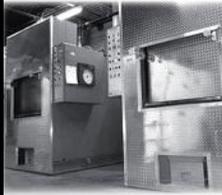
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Dear Counselor

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It has been almost 10 years to the date when interest rates paid on Government bonds fell below 5%. Interest rates “bottomed out” four years later when the sub-prime mortgage market collapsed. Depressed interest rates threatened the nation’s credit markets, and in late 2008 the Federal Reserve Board initiated a stimulus program involving the purchase of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed bonds.

For almost six years, the Fed’s stimulus program supplied demand for low interest debt instruments that did not meet most investors’ objectives. Last December, the Fed announced its plan to taper the stimulus program by reducing the Federal Government’s purchase of bonds. The “Tapering Process” may eventually lead to higher interest rates on bank issued certificate of deposits, but recent Fed actions suggest the climb to higher rates will be long and slow. We don’t see certificates of deposits being a viable preneed funding option until the Fed has terminated its stimulus program and interest rates are market driven. Unless the Fed alters its current course, that could be at least four years away.

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



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

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# Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues

## ARIZONA



**Dan Davis**, 61, of Fountain Hills, passed away Dec. 16, 2013. He was a founding director of Messinger Fountain Hills Mortuary in 1995 and was manager until 2001. He graduated from University of Minnesota College of Mortuary Science and was licensed in New Hampshire, Minnesota and Arizona.

## IOWA



**George Burton Peterson**, 76, of Glenwood, Iowa, died November 18, 2013. He was founder of Peterson Mortuary in 1962 with his father and brother in Glenwood, Iowa. He graduated from San Francisco School of Mortuary Science and joined his father and brother in the family business located in Nebraska City. He served as funeral director and embalmer in Nebraska and Iowa for over 50 years.

## MISSOURI



**Ruth Schrader Arft**, 93, of Ballwin, passed away June 18, 2014. She was co-owner of Schrader Funeral Home and Crematory in Ballwin and Eureka. Her services were handled by Schrader Funeral Home.

**Gregory James Cullen**, 57, of Raymore, MO passed away Dec. 29, 2013. He graduated from Worsham College of Mortuary Science in Chicago in 1981. He fulfilled his lifelong dream of building Cullen Funeral Home in 1991 who handled his services.



**John Thomas Dilschneider**, 68 of University City died May 31, 2014. He served in the U.S. Army and upon returning became associated with Lupton Chapel and been a licensed funeral director for over 40 years. His arrangements were under the direction of Lupton Chapel.



**Helen Ewald**, 91, of Curtis, Nebraska passed away May 18, 2014. She was the mother of Jo Jurgens of Daniel Funeral Home in Lamar, Missouri. Her services were handled by Blasé-Wetzel Funeral Home in Curtis, Nebraska.



**Gene S. Hutchens**, 92, of Florissant, passed away on July 9, 2014. He was the grandson of a casket maker in rural Kansas. He had been a part of funeral service since birth. A veteran of WWII and Korean Wars, he served in Europe in US Army Graves registration. He taught at the St. Louis College of Mortuary Science and the American Academy of Funeral Service in New York City before establishing his own funeral home in 1950. He wrote the book "Modern Restorative Art" techniques of embalming restoration. In 1955, Gene and Rose Marie founded the Florissant Mortuary in Old Town Florissant. By 1965 they had opened their current facility. He was past president of the Missouri Funeral Directors Association in 1975-76. The Hutchens Mortuary continues celebrating 60 years of operation by the second and third generations.

## MISSOURI (Cont.)



**Mark Estle Orr**, 54, of Ozark died June 1, 2014. He was Circuit Judge of the 38th Judicial Circuit consisting of Christian and Taney Counties and husband of Sarah (Adams) Orr, funeral director at Adams Funeral Home. The Adams Funeral Home handled the funeral arrangements.



**Adam Weast McElwain**, 35, of Columbia formerly of Macon passed away July 7, 2014. He is the son of Gary and Kathy McElwain. His funeral services were under the direction of Greening-Eagen Hayes Funeral Home.



**Suvée Smith**, 98, of St. Louis died July 10, 2014. She had worked for 50 years at one of the oldest black-owned and operated funeral homes in St. Louis. Her late husband and her owned the Wm. Smith Funeral Home.



**Eric Zentner**, 45, of Joplin, passed away June 18, 2014. He was the husband of Beth (Fraleay) Zentner of Fraley Funeral Supply and he was also a sales representative for Bass Mollett Publishing and Hydrol Chemical. His funeral was under the direction of Parker Mortuary in Joplin.

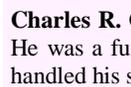
## TEXAS



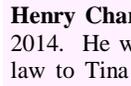
**Maurine Williamson Cain**, 95, of Rockwall, passed away June 19, 2014. She is the mother of Dewayne Cain of Rest Haven Funeral Home in Rockwall. Her services were arranged by the Rest Haven Funeral Home-Rockwall Chapel.



**Guadalupe "Lupe" Castro**, 73, of Edinburg passed away July 15, 2014. She was the mother of Lee Castro, South Texas Regional President and associated with Legacy Chapels who directed her services.



**Charles R. Gaddy**, 79, of Pasadena, passed away on June 5, 2014. He was a funeral director at Grand View Funeral Home who also handled his service arrangements.



**Henry Charles Jackson**, 91, of Laredo, passed away on June 24, 2014. He was the father of the Late Brad Jackson and father-in-law to Tina F. Jackson president and owner of Hillside Funeral Home. Grimes Funeral Chapels in Kerrville, handled his services.

*(Continued on page 15)*

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



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

### TEXAS (Cont.)

(Continued from page 14)



**Margaret "Margie" Locke**, 72, of Willis passed away May 7, 2014. She was the wife of Guy Locke, the manager of Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home in Willis.



**Carl E. "Bud" Monk**, 94 of Nacogdoches, passed away July 16, 2014. He served in the U.S. Army from June 1943 until June 1946. Because of his degree in mathematics, he was initially assigned to serve as a radio teletype mechanic for the Army Air Corps in the Pacific theater. He was eventually transferred to the Quartermaster's Corps. He was former owner of Cason, Monk & Co. Hardware and Funeral Home. His funeral services were under the direction of Cason-Monk-Metcalf Funeral Directors.



**Gladys Best Riley**, 80, of Woodville, died Thanksgiving morning November 28, 2013. She was born and buried on the same farm that she was raised on. She was former co-owner of Riley Funeral Home in Woodville and had helped her son Pat

establish the Pat A. Riley Funeral Home in Nederland, TX. She was a wonderful comfort to families over 50 years and loved and read every issue of **The Dead Beat** publication many times. (From her son: "Mother really loved **The Dead Beat** & would always cry during every issue.") Her services were directed by Riley Funeral Home in Woodville.

**Jean Slay**, 82, of Pilot Point, passed away on May 11, 2014. She was previous owner of Huff/Slay Funeral Home and mother of Terri Slay, owner of Slay Memorial Funeral Center in Pilot Point and Aubrey, which handled her funeral arrangements.



**John Warren Shocklee**, 82, of Austin, died June 19, 2014. He served in the United State Marine Corp from 1951 to 1954. Upon leaving the service, he attended the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science, beginning a long and rewarding career in the funeral service. He received his Bachelor's degree from Southern Nazarene University in 1964 and his Master's in Education from Virginia State College in 1975, with additional graduate work at Virginia Tech from 1976-77. John's compassionate heart and caring spirit were evident in his work at various funeral homes in Odessa, Carrollton, Corsicana, and Austin, Texas. In 1964 to 1969 he served as an Instructor at the Dallas Institute, later becoming the Dean of Students from 1969 to 1971. In 1971, John accepted the position of Program Head of Mortuary Science at John Tyler Community College in Chester, Virginia. In 1980, John returned to Texas to serve as the Executive Director for the State Board of Morticians until 1986. Other accomplishments include serving on the Curriculum Committee and the Accreditation Committee for the American Board of Funeral Service. He received the Texas Funeral Directors Association Fifty Year Award in 2012. Cook-Walden Funeral Home in Austin handled his arrangements.



**Ray Spivey**, 77, of Nacogdoches, passed away June 22, 2014. He was drafted into military service having served two separate times from 1959 until 1965. After his time in the Army, he earned his mortuary license from Commonwealth Institute of Mortuary Services in Houston. He returned to East Texas and worked again for Skinny Garrison, eventually becoming the manager at the Oakley-Metcalf Funeral Home in Nacogdoches. When Oakley-Metcalf purchased Cason Monk Funeral Home in 1986 the funeral homes merged. Ray managed the merged Cason Monk-Metcalf Funeral Home for several years. He eventually retired from serving the families of Nacogdo-

(Continued on page 17)



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

*(Continued from page 15)*

ches and Garrison for almost 50 years. Funeral arrangements were under the direction of Cason Monk-Metcalf Funeral Directors in Nacogdoches.

**Charles R. Walden, Sr.**, 91, of Austin, died on July 18, 2014.



He decided at an early age he wanted to be a Funeral Director and after graduating from Business School continued his education at Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science to accomplish that goal. After working for R. L. Mullins Funeral Home in Wolfe City, he and Milly moved to Austin in 1942. He received his Funeral Director license in October of that year. Charles Walden is a name respected in the funeral and cemetery industry. In 1970 he entered a partnership to purchase the Cook Funeral Home, thus the oldest funeral establishment in Austin became Cook-Walden. During subsequent years the stately old building located prestigiously between the Governor's Mansion and the Capitol took its place in Austin history and Cook-Walden emerged as a cluster of 5 funeral homes and 3 cemeteries from Oak Hill to Georgetown. His arrangements were directed by Cook-Walden Funeral Home.



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## DALLAS INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE ANNOUNCES COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES



The Dallas Institute of Funeral Service announces the commencement of the Spring 2013-2014 CHI DELTA class. Those commencing with an Associate Degree of Applied Science in Funeral Service include: Patrick James Bartle of Wichita Falls, TX; Brenda Marie Batman-Daley of Dallas, TX; Julie Dawn Brister of Lafayette, Salutatorian of the class; Taylor Morgan Calloway of Edgewood, TX; Aaron J. Cossey of Clayton, OK; Stephen Clayton Dean of New York, NY; Hali La'Joyce Edwards of Gloster,

LA; John Allen Gamble II of Dallas, TX; Aaron Gonzalez of San Elizario, TX; Jason Ryan Haacke of Farmington, UT; Ayana Tamu Herrera of New Orleans, LA; Ken G. Hodgkins of Fort Worth, TX; Courtney Brianna Jackson of Greenville, TX; Tyler Craig Johnson of Wichita Falls, TX; Shane M. Joshua of Mesquite, TX; Chris B. Lopez of Abilene, TX; Naomie Denise Lopez of Crowley, TX; Gary L. Mills of Arlington, TX recipient of the "Bill Pierce" award; Doyce DeWayne Moore II of Longview, TX; Jon Richard Parton of Waco, TX; Domanik Raquel Phillips of Galveston, TX; Cynthia Ramirez of Dallas, TX; Hakeem Patterson Rashad of St. Louis, MO; Amara G. Saucedo of Great Bend, KS; James Edward Smith, Jr. of San Diego, CA; Hunter Nicole Sparks of Rockwall, TX; Sarah Allison Vasquez of Arlington, TX; Kaitlyn Flynn Voss of Centertown, MO received the Valedictorian Award; Jermichael Jose' Williams of Dallas, TX; Amber Nicole Wright of Wichita, KS; and Bethany Serene Wright of Palmer, TX.

Those graduating with a diploma in the funeral directors program were: Craig David Burcham of Irving, TX; Brandy Cox of Watauga, TX ; Elizabeth Gomez of Grand Prairie, TX; Joseph B. Henry Sr. of Dallas, TX; Wendell Leon Jackson of Daytona Beach, FL; Jill M. Johansen of Kaufman, TX; Ruthann Stuart Kusch of Bedford, TX ;Amy Nicole Lee of Sulphur Springs, TX; Shawn David Parker of Kaufman, TX; Yvonda Denise Spears of Dallas, TX; and Jennifer Lee Walls of The Colony, TX.

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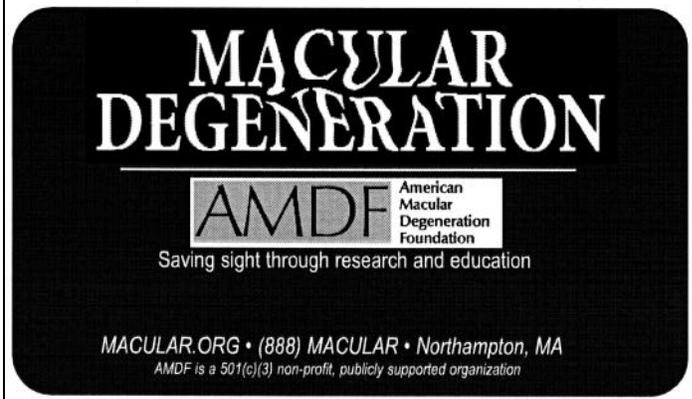


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- ◆ Don't let your worries get the best of you. Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.
- ◆ Some people are kind, polite and sweet –spirited until you try to sit in their pews.
- ◆ Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers.
- ◆ It is easier to preach ten sermons that it is to live one.
- ◆ The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.
- ◆ When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.
- ◆ People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.
- ◆ Opportunity may knock only once, but temptation bangs on the front door forever.
- ◆ Quit griping about your church; if it was perfect, you couldn't belong.
- ◆ If a church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has.
- ◆ We're called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges.
- ◆ God Himself doesn't propose to judge a man until he is dead, so why should you?
- ◆ Some minds are like concrete: thoroughly mixed up and permanently set.
- ◆ Peace starts with a smile.
- ◆ I don't know why some people change churches. What difference does it make which one you stay home from?
- ◆ Be ye fishers of men. You catch 'em –He'll clean 'em.
- ◆ Stop, Drop and Roll won't work in Hell.
- ◆ Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.
- ◆ Don't put a question mark where God put a period.
- ◆ Don't wait for six strong men to take you to church.
- ◆ Forbidden fruits create many jams.
- ◆ God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called.
- ◆ God grades on the cross, not the curve.
- ◆ God loves everyone, but probably prefers 'fruit of the spirit' over 'religious nuts!'
- ◆ God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
- ◆ He who angers you, controls you!
- ◆ If God is your copilot, swap seats!
- ◆ Prayer: Don't give God instructions; just report for duty!
- ◆ The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.
- ◆ The will of God never takes you to where the grace of God will not protect you.
- ◆ We don't change the message; the message changes us.
- ◆ You can tell how big a person is by what it takes to discourage him/her.
- ◆ The best mathematical equation I have ever seen: 1 cross+3 nails = 4 given.



## Respect

Here are some things to consider in reference to Local EMS workers, firefighters, & law enforcement officers in your area. One day they'll probably be saving your property or your own life. When you see them coming with lights flashing, move out of the way quickly...then pray for them!

I wish you could comprehend a wife's horror at 3 in the morning as I check her husband of 40 years for a pulse and find none. I start CPR anyway, hoping to bring him back, knowing intuitively it is too late. But wanting his wife and family to know everything possible was done to save his life.

I wish you could read my mind as I response to an EMS call, "What is wrong with the patient? Is it minor or life-threatening? Is the caller really in distress or is he waiting for us with a 2 x 4 or a gun?"

I wish you could be in the emergency room as a doctor pronounces dead the beautiful five-year-old girl that I have been trying to save during the past 25 minutes. Who will never go on her first date or say the words, "I love you Mommy" again.

I wish you could know the frustration I feel in the cab of the engine, squad, or my personal vehicle, the driver with his foot pressing down hard on the pedal, my arm tugging again and

*(Continued on page 24)*

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# FindTheBest Addstributes.com Tributes.com Obituary Data to its Genealogy Records

BOSTON Innovation District, MA -- July 21, 2014 – Tributes.com, the online source for local and national obituary news, announced today that they have partnered with research engine FindTheBest to enrich its database of genealogy records. Tributes.com documented between 70-80% of the deaths in the country in 2013 and possesses the largest, free consumer-facing databases of online obituaries and death notices within the United States – 97 million records and growing. Aggregating obituary information directly from funeral homes and families across the country, Tributes establishes permanent online memorials which preserve the stories of loved ones lost for generations to come.

“Our goal is to take the anxiety out of research by providing users with all the information on thousands of topics,” said Robert Goldman, Director of Product Management at FindTheBest. “Partnering with Tributes.com to add obituary information has brought us a step closer to delivering the world’s most detailed genealogy research engine.”

“FindTheBest has a unique approach, aggregating many sources of content within a topic to help users get the most comprehensive understanding of their research needs,” said Elaine Haney, CEO and President of Tributes, Inc. “FindTheBest’s selection of Tributes.com as a content partner validates the importance of our developing data set within the online obituary space.”



### About Tributes.com®

Tributes.com is driven by the belief that *Every Life has a Story* which deserves to be told and preserved.

Tributes.com is the online source for current local and national obituary news and a supportive community where friends and family can come together during times of loss and grieving to honor the memories of their loved ones with lasting personal tributes. Through one centralized national web destination, with 97 million and growing current and historical death records dating back to the 1930s, Tributes has made obituary and online memorial service information easily accessible. The site has experienced rapid growth since its launch in the fall of 2008, and is now relied on by thousands of funeral homes and 4-5M unique consumers each month to publish and locate obituary news. For more information about Tributes.com, please visit our website at [www.tributes.com](http://www.tributes.com) or contact us at [media@tributes.com](mailto:media@tributes.com).



### About FindTheBest

FindTheBest is a research engine focused on collecting, structuring, and connecting the world’s data — 59 billion facts to date — to give people all the information they need to research with confidence. The company’s desktop site, mobile site and embeddable widgets let people thoroughly research thousands of topics on one intuitive interface. Launched in late 2010, FindTheBest has quickly become a leading research engine with 25 million monthly visitors. FindTheBest is headquartered in Santa Barbara, California. For more information about FindTheBest, please visit [www.findthebest.com](http://www.findthebest.com) or contact [press@findthebest.com](mailto:press@findthebest.com).



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## Funeral Director Opens Business To Serve Other Directors



Mike Matos, an Arkansas licensed funeral director has founded his company to serve other funeral directors in a vital area of service.

Mike started in the funeral business at 19 years old selling prearrangements and became a licensed funeral director five years later. Mike realized there was a need for a removal service in Arkansas that specialized in one-on-one initial contact with families on behalf of the funeral homes they served.

While it is one thing to transport a body from a funeral home to another funeral home, or transport from a morgue to a local mortuary it is not the same when making a home



removal, or a removal where the family is present. Mike noticed that many funeral homes were not being adequately represented in this area of service. Therefore, he founded his company, Matos Mortuary Transport Service to specialize in removals and home calls where the family is present.

“Many times that initial call when the family is present, is the family’s very first image of your local funeral home. And proper representation is a must.” Mike said.

Mike also said, “Before you have a chance to do the best embalming job, your family has already received a positive or negative notion about your company based on how good or bad you did during the removal process.”

Mike wishes to represent funeral homes on that first initial call where the family is present. When his services are



called upon by local funeral homes, a licensed funeral director is dispatched to carry out those delicate services.

For some clients, he also gets permission to embalm from the family and sets up a time for the family to come into the funeral home and finalize arrangements.

“We want to be an extension of your staff. If you need help around the mortuary answering phones, running a flower van, or dressing bodies our services are available. Removals are made in dress slacks, dress shoes, and a button-down long sleeve dress shirt for men, or blouse for ladies. A suit coat and neck tie is in the van for our customers that require them to be worn,” Mike commented.

Cots are clean with sheets, and pillows with pillow cases are used. In addition, Mike and his staff will make the bed of the deceased and leave a card or rose if the funeral home wishes for them to do so.

Mike stated, that his desire is for the family to arrive at the arrangement conference and thank the funeral director for how they handled things during the removal process. You can find out more about Mike and his company by visiting his website at Matos Mortuary Transport |Austin, Arkansas 72007

Matos Mortuary Transport Service located in Austin, Arkansas provides mortuary transport and removal services to funeral homes and mortuary services ... View on: [www.matosmortuarytransport...](http://www.matosmortuarytransport...)

Matos Mortuary Transport Service, Inc.  
P.O. Box 31  
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(501) 606-0121



Mike and Faith Matos

## Homegrown Logos Are A Crummy Idea. By Joe Wiegel

That clip art of a pyramid you pulled out of Microsoft Office and put over your funeral home's name? That's not a logo. That wavy line you "borrowed" from an ad you saw in a trade magazine? That's not a logo. That stylized capital-version of the first letter of your company's name? That's not a logo. Printing your company's name in a particular color? That's not a logo.

What were once called logotypes and are now better known as logos are graphic symbols that are intended to symbolize a company. So many are iconic — from Target's red bull's-eye to Starbucks's green mermaid to the Batesville Casket tree. No wonder so many companies believe a logo of their own will create the same kind of cachet. Of course, it won't. Part of the reason we all can envision the three I mentioned is that there has been a gazillion dollars of promotional efforts behind them — but that's another story.

A logo can indeed be a powerful symbol for your company, but if you approach it as a do-it-yourself project, it won't be. Period. Especially if you try to pass off some kind of tired clip art like the aforementioned pyramid. Instead of looking like a professional funeral home, you're going to look amateurish, especially in front of your families who know better.

If you want to have a logo that will truly represent your business, you need to hire a professional graphic designer. Again, I said professional — your niece who has a copy of some Adobe software doesn't count. The designer will ask about your vision for the company and about your tastes, and then come back to you with amazing representations. In my experience, most designers bring back so many good options that clients struggle to narrow it down to just one.

A professional designer can also prevent problems with your logo. He or she will know that the logo has to work on everything from church bulletins to signage, from business cards to web graphics, and will consider all of those things when creating yours. That nice intern who dabbles in art? She doesn't know that the pretty design she came up with for your logo will never be readable if it's rendered smaller than two inches square.

You're talking about something that will represent your business in the marketplace for many years, so don't cut corners here. Hire a professional — it's well worth the investment.



*Joe Weigel 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.weigel@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.weigel@gmail.com).*

## Respect (Cont.)

*(Continued from page 21)*

again at the air horn chain, as you fail to yield the right-of-way at an intersection or in traffic. When you need us however, your first comment upon our arrival will be, "It took you forever to get here!"

I wish you could know my thoughts as I help extricate a girl of teenage years from the remains of her automobile. "What if this was my sister, my girlfriend or a friend? What was her parents' reaction going to be when they opened the door to find a police officer with hat in hand?"

I wish you could know how it feels to walk in the back door and greet my parents and family, not having the heart to tell them that I nearly did not come back from the last call.

I wish you could know how it feels dispatching an officer, fireman or EMT out and when we call for them and our heart drops because no one answers back or to hear a bone chilling 911 call of a child or wife needing assistance.

I wish you could feel the hurt as people verbally, and sometimes physically, abuse us or belittle what we do, or as they express their attitudes of "It will never happen to me."

I wish you could realize the physical, emotional and mental drain or missed meals, lost sleep and forgone social activities, in addition to all the tragedy my eyes have seen.

I wish you could know the brotherhood and self-satisfaction of helping save a life, or being able to be there in times of crisis, or creating order from total chaos.

I wish you could understand what it feels like to have a little boy tugging at your arm and asking, "Is Mommy okay?" Not even being able to look in his eyes without tears from your own and not knowing what to say.

Or to have to hold back a long time friend who watches his buddy having rescue breathing done on him as they take him away in the ambulance. You know all along he did not have his seat belt on. A sensation I have become too familiar with.

Unless you have lived with this kind of life, you will never truly understand or appreciate who I am, we are, or what our job really means to us...I wish you could though.

Appreciate and support your Local EMS workers, fire-fighters, & law enforcement officers in your area. One day they'll probably be saving your property or your own life. When you see them coming with lights flashing, move out of the way quickly...then pray for them!



## Scooter Died (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

put him to sleep so he wouldn't hurt anymore.

The 20-minute car ride home was quiet, Hayden didn't say anything until we pulled into the driveway. He noticed that only Vader and Lucy ran to the fence. He then asked me if Scooter was really dead or if I was joking with him. I explained that I would never joke about something like that and that, yes, he really was dead. He asked me if he could see Scooter.

When we went inside the house I showed him where I put Scooter. I opened the back patio door again allowing Lucy, Vader and Hayden time to understand what happened. Unfortunately Lucy started pawing and biting at Scooter again. She then picked Scooter up and started shaking him. After I got her to stop she started pacing back and forth and panting heavily I moved Scooter into a separate room. Hayden asked me why Lucy did that. I explained that she was just trying to wake him up.

When Sean came home from work Hayden picked out a spot in the backyard for Scooter to be buried. All three of us started digging with the somewhat help of Lucy. Hayden thought it was cool that Lucy was trying to help us dig. After the hole was dug Sean carried Scooter and placed him down in the hole. I handed Hayden Scooter's collar which he put on top of him. I in turn placed Scooter's leash and choke chain in the hole. As soon as they were placed in it Hayden exclaimed that now Scooter had everything he needed to go to Heaven with.

The grave was filled back up then Hayden stated that we have to get a headstone to mark Scooter's grave. As a six-year-old Hayden seemed to take Scooter's death better than Sean or I.

This is not the first animal that he has known that has died. The others were old or sick and lived with the grandparents. We did have an older cat named Oprah that disappeared which means we can only speculate what happened. He still mentions that he misses her, but only occasionally does he say he misses Scooter.

I feel it is very important for a child to believe that there is somewhere better a person or animal goes once they leave this earth. Hayden was able to move on without much trouble because he knows that Scooter will be up in Heaven playing with the other dogs and cats and going on walks.

Samantha Spears, 2014

### Grandma's Version

My daughter Samantha texted me that Scooter, their beagle, had gotten hit by a car and had to be euthanized. He and Vader, their Boston terrier puppy, had gotten out while she and her husband Sean were at work. Someone saw it happen, called the number on the tag and Sean came to take Scooter to the vet. But his injuries were too severe.

Samantha, who works for Animal Welfare in the City, made it just in time to say good-bye. She then had to pick up her six-year-old son Hayden from school and try to tell him the news

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when she couldn't stop crying. Hayden knew of a couple other pet deaths, our cat Paws died from old age. Another cat of his ran away and they figured she too had died. But Scooter was not old or sick and Samantha was not sure how Hayden would take it.

They brought Scooter home to bury. Lucy, their black lab and Scooter's best pal was distraught, not understanding Scooter was gone. Hayden picked out the spot for Scooter's grave, watched as he was placed inside and dropped in his collar. When Samantha put the leash in, Hayden said that now he had everything he needed so Jesus could take him for a walk. He insisted that they needed to make a headstone.

Later that evening I called Sam to see how Hayden was doing. She thought he was a little agitated over some simple things but she wasn't sure if that was because of Scooter. I wrote him a letter telling him how sorry I was that Scooter was gone and how much he would be missed.

Hayden called me when he got the letter and when we were talking asked me if I was sad. I said that I was and he told me that it was okay to be sad. He seemed to have taken everything in stride as children often do. Hayden is a bright kid, a thinker and when he visited a few days later said a few things that indicated that Scooter's death had an impact.

When talking about his baby brother's upcoming birth, I told him he might be born the same day as his Great-Grandpa Johnny. He then asked if he was alive. I said "No, he died in 1996". When I told him that his own birthday was the same as his Papa Marshall's brother Tom and I showed him a picture, Hayden then asked if Tom was dead. I said "No" and he went on talking of other things.

Video games, TV shows and movies all depict death in various forms so most kids are familiar with it to some degree. But when a best friend like a pet dies, it becomes real. I thought my kids did a good job letting Hayden see that reality, letting him be a part of the process and helping him to deal with their loss.

Ivy Douglas, 2014

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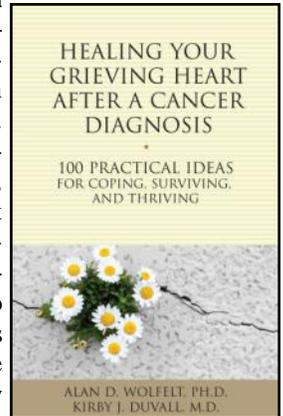
Fort Collins, CO...Companion Press announces the publication of two new books for people diagnosed with cancer and those who want to support them. Entitled **Healing Your Grieving Heart After a Cancer Diagnosis** and **Healing a Friend or Loved One's Grieving Heart After a Cancer Diagnosis**, these books are authored by renowned grief educator Dr. Alan Wolfelt and physician Dr. Kirby Duvall.

**Healing Your Grieving Heart After a Cancer Diagnosis: 100 Practical Ideas for Coping, Surviving and Thriving** helps people who have been diagnosed with cancer understand their many difficult feelings, before, during, and after treatment. This book guides the reader to find ways to understand and express their grief, experience peace and joy throughout the journey, and live with meaning in each moment.

**Healing a Friend or Loved One's Grieving Heart After a Cancer Diagnosis: 100 Practical Ideas for Providing Compassion, Comfort and Care** helps those who love someone who has been diagnosed with cancer understand how best to companion their friend or family member during this life-changing journey. This book affirms the needs of the companion and suggest ways to help make the cancer patient's journey easier and brighter.

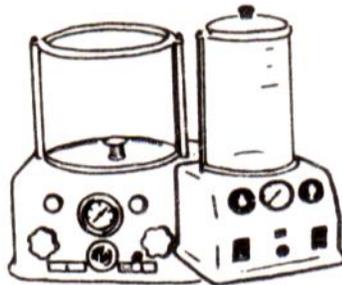
Author, educator, and grief counselor Dr. Alan Wolfelt is a prostate cancer survivor. He serves as Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. Perhaps best known for his model of "companioning" versus "treating" mourners, Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well as they can live well and love well. He is also a respected consultant to hospices and funeral service. Dr. Kirby Duvall is a family practice and occupational medicine physician.

**Healing Your Grieving Heart After a Cancer Diagnosis** (ISBN 978-1-61722-200-9) and **Healing a Friend or Love One's Grieving Heart after a Cancer Diagnosis** (ISBN 978-1-61722-203-0) are published in soft-cover. They are each 128 pages in length and priced at \$11.95 U.S. To request review copies or schedule an interview with Dr. Wolfelt, please call the Center for Loss at (970)226-6050 or email DrWolfelt@centerforloss.com. All Companion Press titles are distributed to the trade by Independent Publishers Group (IPG) and are available through local bookstores or directly from the publisher at (970)-226-6050 or [www.centerforloss.com](http://www.centerforloss.com)



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## Life Celebration, Inc. Completes Website Update

### *Renovated Site Provides Visitors with an Improved Overall Experience*

**NORTH WALES, PA** – Life Celebration, Inc., a growing community of funeral homes that embraces a systematic approach to creating memorable and meaningful funeral experiences for families, recently redesigned the company’s website. The newly reorganized and revamped site now provides a more dynamic look and feel to visitors.

Highlights of the site upgrade are:

- ◆ An image-centric site structure that allows the visuals to tell the Life Celebration story.
- ◆ Condensed copy reworked to better fit the new theme and style of the site
- ◆ Relevant technological features such as a Google Virtual Tour and a new YouTube channel
- ◆ A section which showcases the components of the Life Celebration Memories Collection
- ◆ A location map of listing community member firms that also identifies available markets around the country which offer exclusivity for prospective firms.

“Our goal in designing the new website was to provide end users with a virtual glimpse of a Life Celebration experience right at their fingertips,” said Shannon Cummings-Plotkin, design and marketing manager for Life Celebration. “The immersive user experience will give funeral professionals who visit the site a taste of what’s in store at every Life Celebration community home location and provide prospective Life Celebration community members a glimpse of how the Life Celebration brand boldly differentiates them in their market.”

The project began as a basic facelift of the existing site, but the design team soon realized a complete overhaul was in order. The site’s design and construction is a bit unconventional compared to other sites in funeral service, but that was the project’s overall intent.

“We’re relentlessly passionate about the experiences we create; whether it’s the consulting service we provide, the products we create or the websites we design. Throughout the process, we took a page from Google’s innovative strategy page of always creating a fresh customer experience,” said Gerry Givnish, President of Life Celebration. “We believe that this new site provides a portal for every visitor to have a very memorable experience, not just obtain information.”

The new website provides social media integration and direct links to Life Celebration’s Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages, where company updates



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will appear on a regular basis. Additionally, the site was designed for a wide range of browsers and has been optimized for viewing on mobile devices such as smartphones and digital tablets. Over the coming months, new content will continue to roll out on the site as more features are added to increase functionality.

“Our website has always been an important way for us to share information about the resources inherent as a Life Celebration community member,” said Jim Cummings, Vice President and Chief Experience Officer at Life Celebration. “The redesigned website has a new look and improved functionality to ensure an easier and more engaging experience and communicates to prospective firms the value of the Life Celebration concept as a competitive tool. It serves as a compilation that reflects the ongoing creative work of the entire Life Celebration community.”

To schedule a visit to the Life Celebration facility or get more information about becoming an exclusive Life Celebration provider, send an email to [jcummings@lifecelebration.com](mailto:jcummings@lifecelebration.com) or call 888-887-3782. You can also visit [www.lifecelebrationinc.com](http://www.lifecelebrationinc.com).

**About Life Celebration Inc.:** Founded by funeral directors Gerry Givnish and Jim Cummings, Life Celebration is a comprehensive system solution that provides funeral professionals with the capability and processes to stage meaningful funeral experiences for families while creating new revenue streams and growth opportunities for the funeral home. For more information, call 888.887.3782 or visit [www.lifecelebrationinc.com](http://www.lifecelebrationinc.com).







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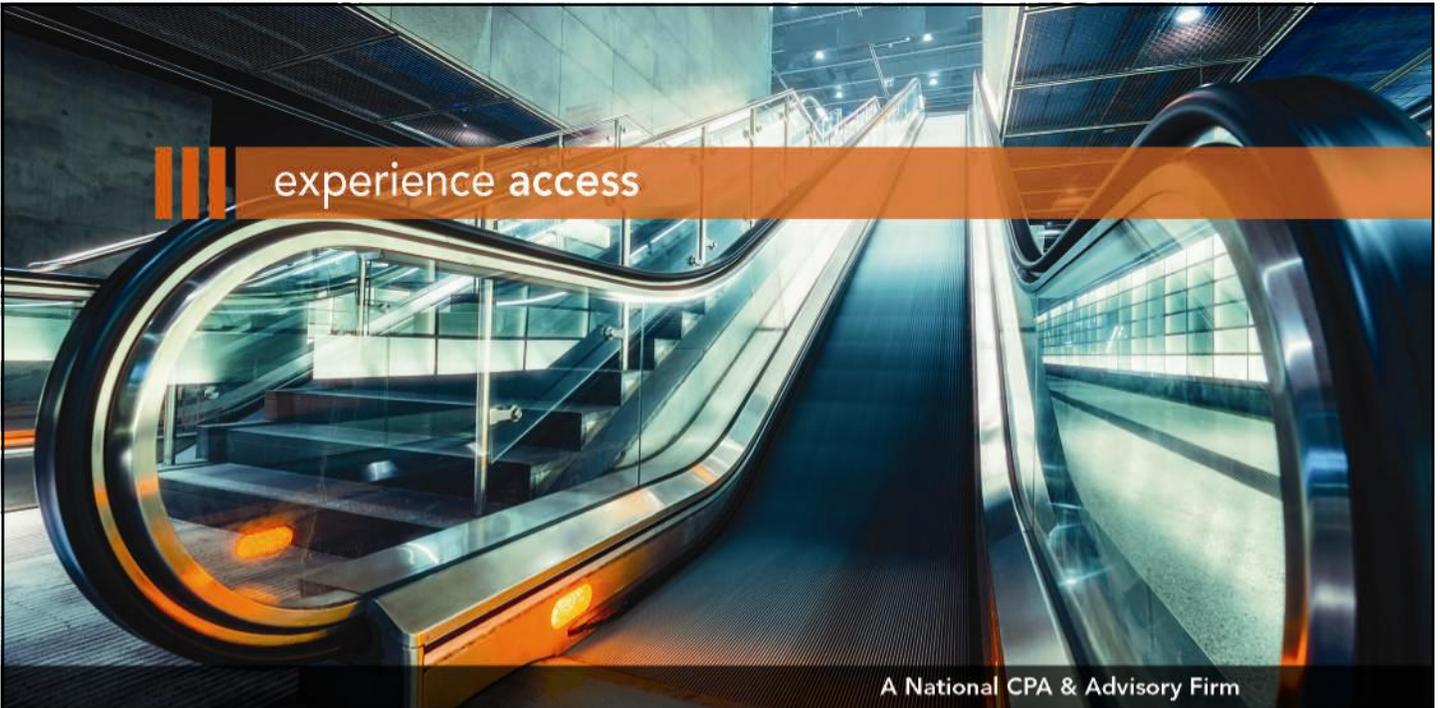
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