

January 2018

Volume 67, Issue 1

Texas Director

The Official Publication of the Texas Funeral Directors Association

www.tfda.com



TFDA Puts On Wreaths Across America Ceremony at Capitol

Plus

Show Me
the Money

The Tragedy at
Sutherland Springs

Are You a
Considerate Person?

Southeast
Award Winners

TEXAS
SERVICE
LIFE

Happy
New Year
2018

Texas Service life is excited about 2018, and our
NEW AFTERCARE PROGRAM!

Please contact our Marketing Department at the number below
to discuss how we can better serve you.

Family1[®]

800.756.7306 • WWW.TSLIC.COM

LIFE INSURANCE OR ANNUITY UNDERWRITTEN BY TEXAS SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.
FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.PREPAIDFUNERALS.TEXAS.GOV WWW.DOB.TEXAS.GOV



TEXAS FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

1513 South Interstate 35
Austin, Texas 78741
512/442-2304
Fax: 512/443-3559
www.tfda.com

STAFF
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Ann Singer
ann@tfda.com

MEMBER AND REGIONAL SERVICES
Joyce Dawson
joyce@tfda.com

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION
Mary Yanes
mary@tfda.com

FINANCE
Debbie Russ

LOBBYIST
Bill Haley
bhaley1@gmail.com

PUBLISHER
Sail House Publishing
3510 Crowncrest Dr.,
Austin, TX 78759
512-346-0892
kscheberle@austin.rr.com

PUBLISHER
Kim Scheberle

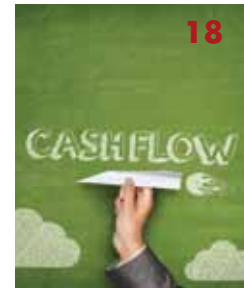
EDITOR
Alice Adams
rtadams2@aol.com

ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER
Kiki Pantaze

ADVERTISING SALES
Patty Huber
512-310-9795
210-579-7054 - Fax
phuber2@austin.rr.com

CONTENTS

January 2018
Volume 67, Issue 1



HIGHLIGHTS

- 11** Wisdom for the New Year
- 12** TFDA Puts on Wreaths Across America Ceremony at Capitol
- 14** The Tragedy at Sutherland Springs
God's House No Longer a Safe Sanctuary
- 18** Show Me the Money
Tips for Directors on Collection Policies
- 20** American Deathcare Spending in 2017
- 22** Working in Funeral Service While Going to School
– Does It Matter?
- 24** How Family Engagement Adds Value to Personalization
- 26** Are You a Considerate Person?
- 30** Celebrity Passings in 2017
- 38** A Fitting Farewell to the French King of Rock 'n Roll

DEPARTMENTS

- 4** President's Message | **6** TFDA Leadership | **8** TFDA News
- 10** Bravos & Bouquets | **30** Memorials & Obituaries
- 34** TFDA Services Inc. | **37** Calendar of Events | **37** Index to Advertisers



Three Simple Goals for Every Director This New Year

Lee Castro



"This year believe that anything is possible. Start each day with goals. Eat more real food. Buy good books and make time to read them. Drink water. Exercise daily even when it sounds like a terrible idea. Shop for quality not quantity. Purge the unnecessary and decrease clutter. Hug the ones you love. Find the best in others. Show others the best in yourself."

-Unknown

It's the New Year, so that about covers it, right? Well not quite. TFDA members have a busy year ahead, beginning today...and I'm a natural-born optimist so I know we can get done the work we have ahead.

The difference between me and a pessimist? An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

Before 2017 is but a speck in our rear-view mirror, I want to share with you the pride I have for TFDA, its members and funeral directors everywhere for being the first to step up to the plate, to give of themselves and keep on giving, whenever and wherever there's a need.

I saw this during Hurricane Harvey when directors across

the state and around the country lent helping hands to firms without electricity, with several feet of flood waters in their firms AND their homes.

Directors in boats, making sure their neighbors and total strangers were out of harm's way. Helping families of victims or families who lost loved ones during the flood, improvising where necessary and relying on fellow directors when the need arose.

Then recently, directors everywhere reached out to their fellow directors charged with caring for the victims and their families after the rampage that took the lives of 26 congregants at Sutherland Springs Baptist Church.

These much needed "random acts of kindness" made all the difference, between suffering and peace, reassurance. From being totally alone to being among helpful and courageous new friends. From helplessness to hope...and I couldn't be prouder to count myself among these unsung heroes, the selfless directors who constantly put others before themselves. Thanks to all of you for representing our profession so well.

So I'm excited! About what

(besides my family, my profession and my faith)? I'm excited about the opportunities of 2018. But we're also going to have to work, individually and together to make some of our opportunities, and I invite you to make the following three commitments:

1) I want each one of you to commit, here and now, to reach out to local legislators...to get to know them as individuals and inform them about why you chose the funeral profession and how your calling is to serve your community each and every day.

2) Commit to contribute to TFDA's PAC, either through our several fundraisers or our bank draft plan.

3) Finally to attend at least one regional meeting this year and attend at least one day of our annual convention, scheduled for Galveston and featuring – thanks to the sponsorship of Legacy Funeral Group – Dr. Alan Wolfelt, this nation's leading grief expert.

We also want to change the model for our committees. Instead of simply signing up and attending one meeting during our annual Leadership Conference, we're asking each committee to communicate throughout the year, either through in-person or teleconferenced meetings...to accomplish real goals serving to build our association and help make membership even more meaningful and beneficial than it is today.

All of this will prepare us for the upcoming review of the Texas Funeral Service Commission by the Sunset Commission. This outcome will either be in our favor as funeral service profession-

als or it will heavily impact the value of our professional licenses.

This is a big ask, I realize. We all have families to serve, staff duties and business to manage, as well as provide for our own families, not only financially but also with our presence and involvement.

So, I challenge you. Find, at minimum, 30 minutes, three days a week, you can dedicate to your professional association... whether it's making phone calls, inviting new members to join us or taking a proactive role in your committee, introducing yourself to local legislators or reaching out to mortuary students and inviting them to be your guest at the next regional meeting or a day at the convention. Just 30 minutes a day, three days a week for a total of 90 minutes a week. What a difference we can make!

Just think how much momentum we will have, going into the next session? How much camaraderie we've developed as a result of our collaborations? How powerful our voices will be if we have to defend what we need to do our jobs as professionals?

Lao Tzu is often quoted: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

What I've outlined here isn't easy. I'll give you that, but together – I'm convinced – we can achieve anything.

Wishing you a safe, prosperous and happy New Year!

I look forward to seeing each of you on the road this year, and in the meantime, I'll be working alongside you to make this year a success for funeral service, your practice and TFDA!

EDUCATE – ADVOCATE!



Twinwood Mortuary Service

TOLL FREE: (844) 2-EMBALM

Houston Local: (713) 526-1234 Fax: (713) 529-1113

HOUSTON'S PREMIER INDEPENDENT MORTUARY SERVICE

***Rapid
Removals**

***Excellent
Embalming**

***Superior
Service**

**We offer Removals, Embalming, Refrigeration, Ship-In and Ship-Out Service,
International Ship-Outs, Overland Transportation, Airport Transfers,
Documentation Service, Complete Cremation Service,
and Funeral Director's for Graveside Services.**

Learn more about us by visiting our Website:

TFDA

www.twinwoodmortuary.com

NFDA



**Our service area is all of Houston and Southeast Texas, including Galveston, Conroe, Katy, Sugar Land,
Freeport, Baytown, League City, Texas City, Pearland, Rosenberg, Friendswood,
Pasadena, Tomball, Kingwood, Clear Lake, and more.**

We transport all over Texas and Louisiana.

4801 Almeda Rd Houston, TX 77004

Email us at: Twinwood.Mortuary@comcast.net

TFDA Executive Board Officers



Lee Castro
President
Legacy Chapels
 4610 South Jackson Road
 Edinburg, TX 78539
 (956) 618-5900
 lee@legacychapelsrgv.com



Charles W. "Chuck" Robertson, CFSP
President Elect
Robertson Funeral Directors
 P. O. Drawer 1090
 Clarendon, TX 79226
 (806) 874-3515
 c.robertson@amaonline.com



E. Gene Allen, CFSP, CPC
Secretary Treasurer
Kerrville Funeral Home, Inc.
 1221 Junction Hwy.
 Kerrville, TX 78028
 (830) 895-5111
 gallen@kfhtx.com



Heather Edwards Hauboldt
Past President
Texas Service Life Insurance Co.
 209 Woodridge Drive
 Victoria, TX 77904
 (800) 756-7306
 hhauboldt@tslic.com



Wayne Giese
Director at Large
Memorial Oaks Chapel, Inc.
 1306 West Main
 Brenham, TX 77833
 (979) 836-4565
 dawg1419@yahoo.com



Bill Vallie
NFDA Policy Board Rep.
Sunset Memorial Gardens & Funeral Home
 6801 E. Business 20
 Odessa, TX 79762
 (432) 559-4252
 vallie@legacyfuneralgroup.com

2017-2018 Board of Directors



Christopher Aguilar
Dodge Seguin



Tiffany Aguilar
Palmer Mortuary Seguin



Tony Aguilar
Texas Service Life Insurance Co. Cumbly



Blue Broussard
Broussard's Mortuary, Inc. Beaumont



James Campbell
Robert Massie Funeral Home San Angelo



Joseph D. Conde, CFSP
Palm Valley Memorial Gardens Funeral Home Pharr



Brant Davis
Amarillo College Amarillo



Colt Ellis
Ellis Funeral Home Muleshoe



Jim Kurtz
SinoSource Fairview



Ryan Lange
Lange Funeral Home Ballinger



Jay Morrill
Lucas Funeral Home & Cremation Svcs. Keller



Lois Keller Nelson
Cypress Fairbanks Funeral Home Houston



Ruben B. Ontiveros
Texas Service Life Insurance Co. Austin



David Patterson, CFSP
Global Mortuary Affairs, LLC Mesquite



Sabrina Young, CFSP
Harper Talasek Funeral Homes Temple

Executive Director
Ann Singer
Texas Funeral Directors Association
 1513 S. Interstate 35
 Austin, TX 78741
 (512) 442-2304
 Fax (512) 443-3559
 ann@tfda.com

Enroll Online
TODAY!

ROPE A GREAT DEAL

Look at what Directors Choice Assignment Services is rolling out for the new year!

- New fee structure
- Preneed funerals with Funeral Directors Life/Funeral Agency paid same day at a greatly reduced fee
- New, easy-to-use system
- No claim forms*

**Unless required by insurance company*

***Better, Faster, Easier
Life Insurance Assignments***

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Melanie Carr, General Manager

1-800-692-3688

melanie.carr@directorschoiceservices.com

DIRECTORS
Choice
ASSIGNMENT SERVICES®

www.directorschoiceservices.com



Southeast Award Winners



Ed C. Smith Lifetime Achievement Award –
Wayne Giese



Funeral Director of the Year – Jeffrey Nobles



Supplier of the Year – Michelle R. Nowak

TFDA

Houston's Choice

NFDA

KIRK MORTUARY SERVICE

of HOUSTON

1-800-825-4603

www.kirkmortuary.com

The Leading Independent Commercially Licensed
Embalming Establishment in the
Houston/Galveston Area.
WHEN QUALITY COUNTS

REMOVALS, EMBALMING, TRANSPORTATION, DIRECT CREMATION SERVICES,
GRAVESIDE SERVICES OR SPECIAL SERVICES UPON REQUEST

—COMPLETE SHIP OUT SERVICE—



Robert C. (Bobby) Davis
Owner & Operator

HOUSTON 713/869-6621
FAX 713/869-8614

2017 AIRLINE DRIVE • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77009

If this is what you see...



FOCUS.

Poor driving decisions could keep you and your employees from making it home S.A.F.E. today.



www.federatedinsurance.com/drivesafe/attention



To learn more about our Drive S.A.F.E. risk management resources, please contact your local marketing representative.

federatedinsurance.com

Ward's 50® Top Performer
A.M. Best® A+ (Superior) Rating

Federated Mutual Insurance Company and its subsidiaries*
17.02 Ed. 12/17 *Not licensed in all states. © 2017 Federated Mutual Insurance Company

BRAVOS & BOUQUETS

Prayer Request: Please keep **Karen Grice**'s daughter **Laura** and the family in your prayers as Laura recovers from brain surgery performed the Tuesday before Christmas. After a weeklong hospitalization, Laura will be recovering at home.

Congratulations to **Charlotte Chism Waldrum, Gary Westerman** and the participating funeral directors in Irving on another well-coordinated Wreaths Across America laying of wreaths and ceremony honoring our veterans at Oak Grove Cemetery.

Attention all directors who also serve as fire fighters and EMTs for their community volunteer fire departments. Please notify the office at 512-442-2304 if you serve in your town's VFD.

Cody Jones, Owner/Funeral Director, **Callaway-Jones Funeral & Cremation Centers** in Bryan, will be a presenter at the 2018 NFDA Cremation Retreat, to be held Feb. 23-25 at Tradewinds Island Resort at St. Pete's Beach, Florida. His topic will be "A Funeral Home Facelift for

Today's Modern Family."

Cody is a fifth generation Funeral Director and a graduate of Southern Methodist University and the Commonwealth Funeral Institute of Houston (Class of 2004), where he received the distinguished honor of admittance into the National Funeral Service Honor Society.

Welcome home, **Mary Yanes!** So glad to hear your cheery voice and see your

smiling face. Joyce was probably happiest to see you.

Congratulations to **Tiffany & Chris Aguilar** as they prepare to greet the newest member of their family.

Big thanks to **Jay Carnes** for helping out as a Salvation Army Bell Ringer. A great organization that does amazing work throughout our state. Dig deep!



PRESS SEND

Taking photos at the regional TFDA meetings? We want them to publish!

Just send them to kscheberle@austin.rr.com. Select "original file size" when sending.

Miller & Sons FUNERAL CAR SALES

Without quality, there is no value!



2018 FEDERAL RENAISSANCE



2018 EAGLE KINGSLEY



2018 EAGLE/FEDERAL 70" RAISED ROOF



7138 ENVOY COURT
DALLAS, TEXAS
75247-5102

WWW.HEARSEANDLIMO.COM
SALES@HEARSEANDLIMO.COM

TOLL FREE : 800.822.9586
BUSINESS : 214.828.1095
FAX : 214.827.0136

Wisdom for the New Year

Here are some New Year's quotes that will help you close out the departing year and ring in all that may come in the new year. Some of these folks you may know. Others, not as familiar. However, they all will inspire you to celebrate each moment of life: yesterday, today and tomorrow. (With thanks to Thought&Co. for the collection.)

MICHAEL ALTSHULER: The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot.

BROOKS ATKINSON: Drop the last year into the silent limbo of the past. Let it go, for it was imperfect, and thank God that it can go.

HENRY WARD BEECHER: Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past.

HAL BORLAND: Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us.

BUDDHA: Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.

ALBERT EINSTEIN: Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

I feel that you are justified in looking into the future with true assurance because you have a mode of living in which we find the joy of life and the joy of work harmoniously combined. Added to this is the spirit of ambition which pervades your very being, and seems to make the day's work like a happy child at play.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.

ELLEN GOODMAN: Maybe this year we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives not looking for flaws, but looking for potential.



MAX LUCADO: Lower your expectations of earth. This isn't heaven, so don't expect it to be.

JAY LENO: New Year's Eve, where auld acquaintance be forgot! Unless, of course, those tests come back positive.

BRAD PAISLEY: Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one.

EDITH LOVEJOY PIERCE: We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day.

NEAL SHUSTERMAN, DOWNSIDERS: People would cheer, throw confetti and then go about breaking the resolutions they had made only moments before.

VERN MCLELLAN: What the New Year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the New Year.

THOMAS MANN: Time has no divisions to mark its passage. There is never a thunderstorm or blare of trumpets to announce the beginning of a new month or year. Even when a new century begins, it is only we mortals who ring bells and fire off pistols.

MARK TWAIN: Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

OPRAH WINFREY: Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.

ERIC ZORN: Making resolutions is a cleansing ritual of self-assessment and repentance that demands personal honesty and, ultimately, reinforces humility. Breaking them is part of the cycle.



Capital Mortuary Services, Inc.

"We Are Here When You Need Us"

512-373-8467

"THE PROFESSIONAL CHOICE IN AUSTIN METROPLEX AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES"

Please visit our website at: www.capitalmortuaryservices.com

CMS Family Owned & Operated	CMS Permit and Certificate Procurement
CMS On-Site Crematory	CMS National and International Shipping
CMS Removals & Transport	CMS Easy Access Located 2 Blocks off I-35
CMS On Site Embalming Facility	CMS Licensed staff for Funeral and Graveside Services
CMS We Offer Complete Shipout Services	

Fax 877-505-1106

cms@capitalmortuaryservices.com

201 Victor St. • Austin, TX 78753

Member TFDA & NFDA



TFDA Puts on *Wreaths Across America* Ceremony at Capitol

At 11 a.m. on December 11, 2017, wreath laying ceremonies at all 50 state capitols across the United States were held. In Texas, the effort was led once again by the Texas Funeral Directors Association, which ordered up beautiful weather for the ceremony. Special guests for this year's event included Candy Martin, Past President of the Gold Star Mothers, Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Vietnam Veteran Ron Ridgeway, who was a prisoner of war for five years, and Texas Rep. Tony Dale.

Both Martin and Land Commissioner Bush spoke to those gathered at the ceremony.

TFDA Executive Board members also spoke about the event's meaning and the importance of remembering and honoring our veterans. Speakers included TFDA President Lee Castro, TFDA President Elect Chuck Robertson, David McCoskey, Brad Shotts, Gene Allen and Charles Hauboldt II. Many

other TFDA members were on hand to support the event and honor veterans.

Additionally, the Westlake High School Chamber Women's Choir provided patriotic music, with Wesley McCoy on the bagpipes and a member of the DPS Honor Guard playing Taps.

Texas State Cemetery Ceremony

In addition to the State Capitol ceremony that took place on Dec. 11, ceremonies took place on Saturday Dec. 16 at 1,422 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea, and abroad. More than 1.5 million remembrance wreaths were placed.

At Arlington National Cemetery specifically, 244,700 wreaths (one for each marker there) were placed by more than 75,000 volunteers, the largest crowd to ever participate there. Nearly 500 truckloads of wreaths were transported across the country through a network of hundreds of volunteer drivers, donated trucking and diesel, and countless hours of dedicated volunteers committed to the mission to Remember, Honor and Teach.

One of those locations was the Texas State Cemetery, where Ellen Fuller and co-chairs, Charlotte Chism Waldrum, Brad Shotts and Michael Land honored the 2,486 veterans resting there.

Hundreds of volunteers helped make the event special.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott additionally spoke and helped honor veterans.



WAA Event at Texas State Cemetery



Volunteer co-chair and Chris Kyle family friend, Brad Shotts places a Navy wreath in honor of Taya, the children and Chris Kyle during the Wreaths Across America event.

The TRAGEDY at Sutherland Springs

God's House No Longer a Safe Sanctuary

By Alice Adams



Sunday, Nov. 5, 2017, dawned with a cloudless sky and perfect fall weather in the area of Texas south and east of San Antonio.

One can only imagine activities in many homes in and surrounding the small southeast Texas town of Sutherland Springs as families prepared for Sunday morning worship. A hurried breakfast, hair combed, teeth brushed, a search for a missing shoe, “Where’s my phone?” Carrying Bibles to the car. A normal Sunday for just about every household.

At First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, the usual 40 or 50 worshipers took their seats in

the chapel’s pews. Songs were sung, Scripture was read, the offering plates passed.

As the congregation took their seats for the sermon, Brother Bryan Holcombe arose and started down the aisle for the podium at the front of the chapel. It was about 11:20 a.m. He had agreed to preach this Sunday in the absence of Pastor Pomeroy and his wife, who were out of town this particular day of worship.

At the same time, a dark figure emerged from a vehicle parked at the service station across the street, wearing black tactical gear, a ballistic vest and a black face-mask featuring a white skull. He was carrying an AR-15 pattern Ruger AR-556 semi-automatic rifle.

That’s when the shooting began...first one or two random shots as the shooter walked toward the church and then a barrage of bullets, coming through the chapel’s windows

before the cold-blooded, crazed shooter made his way to the door of the little church and walked calmly down the aisles, intent on killing his ex-mother-in-law while wounding 20 and ending the lives of 26 innocent members of the congregation, sitting in the pews or scrambling for shelter.

The primary target – the former mother-in-law – was absent this particular Sunday.

Among the dead in this nation’s 5th deadliest gun massacre: the Pomeroy’s 14-year-old daughter Anabelle Renae Pomeroy, described by church members as always smiling, always willing to pitch in, an angel with dark hair and sparkling black eyes.

After emptying several magazines of ammunition on the congregation, the shooter – a former U.S. Airman who had spent a year in the brig and was then booted from the military

with a bad conduct discharge – ran to his SUV.

Hearing what he decided must be gunfire, neighbor Steven Willeford grabbed his AR-15 and seeing the shooter retreating from the church, shot twice, wounding the shooter in the leg and torso.

As the shooter’s SUV sped off, Willeford flagged down passing motorist Johnnie Langendorff and the two followed the SUV on a high-speed chase until the shooter crashed his vehicle and took his own life with a gunshot to the head. He was later reported to have three gunshot wounds – Willeford’s two hits and the lethal bullet through his brain.

Meanwhile 10 of the wounded, in critical condition, were rushed to Connally Memorial Medical Center in Floresville, University Hospital in San Antonio, and Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston.

Among the fatalities, 23 people were killed inside the church, two outside and another victim died at the hospital.

The remainder of the day of the shooting and well into the following Monday, three law enforcement organizations examined the gory crime scene. Bodies – some adults, some children – were identified and removed, one after the other...all ages who had come to the small, white chapel that morning for teaching and fellowship that would deepen their relationships with their God.

Investigators told area and national media they had found 15 empty magazines, holding 30 bullets each. A camera used to film services showed the 26-year-old shooter shouting obscenities and pausing firing at the congregants only to reload until he ran out of ammunition.

The crime scene – which will be demolished and the church rebuilt – wasn’t cleared of victims until late Monday. All bodies were taken to the Bexar County Medical Examiner’s office and then released to funeral homes selected by the families of the victims.

Directors Called to Serve

TFDA was called upon to supply a refrigerated unit to San Antonio, which was delivered by the Disaster Team on that fateful Sunday.

According to The Mirror newspaper, until Nov. 5th, the day of the church massacre, in 309 days of 2017, there had been 307 shootings with at least four victims in the U.S. The Mirror article quoted statistics published by the Gun Violence Archive.

As families selected funeral homes and made arrangements, Bertha Cardenas-Lomas, who heads the board of the Sutherland Springs Cemetery, was tasked with scheduling

the interments after the funeral services and the gravesite rites. The cemetery, built by Dr. John Sutherland on a Spanish Land Grant in the 1850s, usually has only about 15 burials each year.

“Words fail when saints and heroes fall,” Vice President Mike Pence said at a vigil in neighboring Floresville on the following Wednesday evening. During the vigil, Vice President Pence thanked the first responders for their life-saving efforts and the two neighbors who are credited with stopping the gunman from killing anyone else.

The service came just hours after he met personally in Sutherland Springs with those who were injured and family members of those who were killed. “I know the cherished names of the fallen will live on forever in the

hearts of those who knew them,” he said. “But let me assure you their names will also be enshrined in the hearts of every American.”

Before the vice president spoke, Texas Governor Greg Abbott addressed the crowd. He put an emphasis on prayer, God, and the resilient spirit of those in the community. “We will not be overcome by evil,” Abbott told the crowd. “We will overcome evil with good.”

The Texas Funeral Directors Association asked members to volunteer if assistance was needed by the funeral homes in the Sutherland Springs area.

Edinburg’s Ceballos-Diaz Funeral Home Director Johnny Garcia signed up immediately. He said he sees his 25-year career as a gift. “The reason I decided to get into the funeral business was to make a difference in people’s

lives. I’ve always believed in serving others before myself,” he told local media.

When Garcia heard the news about the mass shooting in a Sutherland Springs church, he saw a chance to help others before himself. “The first reaction was a whole community is suffering. It wasn’t just a family, but a whole community.”

“My role would be anywhere where I am actually needed,” the licensed funeral director and embalmer told a RGV newspaper, “so wherever the community would need me – whether it be for preparation of their loved ones or to actually help do the funeral services themselves. We’ll actually take a hearse, too.”

“If we are called upon, we are going to be used as manpower to assist in the actual funeral services themselves,” he said.

Handling the Services for Victims in Sutherland Springs

Joann Lookingbill Ward, 30
Emily Garcia, 7
Brooke Bryanne Ward, 5
Funeral services held at the direction of Castillo Mission Funeral Home including a mass of Christian burial at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church.

Haley Krueger, 16
Funeral services held at the direction of Mission Park Funeral Chapels South, San Antonio.

Dennis Neil Johnson Sr., 77
Funeral services held at the First Baptist Church in Floresville.

Sara Johns Johnson, 68
Funeral services held at the First Baptist Church in Floresville.

Ricardo Rodriguez, 64, and his wife Therese Rodriguez, 66.
Funeral services were held at Grace Bible Church in La Vernia, followed by interment at Sutherland Springs Cemetery.

John Bryan Holcombe, 60, and his wife Karla Plain Holcombe, 58
Their son Marc Daniel Holcombe, 36
Marc’s daughter, Noah Grace Holcombe, 1
Crystal Marie Holcombe, 36, wife of survivor John Holcombe
Crystal’s children Gregory Lynn Hill, 13, Emily Rose Hill, 11 and Megan Gail Hill, 8 (Crystal was 18 weeks pregnant).

Franklin’s Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements for the funerals of the Holcombes and the Hills, held on November 15 at the Floresville Event Center. There was a private burial at a later time at Sutherland Springs Cemetery.

Lula Woicinski White, 71
There was a private family memorial service that was not made public.

Annabelle Renae Pomeroy, 14
Funeral services were held at First Baptist Church, La

Vernia. She was buried in a private family-only service at Sutherland Springs Cemetery.

Robert Scott Marshall, 56, and his wife Karen Sue Marshall, 56
More than 500 people attended a private funeral for Scott and Karen Marshall held at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph on Nov. 9. A traditional military funeral was held for the couple and was closed to the media and the public at their family’s request.
Karen Marshall was promoted posthumously to senior master sergeant. She had been planning to retire from the military soon. Scott Marshall, already a military retiree, was a civilian employee at the base.

Keith Allen Braden, 62
Funeral services were held at the direction of Finch Funeral Chapel in La Vernia. Burial followed at Sutherland Springs Cemetery.

Tara E. McNulty, 33
Funeral services were held at the direction of The Vineyard Funeral Home in Floresville. Services were held at the First Baptist Church in Floresville. A remembrance reception followed at Studio C in Floresville. Burial was private.

Peggy Lynn Warden, 56
A memorial service was held in the Cowboy Fellowship Church in La Vernia. A tireless church volunteer, she died shielding the body of her 14-year-old grandson Zachary Poston.

Robert Michael Corrigan, 51, and his wife Shani Louise Corrigan, 51
A memorial service for Chief Master Sgt. (retired) Robert and Shani Corrigan was held at First Baptist Church of La Vernia. Arrangements were by Franklin Funeral Home of Floresville.



Charles and Arlene Franklin were two of many funeral directors called to service in the wake of the Sutherland Springs tragedy. This memorial tree was on display over the holidays.



was help the families. I would have done most anything for them,” he said.

Working with Franklin Funeral Home’s Arlene Franklin and her son Charlie Franklin in Floresville, Vaughan’s Lydia Huffinam-Moon began making arrangements to help any way they could. Because the Franklin’s were chosen to care for the eight victims in the Holcombe family, Vaughan’s was asked to help by providing white coaches.

On Nov. 15, a caravan of seven white hearses drove from Alvarado to Floresville and Franklin Funeral Home, in time to ferry the individualized caskets for the service at the city’s event center. The vehicles were driven by Vaughan employees and two volunteers from the Fort Worth area.

“It was the largest service I’ve been involved in,” Ardeen said, “and I’ve been in funeral service forever, but I’ve never been in anything like that. Like most directors, I’ve buried two or three at a time, but never eight members of one family.

“There were 3,000 people, just signing the register book,” he said. “Quite a turn out. I had never seen anything like that, thank God.”

The funeral director said he could see the shock at the devastation and the sadness in the

Like Garcia, veteran funeral director and longtime TFDA member Ardeen Vaughan of Vaughan Specialty Automobiles in Alvarado, saw news of the tragedy on TV. “I have done business with funeral homes in the area and wanted to help... and the least I could do

eyes of the mourners. “But the people came together and worked together, supporting each other and handling the details,” he added.

Vaughan also had high praise for the cemetery crew, who had prepared the seven grave sites and were awaiting Vaughan’s coaches as they traveled the 12 miles from Floresville to Sutherland Springs Community Cemetery.

“The road into the cemetery circled around in a U,” the director said. “Each casket was placed on a lowering device, and because the interment was private, we parked the vehicles on the road in front of the cemetery. At the end of the interments, there was a balloon release. Mrs. Franklin and her son did a good job.”

So Very Personal for the Franklins

Arlene Franklin, whose husband Charles Franklin was a member of TFDA before his death, buried 13 of the 26 Sutherland Springs victims. “Most were personal friends,” she explained, “and my son was in school with some who died. The number of deaths and how it happened was mind blowing. Many of us still have trouble believing it.

“We were in church when it happened,” Franklin continued. “One of our employees texted me, so I stepped outside and called her back. We have a retired sheriff in our congregation. I shared what I had been told and at the end of our service, we stayed and had prayer. Everybody knew everybody, so it wasn’t just a tragedy in another town. All of us felt the brunt of what happened.”

Meeting with the families and handling the details of the large service for the eight members of the Holcombe family as well as coordinating the other services took an emotional toll, Franklin admitted. “At the end of the services, my son Charlie hugged me and

whispered, ‘We did it, Mom.’ I knew then my husband was right beside me in spirit, proud of both of us.”

The funeral home owner is very proud of her neighbors living in the small communities around Sutherland Springs “I’ve never seen people come together and support each other like this. Sutherland Springs is so small, but everyone is practically family,” Franklin said, “and we’re still helping each other get through, dealing with everything as it comes.”

She is also proud to be part of funeral service in Texas. “So many offered to help,” she said. “People came from everywhere. Vaughan’s sent all seven hearses for the nine members of the Holcombe family. An 18-month old was buried with his father. Another family member was pregnant.”

Elegant Limo Service of San Antonio made sure every funeral had lead cars and limos.

Palmer Funeral Home provided an Escalade and two Suburbans.

Four Mercedes buses were required to transport the 42 pallbearers needed for the large family service.

“The City’s Event Center is 15 miles from the cemetery, and as the lead car entered the cemetery gate, the last of the procession was leaving the Event Center’s parking lot. It stretched that far,” she said.

Also taking part in the processions were members of police departments from the surrounding area as well as representatives from the FBI and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Roger Garza discounted prices for tents, chairs and lowering devices at the cemetery while Joe Garza donated concrete liners for every grave.

The Southern Baptist Association of Texas covered all funeral costs plus assisted the victims’ families in purchasing cemetery spaces around them.

The City of Floresville donated employees, who set up everything at the Events Center, which also was donated for the Holcombe family service.

“In this profession, you learn to separate your feelings and focus on helping the family,” Franklin said. “After everyone else is taken care of, you deal with your own grief.

“We continue to check in with the families, making sure they’re doing okay. I want to give them the space they need, but they also know I’m here – I’m here to help.”

Editor’s Note: The Vineyard Funeral Homes and Finch Funeral Homes were contacted for this article but didn’t respond to our requests for comment.



Exclusive distributor of Armbruster Stageway



The most innovative
new car in the industry.

Southwest Professional Vehicles

Proudly serving our customers since 1958.

3910 East Overton Road, Dallas, Texas 75216 | www.spvinc.com | 1.800.282.1544

Show Me the MONEY

Tips for directors on collection policies

By Melanie Carr



“Show me the money” is a line made famous by the 1996 hit movie *Jerry McGuire*. In the movie, the character played by Cuba Gooding, Jr. is essentially telling his sports agent that he wants to be paid what he’s worth. Don’t we all? This is probably a sentiment that, although not verbalized, you have probably felt at some point in your career providing funeral services. Every funeral home has families that promise to pay but weeks or months following the service their balances remain, and the family cannot be found. It’s frustrating, but worse, it is terrible for your cash flow. Money is always going out to pay your bills and expenses, but if you do not have enough coming in, your business could be in financial jeopardy.

This time of year can be especially problematic, as families unprepared for a death may have just overspent during the holidays, and cash, or even credit, may be in short supply.

So, what can you do about this? I’d like to share three practices that can help you get through the holiday crunch and improve your overall cash flow throughout 2018.

1. Communicate Your Collections Policy

For starters, you need to come up with a collections policy and this policy needs to be shared with your families as soon as you go over pricing and payment options. Do not wait 30 days after a service to send out an invoice as it can be too late at that point. Some people offer an incentive for full payment within the

first week, or they may implement penalty fees for late payment, or they may use some kind of combination approach. The key is to educate your families. Some will love the idea to save money by paying early, while others just need to know how long they have until prices go up to pay. Be proactive and figure out how your funeral home is going to handle this now, not after a problem occurs. And there will be problems, so do not be naïve and think this will not happen to you. Many funeral homes have a drawer filled with good intentions and uncollected IOU’s.

2. Be Aware of Potential Risks with Insurance Assignments

When cash flow is an issue for families, they may ask your funeral home to accept a life insurance policy as payment. While this is a common practice in most funeral homes, accepting such an assignment and handling it yourself can be very problematic. For starters, insurance companies often take 6–8 weeks to process and pay a claim, and this is providing they do not run into any problems or issues that may delay their approval. It can also be very time-consuming dealing with the insurance companies as the process typically involves many lengthy phone calls and back and forth interactions. Finally, it can be extremely risky. While an insurance company representative may tell one of your employees that a policy looks good and gives you a verbal or written verification, most companies do not stand behind their verifications if they make a misquote. Most insurance companies have a clause at the bottom of their verification form that states a verification is no guarantee of payment of benefits and that all claims are subject to review. That means if you accept a policy as payment for a funeral after getting a verification from the insurance company, you could still be left with a contestable policy or one with outstanding loans on it and you might not find out about this until weeks after the death and funeral.

3. Consider Using an Insurance Assignment Company

One way to improve your cash flow and minimize your financial risk is to work with an insurance assignment funding company. For a small fee, they will advance funds to a funeral home within a couple of days instead of having to wait weeks or even months to get paid by an insurance company. Not all funding companies are created equally so this is where your due diligence comes in. You

need to find out: what their fees are; how quickly they fund; if there are any limits to the funding amount; do they provide funding to beneficiaries; and, what is their policy for recourse. You should also find out how your account will be serviced and by whom. We all want to know who we will be working with, as relationships matter in this industry. This is important because your representative(s) will become, in essence, your remote employee. The great thing is that instead of paying an employee at the funeral home full-time or part-time wages plus benefits to handle insurance assignments, you only have to pay the funding company when you have an assignment, and if you pass the fee along to the family, you do not have to pay them at all. Free help... how good is that?

Cash flow is imperative to a business' financial success and if you are going to stay financially healthy you need to take measures to get paid quickly. You need people to "show you the money." While never ideal to act as a bank for families if you have one that needs time to pay you, make sure you clearly lay out your collection policy and then follow through on it. A collection policy will not help you if you allow excuses or procrastination to further de-



lay payment. Be kind, be professional, but be firm. Your business depends on it. And if they want to use an insurance policy, make sure you use an assignment company to provide you with quick funding and financial protection. These small steps can save you time, aggravation and will improve your financial outlook.

Melanie Carr is the General Manager for Directors Choice Assignment Services, a life insurance assign-

ment company based in Abilene, Texas. Directors Choice Assignment Services is a sister company to Funeral Directors Life Insurance Company and services funeral homes and cemeteries across the United States. Melanie has worked in the funeral industry for many years and is committed to helping funeral homes improve their business practices and financial outlook. Melanie can be reached by phone at 800-692-3688 or via email at melanie.carr@directorschoiceservices.com

CELEBRATE THE MEMORIES

DoricLink, your free iPad or Android App, allows you to show the full customization of our vault and urn vault carapaces with ease, including our fully-licensed Mossy Oak line.

Let us help your 2018 families celebrate the memories.



24/7 Online Ordering Available at

DoricTexas.com

PO Box 277 • Justin, TX 76247

Toll Free: 844-393-8973

Main Line: 940-648-3851

Fax: 940-648-3953



Free iPad or Android App



Contact Us Today!

Jennifer Rountree-Braun & Sherry Rountree

Family-owned and Operated

A Division of TexSet, LLC.

American *DEATHCARE* *Spending* in 2017



Between January 1, 2017 and November 1, 2017, Americans spent \$282.40 billion on funeral and burial services. This represented a 0.22 percent share of total expenditures, but a 2.72 percent increase over the same period in 2016, and -2.09 percent decrease over a decade ago (Jan.-Nov. 2007).

Out of 50 randomly-chosen categories, funeral and burial services ranked 38th, ahead of Lottery ticket buying (\$269.79 billion – a 12.2 percent increase over 2007) and slightly less than telephone/landline (not including cell phone plans) spending (\$360.85 billion – and a -53.03 percent decrease over the previous 10 years).

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Americans spent a total of approximately \$130.6 trillion between January and November 2, 2017, a 2.7 percent increase over the same period in 2016.

Note: Personal spending in the U.S. represents about two-thirds of all spending, an important factor in the country's economic growth.

As 24/7 Wall Street writer Evan Comen reported in his Dec. 22nd article, “as the U.S. economy experiences steady growth, consumer spending on luxury goods such as yachts and private planes has risen over the past year, as well as on necessary expenses such as housing, food, and health care.

“Additionally, due to improvements in technology more Americans are able to afford televisions, internet access, and other consumer electronics. Changes in technology also have led some Americans to abandon certain

outdated products and services altogether, spending on postal services and video rentals declines to a fraction of what it was one decade ago.”

To determine what Americans spent in 2017, 24/7 Wall St. chose to study 50 consumer categories and ranked them according to spending by Americans compared to how consumer spending patterns have changed from previous years.

Top dollars went to third-ranked physician and dental visits (\$6.68 trillion – a 25.80 percent over spending in this category in 2007), second-ranked groceries (\$7.89 trillion – a 10-year change of 5.14 percent) and the individual consumer's #1 greatest expense – housing (\$19.39 trillion – a 14.85 percent share of the total individual expenditure and a 14.01 percent increase over 10 years ago.)

Americans also spent \$5.61 trillion in restaurants and bars (a 15.65 percent increase over 2007). This was more than the \$4.24 trillion spent on clothing and footwear (a 19.08 percent increase over the past 10 years).

As consumers, we spent \$366.29 billion on flowers, seeds and potted plants; \$1.1 trillion on sporting goods and supplies and \$976.77 on casinos. We also spent \$1.48 trillion on wine and spirits, \$1.77 trillion on cell phone plans, \$3.74 trillion on prescription drugs and \$7.25 billion on pets and pet supplies.

American consumers spent more on sports, music events and movie admissions (\$702.15 billion) than they did on childcare (\$363.93 billion) but less on residential mental health and substance abuse treatment (\$94.81 billion) and more on dry-cleaning (\$117.28 billion).

Sadly, in spite of close to 40 decades of warnings, American consumers spent more than \$850 billion on cigarettes and tobacco products. This represents a 30 percent decrease over 2007.

What inferences can we draw from these numbers?

Obviously, some long established expenditures are becoming less as they are replaced by faster and more convenient services. Secondly, the expenditures closer to the bottom of the list may indicate the value the consumer places on the services, such as funeral and burial expense and childcare as two examples.

Spending patterns also show not only changing value-assignments but also needs for recreation, such as foreign travel (\$1.77 trillion), motorcycles (\$112.96 billion) and recreational vehicles, such as boats, planes, RVs (\$443.45 billion)...and spending on used automobiles (\$1.50 trillion) and new automobiles (\$2.81 trillion) remain high – reflecting not only our reliance on personal transportation but also the status many assign to the vehicles they drive.

Notably, due to hybrid and electric vehicles entering the marketplace, spending for gasoline and other fuels decreased to \$2.84 trillion, representing a year-over-year decrease of 1.06 percent.



THE INDUSTRY'S

FASTEST. EASIEST.®

INSURANCE ASSIGNMENT EXPERTS

NUMBERS THAT SPEAK

800+



**INSURANCE COMPANIES
IN THE US**

100%



**OF INSURANCE COMPANIES
WE WORK WITH**

50



STATES WE SERVICE

90%



**OF CLAIMS FUNDED
WITHIN 24 HOURS**



**EXPRESS
FUNERAL FUNDING**

FASTEST. EASIEST.®

812.949.9011 → www.expressfuneralfunding.com

WORKING in *Funeral Service*

While Going to School – DOES IT MATTER?

By Dylan Stopher



Mortuary science has become quite the field... and it's interesting to see some of the people who come through the various programs. As a vendor in a city with a mortuary college, I have the pleasure and privilege to present to their senior class twice a year. This allows me the freedom to meet and speak with these men and women who have chosen to attend the school, go through with the board exams, and accept the responsibilities of an apprenticeship and eventual licensure.

But then there's the statistics about how many people enroll and don't finish (happened to about a third of my class), and the numbers on how many people complete the education and

don't ever go through and get their license. And I'm forced to wonder whether or not it matters if they have a job in funeral service prior to enrollment or graduation.

So all I can really do here is tell the story of my class and a few people I know, names all withheld, of course. But I'll start with me, because that one's easy. I started at a funeral home before I went to school, and was able to complete a portion of my apprenticeship.

When I arrived at Commonwealth in Houston, I was already capable of the practices of both embalming and funeral directing, and most of my apprenticeship casework for my home state of Louisiana was complete. I transferred to a funeral home in the city of Houston, and I worked in that firm and a sister firm the entire time I was in school. There was never a thought in my head of working anywhere other than a funeral home, given that practical

experience would help to fill in gaps and aid in my education. I don't believe I was wrong to make that choice.

I was ready for the discussions, and I had licensed professionals who attended the same school looking over my work, helping me to think critically about everything. I studied, but I also worked. And it was no surprise to me that I had a grasp on certain concepts, because of real-time service in the field with families and funeral directors, waiting on families and embalming.

Then we transition to a few others like me who either were born into a family of funeral professionals or had fallen into the profession as I had, and found a home within it. What's most interesting to me as I ponder on this is that all of those people are still in the business. They are still serving, still working, still striving to go above and beyond for every family they have the privilege to serve. We were always in class, always on time, always ready to go, and we stuck together and finished strong. We took the boards together, we all passed them, we all got our licenses at about the same time, and most of us kept in touch. I see and speak to several of these peers and colleagues on a regular basis within the TFDA even now.

Of course, there's also those like a young lady in our class who decided she'd come and get a "quick and easy degree," until she realized that there were actual dead people in the caskets in a funeral home. That brought about an episode of fainting, and she withdrew from the school the next day. I still have no idea how that all happened, given that we were in school to work with the families of the dead, and serve them directly through embalming and funeral directing. But oh well, it happened. She had no clue about the reality of death, and that we would face it directly as professionals. I'm certain, to this day, that she probably found where she needed to be... and as we have all heard, our chosen profession isn't for everyone.

Given that small sample size, I'm going to assert my own personal feeling that it absolutely makes a huge difference in your career

and education if you're working in a funeral home, actively serving, applying book knowledge that you're receiving to the practical experiences you're enduring.

There are things you learn in the funeral home that school cannot prepare you for, given that we deal with living, breathing, grieving family members who are going to run the gambit from being kind to being impossible to please. We're going to have cases that are far harder to treat in the prep room, and face situations of extreme difficulty that no clinical can possibly prepare you for. And we're going to do all of that while studying for finals and comps.

Now, you've got to then shift to the young man in our class who had never worked in a funeral home, but after graduation took a job with a prestigious firm and has remained and been promoted more than once. He, along with another young lady who was fresh to the idea of funeral service and has never left it, are most certainly the exceptions to the rule. They had no clue what they were getting into, and they are still in it today. Both of them are exceptionally talented, and they have a keen sense of how to serve a family. I'm honored to have learned with them, and from them, and I know that their firms are far better off for having them as teammates.

So we now return to my original thought... does it matter if you're working while you go to school? My initial response is always going to be that it does. And if you're a mortuary student, or someone who wishes to be one, and you're reading this while you ponder going to work in a funeral home while you're in school, then my advice is to quit pondering and go get a position with a firm immediately! Education matters, and it will certainly be evident in your career whether you're all book smart or work experience, or a marriage of the two. Trust me, you want to be the combination of both.

However, when you look at the few who succeed without having ever started in a funeral home, and you see that it is possible to do it that way... well, then I'm still stuck with my original answer. Because the number of people who succeed without knowing exactly what they're getting into is so unbelievably small, and those of us who are still around can all probably name multiple folks who came and left due to a lack of practical experience in conjunction with the knowledge and education needed to thrive and grow to the point of being able to competently and confidently serve families in their time of need.

So now, if you're a funeral professional who has access to a student and you want them to be successful, I would suggest you push them to find a position and enroll in higher education... today. Their families will thank them for it down the road. I promise.

The author, Dylan Stopher, is the regional sales representative for Wilbert Vaults, based in Houston. A funeral director for the past 13 years, he graduated from Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in 2002. Dylan is a member of TFDA as well as the Emerging Leaders group. He also serves on six TFDA committees. He resides in Friendswood with his wife, Mollie, and three children. He has enjoyed writing his entire life, and has published three books (all found on Amazon) and multiple industry-related articles.



Like Texas Funeral Directors Association

One More Way To Get All the Information You Need.



METROPOLITAN FUNERAL SERVICE INC.

Serving:

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
District of Columbia, Virginia & Maryland Areas

Receiving Remains for Arlington National Cemetery
Casketed- \$650 • Cremains - \$80

TOLL FREE 1-800-527-7774 • FAX (703) 971-8143

24 Hour Service

• SHIP-OUTS • SHIP-INS • CREMATIONS

Washington Area's FIRST Shipping Service Not Affiliated With a Public Funeral Home

Steven Wooddell, President
5517 Vine Street, Alexandria, VA 22310

How *Family Engagement* Adds VALUE to PERSONALIZATION

By Alice Adams



As you know, the emphasis in funeral service for the past decade has been on personalization. For our purposes here, “personalization” means tailoring as much of the service as possible to reflect the life of the decedent.

If they liked country western music, inject several tunes from their favorite bands or singers. If they played an instrument, ask a local musician to play some songs on that particular instrument.

If they were a fan of a sports team, prominently display those colors during the service. If they liked certain foods, serve them at a buffet or reception.

So, personalization has moved from reading a favorite scripture or poem during the eulogy and has stretched to having a favorite motorcycle, bicycle or dogsled in the chapel or as part of a display of memorabilia. Personalization may include using a motorcycle- or bicycle-drawn hearse, or a John Deere tractor or fire truck to transport the casket to the cemetery.

Now it's time to take personalization to the next level: family engagement.

By engaging the family, the funeral director

assures satisfaction and loyalty as well as positive word-of-mouth after the service.

By definition, “engagement” means the depth of the relationship between the director and the family, the act of interlocking. Customer engagement is the depth of the relationship between a customer and your firm.

Because funerals are personal, the engagement of a family with the funeral director and the funeral should be a natural happening.

Typically, a customer's relationship with a brand, such as a automobile, beer, potato

chip or ball team comes as a result of multiple uses or encounters. But in funeral service, the depth of engagement comes often after only one funeral. Therefore, it is up to the funeral director to offer ways the family can engage to build the relationship instantaneously.

Some may argue that the depth of a family's engagement can be measured by the level of satisfaction (measured by hugs, thank-you notes, compliments) after the service.

However, real engagement occurs when the director creates an environment where family members are encouraged to identify their loved one's true passions and then to incorporate these into a celebration of their life.

Some families may wish to host celebrations or services within the traditional three-to-seven days following the death. But make it clear the service may be held days, weeks or even months later.

In this environment that invites engagement, perhaps the deceased was a masterful outdoor chef, so why not serve grilled hamburgers or hotdogs? Why not move the celebration from the chapel to a nearby park — or the firm's parking lot, a church fellowship hall or a hotel ballroom.

It is imperative the director be able to make whatever the family chooses. The same goes for finding musicians or performing groups, caterers for anything from cake and ice cream to barbecue, Mexican, Italian, Greek, Jewish or Asian food providers.

If the decedent enjoyed hiking, plan a hike, allowing non-hikers to meet the group at a specified destination. Spending time sharing stories in this place not only celebrates the loved one's passion but pays tribute to his/her love of the outdoors. Sharing stories may call for sips from water bottles or other cool beverages.

Celebrations of life can include a celebrant or clergy, a close friend to serve as master of ceremonies. Mourners may be invited or attend voluntarily. Any or all can be asked to share stories or write down words that describe the deceased.

Give the family the option to send invitations to those they wish to attend or publicly invite friends through the obit printed in the newspaper or posted on the funeral home's website.

Family engagement is built by the director open to any and all ideas (excepting those immoral, indecent or illegal) and making it easy for the family to contribute meaningful touches to the celebration. This engagement is strengthened with every idea, even those involving little or no cost.

In facilitating these wishes, the director not only provides each family with choices but also a certain amount of control in an all-too-often uncontrollable sequence of situations, i.e., illness-death-funeral.

The series of interactions between the director and the family leading up to the celebration connects the family with the firm and builds the family's loyalty.

So how can you determine whether or not the family is engaged?

1. The family is totally focused on the success of their celebration and final tribute to their loved one. They may call in the days leading up to the celebration with additional ideas they would like to incorporate.

2. The family is willing to find ways to

make their wishes happen, including finding more affordable ways serve a dinner, give mementos at the end of the service or find less costly musicians.

3. They refer others to your firm.

4. When requested, they readily provide feedback to questionnaires about your services.

5. They become loyal to your firm, regularly attending special events for the community as well as events to remember family member(s) for the holidays.

Cemeterians were once taught that a family makes close to 1,000 decisions between the time

a loved one dies and the closing of the grave. This was a traditional view of deathcare, designed – to some extent – to “keep the family ‘busy’ in the early stages of shock and loss.

By engaging the family, a director provides not only a certain amount of control but also a feeling of confidence and even joy and excitement in their ability to participate in this one last gift of remembrance of their loved one.

This is the type of service that makes funeral service professionals and the services and assistance they provide invaluable to the community.



Let's Make
AUSTIN MORTUARY SERVICE
Your Austin Connection!

- Removals
- Embalming
- Shipping
- Transportation
- Gravesides

- Cremations
- Quality Service
- Se Habla Español
- TFDA member

Austin Mortuary Service, LLC (new ownership)
13200 Pond Springs Rd. E-36 • Austin Texas 78729
512-441-3114 • fax 512-276-6761 • Austinmortuaryservice@yahoo.com

Miller & Sons FUNERAL CAR SALES

Without quality, there is no value!

2018 S&S 70" Limousine






NOW REPRESENTING

SUPERIOR COACH

&

S&S COACH COMPANY



2018 S&S Medalist

7138 ENVOY COURT
DALLAS, TEXAS
75247-5102

WWW.HEARSEANDLIMO.COM
SALES@HEARSEANDLIMO.COM

TOLL FREE : 800.822.9586
BUSINESS : 214.828.1095
FAX : 214.827.0136

Are *You* a CONSIDERATE Person?

No, Really, Are You?



“Politeness is to human nature what warmth is to wax.”
— Arthur Schopenhauer, philosopher

It's true. In the at-need environment, kindness is not only a “must” for today's funeral director. It's often necessary for the survivor to be strong enough to get through the arrangement. The director's kindness takes the sharp edges off the recent loss.

The surviving spouse or child would probably describe having to function and make decisions so soon after a death as feeling like walking over hot coals. The director's kindness and understanding consideration bridges the hot coals' path...or at least makes the burning heat bearable.

But there's another reason the director's kind consideration is necessary when making that first connection with the decedent's next-of-kin. Schopenhauer also may have meant being consid-

erate of others is an integral part of what it means to be human.

As Charles Darwin pointed out, “our instinct to be considerate is even stronger than our instinct to be self-serving.”

The study of neuroscience only recently explained why these theories are true: Research conducted by Dacher Keltner at Berkeley showed that our brains react exactly the same when we see other people in pain as when we experience pain ourselves. Watching someone else experience pain also activates the structure deep inside the brain that's responsible for nurturing behavior, called the periaqueductal gray.

Being considerate is certainly part of funeral service, but it's also good for your health. When you show consideration for others, the brain's reward center is triggered, which elevates the feel-good chemicals dopamine, oxytocin, and endogenous opioids. That's why those hugs from the family after the service and the occasional thank-you notes through the mail give you a great feeling, which is similar to what's known as “runner's high,” and all that oxytocin is good for your heart.

So how do you become more considerate

when you have so many other things competing for your finite mental energy as well as your time?

It's not that hard—all you have to do is follow these eight habits of highly considerate people:

1. Always be on time. Showing up late sends a clear message that you think your time is more important than everyone else's, and that's just rude. Instead, be considerate and show up when you said you would. That will do tons for the respect people have for you.

2. Act on empathy. It's important to be able to put yourself in someone else's shoes — in fact, it's essential in funeral service — but that doesn't always translate into being considerate — allowing your ability to walk in their shoes change what you do, whether that's changing your behavior to accommodate their feelings or providing tangible help in difficult situations.

3. Apologize when you need to (and don't when you don't). This is a tricky one. As we all realize, there are people who are so insecure or so afraid of offending someone, we see them regularly practically apologizing for breathing. With these people, apologizing

loses its meaning. But it's becomes a totally different matter when a sincere apology is warranted. When you've made a mistake, or even think you've made a mistake, apologizing is critical to being considerate.

4. Smile appropriately. Have you ever known a person whose smile was actually how their faces looked whenever they weren't talking? They weren't smiling all that time. They had just stopped talking, but as we all know, it's easier to frown than to smile. However, it pays to make the extra effort, to smile because it has a huge effect on other people. When you smile at people, they will subconsciously return the favor and feel good as a result.

5. Be appropriate. It appears many have come to believe that manners are not only unnecessary, they're undesirable because they're fake. They think being polite means you're acting in a way that's not authentic, but they've got it backwards: “Minding your manners” is all about focusing on how other people feel, not on how you feel. It's consciously acting in a way that puts others at ease and makes them feel comfortable.

6. Use common sense. Remember the '70s mantra — “if it feels good, do it?” But now we know it is not okay to act on something you feel because of something we're all supposed to have called self-control. Whether it's helping out a co-worker when you're in a crunch to meet your own deadline or being pleasant to someone who doesn't return the favor, being considerate usually means not acting on what you feel.

7. Find ways for everybody to win. Many people think somebody has to lose when somebody else wins. If you're a considerate person, however, you try to find a way for everybody to win. Honestly, we all know it's not always possible. To be more considerate in your day-to-day interactions, stop thinking of every solution to a problem as a win/lose scenario.

8. When it comes to other people's needs, let your intuition be your guide. Sometimes you can just tell when someone is upset or having a bad day. In such cases, being considerate means checking in with them. If your intuition is telling you to reach out—do it; they'll appreciate your concern.

Being considerate is, bottom line, a good attribute for people in funeral service. It's not only good for you, professionally, but it's also good for you, your professional success and everyone around you. On top of that, it just feels good...right?

Interested in obtaining a degree in the funeral service industry?

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service (CIFS) now offers an **Associate of Applied Science** in Funeral Service partially online! The online format allows you the opportunity to earn a degree in a growing industry, no matter where you are.

THE PROGRAM OFFERS:

- **High-Quality Education** – All instructors are licensed funeral directors and embalmers
- **Accelerated Format** – Obtain a degree in only 12 to 15 months at your convenience
- **Reputation** – A leading provider of funeral service education

Take the next step to your future!

www.commonwealth.edu

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
415 Barren Springs Dr.
Houston, TX 77090
(800)628-1580
(281)873-0262



CELEBRITY *Passings* in 2017

This listing, by far, is incomplete but is meant to include some of the more recognizable names who slipped away from us all in 2017.



Sir Roger Moore – James Bond (after Sean Connery)

Mary Tyler Moore – America's girl next door

Adam West – Batman

Martin Landau – Mission Impossible, Cleopatra, Space 1998

Erin Moran – Joanie Cunningham on Happy Days in the '70s.

Jerry Lewis – actor, director and CP fundraiser

Lord Snowden (Anthony Armstrong-Jones) – married to Queen Elizabeth's sister, Princess Margaret

Jake LaMatta – former world middleweight champion boxer and subject of movie, Raging Bull. He was portrayed in the movie by Robert DiNero.

Tom Petty – American songwriter rocker with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and co-founder of The Traveling Wilburys.

Glen Campbell – country singer-songwriter.

Joanie Sledge – founder of Sister Sledge with her siblings, best known for the song, "We Are Family."

Walter Becker – co-founder of the band, Steeley Dan.

Malcolm Young – co-founder of AC/DC, guitarist

Gregg Allman – co-founder of Allman Brothers Band, married to Cher in the '70s.

Don Rickles – Sarcastic, sometimes caustic comedian introduced to the world by Johnny Carson.

J. Giels, Jr. – guitarist and founder of The J. Giels Band – best known for "Centerfold."

David Cassidy – star of TV musical-sitcom "The Partridge Family" in 1970s and teen idol.

Johnny Hallyday – the French Elvis Presley.

Fats Domino – New Orleans musician who became a global rock 'n roll legend.

Chuck Berry – amazing performer, legendary musician and best known for hits "Maybellene," "Sweet Little Sixteen" and "Johnny B. Good." John Lennon said, "If they renamed

rock 'n roll, they'd call it "Chuck Berry."

Hugh Hefner – Founder of the magazine, "Playboy."

Mike Connors – star of "Mannix" detective series. One Emmy and eight straight nominations.

Barbara Hale – Emmy Award-winning actress who played Perry's secretary Della Street on "Perry Mason."

Al Jarreau – American singer known for his jazz stylings.

Larry Coryell – American jazz musician



Bill Paxton – actor known for work in "Terminator," "Weird Science," "Apollo 13," "Titanic," "Twister" and Golden Globe winner for TV's "Big Love."

Michael Parks – motorcycle-riding TV star in "Then Came Bronson" and won kudos for singing the show's theme song.

Powers Booth – Initially a Shakespearean actor from Snyder, TX., who attended Southwest Texas State and won an Emmy for his portrayal of Jim Jones in "Jonestown," and crossed Screen Actors Guild picket lines to accept his award. Also acted in "Sin City," "Nixon" and "Southern Comfort, among others.

Dina Merrill – actress, socialite, businesswoman, heiress and philanthropist.

Jim Bunning – American baseball player and politician

Bobby Doerr – American baseball player and coach

Zbigniew Brzezinski – Polish-American diplomat, respected political scientist and TV anchor Mika Brzezinski's father.

Prodigy – American rapper

Roy Halladay – American baseball player

Elsa Martinelli – Italian actress and fashion model.

John Heard – actor best known for "Home Alone" series, "Deceived," "Pelican Brief," "Awakenings" and many others.



Dick Gregory – comedian who began his career in the midst of the Beat Generation who referenced political, social and racial inequality in his act.

Robert Guillaume – American actor best known for his roles in TV series "Sports Night," "Soap" and "Benson." Won Emmys for "Soap" and "Benson." Also won Tony

Award for "Guys & Dolls."

John Hillerman – actor best known for his award-winning role as Higgins on "Magnum, P.I."



Jim Nabors – comic actor who co-starred on "The Andy Griffith Show" who was given the lead in a spin-off, "Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C." To many of his TV fans' surprise, Nabors also had a beautiful voice and recorded several albums.

Keely Smith – American singer who teamed with Louis Prima and later married. Best known for "That Old Black Magic."

Rose Marie – known for role on The Dick Van Dyke Show as TV comedy writer Sally Rogers.



Later on The Doris Day Show and was a 14-year panelist on Hollywood Squares. She is the subject of 2017 documentary, Wait for Your Laugh, with co-stars Carl Reiner, Dick Van Dyke, Peter Marshall and Tim Conway.

Sue Grafton – American mystery writer who titled her books to incorporate a letter in the alphabet, beginning with "A is for Alibi." She died shortly after "Y is for Yesterday" was published although she had begun planning "Z is for Zero." Her heirs say there won't be a Z due to Grafton's dislike of ghostwriters.

Richard F. Gordon – astronaut who flew to the moon and was command module pilot for Apollo 12.

Peter J. Weitz – astronaut, aeronautical engineer and Navy pilot who flew on the first manned Skylab flight. He also commanded the first Space Shuttle Challenger Flight.

Bruce McCandless, II – U.S. naval officer, electrical engineer and NASA astronaut. In 1984, during the first of his two Space Shuttle missions, he made the first untethered free flight using the Manned Maneuvering Unit.

**Note: On January 6, 2018, John Young, Navy test pilot and the longest-serving NASA astronaut (40 years) died. He was co-pilot of first Gemini mission and piloted the second. He was one of 12 astronauts who walked on the moon and the only astronaut to fly six missions into space. He was an aeronautical engineer and advised many missions prior to retirement.*

2018 is the year to update your fleet
Call us today...



2018 Federal Cadillac XTS Renaissance Coach



2018 Federal Cadillac XTS Ambassador RR Six Door

We are funeral directors...
We know your needs...
We have what it takes...



Serving the Industry since 1929



Artie Vaughan
Owner & CEO



Tara Campbell-Mauney



Lydia Huffman-Moon
Finance & Warranty Director



Jim Flippen
Sales



Andy Reed
Senior Salesman



Michael Vaughan
Salesman

709 South Parkway Drive, Alvarado, TX 76009

800-245-4127 • www.vaughanspecialtyauto.com

Mary Lucas Arnold

TFDA Executive Board & Staff
 Lee & Judith Castro
 Gary & Della Shaffer
 Douglas Nobles & Jeffrey Nobles
 Robby & Betty Bates
 Matt Boyd – Funeral Planning Agency

W. A. Demsey, Jr

TFDA Executive Board & Staff
 Lee & Judith Castro
 Gary & Della Shaffer
 Douglas Nobles & Jeffrey Nobles
 Robby & Betty Bates
 Matt Boyd – Funeral Planning Agency

Gerald L. “Jerry” Miller

TFDA Executive Board & Staff
 Lee & Judith Castro
 Gary & Della Shaffer
 Douglas Nobles & Jeffrey Nobles
 Robby & Betty Bates
 Matt Boyd – Funeral Planning Agency

Arnold

Mary Fay Lucas Arnold, 97, of Bryan passed away November 29, 2017 at the Hospice Brazos Valley Inpatient Facility in Bryan. She is the mother-in-law of Jodie Hoyak, who is a former funeral director at Memorial Funeral Chapel in Bryan.

Mary was born at home in Argo, Texas on November 17, 1920 to William Burney Terrell and Cora Ellen Murphy Terrell. She attended school in Argo and Mt. Pleasant, Texas. On September 5, 1943, Mary joined the Women’s Army Corp to do her part in serving her country during World War II. She met and married William Everett “Bill” Lucas in January 1944. With her husband being an Engineer with Brown and Root, she

and her family traveled and lived in Haiti, Venezuela, and eventually College Station to build the International Shoe Factory in Bryan. When her husband retired, they made Bryan their permanent home. After Bill’s death in 1972 she married T.H. “John” Arnold, who is also deceased. Mary was the Assistant Credit Manager at Sears in Bryan for 25 years. At the time of her death she was one of two of the oldest living members of First Baptist Church in College Station. She was also a member of the American Legion Earl Graham Post 159 and the VFW Auxiliary Post 4692, both of Bryan. She was also a member of the Bryan Chapter #222 Order of the Eastern Star for over 50 years

She is preceded in death by her parents, a

grandson William R. Lucas, Jr., five brothers, Fleming, John, Whitey, Clem, and Sebe Terrell, and three sisters, Ellen Terrell (infant), Mildred Justice, and Juanita Anderson.

She is survived by her son, William R. “Randy” Lucas and Paula of Woodbridge, Virginia; her daughter, Elaine Hoyak and husband Jodie of Bryan; one sister, Helen Wilbanks of Mt. Pleasant, Texas; two granddaughters, Kristine Elander and husband Robert of Round Rock and Cindy Hoyak Wicht of Bryan; six great-grandchildren, Shannon Galvan and husband Chris, Josh Elander and wife Brittney, Lauren Elander, Chase Elander, Ethan Wicht, and Hayden Wicht; and one great-great-granddaughter, Olivia Mae Galvan. She is also survived by Margie Lucas of Round Rock, and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

Funeral Services were held December 4 at Memorial Funeral Chapel in Bryan with Reverend David Strawn of First Baptist Church College Station officiating. Interment followed at Rest-Ever Memorial Park Cemetery in Bryan.

Memorials may be made to Hospice Brazos Valley or to First Baptist Church of College Station.

Dempsey

Funeral services for W.A. Dempsey, Jr., 75, of Lufkin were held December 15, 2017, in the Carroway Funeral Home Chapel with Brother Charles M. Roberts officiating. Interment followed in the Garden of Memories Memorial Park.

Dempsey was born July 1, 1942 in Orange, Texas to the late Dale (Allen) and Willard Aaron Dempsey, Sr., and died Tuesday, December 12, 2017 in a local hospital.

Dempsey was a lifetime resident of Lufkin. He was a licensed funeral director and embalmer, and received his 50-year recognition pin from the Texas Funeral Directors Association in June 2014. Mr. Dempsey was employed with Gipson Funeral Home for 45 years, and had currently worked for Carroway Funeral Home for eight years.

Dempsey was a past president of the Lufkin Youth Baseball Association and coached youth baseball for over 50 years. He was a member of the Lufkin Sideliners Club and a devoted Panther fan. He was also a past president of the Angelina Roadrunners Club. Mr. Dempsey attended Denman Avenue Baptist Church.

Survivors include his daughter and son-in-law, Dana Thompson and Sam Baker of Lufkin; sons and daughter-in-law, Lance

The Answering Service in a Class of its Own



- Award-Winning App
- Highly Trained Staff
- Tools For Growth
- 30-day Free Trial

Funeral Solutions

1-800-868-9950

myASD.com



“My funeral career began in 1971 with a family owned funeral home in my home town. I then spent 13 years with a large corporation working in Midland. In 2007 when Michael Soper asked me to operate his family owned business in Odessa, I took it. I am truly blessed to be in a profession and environment I really love, and back to my roots. Come join us.”

-Bill Vallie

Bill Vallie
Regional Manager of West Texas &
Eastern New Mexico.

It's worked out fine.



**For a confidential talk,
call Michael Soper, CEO
713-529-5770
P.O. Box 56005
Houston, TX 77256-6005**

**LEGACY
FUNERAL
GROUP®**



www.legacyfuneralgroup.com

For questions on how to join our family of professionals or to find other opportunities to advance in the funeral care industry, please visit our website.

Dempsey and Ron and Courtney Dempsey, all of Lufkin; grandchildren, Seth and Hannah Thompson, Zac Thompson, Bre and Tracy Dempsey, Drew and Libby Dempsey; great-grandsons, Stoke Thompson and Jax Dempsey; sisters-in-law and brother-in-law, Jany Dempsey of Lufkin and Charleene and Bill Ringle of Bossier City, Louisiana; and a number of nieces, nephews and other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife of 48 years, Jan Dempsey; daughter, Jackie Dempsey; brother, Jack Dempsey; and sister, Linda Roach.

Pallbearers included Roy Carroway, Jr., Don McAdams, Ron Crocker, Todd Stracener, George Temple, and Doug Russell.

Honorary pallbearers were Bud Maddox, Cecil Roach, Randy Allee, John Slaughter, and Ardie Dixon.

Memorial contributions in his honor may be made to Denman Avenue Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1351, Lufkin, Texas 75902. Memorials and condolences may be added, and live webcasting of the services may be viewed at www.carrowayfuneralhome.com.

Miller

Gerald L. "Jerry" Miller, 81, of Hewitt, passed away December 13, 2017.

Jerry was born January 25, 1936 in Cooper to Greaver L. and Laura (Morgan) Miller. He graduated from Cooper High School in 1954 and received his Bachelor of Science Degree from East Texas State College (now

Texas A&M Commerce) in 1957 and was a member of the Tejas Fraternity. He graduated from Dallas Institute – Gupton Jones College of Mortuary Science in 1958. He received his funeral director license in 1958 and his embalmer license in 1959. He was a member of Pi Sigma Eta Mortuary Fraternity.

Jerry's working life was about serving others through funeral service. He worked as a funeral director at W.Y. Goff Funeral Home in Commerce, Franklin-Bartley Funeral Home in Lubbock, and Hampton-Vaughan Funeral Home in Wichita Falls from 1954 to 1963.

Jerry then became involved in mortuary education: (1963 to 1967) instructor at Dallas Institute – Gupton Jones College of Mortuary Science; (1967 to 1970) Dean at Commonwealth College of Sciences, Houston; (1970 to 1971) President of The Bryan School in Houston; (1971 to 1987) Vice President of Professional Training Schools and Pierce Mortuary Colleges; (1987 to 1997) President of Pierce Mortuary Colleges and Professional Training Schools, Member- Board of Trustees of Pierce Mortuary Colleges, Member- Board of Director- Professional Training Schools and Pierce Chemical/Royal Bond.

Jerry then entered the sales field. From 1997 to 2000, he was a sales representative for Pierce Chemical/Royal Bond for part of Texas, and member, Board of Trustees- Dallas Institute of Funeral Service; and from 2001 to 2008, Jerry was a sales representative for The

Dodge Company, Inc.

Jerry's memberships and accomplishments include: 60 year member- Master Mason (Hella Temple Shrine); Fifty Year Recognition as Licensed Funeral Director/Embalmer in 2008; Texas Funeral Directors Association, Texas Funeral Supply Sales Club; First United Methodist Church, Waco; served as Chairman of Programs and Education Committee – TFDA; Funeral Supply Salesman of the Year in 1988 selected by Kansas Funeral Directors Association; Member, Board of Director- Kansas Funeral Supply Sales Club (1985 to 1997); President of Kansas Funeral Supply Sales Club in 1988; South Central Texas Funeral Directors Association Salesman of the Year in 1999; named Funeral Supplier of the Year in 2000 by Texas Funeral Directors Association; and Certificate of Special Recognition from the Texas Funeral Service Commission in 1997.

Survivors include wife, Sue (Vandever) Miller; daughter, Jeri Thompson and husband, David; sons, Jeff Miller, and Jay Miller and wife, Melody; grandchildren, Justin Miller, and Courtney Miller; brother, Jim Miller and wife, Linda; and Dovie Burrow and family, the Vandever Family, and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held December 18 at Lake Shore Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. Steve Manson officiating. Memorial contributions in his honor may be made to the Central Texas Humane Society, Waco.

Victoria Mortuary & Cremation Service

"On site crematory – Serving Funeral Directors Only"



Also Serving the Corpus Christi Bay Area

Adrian Fulton

Funeral Director

Air • Combo • Cremation Trays in stock

1-888-524-1646

**Removals • Embalming • Gravesides • Cremations
• Transportation**



The Fulton Family

**1505 La Valliere Ave.
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-578-4646**

**PO Box 7662
Victoria, Texas 77903
361-578-0228**

BAY CITY • CUERO • EDNA • GANADO • GONZALES • HALLETTVILLE
NIXON • PALACIOS • PORT LAVACA • REFUGIO • SCHULENBURG • SHINER
WAELDER • WHARTON • WEIMER • YOAKUM • YORKTOWN

**Would you like
to advertise in
Texas Director?**



Contact

Patricia Huber
phuber2@austin.rr.com
512.310.9795
210.579.7054 fax

WHAT PAYMENT METHOD DO YOU PREFER FAMILIES
USE FOR YOUR GOODS AND SERVICES?

**YOUR PREFERENCE
COULD BE COSTING**

YOU UP TO

31%



C&J Financial, LLC

The Leader in Insurance Assignment Funding™

CJF.com/Profit | 800.785.0003

TFDA Services, Inc.

Endorsed Providers

Answering Service

ASD — Answering Service for Directors was the first answering service devoted solely to serving the needs of funeral directors and has been family-owned and operated since 1972. Many funeral directors began using this service at its inception and continue using it today. ASD maintains the highest degree of professionalism with extensive training, cutting-edge technology and an unmatched level of service. Contact Jason Bathurst at (800) 868-9950 or jason@myASD.com.

Banking

Live Oak Bank provides financing solutions to funeral home and cemetery owners nationwide. Beginning with funeral home lending and later expanding to funeral and cemetery trust services, we are dedicated to helping funeral professionals succeed. Our team works solely with funeral home and cemetery owners allowing us to truly understand the unique needs each client faces. To learn about Live Oak Bank, visit liveoakbank.com/funeral or contact Tim Bridgers the General Manager of Funeral Home Lending at Tim.bridgers@liveoakbank.com or 910-685-7446.

Business Insurance

Federated Insurance Cos. is the endorsed TFDA Services, Inc., property/casualty, liability and workers' compensation insurance provider. Federated is recognized as the national leader in partnering with trade association and buying groups and has been endorsed by 29 state funeral directors associations. The company has more than 100 years' experience providing insurance and risk management services to business owners. They currently have 29 representatives in Texas to serve you. Federated offers very competitive rates.

Continuing Education

APEX Continuing Education Solutions is now partnering with TFDA to help you meet your continuing education needs. To qualify for the TFDA partnership, simply go to TFDA.com and click on "Continuing Education" and then on the Apex link. You will

be taken to their website where you can sign up for CE hours. TFSC has approved all the continuing education modules. It is possible to get all 16 hours, including the required hours, through this program. You may study the modules and take the tests online, or order the modules through the website and have them mailed to you. The cost is reasonable and the process user-friendly.

Credit & Debit Card Processing

Authorized Credit Card Systems has no start up fees, no monthly fees, no contracts and no cancellation fees. Their credit card processing rates are very competitive and may be lower than the rates you are paying now. For a quick comparison of rates, or to add a new location or for questions regarding your existing service, please contact Anthony Truitt at (512)659-5592 or anthony@authorizedccs.com.

Electricity

SimplySmart Solutions offers competitive non-biased electricity bids from multiple Retail Electric Providers with personal attention, accessibility and customer service. The team works together with each customer to ensure that member's electricity needs are met in a timely and cost-effective way.

Contact: Jessica Dusek at (512) 691-6260 or Jessica.duske@nrsgsimplysmart.com.

Final Assistance

Full Circle Care is a unique service will provide your families with the assistance they need to finalize matters such as credit cards, bank accounts, credit bureaus, pensions, social security and much more. They make calls with the family on a three-way conference call. For more information, please call Matt Van Drimmelen, (888) 713-4625, matt@finalassistance.com

Funeral Financing

Stairway Lending is a quick and easy way for your family to secure a loan for funeral expenses. They assist the family in their time of need from a large pool of lending institutions. It is much like a personal loan. The funeral director has no obligation to follow

up for payments. For more information, contact Josh Holloway (205) 572-5640 or email jholloway@stairwaylending.com. Website: www.stairwaylending.com

Group Health – Retirement (401k)

Advanced Benefit Solutions offers TFDA members a free confidential evaluation of their employee benefit program. ABS can offer proven cost-saving alternatives and increased benefits. Products include employee retirement programs, group life insurance, long-term disability, dental and group medical insurance. Call Ron Seibel at (800) 291-2009 or fax (512) 582-9493. Customer service and satisfaction is guaranteed.

Internet/Phone/Cable

SimplySmart Solutions can help with service and/or equipment. Let us know when your current contract is expiring if you want to improve internet speeds and/or phone services to make your business more efficient. Contact: Jessica Dusek at (512) 691-6260 x104 or Jessica.dusek@nrsgsimplysmart.com.

Online Newsletters

MultiView produces and provides a weekly email newsletter, Funeral Trends, to the TFDA membership. The information in the newsletter is industry related covering a variety of news stories from across the country. They also sell advertising on the TFDA website. Members have the opportunity to purchase advertisements in the newsletter or on the website. For information on advertising rates, please contact Geoffrey Forneret at (469) 420-2629 or email gforneret@multibriefs.com.

Phone "On Hold" Systems

HEAR HERE "On Hold" Systems offers customized music and message "on hold" service to TFDA and its members. They can help you project your professional image each time you find it necessary to place a caller "on hold" by creating custom productions especially for your business. They are proud to offer their services without any equipment to buy or contracts to sign. You can hear a sample of their service by calling the TFDA office. For more information about this great image enhancing marketing tool, call Vince at (800) 613-3197 or visit them online at www.hearhere.net.



**“I knew everything
about my business.**

**Except how
to sell it.”**

*Laurens Fish III
Weed-Corley-Fish
Funeral Homes &
Cremation Services*

One doesn't learn everything about their business overnight. In fact, it has taken me over three generations of family ownership and I'm still learning. When it came time for me to make a transition, I realized I was out of my comfort zone. My research kept showing that Johnson Consulting Group was the “go-to” firm for funeral homes in my situation. It was the best call I ever made.

Not only has JCG helped funeral home owners time and time again, they understood that this would be my first and only time to do this. And that I had some unique wishes. Like the fact that I wanted to stay involved after the sale. And that I wanted my staff to stay intact as well. My goal was to remain connected and have more time to devote to the local community and my favorite charities. JCG made all of that happen. They know their business. Because they understood mine.



*Johnson
Consulting
Group*

888.250.7747
www.JohnsonConsulting.com

MEMBER SERVICES These services are provided to TFDA members only.

AT&T Discounted Cell Phone Service TFDA members are eligible for a 10 percent discount. This is for personal accounts under users' social security numbers. Business accounts are not eligible. They offer some great specials not available anywhere else. To access the link, you must go to the Members Only portion of the TFDA website and log-in. You may also take your membership card to any AT&T store to verify eligibility.

TFDA Job Bank assists funeral homes, commercial embalming establishments and crematories looking for personnel. Information is posted to the TFDA website for 90 days unless otherwise stated. Using the TFDA job bank significantly increases your applicants and shortens your search time. Licensed funeral directors and embalmers are encouraged to email their resumes to joyce@tfda.com so that potential employers can contact them. Contact the TFDA office at (512) 442-2304 for more information.

Verizon Wireless Service TFDA members (all existing and new customer Verizon accounts) will receive an 8 percent discount off their monthly bill along with discounts of up to 25 percent off all accessories. This discount applies to business accounts and personal accounts. All activation fees will be waived for new services provided, along with early termination fees up to \$350. All agreements will be for a duration of two years. Apple products will not receive discounts. To initiate your account, contact Will Godfrey (832) 349-5106, will.godfrey@cellularsales.com.

El Dorado Motor Group offers TFDA members and their employees the ability to purchase GM vehicles at fleet pricing. El Dorado Motors will sell all eligible vehicles at GM Supplier Pricing as detailed on the manufacturer's invoice. This is truly a "no hassles/no haggle" process. For each vehicle purchased, they will donate \$50 to the Colin Owens Memorial Scholarship Fund. Contact Tom Bresnahan in McKinney, Texas, at (972) 569-0101.

Funeral Service Credit Union, located in Springfield, Illinois, is a state-chartered credit union established in 1983 that provides financial services to funeral service professionals, their employees and immediate families. This credit union is endorsed by NFDA, many other national funeral service organizations and state funeral directors associations. They offer many services and very competitive rates. For more information, visit www.fscunet.org or call toll-free (866) 701-3728 or (217) 546-5480.

Music Licensing TFDA members are eligible for the same low rate for music licensing as is available to NFDA members. NFDA allows members of the state associations to receive a discounted music license. The 2017 music license is \$246. This is a considerable discount over the price you would pay to become licensed directly with each agency (ASCAP, BMI and SESAC). For a copy of the 2017 NFDA music license renewal form, go to www.tfda.com and click on "Helpful Forms." Failure to obtain an annual license may result in substantial fines.

Men's Wearhouse Men's Wearhouse is the go-to menswear store for funeral directors of all ages. Superior suit selection is broad on styles and brand names. To get discounts go to www.tfda.com, then Members Only.

TFDA Services, Inc.

Executive Officers



PRESIDENT
D. Michael Land
Hurst
michael@forestridge-fh.com



VICE PRESIDENT
Zach Carnley, CFSP
Burlison
zach@familyowned.net



SECRETARY TREASURER
Charlotte Chism
Waldrum, CFSP
Irving
char1chism@aol.com

Directors



Larry Don Graves
Huntsville
larry@shmfh.com



Tracy A. Lane
Pineland
lane6583@yahoo.com



Jeffrey Nobles
Navasota
noblesjeff@yahoo.com



Dick Owens
Wolfe City
rowenswc@yahoo.com



Larry Payne, CFSP
West
lwpayne@aderholdfuneralhome.com



Gary Lee Westerman, CFSP
Irving
gwesterman@brownmem.com

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

ASD Inc. **30**
 Austin Mortuary Service, LLC **25**
 C & J Financial, LLC **33**
 Capital Mortuary Services **11**
 Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service **27**
 Directors Choice Funeral Directors Life **7**
 Doric Texas **19**
 Express Funeral Funding **21**
 Federated Insurance **9**
 Johnson Consulting Group **35**
 Kirk Mortuary Service of Houston **8**
 Legacy Funeral Group **31**
 Metropolitan Funeral Service **23**
 Miller & Sons **10, 25**
 Miller Mortuary and Crematory Services **37**
 Shields Southeast Sales Inc. **BC**
 Southwest Professional Vehicles, Inc. **17**
 Texas Service Life **IFC**
 Twin Wood Mortuary **5**
 Vaughan Specialty Auto **29**
 Victoria Mortuary Services **32**
 Wilbert Funeral Services **IBC**

2018 TFDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January	23	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
	24	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
February	5	Emerging Leaders Meeting	Austin
	March	15	North Texas Meeting
20		Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
22		South Central Texas Meeting	Austin
23		Track Training	Austin
29		East Texas Meeting	TBD
April		4, 5	South Texas Meeting
	15	North Texas Meeting	Dallas
	12	Southeast Texas Meeting	TBA
	17	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
	18	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
	25-27	NFDA Advocacy	Washington, DC
June	10-13	TFDA Convention	Galveston
	19	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
July	8-11	NFDA Leadership Conference	Asheville, NC
	September	11	Texas Funeral Service Commission
October		14-17	NFDA Convention
	23	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
	24	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin

Wedding? Celebration? New grandchild?

Send us a note about recent celebrations in your life:

Kimberly Scheberle at
 kscheberle@austin.rr.com



MILLER MORTUARY & CREMATION SERVICES
 Family Owned Business Ready to Serve Your Firm

ON SITE CREMATORY

Removals | Embalming | Graveside Services
 Transportation | Ship Outs Administration | TSA Certified

800-477-2150

millermortuary@gmail.com
 202 Avenue Q - Lubbock, Texas 79415

Members of
 TFDA, NFDA,
 and CANA

A Fitting Farewell to the French King of Rock 'n Roll



PARIS — You've probably never heard of Jean-Philippe Smet. You may not even recognize his stage name – Johnny Hallyday – but in France and other parts of Europe, millions of his adoring fans believed him to be “the French Elvis,” an authentic rock star.

His well-earned credentials resulted from a 57-year career built on 181 tours, 18 platinum albums and worldwide record sales of more than 110 million, making him one of the world's best-selling rockers of all time.

Johnny Hallyday died early in the morning of Dec. 6. Lung cancer was listed as the cause of death although he had been diagnosed earlier with colon cancer and treated for lung cancer and repeated health issues in the years prior to his death, but had performed as recently as the summer.

We make note of him here because Johnny Hallyday was memorialized Dec. 9 in Paris, his adoring fans, numbering into the hundreds of thousands,

crowding the procession's route which began at the Arc de Triomphe and down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. Some followed his casket on foot while others rode alongside, with reports of more than 1,500 motorcycles – the rock star's passion – making up a large part of the procession.

A religious ceremony was held at Le Madeleine Church, where members of the Johnny Hallyday band performed their greatest hits from a stage outside the church. Fans were able to view the funeral ceremony taking place inside from giant screens flanking the stage. Thousands of police provided security.

French President Emmanuel Macron, who spoke during the eulogy, paid tribute by saying, “We had built deep within ourselves the conviction that he was invincible. He is among these men who should have died 100 times because of their lifestyle, because of their overindulgence, because of their battles,” Macron, 39,

said. “But he never fell.”

Why so many fans? Why was Johnny Hallyday so loved? Was it his rugged good looks and scratchy voice? Or was it the charisma that singer Line Renaud, who helped launch his career and is known as his “godmother,” said “there's no school for.”

According to his manager, speaking to the Associated Press, Hallyday displayed an authentic and deep affection for his fans. French radio reported the rock star was buried on the French Caribbean island of St. Bart's, where the singer and his family had a summer home.

The Eiffel Tower was lit with the words “Thank you Johnny” over the weekend of the funeral and all soccer games played in the top two divisions of the French league began their events with Hallyday's songs.

Editor's note: As with many European personalities, there is an American connection to France's Johnny Hallyday aside

from the influence of rock 'n roll music Europe imported from the U.S.

Born in Paris on June 15, 1943 to Leon Smet, a Belgian father, and a French mother. Huguette Eugénie Pierrette Clerc. Hallyday was raised by an aunt and took his professional name from a cousin-by-marriage who lived in Oklahoma and performed as “Lee Halliday.” He called the young Smet “Johnny” and was a father figure to the youngster, introducing him to American music.

During his career, Hallyday openly admitted he had never stopped grieving over his absent father, who had disappeared from his life when his parents divorced before he was a year old. He only occasionally sang “A Propos de Mon Pere” (“Concerning My Father”), which appeared on his 1974 album, said to be about his dad.

Commemorating First Responders

When a hero falls, Wilbert is there.



Wilbert's *Commemorating First Responders* program provides families of firefighters, law enforcement officers and emergency medical personnel who have died in the line of duty with a tribute worthy of their valor and sacrifice.

At no charge, your local Wilbert vault plant will donate a customized Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault. If the choice is cremation, we offer a selection of urns, as well as a Stainless Steel Triune® urn vault for memorial tribute. If permitted, a WilbertWay graveside service may also be included.

When a hero falls in your community, contact your local Wilbert vault plant or representative about the First Responders program.

Wilbert
Commemorating Life with Respect™



Abilene.....	972-291-7854
Amarillo	806-372-6178
Beaumont.....	800-737-2792
Corpus Christi.....	800-522-8589
Fredericksburg	800-460-2122
Grapevine.....	817-481-3577
Harlingen	800-460-3999
Houston	800-874-5642
Jarrell	512-746-5500
Lubbock.....	800-692-4266
Midland.....	432-553-5242
San Antonio.....	800-460-2122



S H I E L D S
PROFESSIONAL VEHICLES

www.myhearse.com
800-334-2697

XTS CORTEGE
FLOWER CAR



Phoenix



Lincoln MKT *Legacy*



Blaine Smith

(Cell) 214-519-1457

blainehsmith@yahoo.com



Phoenix C

Providing The Finest Funeral Coaches Since 1969