

The Dead Beat



The Caregiver's Soapbox

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



Volume 16

www.thedead-beat.com

Issue 4

New Column—Dylan's Directives **Emerging Leaders**

Dylan Stopher

“Make no mistake, friends, the future isn't going to be about the business of the past.”

What makes an “emerging leader,” you might ask? Frankly, the list is too long to cover in total. But the main focal point that I'd like to discuss is that we, as a group, are unafraid of change. I know, I know, that makes all of those who taught us shiver when we talk about change and our willingness to embrace it... but make no mistake, friends, the future isn't going to be about the business of the past.

So why do I bring this up now? Well, put simply, I want to encourage the leadership (both owners and managers) of every firm in our great state of Texas to identify one emerging leader in their team. It could be the owner or manager, or it could be the student or apprentice. It doesn't really matter who it is, just as long as there is one on the team who is willing to come in and throw ideas around to make the whole profession better in Texas. And, again, don't confuse the truth behind it all... the goal is to improve service to the families we are all privileged to meet.

With that in mind, let's talk about a few things that makes this group great for your firm, and why you should send one or more representative (schedule and services permitting, of course) to meet with us. First of all, and likely the strongest reason I could ever provide, is the network. The network of professionals I have amassed in my almost 20 years in this profession is extensive, and when I need assistance with something I never need the Redbook (sorry, Redbook guys). I have a list of cell phone numbers for directors, managers, owners, apprentices, students, vendors, lawyers, consultants... all in my cell phone, and I can call on these people for direct insight. They, in turn, can call on me. And what is paramount about this, in my opinion, is that I know their philosophy and the heart behind why they serve. I trust them. I know that if I need to turn a family over to them, they will care for that family in the same way that I would. I have zero doubt about the outcome, because the handoff is a solid one.

In the same vein, if all I'm calling for is advice, I know that their ego isn't coming into play at all. They'll tell me the truth, whether I like it or not, and they'll help to guide me to the best possible outcome for the family's benefit. THAT is what the network of Emerging Leaders does for me, and I guarantee you, it's the best network you can allow your team access to. Who doesn't want to be able to

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What If God Sent You Today?

From My Purview
By Reverend Janice Hoffman



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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



Outhouse

Once there was a little boy that lived in the country. They had to use an outhouse, and the little boy hated it because it was hot in the summer and cold in the winter and stank all the time. The outhouse was sitting on the bank of a creek and the boy determined that one day he would push that outhouse into the creek. One day after a spring rain, the creek was swollen so the little boy decided today was the day to push the outhouse into the creek. So he got a large stick and started pushing. Finally, the outhouse toppled into the creek and floated away. That night his dad told him they were going to the woodshed after supper. Knowing that meant a spanking, the little boy asked why.

The dad replied, "Someone pushed the outhouse into the creek today. It was you, wasn't it son?"

The boy answered yes. Then he thought a moment and said, "Dad, I read in school today that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree and didn't get into trouble because he told the truth."

The dad replied, "Well, son, George Washington's father wasn't in the cherry tree."



Butterfly in Zinnas





Mortuary Muse

By Lowell

Tom Hebner, MFDEA President, reported in the **Missouri Director** magazine that he had spoken with the funeral director liaison for the Midwest Transplant Network about the continuing problems of communication between the Transplant Network, funeral directors and our client families. It seems to me that many of our problems stem from misinformation given by the workers that solicit the families for the donor body. Regretfully the families unmet expectations are usually directed at the funeral directors and not the initial information providers. What is the solution to this communication or miscommunication problem?

Readers of **The Dead Beat** should note we have been privileged to have some great contributors lately. Some fresh viewpoints from more diverse demographics are certainly welcome and needed. Be sure and check out these new contributions to the magazine and give us feedback.

Our funeral home continues to receive shopper calls for direct cremation without services. Since my licenses are retired and I'm too blind to read the GPL anyway, I try to defer to our GPL on the website.

But an interesting issue that arises often when the caller is the client or family member and their perception of what hospice or the transplant people will provide. Usually there is no clear understanding about removal, death certificates, transportation and the timeline of the events. I made up a list of items that should be included in the price of a commodity priced cremation. It's a shame that the initial contact prior to the funeral home call really doesn't know what a funeral home really does. Have we done our jobs so well that people don't really know that in order to cremate a person there are quite a few steps before that can happen? Don't you just need the crematory's number???

About the Author: Lowell Pugh has had funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the family funeral home which started in 1904. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address.

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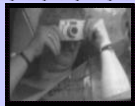
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As We Drive By We love to take pictures as we go by funeral homes and interesting places, but we'd welcome pictures, if you send them to us.

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McReynolds-Nave-Larson Funeral Home Clarksville, TN With 1957 National/Chevrolet "Minuteman" Ambulance

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Styninger Funeral Home Centralia, IL

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



Behind the Back Fence

By Lowell

A hard lines trade magazine reported that the big box discount store is using virtual reality to train sales persons before putting them on the actual sales floor. This might also help train funeral directors to learn the arrangement counseling process.

Twenty-some years ago I videotaped myself practicing an arrangement conference. It wasn't long after viewing the tape before I retreated to a supporting role. It is better if the arrangement counselor can defer to management for touchy credit and financial situations.

It was a mid-afternoon on a Saturday and we were waiting for someone to bring a photograph of the deceased. The doorbell sounded and I headed downstairs. In my haste I neglected to close the doggie gate at the top of the stairway. Nearing the bottom of the stairs I heard Joanne tell Jack the FDIC (Funeral DOG in charge) to STAY!! Rounding the corner downstairs the front door came into view—the delivery person was frozen in place. Obviously you have to watch what you say.



Looking through the mail and the “trades,” I am amazed at the plethora of new personalized and meaningful funeral stuff from the tech world. There simply are not enough superlatives to describe all of the ways we can help our grieving families.

However—at 11 p.m. when the only thing the funeral director gets from the Cloud is Rain; the printer and computer aren't speaking to each other; your website entries have disappeared for the third time and the internet went down again—well, there are not enough expletives in the dictionary.

A few days ago we held a really large (for us) visitation—more than 500 in attendance. During a break from the front door I walked out to the lawn to see how far the line of people reached. Scheduled for two hours it ran about 1 1/2 hours longer. The church service the next day was attended by about 400. For our firm services this size usually occur once in 3-5 years. Nothing unusual here except for the floral tributes. Over the years this size service had always received 125—150 flower tributes. Times are changing this service had



only 31 pieces. When I moved them out to the loading porch for the trip to the church, my aching back told me there must have been more than 3 or 4 hundred pounds of heavy vases and pots.

I have heard by the grapevine that florist here determined that more weight sells and brings more customer satisfaction. What next? Load ratings on flower stands? More trips to chiropractor? Remember the average floral tribute gets moved eight times.

Years ago a family would enter the funeral home—greetings exchanged, condolences offered and seats taken. A few more remarks made and then the question. What did you have in mind for your _____ funeral service? And the most often repeated reply was, “he didn't want anything special.”

Well. . . . They probably didn't get much of anything special, except a lot of friends dressing in their Sunday best, filing past the open casket and then on to “their cars and a long procession to the cemetery.”

Any personalization was most likely a comment in the obituary or a comment by a more articulate minister. He didn't want anything special and that is what he got.

Is it really any different today?

Today when that person across the table from you at the restaurant says, “Just cremate me.” He's really saying, “I don't want anything special.” Perhaps he really doesn't. It may NOT be important to him or her how they are remembered, but they may not be able to see how important the remembrance of them is important to the family. They may not see that it is vital to the family that the community remembers the deceased as the family does. Perhaps the person who doesn't want anything special is really only thinking about family finances!

I think a positive step at this point is adopt pricing choices on your GPL similar to Joseph J. Earthman's Generations, LLC. Services of a funeral with burial or cremation with memorial service \$3,995 or a modest cost.



About the Author:

Lowell Pugh has had funeral director and embalmer licenses in Missouri and Texas and continues the operation of the family funeral home which started in 1904. He is publisher of **The Dead Beat** which began in 1999. He can be contacted at **The Dead Beat** address and editor@thedead-beat.com

After-Thoughts *By Joanne Howard*

Several things I've been encouraged to do lately seem awfully hard to complete. One is see our blessings in everything and to be humble. With all the natural, man-made and personal tragedies happening you have to wonder what in the world is going on.

But then I think what possible blessings can be these experiences. But then I think of how many times I have been close to tears seeing how people have assisted other people, animals or doing anything to help.

When you hear about the sacrifices that people have made to help others, you have that deep down feeling that God is there in those people's hearts. Why tragedy happens is sometimes explained in many ways. But it still hurts. We can grow from any experiences and sometimes the bad ones influence us the most.

We know that we can not stop natural disasters like hurricanes, flooding, earthquakes, tornadoes and many others. We can prepare the best that we can, but sometimes that still doesn't lessen the tragedies. No matter what the situation, people need help. We are not always able to go physically, but we can always pray and possibly send help monetarily or do whatever we can.

But the blessings?? Maybe the circumstances will help get attention to what needs to be done in case it should happen again. We see great examples of heroism though it usually has tragic results.

Man-made disasters like shootings, killings, inhuman acts that we hear about are not as easily understood or are we able to avoid. But as many people have shown, you can assist in whatever way is necessary even if it leads to your own harm. If you are not directly involved, you again can pray for all to heal or comfort for those grieving. But again we ask and where

are blessings in these acts except for man coming to the aid of fellow human beings.

If you weren't involved in the natural or man-made disasters, sometimes you are dealing with personal tragedies closer to home. Illnesses, deaths and other personal challenges are in our daily lives. Helping those experiencing those kinds of tragedies demand a different kind of help. As I mentioned before, one of the first things we can provide is prayer. We may question why God allowed these things to happen, but we have to remember that He does have reasons.

Understanding those reasons may be the hardest thing for us to accept. He will help us, if we remember to ask for ourselves and others. People at times just need our support. We don't need to know why, but to just care and provide whatever we can.

Having experienced tragedies in my life as many have in theirs, I try to remember those blessings that were there before the tragedy. With my girls, after all the years I still try to find ways I can help and of course I appreciate the time that I had the honor to be their mom.

I have mentioned in the past that I have done specials at church in remembering my daughters' birthdays and death anniversaries. This year on my oldest daughter Amy's death anniversary I decided to let her love of the Lord be shown again by her own witness. We had a recording of her last church special and her journal entry before she sang. I shared that with our church family who most had not known her personally. To say the least, it was still inspiring 14 years later and she was still sharing her faith. To this mother that was definitely a blessing. Do I

miss her? Of course, but is this a blessing years later. I think so.

I have shared many things of my daughters throughout the years. Recently a friend at church who has many foster children was talking about not having any girl toys. She had mostly had boys in the past and girl things were in short supply. I know it sounds strange but parting with my children's things is hard. Even though they would be in their 30's now and would have long ago disposed of their things, it's just another part of them I have to lose. But finally after almost 20 years I started going through their toys to find something for someone who was totally lacking.

After much cleaning I think I have organized the toys to such an extent to ask the woman if she thinks the girl would like anything. She is only with her temporarily, so I didn't think she would need much. I also question whether the girl would really want used toys. Well, I gave her a ballerina teddy bear, but really don't know if she really liked it yet. Maybe I will find out if another blessing has happened from a tragedy many years ago.

Remember to pray for all involved in all the disasters that have happened recently!!!!

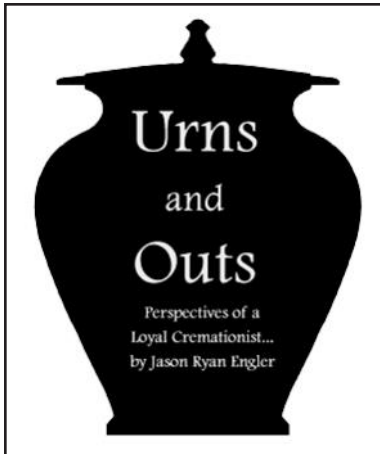


About the author: Joanne Howard is the editor of **The Dead Beat**. She has been a licensed funeral director since 1992 with Pugh Funeral Home in Golden City, MO and also the aftercare coordinator. Much of her writing in this column is influenced by her loss of her two daughters Laura at age 10 in 1997 and Amy at age 19 in 2003. Any comments or questions can be directed to 417-537-4412, P.O. Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748 or email: jfhoward53@yahoo.com

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2013	Cadillac	S&S Medalist	Hearse	Black/Black	44,000	
2011	Cadillac	S&S Medalist	Hearse	Blk top/Bronzemist	53,000	BU600339
2008	Cadillac	S&S Medalist	Hearse	Dk Blue/Dk Blue	84,400	8U500171
2008	Cadillac	S&S Medalist	Hearse	Dk Blue/Dk Blue	89,200	8U500119
2006	Cadillac	Federal	Hearse	Black/Black	52,000	6U500336
2004	Cadillac		Hearse	Black/Black	49,000	4U500108
2002	Cadillac	Superior	Hearse	Black/Black		2U500555
2001	Cadillac	Crown Superior	Hearse	Black/Black	61,000	
2000	Cadillac	Eureka	Hearse	Black/Black	75,000	YU500370
2000	Cadillac	Federal	Hearse	Blue/Black		YU500066
1999	Cadillac	Superior	Hearse	Black/Black	75,000	XU500088
1999	Cadillac	Eureka	Hearse	Blue/White		XU500178
1998	Cadillac	M&M	Hearse	Black/Black		WU500022
1997	Cadillac	M&M	Hearse	Burgundy/White		VU500107
1997	Cadillac	Superior Crown Sov.	Hearse	Blue/Beige		VU500398
1997	Cadillac	Superior	Hearse	Black/Black		VU500319
1991	Cadillac	S&S Victoria	Hearse	Blue/Silver		MR707866
Year	Make	Builder	Type	Color Combination Interior/Exterior	Mileage	Stock No.
2003	Lincoln	65"/6-Door	Limousine	Dk Blue/Dk Blue	42,000	34674104
2002	Cadillac	M&M 6-Door	Limousine	Black/Black	46,000	24550492
2001	Cadillac	M&M 6-Door	Limousine	Black/Black	42,000	14551085
2001	Cadillac	Superior 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/White		1U550391
1999	Cadillac	Eureka 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/White		XU550186
1999	Cadillac	Eureka 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/White		XU550273
1999	Cadillac	Eureka 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/White		XU550248
1998	Cadillac	S&S Presidential/6-Dr	Limousine	Black/Black		WU550509
1995	Cadillac	Superior 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/Black		SR713310
1995	Cadillac	Federal 6-Door	Limousine	Dk Blue/Light Gray		SR704839
1995	Cadillac	Superior 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/Black		SR712992
1993	Cadillac	Federal 6-Door	Limousine	Blue/White		PR728680

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Jason's is taking an issue off,
but refer to his blog:
www.cremationhistorian.com



New Book by Dr. Wolfelt Offers Daily Doses of Mindfulness

Fort Collins, CO: Companion Press announces the publication of a new book entitled **One Mindful Day at a Time: 365 Meditations for Living in the Now** by renowned grief educator Dr. Alan Wolfelt.

For most of us, life is way too hectic. We feel scattered and distracted. We're busy rushing from one required activity to the next, and when we have a few moments of downtime, we're often glued to our electronics. Is this what life is really all about? Learn to slow down and live more mindfully with this daily companion. In one brief entry for each day of the calendar year, counselor Dr. Alan Wolfelt offers small, day-at-a-time doses of wisdom and practical guidance. In just a few minutes a day, this little gem of a book will teach you to live every moment from a place of peace, purpose, and

gratitude. Living in the now is a habit you can cultivate. Published right before the holiday season, this book is an ideal gift book for your self or someone you love.

Author, educator, and grief counselor Dr. Alan Wolfelt serves as Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. The author of **Grief One Day at a Time, Understanding Your Grief** and many other books for grief caregivers and mourners, Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well so they can live well and love well. He is available for interviews on the normal, necessary journey through grief and on healing through active mourning.

One Mindful Day at a Time is available in both softcover and e-book formats. To order and to learn more about Dr. Wolfelt's books on grief and loss, visit www.centerforloss.com or call (970) 226-6050

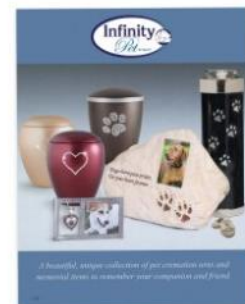
Kelco Releases New Infinity® Catalog

Big Lake, MN July 5, 2017: Kelco Supply Company, under its Infinity Pet® brand, is proud to announce the release of its latest volume and complete catalog of cremation urns, keepsake jewelry, and remembrance products for pets. The next generation Infinity Pet® catalog introduces more than 30 new products that are exclusive to Kelco.

Alicia Carr, CEO states, "As the demand for pet cremation and memorialization increases, so does the need for unique and interesting

product concepts that are meaningful and affordable. Staying true to our commitment of being there for our clients, we never stop searching for the perfect additions to our already exceptional product offering. The new Infinity Pet® catalog is designed to provide funeral directors and/or veterinarians with the information and products they need to properly support their client families in today's cremation market. We are proud to release a catalog that provides beautiful and meaningful products at all price points.

For more information on the Infinity Pet® product line, or to request a catalog, please call 800-328-7720 or email order@kelcosupply.com. You may also visit www.kelcourns.com



Cherishing Memories While Moving Forward

By Ken Doka

When a spouse or a partner dies, often the last thing on our mind is to think about ever dating again. It may seem disloyal or disrespectful to the memory of someone we loved deeply. Then too, as we experienced death and possibly long illness, we may have no desire to experience grief or caregiving again.

Yet on the journey with grief, there may come a time when we are more open to companionship and willing to consider dating again. This, too, is a normal response to the loneliness we may be experiencing. However, as we consider dating, we may want to think about a few issues.

The first question is whether we are really ready. Sometimes our willingness to date reflects more of our need to overcome our loneliness rather than to begin a new commitment. The question is whether we just want to go out, or whether we want to go out with that person?

We also need to remember that we can never replace the relationship we lost. Every individual and every relationship is unique. Inevitably, it is natural to compare one relationship with the other. As we compare, we need to remember that when we begin a relationship with someone new there will be different things to like about a person as well as quirks that may annoy. We cannot go into some sort of "relationship store" to order the same model number, replacing the one we lost.

We also may consider the effect that this new relationship will have on others who care about and who care for us, such as our children. Children, even adult children, may be ambivalent when a parent begins to date again. After the death of my dad, my mother dated an elderly widower she had known years ago. My sister and I welcomed the respite it offered her

from her loneliness, but my brother could never approve.

In some cases, it may be other family members who struggle with a new relationship. Marilyn was close to her sister-in-law, Sonya. Sonya was especially supportive after Marilyn's husband and Sonya's beloved brother, Gary, died. When Marilyn started dating Jorge 18 months after Gary's death, Sonya was resentful of his relationship with her nephews and deeply frightened that her own role in their lives—and Marilyn's—would diminish.

In the end, while we need to be sensitive to others' fears and concerns, we may need to do what we feel is in our best interest. Marilyn and Sonya shared their feelings and concerns as Marilyn reassured Sonya that whatever happened, Sonya and her family would remain an important part of their lives. In other cases we may take other action to reassure.

After the death of their mother, Landon's children were worried that if he remarried their financial interest in the family home would be threatened. He eased their concerns by drafting a will that gave his new wife life tenancy in the home while passing ownership to the children.

So as we journey with grief, we may find unexpected turns, even new relationships. We need to remember that it is our unique journey, taken on our timetable. We need not put ourselves on a schedule; we will know if and when the time is right.

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, 1710 Rhode Island Ave, NW Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036. Annual subscription-\$25.00.

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*)

Chuckles

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

A woman placed an ad offering a new Porsche for \$10. A man answered the ad, but was skeptical. "What's the gimmick?" he asked. "There's no gimmick," the woman replied. "My husband just died, and his will stated that he wanted his car sold and the money given to his secretary!"

Sitting on the side of the highway waiting to catch speeding drivers, a State Police Officer sees a car puttering along at 22 mph. He thinks to himself, "this driver is just as dangerous as a speeder!" So he turns on his lights and pulls the driver over. Approaching the car, he notices that there are five old ladies—two in the front seat and three in the back—wide-eyed and white as ghosts. The driver, obviously confused, says to him, "Officer, I don't understand, I was doing exactly the speed limit! What seems to be the problem?" "Ma'am," the officer replies, "you weren't speeding, but you should know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be a danger to other drivers." "Slower than the speed limit? No sir, I was doing the speed limit exactly...22 miles an hour!" the old woman says a bit proudly. The State Officer, trying to contain a chuckle, explains to her that 22 was the route number, not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman grinned and thanked the officer for pointing out her error. "But before I let you go, Ma'am, I have to ask ... is everyone in this car OK? These woman seem awfully shaken and they haven't muttered a single peep this whole time," the officer asks. "Oh, they'll be all right in a minute, Officer. We just got off Route 119."

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50." The second boy says, "That's nothing. My dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100." The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money."

Annie, 6 years old, get home from school. She had her first family planning lesson at school. Her mother, very interested, asks, "How did it go?" "I died of shame!" she answered. "Why?" her mother asked. Annie said, "Kooos from down the road, says that the stork brings babies. Sally, next door, said you can buy babies at the orphanage. Pete in my class says you can buy babies at the hospital." Her mother answers laughingly, "But that's no reason to be



Comments

I read the "Vol. 16 Issue 3, Blog "Why Didn't Anyone Cry at Grandma's Memorial Service?". I retired from an insurance company after many years of client service. In visiting with people after a death in the family, I have been told that cremation is economical, however, it leaves an empty place for friends and family. I always suggest at least a visitation and or service, then cremation, if desired, for those left behind, it brings a closure and the healing can begin. I think this article could be shared thru something like Reader's Digest. It is very much worth sharing.

Donna Mitchell, Joplin, MO

I really like the AFTERTHOUGHTS in this issue. First, I want to cry then at the end a smile came on my face.

Karen McKenzie, St. Peters, MO

Thank you so much for sharing "The Dead Beat" with me. It is like Reader's Digest—I can't put it down until I have read it from beginning to end.

Phyllis

I just got my copy of Dead Beat magazine, and read your story about Facebook. It hit so close to home with my son Tom, there are still people talking about him after going on 5 years. I can't imagine the loss of both of your daughters, BIG HUGS.

Frog

Been in the business "ALL" my life. Really enjoy The Dead Beat.

Rick Gabaldon

Feel free to share comments and thoughts to the editor at editor@thedeat-beat.com or mail to The Dead Beat, PO Box 145, Golden City, MO 64748.

Chuckles (Cont.)

ashamed?" "No, but I can't tell them that we were so poor that you and daddy had to make me yourselves!"

Ole does not like weddings so he rarely attends them. Lena finally got him to go to one. As they entered the church, an usher asked, "Are you on the groom's side or the bride's?" Before Lena could reply, Ole examined, "Uff-da! Are dey fighting already!"

"Ole, I tink yew love baseball more den yew love me," said Lena, as they watched yet another game on TV. Ole replied, "Vell, maybe so, Lena. But I vant yer to know dat I love yew

(Continued on page 11)

Chuckles (Cont.)

more den I love basketball."

Sven's cousin Ole showed up one night, just as supper was being served. "But Ole," said Sven. "I taut yew said yew would be coming after dinner." "Dat's right, Sven," said Ole. "Dat's what I came after!"

The doctor said to Ole, "Your leg is swollen, but I wouldn't worry about it." Ole replied, "Yeah, vell, Doc. If yew're leg vas svollen I wouldn't vorry about it either."

In church on Sunday the preacher said, "Anyone with special needs who wants to be prayed over, please come forward to the altar." Ole hopped right up and the preacher asked, "Well, Ole, what do you want us to pray for?" Ole replied, "Vell, I need you ta pray for help with my hearing." The preacher put one finger of one hand on Ole's ear, placed his other hand on top of his head, and then prayed fervently for Ole while the congregation joined in. After a few minutes, the preach removed his hands, stood back, and asked, "Ole, how is your hearing now?" "I don't know," said Ole. "Da hearing is not 'till Thursday."

A southern farmer got his pickup and drove several miles to a neighboring farm and knocked on the farmhouse door. A young boy, about 12, opened the door. "Is yer pa home?" he asked. "No, sir, he sure ain't," the boy replied. "He went to town." "Well," said the farmer. "is yer ma home?" "No, she ain't here either. She went to town with pa." "Well, then how about yer brother, Joe, is he here?" "No, sir, he went with pa and ma." The farmer stood there for a few minutes, shifting from one foot to the other, and mumbling to himself. "Is there anything I kin do fer ya?" inquired the young boy politely. "I know where all the tools are, if you want to borry one; Or maybe I could take a message for pa." "Well," said the farmer uncomfortably, "I really wanted to talk to yer pa. It's about your brother Joe getting my daughter, Pearly Mae, pregnant." The boy considered for a moment, "You would have to talk to pa

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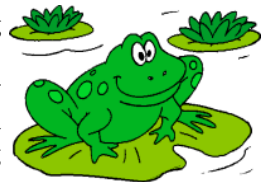
about that," he finally conceded. "I know that pa charges \$500 for the bull and \$250 for the boar hog, but I really don't know how much he gets for Joe."

Little Red Wagon

A fire fighter is working on the engine outside the station when he notices a little boy next door in a little red wagon with tiny ladders hung off the side and a garden hose tightly coiled in the middle. The boy is wearing a fire fighter's helmet and has the wagon tied to a dog and a cat. The fire fighter walks over to take a closer look. "That sure is a nice fire truck," the fire fighter says with admiration. "Thanks," says the little boy. As the fire fighter looks a little closer, he notices the boy has tied the wagon to the dog's collar and to the cat's testicles. "Little partner," the fire fighter says, "I don't want to tell you how to run your fire truck, but if you were to tie that rope around the cat's collar, I think you could go faster." The little boy says, "You're probably right, but then I wouldn't have a siren."

Talking Frog

A guy is 86 and loves to fish. He was sitting in his boat the other day when he heard a voice say, "Pick me up." He looked around and couldn't see any one. He thought he was dreaming when he heard the voice say again, "Pick me up." He looked in the water and there, floating on the top was a frog. The man said, "Are you talking to me?" The frog said, "Yes, I'm talking to you. Pick me up. Then kiss me and I'll turn into the most beautiful woman you have ever seen. I'll make sure that all your friends are envious and jealous because you will have me as your bride." The man looked at the frog for a short time, reached over, picked it up carefully, and placed it in his front breast pocket. Then the frog said, "What are you nuts? Didn't you hear what I said? I said kiss me and I will be your beautiful bride." He opened his pocket, looked at the frog and said, "Nah, at my age I'd rather have a talking frog."



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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues



ARKANSAS



Randall Lyn Carney, 57, of Osceola passed away on August 9, 2017. He graduated from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service on August 12, 1988. He managed Roller-Smith Funeral Home in Osceola, while also serving as county coroner for many years. He had also served as the CEO of the Bailey Funeral Home in South Arkansas and Northern Louisiana. Partnering with his parents, in 2008 he opened Carney funeral Home in his hometown of Blytheville, Arkansas. At the time of his death he was also serving his fourth term as Mississippi County Judge. His services were under the direction of Carney Funeral Home.

IOWA



Randy P. Lahey, 58, of Maquoketa, passed away Aug. 15, 2017. He attended Upper Iowa University where he received his bachelor degree in business. He then went on to earn his degree in Mortuary Science. Upon graduation Randy became a funeral director and was the owner and operator of Lahey Funeral Homes for almost 30 years. He was on the IFDA Ethics Board for several terms and a member of the NFDA. His services were conducted by Lahey & Dawson Funeral Service in Maquoketa.



Ruth Anne Ohde, 76, of Manning, passed away on Sept. 27, 2017. A third generation funeral director, Ruth purchased the family business in 1997. In 1978 she moved back to Manning and started working with her father and brother. She then completed mortuary school at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, served her internship and was licensed in Iowa in 1980. She received her Mortuary Science degree from Southern Illinois University in 1979. Through her roles as a funeral director and business owner, Ruth lived her passion for helping and counseling people for 38 years. She was wholeheartedly committed to the funeral service profession, serving in many volunteer capacities from a local to national level. Ruth was the first (and so far only) female president of the Iowa Funeral Directors' Association. Her services were under the direction of Ohde Funeral Home.

KANSAS



Richard R. Danner, 77, of Abilene died on July 19, 2017. He graduated from the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science. After completing his apprenticeship in Topeka, Richard returned to Abilene to work with his father until taking over the business at his father's death in 1968. He served six years in the Army



KANSAS (Cont.)

Reserves. His services were directed by the Danner Funeral Home.



Lee Roy Haynes, 89, of Edmond, died June 25, 2017. He chose his career as a funeral director with Culbertson Mortuary. He took pride in his business and relished the many friends he made during his years in business. His services were handled by Culbertson-Smith Mortuary.

MISSOURI



Harry "Skip" D. Brown, 72, of Jefferson City, passed away August 22, 2017. He graduated from Kentucky School of Mortuary Science in 1971. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1964-67 as a surgical technician. He worked for Clark Grave Vault Company. His services were under the direction of Houser-Millard Funeral Directors.



John R. Locke, 84, of Waterloo, died March 26, 2017. In early 1950 John joined the United States Marine Corps Reserve. In August 1950 before his senior year in high school his unit, "C" Battery, 6th 105 Howitzer Battalion, was called to active duty. He was discharged from the Marine Corps in April 1952. He graduated from Kansas City College of Mortuary Science in 1954. He worked as a funeral director at Locke Funeral Home for over 50 years who handled his services.



W. Levan Thurman, 94, of Richmond, passed away June 15, 2017. He served in U.S. Army during WWII. He graduated from St. Louis College of Mortuary Science and joined Thurman Funeral Home. He was a 50-year member of MFDEA and past president of 4th District. Weiker Funeral Home Inc, handled his arrangements.



OKLAHOMA



Matthew Wayne Beal, 48, of Stillwater, passed away on Oct. 2, 2017. He worked in the funeral business most of his life. His arrangements were under the direction of Strode Funeral Home.



A.N. (Sonny) Craddock, 82, of Ardmore, passed away Sept. 23, 2017. He graduated from Gupton Jones Mortuary School in Dallas. In 1957 he lived in Duncan and worked for Grantham Funeral Home before moving back to Ardmore to become a partner in the family business. He was President, and Co-Owner and operator for the Craddock Funeral Home for many years until he retired. He was past President of the Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association. His services were under the direction of Craddock Funeral Home.



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TEXAS



Martha P. Barcheers, 84, of Hemphill passed away Sept. 10, 2017. The mother of Bill Barcheers, funeral director with Starr Funeral Home. Her services were directed by Starr Funeral Home.



Richard E. "Rick" Brown, 59, of Irving, passed away Sept. 12, 2017. He was a former funeral director at Brown's Memorial Funeral Home. He is the son of Ben F. Brown Sr., past TFDA President and Jeanne Brown, owner of Brown's Memorial Funeral Home who directed his services.



Thomas Dale "Tommy" Conrad, 51, of Irving, passed away Sept. 7, 2017. In 2008, he graduated from Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, as a Funeral Director and Embalmer, later earning his certification as a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP). He worked briefly at the former



TEXAS (Cont.)

Chapel of Roses Funeral Home and then established his professional career at Brown's Memorial Funeral Home. He was instrumental in the Wreaths for Veterans of Irving/Wreaths Across America memorial celebration each December, where he took great pride in honoring all U.S. Veterans. His services were under the direction of Brown's Memorial Funeral Home.



Francis Joseph "Frank" Doherty, 88, passed away Jan. 2, 2017. He was a retired funeral director/owner. In the early 1960s he became a funeral director and owned and operated several funeral homes in Texas. His services were arranged by Brandon Cremation and Funeral Services, Brandon, FL.



Margaret "Buddy Maggie" Duhon, 45, of Austin, passed away Aug. 14, 2017. She graduated top of her class at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in Houston. She served her internship at Cook-Walden Funeral Home and started her embalming career and soon showed her amazing talent in the field. She then worked at Capital Mortuary Service. Through her career, she taught many students the skills of the trade with pride and great expertise. Her comforting personality, professionalism and compassion for the families she served followed her everywhere she went. Her services were under the direction of Cook-Walden Chapel of the Hills Funeral Home.



Robert Perry Kite, 91, of Garland, passed away on Sept. 22, 2017. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in August, 1944. He served as a Small Boat Coxswain on the LST 1040 in the Philippines and Okinawa during WWII. He worked for Earnheart Funeral Home in White-wright while he attended Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science and graduated in 1948. In 1952 he joined the faculty of Dallas Institute and named the Dean in 1953. He was appointed President in 1963 which he held until he retired in 1992. He was twice president of the National Association of Colleges of Funeral Service Education. His services were under direction of Eastgate Funeral Home.

(Continued on page 16)

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 Editor@thedead-beat.com

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Death Notices of Fellow Funeral Service Colleagues (Cont.)

TEXAS (Cont.)

(Continued from page 15)



Gloria Gene Mangham, 91, of Hurst, passed away on Sept. 21, 2017. She was the mother of Eddie Mangham of Lucas Funeral Home who handled the arrangements for her services.



Michael DeWayne Poteet, 51, of McKinney, passed away Aug. 14, 2017. He was the son of Quaid and Jan Richburg, who works for The Dodge Company. His services were under the direction of Turrentine-Jackson-Morrow Funeral Home.



James Howard "Jim" Richardson, 85, of Nederland, passed away Sept. 5, 2017. He was a veteran of the Korean War serving in the United States Air Force. He was the grandfather of Colby C. Davis, a funeral director with Cason Monk-Metcalf in Nacogdoches. His services were under the direction of Grammier-Oberle Funeral Home in Port Arthur.



Jane Stevens, 77, of Beaumont, passed away Sept. 2, 2017. She was the wife of Ken Stevens, former owner of Memorial Funeral Home in Buffalo. Broussard's Mortuary in Beaumont handled her services.



Charles Emmett Warford, 92, of Amarillo passed away on July 19, 2017. He was a member of the United States Navy. He served aboard the USS Sims

DE154, a Destroyer Escort that was in the D-Day Invasion of France in 1944, as well as in the Pacific at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He was nearly killed in a kamikaze attack, but was at Tokyo Bay when Japan formally surrendered in 1945. After his service in World War II, he attended Landig College of Mortuary Science in Houston, Texas and graduated in 1947. After graduation, he worked at mortuaries in Dallas, Abilene and Henderson, Texas before returning to Amarillo in 1962, when he and his wife, Wilma founded Warford Mortuary in the North Heights Neighborhood. In his 70 years in the Funeral Service Industry, he was a former President of the Independent Funeral Directors Association of Texas, Inc., and also held memberships in the National Funeral Directors Association, the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, Inc., the Panhandle Funeral Directors Association and the TFDA. His services were under the direction of Warford-Walker Mortuary.

The Prisoner Serving the Family of Prisoners

By Johnny Wooten

Yes, all Funeral Directors know that very few of the approval letters get approved. When a family asks a funeral director to send a letter to get funeral leave for a prisoner, it rarely ever gets approved from the prison system. When they are denied, are there ways that funeral homes can still serve that family in a meaningful way that will help not only the family but the prisoner themselves grieve through the loss of a loved one. Remember, that prisoner will one day need your services also.

Funerals are listed as emergency absences in the Offender Handbook in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice System. This absence is a privilege, not a right. It is granted to offenders who are trustworthy, work hard and who are considered acceptable security risks by TDCJ to be temporarily released to the general public and who meet the basic criteria set forth by TDCJ. Some of those criteria are:

1. Must be a Line Class I, G3 Custody Level.
2. Must be in TDCJ custody for at least six months.
3. State Jail Offenders must have J2 Level.
4. Must be within 12 months of parole eligibility.
5. Must not be convicted of Homicide, Sex Offense, Assault, Kidnapping, Robbery, Escape or any offense with use of a deadly weapon.

Also, a Offender must have no Major Disciplinary within 6

(Continued on page 17)

The Prisoner Serving the Family of Prisoners (Cont.)

(Continued from page 16)

months, no history of assaults on staff, no immigration detainees and it must not be an out of state emergency.

You, as a funeral director, can let the family know these criteria before sending the approval letter so that they are aware of what to expect. The request can only be made by the funeral home handling the arrangements.

Even though the offender may be denied emergency leave, there are still ways that the funeral home can serve the family and the Offender themselves. They are still human and grieve like everyone else. You as a funeral home are going to have to handle their arrangements one day.

Here are some ways that you can better serve the offender and provide for the family.

1. Send the Offender a card or letter with the obituary included. You can get the offenders address and TDCJ number from the family.

2. Call the unit Chaplain and inform him of the arrangements so that he can work with the offender. Believe it or not, when an offender loses a family member, the other offenders will help each other

through the grief process.

3. Take a picture or two for the family (with permission) and send it to the offender. It allows the offender some closure.

4. When talking to the Chaplain, ask for input from the offender in the arrangement process. It helps them to feel included.

Yes, you as a funeral director know that very few of these emergency absences get approved. But there are still ways that you can show mercy and compassion for these prisoners. Remember, if we look at Matthew 25: 31-46, Jesus says we are to visit prisoners. And what you do to the least of these, you did it to Jesus. Prisoners are incarcerated for

(Continued on page 28)



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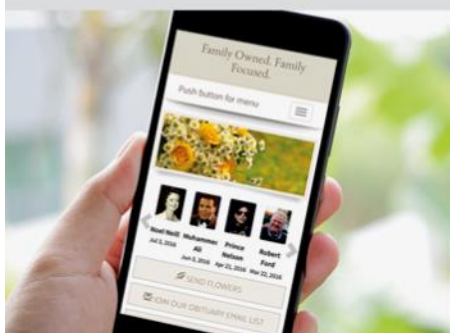
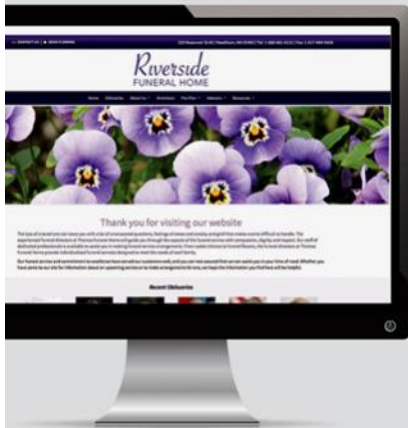
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Artery	The study of paintings	<u>Morbid</u>	A higher offer
Bacteria	Back door to cafeteria	Nitrates	Rates of pay for Working at Night
Barium	What doctors do when patients die		Normally more money than days
Benign	What you be, after you be eight	Node	I knew it
Caesarean Section	A neighborhood in Rome	Outpatient	A person who has fainted
Cat scan	Searching for Kitty	Pelvis	Second cousin to Elvis
Cauterize	Made eye contact with her	Post Operative	A letter carrier
Colic	A sheepdog	Recovery Room	Place to do upholstery
Coma	A punctuation mark	Rectum	Nearly killed him
Dilate	To live long	Secretion	Hiding Something
Enema	Not a friend	Seizure	Roman Emperor
Fester	Quicker than someone else	Tablet	A small table
Fibula	A small lie	Terminal Illness	Getting sick at airport
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1.) Get out! You may underestimate how important this is. Getting out into nature reduces [stress](#), makes you more [creative](#), improves your memory and may even [make you a better person](#).

2.) Move! We all know how important this is, but few of us do it consistently. Other than health benefits too numerous to mention, exercise [makes](#) you more alert, [happier](#), improves sleep, [increases libido](#) and makes you feel better about yourself. A Harvard study tracked a group of men for more than 70 years identified exercise as [one of the secrets of a good life](#).

3.) Enjoy family, friends! People—loved ones, friends and making new friends regularly—have been identified as [one of the biggest sources of happiness in our lives](#). Relationships are worth more than you may realize. Not feeling socially connected gives some of us a feeling of loneliness, and loneliness can lead to [heart attack, stroke and diabetes](#).

The longest-lived people on the planet all place a strong emphasis [on social engagement](#), and good relationships are more important to a long life, than even exercise.

[Friends](#) are key to [improving your life](#). [Share good news](#) and enthusiastically respond when others share good news with you to improve your relationships. Want to instantly be happier? Do [something kind](#) for them.

4.) Grateful? Say it!

[It will make you happier.](#)

[It will improve your relationships.](#)

[It can make you a better person.](#)

[It can make life better for everyone around you.](#)

5.) Pray and meditate! Prayer and meditation can [increase happiness, meaning in life, social support and attention span](#) while reducing [anger, anxiety, depression and fatigue](#). Along similar lines, a few moments of meditation can make you feel better—even if you don't do it regularly.

6.) Get some sleep! You can't cheat on sleep. It's harder to be happy when you're sleep deprived. If you lack sleep, you're also more likely to get sick. "Sleeping on it" does [improve decision making](#). Lack of sleep can make you behave badly (and sometimes

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unethically.)

Naps are great. Naps [increase alertness and heighten performance](#) on the job, increase your ability to learn and chase away negative thoughts while enhancing positive ones.

7.) Continue to grow! [Learning another language](#) can keep your mind sharp. [Music lessons](#) increase intelligence. Increasing willpower just takes [a little effort each day](#) and it's [more responsible for your success than your IQ](#). Not taking advantage of opportunities are things people look back on in their lives and [regret the most](#).

8.) Ho! Ho Ho! When you can use humor to cope with stress, you [develop a stronger immune system, reduce your risk for heart attack and stroke, experience less pain during dental work and live longer](#). Laughter should be like a [daily vitamin](#). Just remembering funny moments can [improve your relationship](#).

9.) Reach out! Touching someone—even with a phone call—can [reduce stress](#) and improve [team performance](#). Hugs make you [happier](#). Sex may improve your [immune system](#) and [extend you life](#).

10.) Keep your sunny side up! Optimism makes us healthier, happier and helps us live longer. The Army teaches soldiers optimism to [increase mental toughness](#). Yep! Being [overconfident](#) improves performance (Who knew?)



What If God Sent You Today?

From My Purview

By Reverend Janice Hoffman

Imagine if for some reason God couldn't come today and He decided to send you on His behalf. In the events you are about to experience, what difference did God make in the interactions you had with others today? Say what? This is a big and thoughtful question.

Those of us in the funeral business are very close to this question. In a sense, we do act on the behalf of our Creator as we help and assist families in laying their loved ones to rest. Interacting with others is what we do each day. We aim to make a difference with family members, comforting them with kindness as they attend to the decision making process they have been thrust into making.

Perhaps God did send us, each one of us. Perhaps He knew we would be the one best chosen to lay his beautiful creations to rest. He must have known we have the sensitivity, the thoughtfulness and a sincere sense of compassion to help others

during one of the worst times of their lives.

How conscious of your words and actions are you each day? I believe it is to our advantage to take time to pause, think of what we are going to say, choose our words wisely and then be aware of speaking them with kindness, conscious of how those words are received.

We spend each day, doing what we do for the reasons we decide, but what if we were making decisions on God's behalf, rather than our own? How would our words and actions compare living from this expanded awareness?

We are radiant, powerful beings. Even the Bible says we come where angels fear to tread. We courageously come and we hold this space for others who have come before us and for those who come after us. I do believe those of us in the funeral business have been bestowed a high honor and great responsibility.

I choose to believe God sends each one of us on His behalf to make a difference, and I wholeheartedly believe we do.



About the Author:

Ordained in 1999 as a non-denominational Christian Minister, **Reverend Janice Hoffman's** ministry

has included facilitating a Course In Miracles, leading an Attitudinal Healing support group, and hosting a guided meditation for a group that met weekly for over 13 years. Rev. Hoffman's work with mortuaries and families began in 2008. After the first funeral service Rev. Janice officiated, she had a deep awareness that honoring the life of a family's loved one was where she wanted to focus her ministry. Beginning with meeting with the family for an intake, Janice writes a custom service bringing comfort to families in shock and grief. None of us are promised tomorrow and bringing that awareness to others, fosters appreciation for those in our lives and the time we spend with them. Contact her at Janice@janicehoffman.com or 303-604-2222.

Bed of Flowers

By Anna Garrison

The moon is full.
As I start to dig this hole.
For myself to die in.
People look upon it with so much shame.
They don't know the weight of pain.
The clovers are so soft on my feet.
I listen to my heart's fast beat.
Like the rhythm to the song of my life.
So much sorrow, so much strife.
Yet it happens to be a hit.
I sing it as I step in the pit.
It starts to hum and starts out slow.
Then I sing it loud to my soul.
Unmarked grave hug me close.

Like the hug of a lonely ghost.
It's really cold under this bed of flowers.
But people will tend to me for hours.
When I'm gone.
Will you hear my song?
So, in the night I won't be alone.
Can't you hear my breathing go?
As my body hears the tone.
A musical life,
With so much strife.
I love the smell of the bed.
This death bed of dread.
I could lay here for hours.
Under this bed of flowers.

The “Logical Buyer” for your business

By Richard S. Lee

I have spent the last 25 years representing owners in the sale of their funeral home businesses. The first 10 years were very active where most sales were to larger corporate buyers (consolidators) and the next 15 years have been transactions mostly to individuals and regional buyers.

However, just in the last 5 years, there seems to be a heavy trend to where most buyers of a funeral business are either a competitor or a non-competing funeral home usually within a 30 - 50 mile radius. For a lot of Sellers, having this buyer group has been the difference between being able to sell or not being able to secure a buyer.

For owners of 100 call funeral businesses or less who want to sell, a direct competitor or surrounding

funeral home is the best match – both financially and operationally. If a Buyer is going to absorb his competitor or acquire a firm within a workable distance, the economies of scale increase where personnel, advertising and other operational costs can be managed more effectively and usually reduced. As a result, that Buyer can afford to pay more for that acquired business and still maintain much higher operating cash flow than what an individual buyer could. Conversely, most individual buyers today want a business performing a minimum of 100 calls or more with gross revenues high enough so they can make a very comfortable living after paying their debt service.

From my experience, there has always been a reluctance for owners

to sell their business to a competitor or surrounding firm. However, with the industry changing so much and it being harder for a smaller firm to secure a new owner, this is a clear and logical option for a Seller to consider.



Richard S. Lee is the President of Lee & Associates, a firm that represents funeral home owners in the sale and transfer of their funeral businesses. Since

1987, they have been involved in over 170

transactions all over the United States. The scope of their work also includes business valuations, accounting solutions and general consulting services. **Richard is always available for questions and may be reached at 407-257-5024 or email him at Leebros@aol.com**

When Insults Had Class

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: “Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease.”

“That depends, sir,” Said Disraeli, “whether I embrace your policies or your mistress.”

“He had delusions of adequacy,” - Walter Kerr

“He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire.” - Winston Churchill

“I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure.” - Clarence Darrow

“He (Ernest Hemingway) has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary.” - William Faulkner

“Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I’ll waste no time reading it.” - Moses Hadas

“I didn’t attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it.” - Mark Twain

“He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.” - Oscar Wilde

Thanks to A.J. Henshaw for sharing

Can We Agree to Disagree?

By Joe Weigel

No one likes conflict, we avoid it like the plague. However, society has reached a conclusion that disagreement is a bad thing. When it comes to business advice and decisions, that conclusion can be harmful.

I encounter disagreement most often when I'm working with a funeral company and recommend a course of action that doesn't match their plans, or find them objecting to the way I've written something on their behalf. Instead of healthy, productive discussions, the conversations sometimes turn into defensive reactions focused on guarding one's turf.

Now, the easiest thing for me to do in those situations is to simply smile, nod my head, and go along with whatever they think or want me to do. After all, they're paying the bills. But what's easiest isn't always ethically appropriate, and if someone is paying for my expertise, I'm foolish enough to assume that they want (and even need) it.

Those of us who counsel companies in funeral service, whether we're talking about attorneys, accountants, or even lowly writers, have an ethical (and often legal) obligation to act in the best interests of those we serve. We're expected to offer advice that best serves their needs, even if they don't like what we have to say.

If you want to sue a competitor, and your attorney advises that you're only going to sink a small fortune into a case in which you're not likely to prevail, she's not being argumentative. She's using her knowledge of the law, the legal arena, and the facts of the case to assess your situation and counsel you on the best course of action.

If you want to write off that personal vacation to Bermuda as a business tax deduction, and your CPA suggests that's a bad idea, he's not criticizing you. He knows from experience

what's likely to pass muster with the fine folks at the IRS and what's likely to earn a rejection and penalties.

And when you tell someone like me about the idea you have for your new ad or the copy for your website update, and I point out that you may not have noticed the negative message it inadvertently creates, I'm not trying to pick a fight. I'm seeing it through more objective eyes, particularly those of your potential audience.

Do the professionals advising you always get it right? Much as we'd like to believe we always do, I know that isn't the case. But when those professionals speak based upon their education and experience they've acquired across their careers, we get it right far more often than not.

The experts who challenge you and your way of thinking aren't trying to diminish you. Their goal is to improve your lot in life, whether that involves protecting you and your company from an unfriendly letter from the IRS or making sure your website is as communicative and persuasive as possible.



Joe Weigel is the owner of Weigel Strategic Marketing, a communications firm focused on the funeral profession that delivers expertise and results across three interrelated marketing disciplines: strategy, branding and communications.

For more information, you can visit his website at

weigelstrategicmarketing.webs.com.

He also can be reached at 317-608-8914 or joseph.weigel@gmail.com

Emerging Leaders (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

call someone they know when there's an issue? A face with a name is how our profession started... it's how it grew... it's likely how many of the successful independent owners still thrive... so let's keep that tradition going, and make sure we can create the best network possible to serve every family, every time, all across the great state of Texas!

Second, we need to look at the knowledge that comes from the network. It's no secret, we've all been licensed for different amounts of time... but we've all got a license. Does that mean, though, that every one of us got exact same education? That we have the same experiences? That we've all faced the same cases? That we all know everything? NO!!!

I'm here to tell you, as I'm certain you've either said or heard many times in your career already, the day you stop learning is the day you should probably leave. We never stop learning. And we never stop teaching. That's why we NEED to know each other on a personal level, so that we can continue to absorb and grow and serve to higher and higher levels. Stagnation makes us weak, and pride stops us from being willing to listen. So we need to share, and we need a place to do that.

You never know who will benefit from the experience you just had, and I would venture to guess that even as you read this article, right now, you can think of something you just learned from some family you recently had the privi-

lege to serve. That knowledge, no matter how small and seemingly insignificant it may be, is going to matter to someone. And it is in that spirit and for that reason that I hold up the sharing of knowledge as an enormous benefit to our organization. Story swapping matters, friends... because those stories help us all to grow!

To expand on that thought, our third big reason has to do with competition. I know that word sounds odd given the juxtaposition against all the friendly sharing and back-patting above, but really think on this one. Competition is healthy. Competition is good for you. Competition is good for the family. And I'm not talking about price lists or profit margins. I'm talking about different and innovative things that can be done to serve a family, the next level being reached, the bar being raised and then raised again.

And as we sit and share these stories with each other about what we've done, and we build the network, share wisdom, share knowledge, we also see what our team across the state is doing. Let's take cremation as an example (oh man, I brought up the C-word!!!) of how we can use this particular point to benefit all of our firms. Cremation isn't going away. If you disagree, you should probably just sell or close your doors, because you're incorrect. Given the direction it's headed, we need to be ready to embrace it.

The mentality that people only choose it for cost is also wrong. They choose it for options, and anyone who's been paying attention in the last decade knows that. So when we hear about different products, higher

levels of service, a concierge-style focus on cremation... we should be listening!

And would you like to know who it is that comes up with these ideas? Hang on for this, because it's gonna floor you... it's the families we serve! I know, you thought I was gonna say the young funeral directors. , that's wrong. However, it IS the young funeral directors who allow and encourage the employment of the new ideas. They have no bias against them, no stigma, no fear.

And THAT is where our profession grows by leaps and bounds. Those ideas then become practice, and that practice then becomes policy, and then I'm sitting at a table hearing about something that someone at XYZ Funeral Professionals does in No One Likes To Drive

(Continued on page 28)

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“Dear Counselor....”

By Bill Stalter

Dear Counselor,

What does the reversal of the judgment against the NPS trustee mean to funeral homes?

If you were hoping for a recovery that would be passed to funeral homes servicing NPS contracts, the short answer is that the reversal has no impact. Any judgment recovered by the Special Deputy Receiver will not be passed through to funeral homes for lost earnings. The SDR has submitted an application to the court to transfer most of the NPS preneed contracts to two Texas life insurance companies, and the documents related to that transfer exclude any recovery from the trustee. The SDR will contest the appeals decision, and if rejected, will retry the case to the trial court judge. If a judgment is eventually obtained, the award will go to the state guarantee associations, not the insurance companies that will administer the NPS contracts.

For funeral homes that participate in a master trust, the appeals decision could be cause for concern to banks regarding trust assets they do not control. The appeals decision states that preneed trustees cannot allow assets to be divested from their control. The NPS trial court will be required to determine if Allegiant Bank violated this requirement when it allowed the trust to continue to hold Lincoln Heritage insurance policies. Many state master trusts offer insurance and/or annuity investment options. The appeals court seems to suggest that these arrangements may not be appropriate. The same may also be true for master trusts that

follow the directions of an independent investment advisor that uses a custodial account external to the trust.

I anticipate that the trial court will find some fault with Allegiant Bank holding the Lincoln Memorial policies, and that decision will be appealed again. Any appeals decision on the standard that may be used by the trial court will be at least two years off. The uncertainty over what the proper standard should be may cause trustees to avoid investment arrangements that do not vest full control over the trust assets.



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**

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Emerging Leaders (Cont.)

(Continued from page 25)

That Far, Texas, and guess what... I'm excited! I'm excited to hear all about something different and how it worked. Moments like that are where we grow, as I hear about what I could do to set myself apart from my local competitor, and thereby offer a higher level of service to the families I am privileged to meet.

One last note... I know that most of you reading this equate the Emerging Leaders with people under 40. Let me assure you, though, as a man who is active in the group and will be 39 this year, I have no intention of stepping out of the group after my 40th birthday. We have people who are beyond that age bracket, and they provide excellent insight. The group is about knowledge and growth, not about youth. So please do not be intimidated or feel unwelcome if you're not in the "young professional" classification any longer. Some of the best ideas I've ever heard have come from the professionals who taught me how to serve, and they were all in their 50's and up when I met them... 20 years ago.

In short, I believe in our team. I'm an active part of it, and I believe that it should gain some additional focus. I believe that every region in the state would do well to have someone come and stand in the group to share what's happening in their area. And I believe that together, we can isolate and identify the best practices and greatest ideas to put forward for the whole of the profession, in Texas and beyond, so that every family who loses a loved one will receive the highest level of service to which we are capable.

And then we'll raise the bar again, and serve higher... because that's what emerging leaders do.



About the author:

Dylan Stopher is a licensed funeral director and embalmer in the states of Texas and Louisiana, and currently serves with Wilbert Vaults of Houston, LLC. He is an active member of the

SETFDA and the TFDA, and a regular contributor to both the Texas Director Magazine and the Millennial Director blog.

A New Look Comes to ICCFA. Com

Sterling, VA (September 16, 2017) - The International Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Association has unveiled a refreshed version of its website, www.iccfa.com. It is

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The Prisoner Serving the Family of Prisoners (Cont.)

(Continued from page 17)

a reason, and trust me, they know it and don't need to be reminded of it. They live through it everyday. How do I know? I am one of those prisoners. I was also a funeral director for over 20 years and remember sending those letters for the family thinking that it was a waste of time. Now, I have seen the other hand of that letter. My father passed away three weeks after I was arrested and I was not able to attend his funeral. I am guilty of my crime and signed for 165 years with no parole, but I still grieve like you. So think about it every time you start to send that letter and what little extra thing you could do for that prisoner. After all, one day you will be serving that family again and it may just be because of how you treated that prisoner.

(Editor Note: Thank you, Johnny, for sharing.)

the first major overhaul of the website since 2012. The website will feature a new design created by DOTH Brands of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The new site has been designed for enhanced navigation to help ICCFA members easily find the information they need. Now when visitors come to iccfa.com, they experience a site that is easily viewed on any device or screen size. The updated menu is designed with a focus on the three main drivers of the association: membership, education and legal help. Popular content such as event and program information, meeting registration, and the ICCFA Member Directory are still available, but in a more streamlined and user-friendly approach.

Founded in 1887, the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association is the only international trade association representing all segments of the cemetery, cremation, funeral and memorialization profession. Its membership is composed of more than 9,100 rooftop locations and 18,000 professionals in the cemetery, funeral home and crematory industries, as well as supplier and related businesses worldwide.

Oxymorons

1. Is it good if a vacuum really sucks?
2. Why is the third hand of the watch called the second hand?
3. If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?
4. If Webster wrote the first dictionary, where did he find the words?
5. Why do we say something is out of whack? What is a whack?
6. Why does "slow down" and "slow up" mean the same thing?
7. Why does "fat chance" and "slim chance" mean the same thing?
8. Why do "tug" boats push their barges?
9. Why do we sing "Take me out to the ball game" when we are already there?
10. Why are they called "stands" when they are made for sitting?
11. Why is it called "after dark" when it really is "after light"?
12. Doesn't "expecting the unexpected" make the unexpected expected?
13. Why are a "wise man" and a "wise guy" opposites?
14. Why do "overlook" and "oversee" mean opposite things?
15. Why is "phonics" not spelled the way it sounds?
16. If work is terrific, why do they have to pay you to do it?
17. If all the world is a stage, where is the audience sitting?
18. If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?
19. If you are cross-eyed and have dyslexia, can you read all right?
20. Why is bra singular and panties plural?
21. Why do you press harder on the buttons of a remote control when you know the batteries are dead?
22. Why do we put suits in garment bags and garments in a suitcase?
23. How come abbreviated is such a long word?
24. Why do we wash bath towels? Aren't we clean when we use them?
25. Why doesn't glue stick to the sides of the bottle?
26. Why do they call it a TV set when you only have one?
27. Christmas—What other time of the year do you sit in front of a dead tree and eat candy out of your socks?
28. Why do we drive on a parkway and park on a driveway?
I dunno, why do we?



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