

The Dead Beat



The Caregiver's Soapbox

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



Late Fall, 2009

www.thedead-beat.com

Volume 10 Issue 4

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

By Joanne Howard

As a review of what has been happening and what might happen in the funeral profession, I reviewed several professional trade magazines from the last year. Looking at national magazines and some association publications gave an interesting collection of thoughts and trends.



Many of the magazines regularly look at the standard issues of financial advice, recommendations of companies or services to use and some interesting happenings of the past or present.

But what were the topics that showed up in the majority of the magazines? Are these the issues that funeral directors and embalmers are really concerned about?

One topic that surfaced several times was the **obesity** issue. Are we prepared to deal with the many facets of dealing with the obese client? We not only need to consider all the funeral equipment that might not be large enough, we also have to be concerned about our personnel having to handle a larger than normal person. Will our regular equipment or facility be able to accommodate the size, weight or other factors? Personally, our older facility has had difficulty with doors to allow the larger caskets to be brought into our funeral home without taking off the door frame. Based on the statistics that are given daily, this is something we are dealing with now and will be handling in the future.



Another matter that has become hot is the whole **"green burial."** There are the people that are becoming more environmentally concerned and therefore they request going "green" in all that they do. The considerations with this type of service range from embalming or not, type of burial container if any, where you would be allowed to bury in this manner, and many other factors related to this environmentally-friendly burial. Even though the people may consider this a more "economically-friendly" situation, that may not really end up being the case until it becomes more common.



The hot topic of **preneed** still presents itself on a daily basis. Depending on what company has taken advantage of consumers and the funeral homes more legislative issues have resulted in some states. The funeral homes are favorable about keeping the preneed companies from absconding their funds, but the resultant regulations are quite challenging to adapt to. Hopefully the solutions will work to everyone's advantage.



Cremation is another factor that is continually discussed. The profitability to the funeral homes has been impacted by the past decisions on what the funeral home was charging when it happened infrequently. Now that it is a large factor to deal with and funeral homes need to ad-



(Continued on page 18)

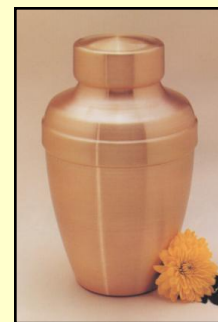
Other Articles in this Issue



Robert Curtis, Kristen Langkopf,
Melissa Speight, Emily Roesslein
Pg. 4



Bates Family Funeral Home
DeKalb, TX
Pg. 17



Seen this Urn????
Pg. 21

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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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Mortuary Muse*

*to think or consider deeply; meditate
By Lowell

Mortuary school curriculums, obituary headaches and online discounters selling caskets have taken up a lot of space in the industry publications and online comments lately. Change, lack of change and/or fear of change in the preceding categories furnishes lots of fodder for the experts, pundits and benchwarmers to feed on —self included.

It seemed to me that a consensus of colleagues writing to one journal were of the opinion that mortuary schools were doing a good job of preparing students to pass licensing exams. They just aren't preparing them very well for the real world of funeral service. Students should also have learned a little more about funeral service before they spent time and money on funeral service education.

In previous issues we expressed con-

cern that poor body presentation may contribute to the rising cremation and no services trend. We also questioned the reasons behind a perceived increase in poor body presentation. Melissa Johnson Williams, CFSP, Executive Director of the American Society of Embalmers and Steve Palmer, Westcott Funeral Home, Cottonwood, Arizona both responded with thoughtful commentary (see **The Dead Beat**, Vol. 10, Issue 1, Late Spring '09). Articles by these two professionals have appeared many times in funeral service publications.

The same questions about poor body presentation were also presented to the department heads of more than a dozen mortuary schools and college programs. None replied. I guess they feel body presentation is a moot point—or that I am.

Several letters and columns circulated have discussed the pitfalls of obituary writing. There has been criticism of Legacy.com for making money off of funeral home's labors and information gathering. A retired director in Florida thought obituaries would be better handled by the families with the funeral directors providing the newspaper contact information without having to hassle deadline and editing along with the possibility of missing survivors. Others have complained about lengthy obits becoming the actual funeral service with the funeral home handling minimal services. Another industry writer complained on his blog about a journal refusing to print his piece about the need for large life history obituaries resulting in additional comments in the journal's letters section and remarks from the publisher. Most funeral directors we have spoken to plan to continue to assist families with obituary writing and placement. A good idea since online discount casket sellers have not yet put in an obituary department.

(Continued on page 8)

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At Season's End Mortuary Apache Junction, Arizona Opened on June 1, 2009

Apache Junction Mortuary in Apache Junction, Arizona has closed as of May 31, 2009. At Season's End Mortuary proudly announces it's opening as of June 1st. Christina Duwel, who was the funeral director at Apache Junction Mortuary for eight years and Jim Taft who was the cremationist and funeral counselor for one and a half years, opened At Season's End at 105 S. Delaware Drive, Suite 4, Apache Junction, Arizona 85120.

St. Louis Community College Mortuary Science President's Letter



Hello All,

It was brought to my attention at a recent MFDEA meeting that the St. Louis Community College's Mortuary Science class does not have a voice in any of the local funeral newsletters. So I am taking this opportunity to introduce the Mortuary department and to get more funeral personnel involved in the many activities that are happening this year with the students at the school.

We are off to a great start this semester.

First, I would like to congratulate the students that won scholarships for the 2009-2010 school year. What a great opportunity for the students to get some help with tuition. A big thank you goes to the contributors of the MFDEA Education Fund for awarding \$300 to the students listed above, and



Kyle Clay, Jim Gramlich, Kristen Langkopf,
LaRonda Willis, Ramona Revels



Chandra Zeisset

to the NFDA for awarding Chandra Zeisset a scholarship amounting to \$1000. It was greatly appreciated.

Second, I would like to introduce the class officers that are working hard to make this a productive year (see picture below). We are planning many fundraisers as well as community service activities. One of the fundraisers we recently concluded is the always popular t-shirts sales and this year we added polo-style shirts to the selection. All proceeds from the fundraisers including the shirt sales are going to our class graduation dinner. This is so we can bring ourselves and a guest to the dinner.

If you are interested in supporting your local school you can contact me through our class blog at <http://stlfuneral.wordpress.com>. Please stay tuned to future updates for more activities that help us support our goal.

For our community service project, we held a canned food drive, collecting 200 pounds of food and fed 172. Overall we had a good turnout for a great cause.

In closing I would like to quickly mention that several students are looking for practicum sites and/or apprenticeship opportunities following the passing of our boards in May. If any funeral home in Missouri or Illinois would like to help please notify Steve Koosman at St. Louis Community College or you can post any opportunities at the above mentioned blog.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Melissa Speight
Class President 2010



Robert Curtis, Kristen Langkopf,
Melissa Speight, Emily Roesslein

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(If you would like to find someone in the funeral industry, let us know-
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Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell

Certified In All Things Green.....

Bananas, beans, burials — and GREENBACKS.



Green burials and shades of green, are probably the oldest form of burial in North America. Any funeral service person who has been around for awhile, especially in rural areas, has likely experienced some green variation. So why the relatively recent interest in Green Burial? I suppose much

of the interest is generated by the green hype as more people take climate change seriously.

In true entrepreneurial spirit more and more businesses have figured out there are green dollars to be made by selling green products to customers. It may not matter whether or not the company really has the environment at heart. Hey, why knock a good business stimulator. I notice a lot of politicians seem to change with the wind too.

Now enter the Green Burial Council. This group of entrepreneurs comes from a mixed background of folks, INCLUDING CEMETERY MANAGEMENT. They apparently decided that green burial, for various reasons, would be a good vehicle to preserve land, promote environmental awareness or perhaps a way to make money.

Consequently a number of funeral industry manufac-

turers, practitioners and some of the general public seem content to accept the Green Burial Council as the ultimate authority for “green” burials.

What is next—Green Burial Certification by a licensing or association authority? I hope that is not the case. Medical doctors have their specialty categories and funeral directors have their voluntary CFSP programs. There is nothing wrong with promoting green burials as a marketing too. However, legitimizing green burial by a certification process diminishes the value of the funeral director’s license. A valid funeral director’s license should make the licensee qualified in all aspects of funeral service. And who needs another licensing/certification process? Contrary opinions are invited.

In the last issue I made a rather skeptical comment about problems that may arise as we try to switch to the online death certificate. A colleague from another state that is already doing online certificates says it is great. Saves them a lot of time and mileage. He did mention that some doctors are still dragging their feet.

Death Certificate

If Fed-Ex is going to deliver caskets purchased online, associations should encourage them to handle body transport.??????????????



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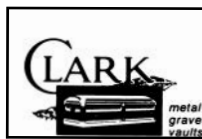
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About the Author: Lowell Pugh has funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the 105-year-old family funeral home. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.



After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*



Now every year I have tried to come up with some relevant thoughts for you to take with you and hopefully be a comfort. My life has been so hectic I have been struggling to arrive at the appropriate thoughts to share. I try very hard to let God guide me to what would be most comforting and helpful. So I have come up with three different sources of information for us to contemplate.

A book **"Everyday Angels- Simple Ways to Be an Angel for Others Every day,"** by Karon Phillips Goodman, is my first source of inspiration. The introduction of this small book talked about those "everyday angels" that are the ones that "entered your life at good times and bad, who have been just the godsend that you needed right when you needed it." It also mentions, "You've been someone's angel too, when you shared and helped and guided and loved, or maybe just listened."

The definition that is sometimes given for an angel is "an attendant spirit." These attendant spirits share their peace and joy and serenity, reach out to others without judgment, look forward and not back and finally see the best, take it and leave the rest behind. Seizing the opportunity that God gives us to reach out and be an angel is not hard, but it's a matter of "giving what you have and listening with your heart," as the tiny book describes.

Our everyday angels or attendant spirits were very present when we lost our loved ones. They were the people that guided us when we couldn't think, provided the shoulders to cry on and the ears to listen to us over and over again. They expected nothing from us, but were willing to do anything we needed. You all remember and are very thankful for these individu-

als. And as we are thankful for our loved ones and all of our memories, we are also thankful for our everyday angels. We probably couldn't have made it through without them.

As important as our everyday angels continue to be in our journey of recovery and adjustment to the loss of our loved ones, another concept that I found comforting were ornaments called **"Blessing Boxes."**

They had different keepsake stones on the boxes and messages attached. Some of the boxes were Faith, Angel, Love, and Prayer. But the one that caught my attention was the one called "Memories." Its message is one to remember and we created some ornaments. The message said, "This gift represents memories, to be cherished every year; A symbol of our loved ones, who no longer can be here; Hang it on the tree, so all the world can see, that though we may be far apart, the memories will live forever in our heart."

We will never forget our loved one and they will always be in our heart, but doesn't it feel great to have something that shows the world a way that we are remembering. I realize that not everyone will see your box on the tree or somewhere in your house, but those that do visit and see it may be touched by its message and even remember their own loved ones. Is this not why there are so many memorials in the world??? I even have my memorial corner at the funeral home in memory of my girls, people look at it and remember them.

So in addition to everyday angels comforting us, our blessing boxes with memories of our loved one will comfort

us and maybe allow us to be an everyday angel to someone else.

Finally a devotional in **Guideposts** by Scott Walker got my attention of how we should approach life. His message was about St. Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897). She was a young Carmelite nun. Due to her tuberculosis she never left the convent after age 16 and she died at 24. But she was considered a saint.

Though her life was confined she developed a rule for living called "the little way." Simply put, "you cannot always choose your circumstances or the company that surrounds you. But you can choose to love each person with whom you come into contact each day." Michael Novak explained, "Therese believed no matter what spiritual darkness you find yourself in, choose as your North Star a tender love for the persons that life's contingencies have put next to you." So the conclusion to all our challenges in life may be, "simply try to love the person closest to you." Let's turn our lives to the positive even in the worst times, with love for each other and let "this little way" guide us to better performance as everyday angels and leave many memories for our blessing boxes.

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



"The Broken Chain"

We little knew that morning that God was going to call your name.

In life we loved you dearly, in death we do the same

It broke our hearts to lose you, you did not go alone;

For part of us went with you, the day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide;

And though we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken, and nothing seems the same,

But as God calls us one by one, the chain will link again.

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Mortuary Muse (Cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

The big discount store's funeral merchandise website raises some interesting questions. Is their line of pretty much mainstream—18 gauge steel casket retail prices uncomfortably close to a lot of funeral home's wholesale costs??? Offering credit terms??? The discounter buys the caskets from Star Legacy Funeral Network. Rick Obadiah, CEO, insists the caskets are American-made, but would not disclose the manufacturer???? In an interview with **Funeral Monitor**, Obadiah said they would also welcome funeral home business. The caskets are delivered by Fed-Ex.

I wonder how a casket manufacturer's margin would be sufficient to allow a distribution system to operate at a profit for the amount that allows a discount retailer to sell at the price points they demand. Will the discounter ultimately set the manufacturer's price, or look overseas, as happened in the soft good market? Perhaps casket company margins have been greater than we thought?

At least when you shop prices online they can't throw you out of the store. Oh, by the way, have they made provisions for oversized caskets?

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Lowell Pugh has funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the 105-year-old family funeral home. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.

New Fourth Stroke Sign

You've heard about the signs to recognize a stroke "**S - T - R**"

1- S- Ask the individual to **SMILE**

2- T—Ask the person to **TALK** and **SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE** (coherently)

3- R—Ask him or her to **RAISE BOTH ARMS**
Add to the list

4-STICK OUT YOUR TONGUE

Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to "stick" out his tongue.. If it is '**crooked,**' or **goes to one side or the other,** this may be an indication.



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Three Neighbors Form Business After Leaving Funeral Home

Chesterfield Twp., MI- "Sending a gift to a funeral will never be the same," says CEO and Founder, Lorraine Sawicki who has teamed up with two neighbors to create "**Remember Me Stone Co.**" "**Remember Me Stones**" are the first of their kind where the message from the deceased becomes the gift and a keepsake that will remain long after the service is over.

"In lieu of flowers,"... Believe it or not, 74% of people do not comply with "in lieu of flowers," simply because they are directed by tradition or obligation. We tend to send flowers to a funeral no matter what the obituary reads. "It's time for change," says Andrea Hilgendorf, Director of Marketing and Founder, "Now you can send a meaningful gift not just for one, but one for everyone." While creating "**Remember Me Stones**," it was important for a gift to do three things: pay respect to the family, provide a keepsake for the survivors and pay tribute to the deceased.

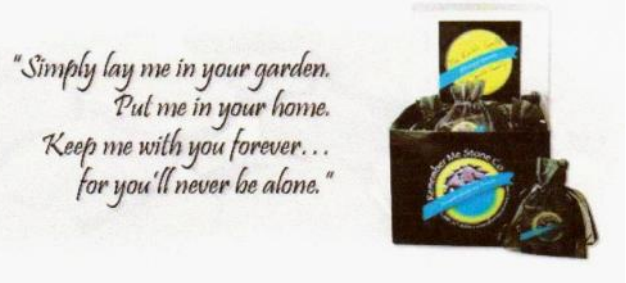
"**Remember Me Stone Co.**" offers handcrafted stones, varying from 2 to 3 inches. The name of the deceased is beautifully handwritten on each individual stone with a phrase that best portrays his/her love for family, friends, occupation, sports, hobbies, etc. "The best part about creating this type of company," says Angela Gearin, Executive Director of Operations and Founder, "was creating the over 150 phrases that can be applied to the stones."

The phrases are available for our customers to choose from categories such as patriotic, humorous, and inspirational or you can simply create your own phrase. One family ordered stones with "Please don't sell the Harley," and another family chose, "Save the earth, it's the only planet with beer." Badge numbers and military rankings are quite popular.

Not only are "**Remember Me Stones**" affordable, they are available in several languages and can be shipped immediately.

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For more information, visit www.remembermestones.com or call 1-888-767-8006.



It is My Grief

By Ken Doka

Years ago, counselors searched for some universal stages of grief. We now speak of individual pathways. Each of us experience loss in our own ways.

Rabbi Earl Grollman, a mentor and associate of **Journeys**, has commented that grief is as individual as fingerprints or snowflakes. Earl's wise point is a reminder that each of us takes our own path as we journey with grief. Some of us take loss in stride, we may have sadness, but we quickly rebound. Others may have more intense reactions. Still others of us may find it difficult even to function at work or at home.

Our very manifestations vary. For some, grief may be experienced as waves of feelings. We may struggle with our emotions—guilt, anger, sadness, relief, loneliness. We may cry, withdraw or even rage. For others of us, our feelings may be more muted. Grief may seem more cerebral. We may think of this person—at times wistfully, other times taking comfort from these warm memories. We might find solace in keeping busy at work or somehow memorializing the person who died.

There are many reasons why our reactions and responses to loss are so different. We are different. We have our own set of experiences, our own spiritual beliefs, psychological makeup, physical health, and sources of support that make every response to loss unique.

We have our own set of cultural identities framed by our ethnicity, race, religion, social class, and even gender. These cultural identities also frame our grief reactions.

Our losses, too, are distinct. Some may be sudden and unexpected—even violent. Others may follow long illnesses yet still surprise us with the timing of the death. Others may be anticipated, or even welcomed as a relief to long suffering. Some losses may come at a time when we can focus on our grief and take care of our needs. Others may come one after another or at times in our lives when other things may compound our grief.

Understanding this individuality of loss reminds us of three important lessons. First, we should not judge our reactions against others. Marge was like that. Her two sisters were so emotional when their mother died. Marge wondered about her own comparative lack of emotion. Was she just colder? No, the answer was simply that she was different. We need not torture ourselves with such questions. We can't always understand the forces that shape us and make us unique.

Second, we should not let others judge us. No one can tell us how we should be reacting or what we should be doing. Our grief is our own. We must own it—validating our own reactions for what they are. We should not

feel guilty that we are not as strong or emotional as someone else. We each experience grief in our own way. Often our past experiences can be a guide, reminding us that the ways we coped in the past will often be predictive of the ways we now respond.

Finally, we will each find different sources of solace and comfort. For some, it may be the everyday activity of life—the rhythms of family, friends and work. For others, it may be in the comfort of a support group or a counselor or confidant. Still others may find value in reading materials that address the path ahead. After all, if our grief is different, what helps us will be different as well.

This article was originally printed in *Journeys: A Newsletter to Help in Bereavement*, published by Hospice Foundation of America. More information about *Journeys* can be found at www.hospicefoundation.org or by calling 800-854-3402 and is published monthly by the Hospice Foundation of America, 1621 Connecticut Ave., NW, #300, Washington, DC 20009. Annual subscription-\$12.00.



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

Threatening Illness; Living with Grief: After Sudden Loss; Death and Spirituality; Living With Grief: When Illness is Prolonged; Living with Grief: Who We Are, How We Grieve; AIDS, Fear & Society; Aging and Developmental Disabilities; and Children Mourning, Mourning Children. In addition to these

books, he has published over 60 articles and chapters. Dr. Doka is the associate editor of the journal **Omega** and editor of *Journeys*, a newsletter of the bereaved. Dr. Doka has served as a consultant to medical, nursing, hospice organizations, as well as businesses, educational and social service agencies. As Senior Consultant to the Hospice Foundation of America, he assists in planning, and participates in their annual Teleconference. In 1998, the Association for Death Education and Counseling honored him by presenting him an Award for Outstanding Contributions to the field of death education. In March 1993, he was elected President of the Association for Death Education and Counseling. Dr. Doka was elected in 1995 to the Board of the International Work Group on Dying, Death and Bereavement and elected Chair in 1997. Dr. Doka is an ordained Lutheran Clergyman.

(And a heck of a nice guy— Editor & Publisher)



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Chuckles

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

CEO on a rampage

A large company, feeling it was time for a shakeup, hired a new CEO. This new boss was determined to rid the company of all slackers. On a tour of the facilities, the CEO noticed a guy leaning on a wall. The room was full of workers and he wanted to let them know that he meant business! The new CEO walked up to the guy leaning against the wall and asked, "How much do you make a week?" A little surprised, the young fellow looked at him and replied, "I make \$300.00 a week. Why?" The CEO then handed the guy \$1,200 in cash and screamed, "Here's four weeks' pay, now GET OUT and don't come back." Feeling pretty good about himself, the CEO looked around the room and asked, "Does anyone want to tell me what that goof-off did here?" From across the room came a voice, "Pizza delivery guy from Domino's."



Things You'll Never Hear in A Western Movie

- ♦ I reckon I'll have me a half-caf double latte with a twist. IN A DIRTY MUG!
- ♦ Gentlemen, rather than get caught up in a mindless reaction, let's draw upon our feminine selves for a more intuitive solution
- ♦ Can we postpone this duel till 12:05? I gotta use the little boys room.
- ♦ Let's see....hardtack and pemmican..that's three grams of fat, seven grams of protein and two starches.
- ♦ You 'n' Slim round up them strays, and I'll tell Cookie to get started on the gazpacho and the fondue.
- ♦ That's him! That's the yella-bellied varmit who shot my therapist!"
- ♦ He was a strong man, a good marshal and I reckon he had a keen eye for interior decoration.
- ♦ Hey, Buck, do these chaps make my butt look big?
- ♦ It's like I keep tellin' ya, Earl; men is from Tombstone, women is from Dodge.



Life's Plan

Two women met for the first time since graduating from high school. One asked the other, "You were always so organized in school. Did you manage to live a well-planned life?" "Yes," said her friend, "My first marriage was to a millionaire; my second marriage was to an actor; my third marriage was to a preacher; and now I'm married to an undertaker." Her friend asked, "What do those marriages have to do with a well-planned life?" "One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, and four to go!"

Fantasy Island-Retirement Vacation

A retired corporate executive, now a widower, decided to take a vacation. He booked himself on



Comments

"We really enjoy reading The Dead Beat....."

Jim Taft, At Season's End Mortuary, Apache Junction, AZ

"Really enjoy it."

Max Bowers, Bowers Funeral Home, Pocahontas, Iowa

"Love Your Site."

Richard Santore, pshomestudy.com

"Lowell and Joanne,

First of all, thanks for mentioning the concierge services. It's not that Baby boomers want to step away from tradition. They just want a service, memorial or celebration that can be remembered.

When Mack Brown took the helm of the University of Texas football program, he asked Longhorn fans to come early, wear orange, be loud and stay late. I think that pretty well describes Boomer expectations for their final ceremony...their final statement.

Boomers also want people who can come in and do the job for them. That's why I believe funeral homes offering concierge services will be a step ahead of the trend. If we have to travel to Fort Worth for Grandma's funeral, why not make it a family "thing" with massages the afternoon before for those who've come a long way, a family dinner before or after the visitation and a catered luncheon at the funeral home after the service. Somebody should be at Grandma's house during visitation and services the next day, so a house sitter is a necessity and who's taking care of Grandma's puppy during all the uproar?

I loved the jokes, especially about the two grandmas who had an unusual way of predicting someone's age.

Keep up the good work....and thanks for bringing a smile into my otherwise hectic day."

Alice Adams, **The Texas Director Magazine**

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"I just read the Dead Beat article on the Life of Riley radio program. I am 69 and remember Digby "Digger" O'Dell the friendly undertaker played by Willard Waterman."

Sincerely, John Herrmann, Herrmann Funeral Home, McCook, NE

a Caribbean cruise and proceeded to have the time of his life, that is, until the ship sank. He soon found himself on an island with no other people, no supplies, nothing, only bananas and coconuts. After about four months, he is lying on the beach one day when the most gorgeous woman he has ever seen rows up to the shore. In disbelief, he asks, "Where did you come from? How did you get here?" She replies, "I rowed over from the other side of the island where I had landed when my cruise ship sank." "Amazing," he notes. "You were really lucky to have a row boat wash up with you," "Oh, this thing?" explains the woman. "I made the boat out of some raw material I found on the island. The oars were whittled from gum tree branches. I wove the bottom from palm tree branches and the sides and stern came from an Eucalyptus tree." "But, where did you get the tools?" "Oh, that was no problem," replied the woman. "On the south side of the island, a very unusual stratum of alluvial rock is exposed. I found that if I fired it to a certain temperature in my kiln, it melted into ductile iron I used to make tools and used the tools to make the hardware." The guy is stunned.



(Continued on page 11)

Chuckles (Cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

"Let's row over to my place," she says. So, after a short time of rowing, she soon docks the boat at a small wharf. As the man looks to shore, he nearly falls off the boat. Before him is a long stone walk leading to an exquisite bungalow painted in blue and white. While the woman ties up the rowboat with an expertly woven hemp rope, the man can only stare ahead, dumb struck. As they walk into the house, she says casually, "It's not much but I call it home. Sit down, please. Would you like a drink?" "No! No thank you," the man blurts out, still dazed. "I can't take another drop of coconut juice." "It's not coconut juice," winks the woman. "I have a still. How would you like a Pina Colada?" Trying to hide his continued amazement, the man accepts, and they sit down on her couch to talk. After they exchange their individual stories, the woman announces, "I'm going to slip into something more comfortable. Would you like to take a shower and shave? There's a razor in the bathroom cabinet upstairs." No longer questioning anything, the man goes upstairs into the bathroom. There, in the cabinet is a razor made from a piece of tortoise bone. Two shells honed to a hollow ground edge are fastened on to its end inside a swivel mechanism. "This woman is amazing," he muses. "What's next?" When he returns, she greets him wearing nothing but some small flowers on tiny vines, each strategically positioned, she smelled faintly of gardenias. She then beckons for him to sit down next to her. "Tell me," she begins suggestively, slithering closer to him, "We've both been out here for many months. You must have been lonely. There's something, I'm certain you feel like doing right now, something you've been longing for, right? She stares into his eyes. He can't believe what he's hearing. You mean..." he swallows excitedly as tears start to form in his eyes, "You've built a Golf Course?"

The Piano

My parents recently retired. Mom always wanted to learn to play the piano, so dad bought her a piano for her birthday. A few weeks later, I asked how she was doing with it. "Oh, we returned the piano," said My Dad, "I per-



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sued her to switch to a clarinet instead." "How come?" I asked. "Because," he answered, "with a clarinet, she can't sing."

Cow's Horns

"Mister, why doesn't this cow have any horns?" asked the young lady from a nearby city. The farmer cocked his head for a moment, then began in a patient tone, "Well, ma'am, cattle can do a powerful lot of damage with horns. Sometimes we keep'em trimmed down with a hacksaw. Other times we can fix up the young 'uns by puttin' a couple drops of acid where their horns would grow in, and that stops 'em cold. Still, there are some breeds of cattle that never grow horns. But the reason this cow don't have no horns, ma'am, is 'cause it's a horse."



Memory Clinic

Two elderly couples were enjoying friendly conversation when one of the men asked the other, "Fred, how was the memory clinic you went to last month?" "Outstanding," Fred replied. "They taught us all the latest psychological techniques - visualization, association - it's made a big difference for me." "That's great! What was the name of that clinic?" Fred went blank. He thought and thought but couldn't remember. Then a smile broke across his face and he asked, "What do you call that flower with the long stem and thorns?" "You mean a rose?" "Yes, that's it!" He turned to his wife. "Rose, what was the name of that clinic?"



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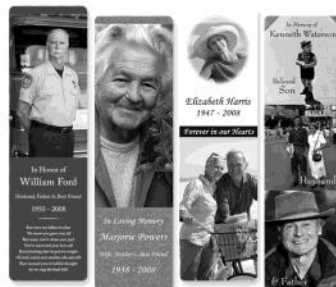
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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues



KANSAS



Greg Bortka, 53, of Overland Park passed away on October 5, 2009. He was general manager at D.W. Newcomer's Sons White Chapel Funeral Home and Cemetery and had previously worked at the Overland Park Chapel and Johnson County Chapel as his lifelong career of over 30 years. Greg was on the board of the Kansas Funeral Directors and Embalmers, serving as District #2 President. D. W. Newcomer's Sons Johnson County Chapel handled the service.

Myrtle Charlene Bell Miller, 76, of Manhattan passed away on November 23, 2009. Her husband Lenard LaVern Miller and her owned and managed several businesses throughout their 52 years. Their first was Miller Funeral Home in Cawker City. In 1972, they purchased the Courser Funeral Home and later the Conroy Funeral Home, both of Manhattan and together they operated them as the Parkview Funeral Home. Services were handled by Holmes-Pfeifley Funeral Home of Riley, Kansas.

TEXAS

Joe A. Brewer, of Blossom passed away October 29, 2009. He was 1997 TFDA Supplier of the Year and he was retired from the Dodge Company. Services were under the direction of Fry-Gibbs Funeral Home of Paris.

Don S. Flesher, Sr., DMS, of Van Alstyne passed away on November 4, 2009. He was the owner of Flesher Funeral Home and a 50 year licensee. His sons are Don Flesher Jr. and Clay Flesher. His services were directed by Flesher Funeral Home of Van Alstyne.

Bob G. Lewis, of Houston, passed away November 10, 2009. He was associated with Geo. H. Lewis & Sons Funeral Directors who handled the all the arrangements.



Denotes Veteran of Military Service

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



The Angel Lady

by Bob Lazzar-Atwood



She was called the Angel Lady for the ornaments she made,
 She carved them out of scraps of fir and pine,
 They echoed a belief she held from which she never strayed,
 That angels are around us all the time.
 She first received her calling with a heart consumed by grief,
 The year her loving husband passed away,
 She found that carving offered her a measure of relief
 And it brought a sense of purpose to her day.
 And then when Christmas came with all the memories it brings,
 And clouds of sadness fell upon her heart,
 She carved her husband's likeness with a pair of angel wings,
 And magically the clouds began to part.
 She fixed it with a piece of string and hung it on the tree,
 He always loved the smell of fresh cut fir,
 And when she sat beside the tree to carve a bit or read,
 She felt his loving presence close to her.
 When others saw the ornament, her neighbors and her friends,
 They marveled at how lifelike it appeared,
 They begged her to consider carving ornaments for them
 Of loved ones they had lost throughout the years.
 And so her mission started and her reputation spread,
 As orders came from cities far and wide,
 From people who were seeking some remembrance of their dead,
 And comfort from the pain they felt inside.
 The children were the hardest and it often made her weep,
 To carve their childish features in the pine,

But late at night a voice would reassure her in her sleep
 That angels were around them all the time.
 And one day she received a special letter in her box
 From a boy whose family dog had passed away,
 She thought about it briefly and then asked herself "why not?"
 And she started carving pets that very day.
 For twenty years she carved until her hands were old and tired
 And all her youthful energy was gone,
 But her belief in angels always made her feel inspired
 And helped her find the strength to carry on.
 And then one Christmas day a neighbor found her in her chair,
 Her heart no longer sounding its commands,
 With shavings all around her, in her clothing and her hair,
 Her carving blade still nestled in her hand.
 And as the medics came and slowly wheeled her to the door,
 Her grieving friends were too distraught to see,
 The photograph that rested right beside her on the floor
 Or the newest little angel on the tree.
 It hung there by her husbands like two birds upon a limb,
 A woman carved in wood still wet with stain,
 Her head was turned and she was smiling lovingly at him,
 And he was looking back at her the same.
 Like all the other angels she had carved throughout her days,
 The image was so real it chilled the spine,
 And engraved upon the bottom was this very simple phrase,
 "Angels are around us all the time,"

we're in it for the **longhaul**



old cliché, but if the shoe fits...

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Great Western Promotes Keirsten Gilbert to Marketing Administrative Assistant



Ogden UT—October 26, 2009—Great Western Insurance is proud to announce Keirsten Gilbert's promotion to Marketing Administrative Assistant. Keirsten will be assisting the Marketing Manager,

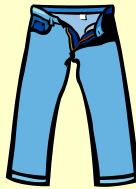
National Sales Manager as well as the Director of Client Relations. "Keirsten's attention to detail, excellent customer service skills and knowledge of our operation makes her the perfect addition to Marketing," commented Christian Dives, Marketing Manager. She has been involved in many different projects before coming aboard as the Administrative Assistant to the Marketing Department. Keirsten was hired in 2003 as administrative support for the company's document management system.

Great Western Insurance Company, owned by John E. Lindquist, is an Ogden, Utah based company writing life insurance and annuities to fund pre-arranged (pre-need) funeral plans. It is licensed in 45 states and the District of Columbia.

Great Western Gearing Up For the Holidays

OGDEN, UT – October 27, 2009 – Great Western Insurance Company (GWIC) has been raising money for the past seven years to support the "Spirit of Giving Program" sponsored locally by the Your Community Connection (YCC) organization.

Each week, GWIC employees are able to purchase "Jeans Coupons" for \$2 allowing them to wear jeans to work on Fridays. Each Christmas the YCC provides GWIC with a list of families with children who are in need of everyday items. GWIC employees volunteer to shop for the families and the money raised from the Jeans Coupons is donated to the annual "shopping spree." Great Western delivers the gift items along with wrapping paper, tape and bows to the YCC so the parents can personally wrap their child's gifts.



The Friday Jeans Coupon campaign is so successful that each child receives two pairs of pants, three shirts, a pair of shoes, a winter coat, boots, and always an item from the child's wish list. When GWIC first participated in the "Spirit of Giving Program" seven years ago, they were able to provide gifts for ten children; because of the generous support from the GWIC employees, they were able to provide Christmas for 56 children in 2008.

Great Western Insurance Company, founded by John E. Lindquist, is one of the industry leaders in pre-need funeral insurance. Great Western's commitment to provide the highest quality products and services comes from the owner's funeral director background. Being owned and operated by a funeral service family, five generations strong – Lindquist Mortuaries/Cemeteries in Utah – sets Great Western apart from other pre-need insurance companies.



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Bates Family Dedicates New Funeral Home

Nearly 600 people helped the Bates family celebrate the opening of their new funeral home in the Northeast Texas city of DeKalb.

The new Bates Family Funeral Home, dedicated August 30, is owned by former TFDA President Robby Bates and his son Robb, the third generation to join the family business.



Three generations of service: Robert Noble Bates (in portrait), Robby Bates and Robb Bates

Like his father, Robb attended mortuary school in Dallas, graduating in 2004. He worked at J.E. Keever in Ennis, until joining his

father in July of this year.

The new building, designed by Terwisscha Construction of Minnesota, was built by a DeKalb contractor and has 6,555 square feet of heated/cooled area, roof coverage of 8,000 square feet and 31,000 square feet of concrete parking.

Two doors—one on the east side and the other on the west side of the building—allow visitors to converge into a spacious lobby with a fireplace. This space can also accommodate overflow from the funeral home's chapel, which seats 176.

"The main thing we wanted was a building that would be warm and inviting to the public," said Robby. "We welcome our guests with a coffee lounge just off the lobby. We don't have a set-aside family room in our chapel because so many of our services are done at local churches. In our chapel, the family is able to sit with their friends and are not secluded in a side room."

A remote-control camera in the new chapel serves three purposes:

- ♦ "When we have a large service, the camera can transmit the service to those seated in the lobby," Robby explained.
- ♦ "We also have the capability of showing our memorial video tributes to the overflow crowd in the lobby..."
- ♦ "The camera also handles regular television programming."

Bates said they located the building deeper into the property to minimize road noise. The placement also allowed them to save an old pecan tree, which now stands directly in front of the funeral home.

"The property also had an existing 140-foot deep water well, so we use that to irrigate our flower beds and our lawn," he said. "We also have a faucet connected to the well we use to wash our vehicles."

The response, thus far, from the community has been extremely positive.

"They do say they feel its warm hospitality," Robby said, "and the credit for that goes to my wife, Betty, who did the interior decoration for the new facility."

The Bates are making their new facility available for the community to use and have offered their chapel, with its drop-down screen and overhead projector for memorial videos, to the local volunteer fire department and other community groups to hold training sessions and other meetings where they require audio-visual equipment.

The funeral home has been busy, even before it was dedicated.

"We received our permit and our license on August 26 and we had two services the day before our open house on Sunday, August 30," Robby said.

On hand for the dedication service was TFDA President Paul Beaty, who presented the Bates with a resolution on behalf of TFDA's board, officers and members.

The main speaker was Church of Christ Minister Billy Blakeney, who has had close ties with the family through the years. When the Bates family opened a "new" funeral home 45 years ago, in February, 1965, Minister Blakeney was on hand to dedicate the structure, and when Bates-Rolf Funeral Home was destroyed by tornado and rebuilt in 2000, the minister dedicated that facility, too.

Like the minister, the Bates have long been an important fixture in their community. Robby's father, who was licensed in 1939, moved to DeKalb in 1946 and was a partner with Hanner Funeral Home. Robert Noble Bates eventually bought the funeral home in DeKalb.

After graduating from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1970, Robby shipped off to Vietnam, where he served as a chaplain's assistant in the U.S. Army.

"When I came back, I started helping my dad at the funeral home again," said Robby. "We were very busy over a weekend...and on that particular weekend in April, 1973, I had a lot of people telling me how much they appreciated what I did and that I was good at it. That's when I felt the call to become a funeral director and entered mortuary school in the fall of that same year."

The reason the funeral home was so busy that April weekend was

(Continued on page 22)



The Dead Beat -The Caregivers Soapbox

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*Happy Holidays to all
of our Faithful Readers*

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

dress the costs for the appropriate services needed for a cremation. Of course, since some people have not dealt with this type of disposition properly, regulation will probably change and with that the economics will too. Funeral homes need to reasonably price and offer many alternatives to families wanting to cremate their loved ones since this preference is becoming more popular.

Finally the topic of discussion that got my attention in several issues of the magazines was that of **the honor and**



privilege that we have to serve our customers. Several instances of the "funeral they would always remember" were mentioned. It made you proud to be among their company. This area of caring for our customers includes the grief support that we try to provide for our clients too.

One area of concern that was mentioned was that our job wasn't the greatest and the families are feeling the need for **"home funerals."** This may be something to be attentive to though some state requirements may not make this a viable alternative even if the individuals want to handle everything themselves. Truthfully, we need to treat each person we serve as if it were our own family and treat them accordingly. When we forget it's a person we are dealing with that's when the families don't think much of our service.

Inspirational quotes were given in one magazine and one seemed to be the thought to end the quick review and look to the future with:

"The service we render others is the rent we pay for our room on earth." Wilfred Grenfill

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

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Vertical Burial in Australia

By Connecting Directors

A new company is turning the funeral business on its head and will bury people vertically. The unique scheme, about to be launched in Melbourne, Australia, is being offered as a simple, natural and economical approach to burial. The deceased are placed in a biodegradable bag and then lowered feet first into a cylindrical hole just over two feet wide and about 10 feet deep.

Company Upright Burials claims it is a world first and the method produces far less carbon dioxide than a regular burial.

Tom Dupleix, managing director, said: "When people have a traditional burial there is the process of manufacturing a coffin which is often made out of wood or a man-made fiber and there is regularly a plastic tray inside the coffin too. Our burials involve far less energy intensive practices and using a biodegradable bag insures that a natural product is going into the ground."

And those not concerned about being "laid" to rest will save space with many more vertical burials being able to take place in any field.

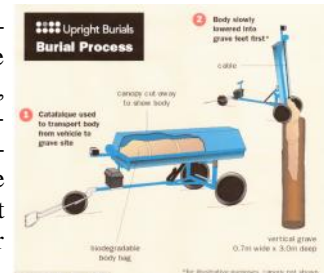
The company has been granted permission to bury in a site west of Melbourne in Victoria, Australia. It hopes to bury between 30,000 to 40,000 in a field. After it has been filled it

will be transferred back to a pasture.

They plan to plant a tree for every body put into the ground "to partially offset the carbon footprint in collection, storage and delivery of the body to the cemetery." And rather than a headstone above each body, the company will simply inscribe the names of those buried on a memorial wall. Relatives will however be given the exact location of their loved one.

They have had many inquires, but none had taken place yet. Mr. Dupleix believes principle rather than price is the main reason for interest. He said, "Most people are attracted by the simplicity of the project and the concept of being far more in touch with nature."

He conceived the idea during a dinner table conversation nearly 10 years ago. He said, "There are no candles, music, grade of coffin, entourage or other burial paraphernalia to decide on. We know upright burials will not be for everyone, but we offer something new, that is simple, respectful and eco-friendly."



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The Oak Grove Chapel Crematorium By Jason Engler

Amid the history and architecture of St. Louis, Missouri, are several beautiful historical cemeteries. In many cases, their beauties are evident in their unique styles of architecture. I've written before about the Missouri Crematory, an important landmark in the history of cremation. But as cremation grew in popularity in the twentieth century, crematoriums were built in many of the major cemeteries in our nation. The cemetery became the most popular site for the placement of crematoriums and a cemetery in a large city was considered inadequate if it didn't offer cremation services to its patrons.

In St. Louis, as in most metropolitan areas, many of the cemeteries opened their own crematoriums. Valhalla Cemetery, on St. Charles Rock Road, opened theirs in the early 1920's as an addition to their historic mausoleum. Their Chapel of Memories houses bronze columbarium niches and a beautiful art deco chapel.

The neighboring cemetery, Oak Grove, wasn't far behind. Their Gothic Revival Crematorium was built in 1940 and is one of the most beautiful structures of its use ever built.



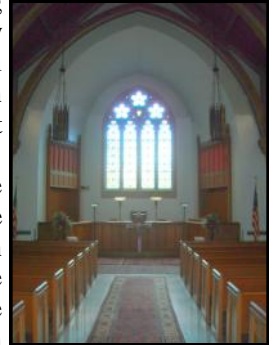
At the southwest corner of the cemetery stands the Chapel Crematory which is visible from Hanley Road. Designed by Sidney Lovell, the famous mausoleum designer, the chapel is constructed of limestone and concrete and has a slate gable roof articulated with copper. Entering through the main doors, one enters the narthex which opens directly into the chapel. A huge, beautiful stained glass window at the back of the chapel catches the eye, the kaleidoscope of colors caught by the sun.

Seating in the chapel is in oak pews which number ten on each side. In the chancel area, an oak pulpit is set about three steps off the floor level and an oak chancel chair sits behind. A Moeller organ is to the right of the pulpit, its pipes hidden by

the ornate wood screens about the angles in the chancel. In front of the pulpit, hidden by ornate rugs, is the casket lift. During services, when the crematorium was in use, the casket was placed horizontally on the casket lift. Upon the conclusion of the services, it was noiselessly lowered into the basement.

The chapel has a high-vaulted ceiling with concrete trusses that are cleverly painted to look like wood. Transom windows of stained glass, four pairs on each side, assist in lighting the elegant chapel.

Four gothic arches are on each side of the Chapel; the first three of these give way to a hall and align with smaller arches in the chambers. The back arch opens to an office on the southwest corner and a family area on the southeast.



From the narthex, hallways lead left and right and angle to run alongside the chapel terminating in the family room on the east side and an office on the west, and giving way to five individual chambers on each side. To the right, along the west side of the chapel, the first room is designated as an office. The second, which is the curve, is a columbarium with white marble-covered niches. The third, fourth and fifth are also columbaria, the third having marble-fronted niches, the fourth and fifth having bronze niches fronted with marble and glass. Each chamber is guarded with an ornate bronze gate.

To the left of the narthex, along the east side of the chapel, the chambers, also guarded with bronze gates, are used for storage areas at present but were designed as columbaria. The front corner chamber is used as the main office for the crematorium and the one immediately adjacent to the narthex is given over to ascending and descending stairs.

Each of the rooms on this level contain at least one stained-glass window, all of which were designed by the Franz Mayer Company of Munich.

Upon ascent of the stairs, one reaches the mezzanine level. The space amounts to a large area that sits above the narthex

(Continued on page 21)

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The Oak Grove Chapel Crematorium (Cont.)

(Continued from page 20)

and front chambers of the main level and was likely designated as a music loft. The space now contains a large table used for cemetery board meetings above which is a large stained-glass window that matches the one at the back of the chapel. A railing separates the large open area of the chapel below from the balcony, and the space could feasibly be used for overflow were it ever necessary.

Two chambers are on each end of the space. One serves as a storage area, the other as a columbarium whose niches are covered with engraved marble tablets.

Upon descent of the stairs to the basement level, one is faced with a wide door and a hallway that goes right. The hallway gives way to the men's and women's lavatory facilities. Going through the door, one enters into the cremation department. To the right is a modern cooling facility beyond which is a large storage space.

The cremation retorts are situated horizontally in the room, their vaulted doors facing toward the west. Two retorts are in place and were manufactured by the Jones Incinerator Company which was originally based in St. Louis. The flue of the cremation chambers travels below the floor under the retorts and is a southeasterly direction, continues up a duct in the side of the building and across the roof, and makes its way to a stack that protrudes but a few feet above the roof and is topped with a copper spire.

Just beyond the cremation chambers is the elevator shaft, enclosed by three walls with a hinged door. The wide door opens to remove the casket, and upon removal, the casket is in line for easy transfer to the waiting cremation vaults.

With its atmosphere of peace and serenity, of permanence and rest, the chapel has become a repository of, not just the cremated remains of those trusted to her care, but also beautiful memories, unmarred by weather or the elements. The cinerary urns in their niches lend themselves to the overall beauty of the place. Only time can bring these attributes, and over time the chapel has remained sturdy and unchanged.

Of course, also with time comes necessary improvements and adjustments, but for the time being, she must remain a part of her poignant past and be a repository of the souls and remains trusted to her care and safekeeping.

Jason Ryan Engler is a Funeral Director in Rogers, Arkansas. He has studied cremation and its history throughout most of his life. He can be reached at arcremationist@hotmail.com.

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Have You Seen This Urn????



Jason Engler has been looking for this urn for the last 15 years. It was distributed by Matthews in the 1980's and possibly before. He wonders if **The Dead Beat** readers have any ideas where he can locate one. They may be stored in basements, attics or cabinets just waiting to be discovered. If any readers find it un-used, they can e-mail him photos and info to purchase at:

arcremationist@hotmail.com

“Dear Counselor....” By Bill Stalter

Dear Counselor,

Under Missouri’s old preneed law, I was not required to register as a preneed seller because the only preneed I sold were joint account contracts. In the future, all I plan to sell are joint account contracts. Do I have to be licensed under the new law as a preneed seller?

Yes. If you sell any form of preneed contract after August 28, 2009, even if it is only joint account contracts, you have to be licensed as a preneed seller.

Many funeral homes have stated that they do not plan to sell preneed in the future, and question whether they must have a preneed seller license. At its last meeting (December 9, 2009), the Board took the position that a funeral home would not have to obtain a preneed seller’s license if the only outstanding contracts it has are joint account contracts sold prior to August 28th. However, if the funeral home has any outstanding contracts funded by either insurance or trust, the Board position is that the funeral home must obtain a preneed seller license unless it ceases to do business (as a seller) and transfers the contracts (and trust/insurance) to another seller. Under that situation, the funeral home must then comply with the requirements of Section 436.500.

If you have only joint account contracts sold prior to August 28th, and want to avoid the preneed seller requirements, you can use a third party seller (such as the MFT). If this situation applies to a funeral home that has already applied for a preneed seller license, it might be able to withdraw the application (and fee). However, you would still be required to obtain a provider license. The same is true even if you never sell another preneed contract. As a licensed provider, you will be required to report the joint account contracts sold prior to August 28th.



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.

**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
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Or Fax: 1-417-537-4797**

Bates Family Dedicates New Funeral Home (Cont.)

(Continued from page 17)

because it was handling the arrangements for one of DeKalb’s most prominent citizens, Dan Blocker, who starred as Hoss Cartwright on the popular television series, “Bonanza.”

“My father directed his service,” Robby remembers, “At the time, Dan Blocker’s mother still lived here and they had brought his remains here for the service. Dan Blocker was the largest baby ever born in our county, weighing in at more than 14 pounds.”

The Bates family also handled the services for Blocker’s father, who had died 13 years earlier. Robby says the Blocker family plot, where Mr. and Mrs. Blocker, Dan and his little sister Virginia (who died as a child from pneumonia) are buried, is very austere.

“Mr. and Mrs. Blocker were very discreet and simple and there was no extravagance about them at all,” Robby said, “but year-end and year-out, people come to DeKalb and the Woodmen Cemetery, adjacent to the new funeral home, to see Dan Blocker’s grave and to remember the popular television series.” (Editor Note: Gravesite shown in the last issue of *The Dead Beat*, pg 31.)

Information from *Texas Director*, 11/2009



2009 Sales Award Winners for Doric Products Inc. In The Dead Beat Geographical Area

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Greatest Number Sold—Division I—Concrete Vaults, Inc. –
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Greatest Percentage of Increase—Division II—Jacson, Inc.
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Greatest Number Sold—Division I—Concrete Vaults, Inc. -
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Greatest Number Sold—Division III—West Plains Vault Co.
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ASCAP Inspecting Funeral Homes Without Music Licenses

Brookfield, Wis.—A funeral home in a small town in South Dakota recently opened the door to an unwelcome visitor during a funeral service—an ASCAP inspector who was checking up on funeral homes that do not have music licenses. ASCAP, along with BMI and SESAC, are the three music-licensing organizations in the United States.

After determining that the South Dakota funeral home was allowing copyrighted music to be performed during the funeral service, the ASCAP inspector gave the funeral home a choice: pay for an ASCAP license for 2009 or face a copyright infringement suit with penalties of up to \$30,000. The funeral home had no choice but to pay for ASCAP license for the final four months of 2009.

Do you have a music license? Maybe you should check out the alternatives for acquiring one.

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William C. Wappner Installed 2009-10 President of National Funeral Directors Association

Brookfield, WI: October 27, William c. Wappner, CFSP, was elected president of the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA). Wappner, owner of Wappner Funeral Directors in Mansfield, Ohio, was installed as NFDA president during the President's Mardi Gras Ball on October 28, which marked the end of the 2009 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Boston, Mass.

Additional members of the 2009-10 NFDA Executive Board who were elected and installed during the NFDA convention include: President-elect Patrick E. Lynch, Lynch & Sons Funeral Directors, Clawson, MI; Treasure Randall L. Earl, CFSP, Brintlinger and Earl Funeral Homes, Decatur, IL; Secretary Robert "Bob" T. Rosson Jr., CFSP, CPC, Waller Funeral Home, Oxford, MS; Immediate Past President John D. Reed Sr., CFSP, CPC, Dodd & Reed Funeral Home and Adams-Reed Funeral Home, Inc., Webster Springs and Cowen, WV; At-large Representative (2008-2010) Robert "Robby" L. Bates, CFSP, Bates Family Funeral Home, DeKalb, TX; At-large Representative (2008-2010) J. Michael Krill, CFSP, Krill Funeral Service Edgerton, Ohio; At-large Representative (2009-2011) Jzyk S. Ennis, MPA, CFSP, ridout's Trussville Chapel, Birmingham, AL; and At-large Representative (2009-2011) Mark Mortimore, Mortimore Funral Home, Inc., Thermopolis, WY.



The 2009-10 National Funeral Directors Association Executive Board. Back row, from left: At-large representative Jzyk S. Ennis, At-large Representative J. Michael Krill, NFDA CEO Christine Pepper, At-large Representative Mark Mortimore, and NFDA General Counsel T. Scott Gilligan, Front row, from left: Treasurer Randall L. Earl, President-elect Patrick E. Lynch, President William C. Wappner, Immediate Past President John D. Reed and Secretary Robert T. Rosson



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Stay Young, My Friend

1. Try everything twice.

On one woman's tombstone she said she wanted this epitaph:

"Tried everything twice. Loved it both times!"



2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.

(Keep this in mind if you are one of those grouches!)



3. Keep learning; learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever.. Never let the brain get idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's

4. Enjoy the simple things.

5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. And if you have a friend who makes you laugh, spend lots and lots of time with HIM/HER.

6. The tears happen: Endure, grieve and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. LIVE while you are alive.



7. Surround yourself with what you love: Whether it's family, pets, music, plants, hobbies, whatever.... Your home is your refuge.



8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.

9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, even to the next county, to a foreign country, but NOT to where the guilt is.

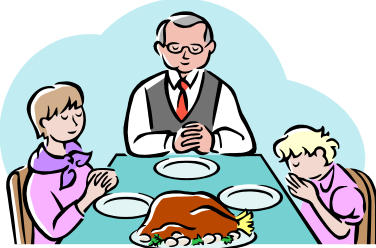


10. Tell people you love that you love them, at every opportunity.

11. Forgive now those who made you cry. You might not get a second chance.

For Funeral Directors at Thanksgiving (Or Fill in the Holiday)

Author Unknown



Dear Lord

We thank you for this day in which we may give thanks...and please, just this once, let me finish our Thanksgiving meal before the phone rings because these chances to enjoy food

and fellowship together come around so rarely.

Not that I don't want to go on a First Call on this Thanksgiving Day (Christmas Day, New Year's Day, etc.), but dear God, I pray others can make it through this holiday without the loss of a loved one.

If the phone does ring, however, I will be truly thankful for the opportunity to be there—and to do what I've chosen to do—not merely as a job but as a calling. You see, God, I think you selected me to be there for others, to help where few have the ability to help, to smooth the path and provide solace between the ending of one life and the continuing lives of those left behind.

God, let me not forget to be thankful for every comfort I am able to provide a family left decimated by the loss of a mother, father, husband, wife, child, sister or brother. Help me lift these people from the Valley of the Shadow into the light of hope while offering thanks and celebration for the life that was lived, even for a short time, on this Earth.

I know in my heart, I stand among a select few who can serve my neighbors in these unique ways, so let me be at my best—even when I'm feeling my worst. Give me the strength to be excellent in my skills, to have a servant's heart and to meet each family's needs with compassion, integrity and sincerity, no matter how much effort it requires.

On this day, I am also thankful for my co-workers, my family, my community—and especially for the men and women who, in the past and in the present, have worked so hard to make this profession what it is. I am honored to stand with funeral directors and embalmers through the years who were able to put the needs of others before their own and others before self. They have set a high standard, but God, give me the ability and the strength to set the bar even higher.

For all this, O God, I am thankful.



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Parker Mortuary, Joplin, MO Proceeds With Crematory



Parker Mortuary is proceeding with the installation of an on site crematory. Installation was delayed in 2008 when a neighbor tried to block the permitting process. District and Appellate Courts both found in favor of Parker Mortuary and the City of Joplin. The person complaining operates a salvage business.





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Doric Products Inc. Installs New Board of Directors

Doric Products Inc. Recently hosted shareholders at the annual meeting held in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. The 2009-2010 Board of Directors were installed at the meeting. Current board members are Asa Brewster (Brewster Vaults, Millville, NJ), Michael Crummitt (Crummitt & Son Vault, Martins Ferry, Ohio), Charles Foskey (Wicomico Vault, Salisbury, Maryland), Gerald Hardy (Hardy Doric Inc., Chelmsford, Massachusetts), Hubert McQuestion (Lake Shore Burial Vault, Brookfield, Wisconsin), Adair Payment (Atlas Concrete Products, Orlando, Florida), Bobby Smith (Eagle Burial Vaults, Ruston, Louisiana), Steven Vincent (J.P. Vincent and Son, Galena, Illinois) and Jim Wiens (Concrete Vaults Inc., Newton, Kansas).

The new board held a meeting to vote officers into position for the 2009-2010 year. Those elected were: President, Steve Vincent; Vice President of Finance and Treasurer, Jim Wiens; Vice President of Manufacturing, Mike Curmmitt; and Secretary, Gerald Hardy. The Executive Committee will again consist of Crummitt, McQuestion, Vincent and Wiens.

Following elections, Board President Vincent commented, "I appreciate the continued vote of confidence and support shown by the shareholders and directors." other members of the board echoed his comment and noted the consistency of membership allows projects to continue without interruption.

New to the Doric Board of Directors is Charles "Chuck" Foskey. Undoubtedly, the name will sound familiar to you. Chuck was voted into the seat that was left vacant when his father, Charlie, passed away this summer. He has been with the family vault business since it began in 1975 and was also involved with Wicomico Memorial Park Cemetery until it was sold in 1998.

Chuck currently serves as President of Wicomico Vault and also makes time to participate in a variety of organizations.

(Continued on page 27)

Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC Launches New Service!

Dallas, Texas (1 December 2009) - David Patterson, Owner/Operations Director of Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC, is pleased to announce that effective immediately, Global Mortuary Affairs will provide a new Pick-Up and Delivery Service to all Dallas/Ft. Worth Airports. This new Door-to-Door service is the easiest and most cost-effective way to meet the **TSA Shipping Standards** and includes the following key features:



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- ♦ Transportation to or from your funeral home.
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- ♦ Shipping Supplies, such as Combo Units, Airtrays, Transfer Cases.

David Patterson truly believes that any size funeral home will benefit from this service. Global Mortuary Affairs has developed the easiest and most cost-effective way to meet the TSA Shipping Standards. Once you place the initial call to Global Mortuary Affairs the rest of your worries are over. Global Mortuary Affairs will set the domestic or internal flight, screen the remains to TSA specifications, place the remains in the shipping container, shelter the remains until such time as the airlines will accept it, and deliver the remains to the airlines. If you are to receive remains, Global Mortuary Affairs will transfer the remains to our facility, shelter the remains until such time as your firm arrives or makes arrangements for Global Mortuary Affairs to transport the remains to your door step.

Global Mortuary Affairs would be pleased to have the opportunity to assist you with any of your shipping needs. Please feel free to call Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC direct at 877.216.2708 or 972.216.2700.

Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC was founded in November, 2006, and provides removals, embalming, cremation, shipping services (Domestic & International), airline transport, overland transport, pathology services, and donor services to funeral homes only. David Patterson and Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC received their TSA Certified Cargo Screening Facility Certification Number in November of 2009, and ranks at this time as the only mortuary/funeral establishment in Texas to meet these requirements. Additional information about Global Mortuary Affairs can be found at <http://www.globalmortuaryaffairs.com>.

Doric Products Inc. Installs New Board of Directors (Cont.)

(Continued from page 26)

Among them are the Delmarva Funeral Service Association, Greater Salisbury Chamber, and the National Concrete Burial Vault Association. He also serves as a Master Mason with Centennial Lodge #221 A.F. & A.M. and is active in the Thomas J. Shryock commanders of Knights Templar and the Maryland chapter of Ducks Unlimited.

Chuck is also proud of his work as a volunteer firefighter with the Salisbury fire Department for 26 years. He has served in a number of leadership roles within the department and is currently the Assistant Chief as well as corporate president. Chuck looks forward to his involvement with Doric and Classic Metal Vaults and continuing, "the highest quality standards" in the industry.

The Doric leadership requires all Doric licensed manufacturing plants undergo an independent inspection by a field inspector of the National Concrete burial Vault Association (NCBVA). This requirement ensures that consumers receive quality products that meet or exceed industry standards. If you would like contact information for the Doric location in your area, please visit our

website at www.doric-vaults.com or call us at 800-457-0671.

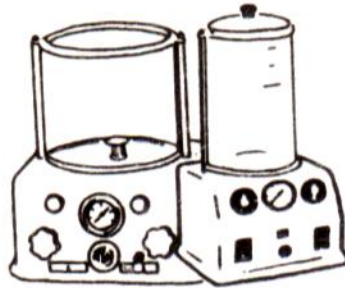


Doric Board Members: Front row (l-r): Chuck Foskey, Adair Payment, Bobby Smith, Gerald Hardy. Back row: Mike Crummitt, Asa Brewster, Steve Vincent, Jim Wiens, and Hubert McQuestion

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Why Dogs Don't Have To Live So Long

Being a veterinarian I had been called to examine a ten-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's owners, Ron, his wife, Lisa and their little six-year-old boy Shane, were all very attached to Belker, and they were hoping for a miracle. I examined Belker and found he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog in their home.

As we made arrangements, Ron and Lisa told me they thought it would be good for Shane to observe the procedure. They felt as though Shane might learn something from the experience. The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. Shane seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time, that I wondered if he understood what was going on.

Within a few minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away. The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulty or confusion. We sat together for a while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives. Shane, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why." Startled, we all turned to him.

What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation. He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life—like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?" The six-year-old continued, "Well, dogs already know how to do that, so they don't have to stay as long." Live Simply. Love Generously. Care Deeply. Speak kindly.

Remember, if a dog was the teacher you would learn things like:

- ♦ When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- ♦ Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
- ♦ Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- ♦ Take naps.
- ♦ Stretch before rising.
- ♦ Run, romp and play daily.
- ♦ Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- ♦ Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
- ♦ On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.
- ♦ On hot days, drink lots of water and lie down under a shady tree.
- ♦ When you're happy, dance around and wave your entire body.
- ♦ Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
- ♦ Be loyal.
- ♦ Never pretend to be something you're not.
- ♦ If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- ♦ When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.

ENJOY EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY!

Handle every stressful situation like a dog.

If you can't eat it or play with it, pee on it and walk away.



A Matter of Honor

By Streuli-Opinion in The Journal Record

Oct. 21, 2009

A white glove touched a patent leather brim, the hand inside not trembling at all despite the cold, damp October weather.

The sergeant held that position in the rigid way that only military men can achieve while two other soldiers meticulously folded the American flag.

The soldiers did not know the man in the casket. It did not matter that he was a father to eight children who had carried him from the church to the hearse.

The First Presbyterian Church in Golden City, MO—certainly, the only Presbyterian church in Golden City, Missouri—is a small white building with a sanctuary half a flight up from the sidewalk and a combination basement and social hall half a flight below. Judging by the doorknobs, it was probably built no later than the mid-1920's about the same time the man who would be remembered in the sanctuary was born.



Family, and there were a lot of them, gathered downstairs for a covered-dish luncheon, a meal perfected by generations of Presbyterians. Cousins posed on the church steps for a rare group photo while uncles took the metal folding chairs up to the family room for the service.

An efficient gray-haired woman in a black dress gave directions to volunteers. Golden City is a one-square-mile town that's home to 884 people, many of them farmers. About one-fourth of them came to pay their respects, the last to arrive standing downstairs, listening to the service on a wireless loudspeaker the church keeps on hand for just such occasions.

There was an occasional laugh as a man's 87 years were recounted and condensed into a one-hour service. There was a cringe when the pianist missed a few notes. And there was a lot of dabbing at the eyes as family and friends remembered everything that were the things that might have been.

(Continued on page 30)

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Meaning of Flag- Draped Coffin



I hope you take the time to read this.. To

understand what the flag draped coffin really means... Here is how to understand the flag that laid upon it and is surrendered to so many widows and widowers.

Do you know that at military funerals, the 21-gun salute stands for the sum of the numbers in the year 1776?

Have you ever noticed the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the United States of America Flag 13 times? You probably thought it was to symbolize the original 13 colonies, but we learn something new every day!

The **first** fold of the flag is a symbol of life.

The **second** fold is a symbol of the belief in eternal life.

The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing the ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of the country to attain peace throughout the world.

The **fourth** fold represents the weaker nature, for American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

The **fifth** fold is a tribute to the country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries may she always be right; but it is still our country right or wrong."

The **sixth** fold is for where people's hearts lie. It is with their heart that they pledge allegiance to the flag of the United State of America and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The **seventh** fold is a tribute to its Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that they protect their country and their flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of their republic.

The **eight** fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day.

The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womanhood, and Mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The **tenth** fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the de-

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fense of their country since they were first born.

The **eleventh** fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The **twelfth** fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, the Christians eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

The **thirteen** fold or when the flag is completely fold. The stars are uppermost reminding them of their nation's motto, "In God We Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for them the rights, privileges and freedoms they enjoy today.

There are some traditions and ways of doing things that have deep meaning. In the future, you'll see flags folded and now you will know why.

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A Matter of Honor (Cont.)

(Continued from page 28)

A talented vocalist soulfully sang "The Lord's Prayer" and "How Great Thou Art," but the Kleenex came out when he added an unplanned, a cappella rendition of "The Old Rugged Cross."

Grandchildren remembered their grandfather with courage and tears, for the man he was, and the man he was not. His was a life of struggle and work, one that did not benefit from a formal education. But his legacy sat in the sanctuary: eight successful children, 22 even more successful grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren so far.

It did not matter that the man's newest great-grandson, just four weeks old, was in attendance as the honor guard fired a three volley salute over the casket.

The bugler didn't notice that the mourners were huddled together under a gray sky, spouses' hands entwined and babies held close under blankets. He just took in the chilly air, put his lips to the mouthpiece and cried out through his horn the 24 mournful notes of Taps.

The seven soldiers in the honor guard were probably unaware that the man they were saluting fought in the Asiatic Pacific Theater in World War II, that he was a U.S. Army infantry rifleman, or that he was Pvt. First Class Vaughn Nichols.

The soldiers didn't know because it didn't matter. The man they saluted was a soldier. That was all they needed to know.



Basler Funeral Home St. Genevieve, Missouri



Basler Funeral Home have completed a new 12,000 sq. ft. funeral home.

They have been serving the Ste. Genevieve community over 100 years. The business was founded in 1898 by John and Sophia Basler, and was run by them until John's death in 1932. John's son, Leo C. "Pumpkin" Basler Sr. and his wife Agnes took over the funeral home. Today the funeral home is owned and

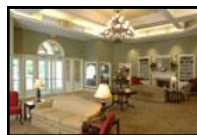


L to R: Beth Basler, Eric D. Basler, Carolyn Basler, Leo C. "Chipper" Basler, Paul Huffstetter

Directory of Advertisers

Aaron Beasley Embalming Service & Crem.	Pg 20
American Crematory Equip. Co.	Pg 8
American Macular Degeneration Foundation	Pg 21
ASD, Inc.	Pg 20
Baxter Vault Co.	Pg 5
CFL Pre-Need	Pg 11
Cherokee Casket Company	Pg 2
City Wide Mortuary Service L.L.C.	Pg 12
Clear Creek Coach	Pg 25
Columbia Cremation Care Center	Pg 12
Custom Air Trays	Pg 23
Dallas Institute of Funeral Service	Pg 11
Federated Insurance Co.	Pg 7
Fraleigh Funeral Supply	Pg 9
Global Mortuary Affairs	Pg 11
Great Western Insurance Company	Pg 15
Hardin Mortuary Service	Pg 12
Highland Hills Transport Service, Inc	Pg 12
Hoefler Associates	Pg 12
ICCF	Pg 17
Lamcraft, Inc.	Pg 13
LJ Enterprises	Pg 2
Last Ride Motorcycle Hearse Co.	Pg 23
Mid-States Professional Services	Pg 27
Miller Coach & Limousine Sales	Pg 16
Mooney-Keehley	Pg 32
Nomis Publications	Pg 26
Pierce Chemicals & Royal Bond	Pg 24
Schaefer Mortuary Service	Pg 4
Security National Life Insurance Co.	Pg 2
Springfield Mortuary Service	Pg 3
Stilwell-Taylor Mortuary Services	Pg 12
Superior Mortuary & Crematory Service	Pg 12
Texas Funeral Directors Association	Pg 29
Thomas & Sons Service Company	Pg 19
United Heritage Life Insurance Co.	Pg 29
Vantage Products Corporation	Pg 28
Victoria Mortuary & Cremation Service	Pg 12
Weatherford Mortuary Service	Pg 12

operated by Pumpkin's son, Leo C. "Chipper" Basler Jr. and his wife Carolyn, whom have had the business since Pumpkin's death in 1971. Chipper's son, Eric Basler, has joined the firm and marks the 4th generation to work at Basler Funeral Home.



Check out their website: www.baslerfuneralhome.com for more pictures, but here is one of their new interior.

They also have a location at Ste. Mary.



Christmas Letter

It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season. How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth, just GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Now, having said that let Me go on. If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting My birth, then just get rid of a couple of Santas and snowmen and put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all My followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town.



Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a holiday tree, instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can remember Me anytime you see any tree. Decorate a grapevine if you wish; I actually spoke of that once in a teaching, explaining what I am in relation to you and what each of our tasks was. If you have forgotten that one, look up John 15: 1-8.

If you want to give me a present in remembrance of My birth here is my wish list. Choose something from it:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of the year. I know, they tell Me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of writing the President complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out this year, why don't you write and tell him that you'll be praying for him and his family this year. Then follow up.... It will be nice hearing from you again.



4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.

5. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.

6. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.

7. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one. Then stop shopping there on Sunday. If the store didn't make so much money on that day they'd close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.



8. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary—especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name.

9. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them, buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in Me and they will make the delivery for you.

10. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

Don't forget; I am God and can take care of Myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember:

*I LOVE YOU
JESUS*



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