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Volume 67, Issue 3

Texas Director

The Official Publication of the Texas Funeral Directors Association

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Why
*Funeral
Directors*
Should Offer
EDUCATION
to Their
COMMUNITIES

Plus

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Convention at a Glance**

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Lee Castro

Sunset Advisory Committee for TFSC Has Been Named

Greetings from the Sunny South (Texas)!

Football fans may be gearing up for spring practice in high schools around the state and many of the colleges and university gridiron teams are readying for their annual spring games.

TFDA activities also are ratcheting up a notch, and for anyone who wants to get busy, there's planning to do, coordination to be accomplished, golf tournaments to attend, our PAC to beef up and meetings to go to...but first things first.

As many of you are aware, the Texas Funeral Service Commission is up for review and the group to review the necessity of the commission – The Sunset Advisory Committee – has been appointed and includes: From the Senate: Brian Birdwell (Granbury), Chair; Dawn Buckingham, M.D. (Lakeway); Bob Hall (Canton); Richard Nichols (Jacksonville); Kirk Watson,

(Austin); and Emily Pataki (Cedar Park) – Public Member.

From the House of Representatives: Chris Paddie, Vice-chair (Marshall); Dan Flynn (Van); Stan Lambert (Abilene); Poncho Nevarez (Eagle Pass); Senfonia Thompson (Houston); and Ronald G. Steinhart (Dallas) – Public Member.

Be looking for a memo, email or the next issue of the *Texas Director* from the Legislative Committee on the next steps needed as we prepare for the next session. YOU can make a difference!

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find a list of frequently-asked questions about the Sunset Commission.

I want to thank the regions for all the planning required for their spring meetings and the warm hospitality they extend. I also encourage every TFDA member to invite a non-member funeral director and/or host a student from

a nearby mortuary school (there are now five, including the new school in Mt. Pleasant) to attend a regional meeting.

As we approach a legislative year, we need more members so our voices can be heard in the House and Senate this next session...and more young members to carry on TFDA's professional mission.

Speaking of younger members, I want to remind you of the upcoming meeting of the South Central region, March 22-23 in Austin, which includes a full day of track training. For more information, email South Central President Sabrina Young, CFSP – FDIC at Harper-Talasek Funeral Home in Temple at syoung@legacyfuneralgroup.com.

Then, Sept.30-Oct. 2, TFDA's Emerging Leaders will host Emerging Leaders University at Harrell Funeral Home in Austin. This training opportunity is designed for all levels of experience, all ages and all job descriptions within funeral service, including vendors and suppliers. For more information, contact Zach Carnley, CFSP – Manager at Lucas & Blessing Funeral Home in Burleson at zach@familyowned.net.

Last but definitely not least, I want to say thank you for all the work Ann, Joyce and Mary as well as the various committees are doing in preparation for our June 10-13 Convention – That's "Island Time" in Galveston. You don't want to miss the opportunity for education, fellowship, adventures on the Island and so much more.

Mark your calendars now so you won't miss one exciting moment of the year ahead...and

if you find you have time on your hands, here are some recommendations:

1. Reach out to funeral directors in your area. Even take a competitor to lunch. Then invite them to join TFDA.

2. Mentor a young director. There are some talented youngsters in funeral service right now. Pick one and share what you've learned.

3. Spend an afternoon at the movies. Texas funeral directors are recommending "The Post" with Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks; "Black Panther" with Chadwick Boseman and Lupita Nyong'o or "Twelve Strong" with Chris Hemsworth, Navid Negahban, Michael Pena and Michael Shannon.

Congratulations go to Tiffany Aguilar of Sequin on her selection to represent Texas at the upcoming NFDA "Meet The Mentor" program, held at Emory University's Conference Center in Atlanta. I cannot think of a better representative for TFDA.

Hats off to Michael Land and David Medina, co-owners of Forest Ridge Funeral Homes in Hurst for being honored by the City of Bedford Police Department Honor Guard Team with a Plaque of Appreciation. The Bedford Police Department's Honor Guard Team uses Forest Ridge Funeral Home's facilities and equipment for practice any time an honor guard is needed in the area!

It's also good to see Ann Singer back from surgery and well on her way to healing.

Until next month, EDUCATE – ADVOCATE!



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What Every Texas Director Should Know About the Sunset Commission

1. **Why is it called “Sunset”?** In government, the term “sunset” means that a particular agency, program, policy, or law will expire on a specific date, unless the Legislature passes a bill to continue it. In other words, anything with a “sunset” date will cease to exist after a set period of time unless the legislature takes action.

During the 1970s, many states created “sunset” laws to address the escalation of government budgets and the perception that government bureaucracy was not accountable. Sunset provisions differ greatly, but share the common goal to regularly shine a light on state agencies and programs to see how well they are operating in a changing world, if they continue to be needed, and how they can do their jobs better.

2. **When was the Sunset Advisory Commission established in Texas?** The Texas Legislature passed the Texas Sunset Act in 1977, at a time when scandals at both the federal and state level had eroded public confidence in government institutions. Texas was the second state in the country (behind Colorado in 1976) to create a Sunset process. After Texas, 33 additional states passed similar Sunset law.

3. **Doesn't Texas already have oversight through audits and the budget process?** The Sunset Commission is one of several agencies charged with monitoring state agency performance. These other oversight agencies include the State Auditor's Office, Legislative Budget Board, Governor's Office of Budget and Planning, and legislative committees. Sunset regularly works with these agencies to avoid duplication of effort and to identify issues that may be addressed by Sunset or another agency.

While standard legislative oversight is concerned with agency compliance with specific policies and procedures, Sunset starts with a more basic question, “Do the agency and its

functions continue to be needed?”

Beyond this fundamental mission, Sunset has always been about more than just shrinking the size of government. The process creates

a unique opportunity and powerful incentive for the Legislature and stakeholders to look comprehensively at each agency and make improvements to its mission and operations.

4. **Who makes up the Sunset Advisory Commission?** The Sunset Advisory Commission is a 12-member body, with five senators and one public member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, and five members of the House of Representatives and one public member appointed by the Speaker of the House. The Sunset Commission employs a Director who oversees about 30 staff to conduct the independent Sunset reviews.

5. **Which agencies are subject to Sunset?** The Texas Sunset Act applies to about 140 agencies and other governmental entities, and each agency's Sunset date is established in state law. Most executive branch state agencies are subject to full Sunset review and abolishment under the Sunset Act. Some state entities, such as universities and courts, are exempt from Sunset review altogether.

Other agencies, such as those created in the constitution like the Teachers' Retirement System, must undergo a Sunset review but cannot be abolished under the Sunset Act. Finally, the Legislature can direct special purpose Sunset reviews and studies, such as an evaluation of the state's purchasing and contracting system, or reviews of local government entities such as river authorities.

About 20 to 30 agencies go through the Sunset review process each two-year cycle. An agency typically undergoes a Sunset review once every 12 years, but the Legislature can change an agency's Sunset date to allow for more or less time between reviews.

6. **How many agencies has Sunset abol-**

ished? The Sunset process has streamlined and changed state government. Since Sunset's inception in 1977, 85 agencies have been abolished, including 39 agencies that were completely abolished and 46 that were abolished with certain functions transferred to existing or newly created agencies.

7. **How much money has Sunset saved?** Estimates from reviews conducted between 1982 and 2017 indicate a 35-year positive fiscal impact of approximately \$981 million in savings and increased revenues, compared with expenditures of \$46.4 million for the Sunset Commission. Based on these figures, every dollar spent on the Sunset process has earned the State approximately \$21 in return.

8. **Is Sunset effective at passing good government reforms?** Yes — a strength of the Texas Sunset process is the high success rate of the Sunset Commission's thoroughly-vetted recommendations becoming law. The Legislature typically passes 80 percent of the Commission's recommendations into law with little dispute.

These changes have positively affected almost every area of state government, as described in the Impact of Sunset.

9. **Who sunsets Sunset?** As an agency created by the Legislature, the Legislature may abolish the Sunset Advisory Commission by passing a bill during any legislative session. The Legislature has openly discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the Sunset process several times over the years. However, the advantages have always been determined to strongly outweigh the disadvantages.

In 2015, the Sunset Commission's staff and process underwent a formal peer review by professionals from other state legislatures who specialize in program evaluation and public policy analysis. This review affirmed the Texas Sunset process as a leader among states, and also provided useful feedback to improve internal review procedures. Please refer to the NCSL Peer Review Report for the results of the peer review.

10. **How are agencies reviewed?** Go to — <https://stateimpact.npr.org/texas/2012/11/30/explainer-how-does-a-texas-sunset-review-work/>

11. **Sunset Staff Review.** Sunset staff work



extensively with each agency under review to evaluate the need for the agency and propose recommendations for positive change. An agency's review typically takes from three to eight months depending on the size and complexity of the agency. Sunset staff gathers information from a broad range of sources, some of which are listed below.

- Each agency under review submits a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) that identifies problems, opportunities, and issues the agency feels should be considered in its review.

- Sunset staff solicits input from the public, interest groups, and professional organizations regarding agency functions.

- Sunset staff collects and evaluates information from extensive interviews of agency personnel, performance reports, research on other states, and other sources.

Once the evaluation phase of the review is completed, Sunset staff publishes a staff report, which contains recommendations for the Sunset Commission to consider. Recommendations can suggest changing the state laws governing the agency, or can direct the management of the agency to make improvements.

12. Sunset Commission Deliberation. After publication of the staff report, the Sunset Commission conducts a public hearing on each agency under review. All information presented at the public hearing is reviewed by Sunset staff and posted to Sunset's website. At the public hearing:

- Sunset staff present the report and recommendations;
- the agency formally responds to the staff recommendations; and
- members of the public and other interested parties comment on the report as well as the agency's overall operations and policies.

The Sunset Commission meets at a later date (typically about a month after the public hearing) to decide and vote on each staff recommendation, including whether to continue or abolish the agency. The Commission may modify the staff recommendations or add new recommendations based on testimony received at the hearing. Sunset staff updates the original staff report to include these decisions.

13. Legislative Action. Sunset staff works with legislative attorneys to draft the Commission's final decisions on each agency into a bill that goes through the regular legislative process. Generally, the Legislature must pass the agency's Sunset bill for it to continue to operate.

14. How can I participate in an agency's Sunset review? The Sunset process is

designed to ensure that state government is responsive and transparent to the people of Texas. To this end, the Sunset Commission and staff encourage public participation and present many opportunities to do so during the Sunset review process.

15. Mailing List. Anyone interested in receiving the Sunset review schedule, Commission meeting schedule and agendas, staff reports, and other documents can sign up for the Sunset mailing list.

16. Input During the Sunset Staff Review. To provide input during the staff's evaluation of an agency, you may contact Sunset directly or fill out the public input form. Input received during an agency's review prior to publication of the staff report is not subject to public disclosure under the Public Information Act.

17. Response to a Sunset Staff Report. Once Sunset publishes a staff report, you may formally respond to the report in writing by filling out the public input form. These responses are considered public information, are subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act, and are published on the Sunset website.

18. Testifying before the Sunset Commission. The Sunset Commission holds a public hearing on each agency under review. Please check the Sunset Commission Meetings page for the meeting schedule and agendas. These hearings provide the opportunity to testify about an agency and comment on the Sunset staff's report and recommendations. If you would like to testify before the Commission, witness affirmation forms are available at the public hearing. Public hearings are webcast and archives are available.

19. Participating in the Legislative Session. The Sunset Commission's recommendations on each agency under Sunset review are drafted into a bill that the Legislature must pass if the agency is to continue. Anyone can participate in the legislative process as they would with any other bill.

20. What changes can be made through Sunset? Generally, the Sunset Act requires the Sunset Commission to recommend abolishing or continuing each agency under Sunset review. If the Commission chooses to continue an agency, it almost always makes other recommendations to improve the agency's operations. These improvements may include transferring certain functions to another agency to eliminate duplication, identifying change to increase the efficiency of operations, or improving the responsiveness of the

agency to its stakeholders.

The Sunset Commission can recommend two types of actions: statutory changes to alter the state laws that govern a particular agency; or management changes, which direct the agency to change its rules or internal policies under existing authority.

21. What changes cannot be made through Sunset? Sunset does not get involved in individual complaints, grievances, or cases. Sunset is not an ombudsman's office or an avenue for appeals. Rather, Sunset gathers information relating to the types of complaints, grievances, and cases the agency has overall and assesses this information to see whether a larger policy issue that can be addressed through the Sunset review process exists. The Sunset review process is also not the place to request additional funding or staff; this should be done through the appropriations process.

22. What happens if an agency is abolished? If an agency is abolished, the agency has one year to conclude its operations. The agency retains full authority and responsibility until the end of that year, when all property and records are transferred to an appropriate state agency.

23. Criteria in the Sunset Act. Sunset staff uses general criteria set by the Legislature to evaluate each of the programs and functions of a state agency placed under Sunset review. These criteria, summarized in the Sunset Review Questions, generally focus on the efficiency, effectiveness, fairness, and accountability of an agency. In 2013, the Legislature added additional criteria specific to occupational licensing agencies.

24. Across-the-Board-Recommendations (ATBs). Across-the-Board-Recommendations (ATBs) are statutory administrative policies adopted by the Sunset Commission as standards for state agencies to ensure open, responsive, and effective government. Routinely applying these ATB recommendations to agencies reflects an effort by the Legislature to prevent problems from occurring, instead of reacting to problems after the fact. See a summary of each ATB.

25. Licensing and Regulatory Model. The Licensing and Regulatory Model is a collection of evolving standards based on past Sunset experience reviewing licensing agencies and programs, as well as other published best practices. The compilation of these standards provides a model for evaluating licensing and regulatory programs, promoting efficiency, effectiveness, fairness, and accountability to protect the public. View a full description of Sunset's Licensing and Regulatory model.

Are you on Track?: Track Training is Coming to the South Central Region

By Sabrina N.Young, CFSP

As the president of the South Central board I've been faced with various complaints regarding regional meetings. Those brave enough came to me and said "I come to the meetings but I don't get anything to take away to go back and practice." "I am a manager, but I want to be a better leader." "I am a newly licensee director and I am not on par with Profit and Loss, Market Share, Arrangement Sympathy and would like to gain more experience to be a stronger director." One person came to me and said "I am an owner; I do not need to be in a room with freshly graduated college students. I want to see lifetime speakers, succession of my business, how to establish a board of trustees, how to grow or sell." It has also been brought up that pre-need counselors needed CEUs to maintain their licenses. On August 22 our board met at the TFDA

building in Austin to discuss your concerns and plan for our future!

We at SCTFDA are for the business, schools and for the individual. It is our board's goal to give you those takeaways. We have begun to plan for our regional "Track Training" to enhance YOU! Classes will be designed for the newly licensed director by strengthening their daily tasks. Touching on topics of caskets and how to personalize the merchandise you have to your family, the difference in vaults, what's important in the production of the service. Managers will be able to walk away from this training empowered to lead. Giving tips and tricks to enhance market share, reading profit and losses, knowing your goals. Owners, we are here to be the network for you to grow or sell your business. We are designing a class for YOU led by other leaders. You will not be

able to attend all the classes as they are going to be specific with what you need from where you are in your career. Each Track is designed to help you!

This is a one-day workshop that is jam packed with solid learning material brought to us by our local vendors, community leaders and volunteers who are taking the time out of their lives to help our profession. This Track Training will follow the day after our SCTFDA Spring Meeting, which is scheduled for March 22 in Austin at Top Golf. Track Training is going to be held at Peel and Sons Funeral Home located at 607 E Anderson Ln, Austin, TX 78752. Please make plans to attend this workshop. Non-Members \$100 and to our members cost of \$20. For the registration form, email Karen Hayley at krhayley@capitalmortuaryservices.com.

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Why *Funeral Directors* Should Offer *EDUCATION* to Their *COMMUNITIES*

By Alice Adams



First a few questions;

1. In the past 12 months, have you spoken to a school or community group about funeral service, pre-planning or new trends in funerals?
2. Have you offered to provide a program of any kind to a community group?
3. Have you ever been invited to speak to a group in your community?

Unlike a certain portion of our society that believes sex education can only encourage young people to have more sex sooner, death education is just something people don't want to talk

about...until a death occurs and the next-of-kin is expected to make informed – and important – decisions about something they know little or nothing about.

According to a recent survey published in June 2017 by the National Funeral Directors

Association, consumers acknowledged the importance of pre-planning their own funerals, but failed to do so. About 62.7 percent of those surveyed said it was very important to communicate their funeral plans and wishes to family members prior to their own deaths,

yet only 21.4 percent had done so.

The survey went on to say this: Even though nearly two-thirds of Americans acknowledge the importance of prearrangements, respondents cited several factors as preventing them from planning, namely that preplanning is not a priority, that they have not thought about it, or that prepaying is too costly.

For the last decade, church attendance in the United States has fallen. The percent of respondents to the NFDA survey who feel it is very important to have religion incorporated into a funeral service has decreased from 49.5 percent in 2012 to 39.5 percent in 2017, an all-time low. This mirrors a broader trend of Americans not identifying with a religion... and one parallel of this trend is that fewer Americans attend a funeral before age 40.

Is it possible – if funeral directors take funeral-related information to church, school or community groups – these hesitant planners could become more motivated or pro-active about their preneed planning?

Why More Funeral Education is Needed

The NFDA survey showed 53.8 percent – more than half of the respondents – said they were interested in exploring green memorialization options to reduce the environmental impact of end-of-life rituals. Green services can include use of biodegradable caskets, a formaldehyde-free embalming process, recycled paper products and more.

This statistic opens the door for community talks, podcasts and blogs about how you as a director can be a part of the education about green funerals and green burial. No, people don't need to go to an unlicensed individual for this kind of service. They can come to you because you are licensed, you are the expert and you are the professional.

Why not offer a program to the local Sierra Club, environmentally-aware groups and environmental science classes at local high schools, community colleges and nearby universities?

It's also a good idea to advertise green funerals – or plan a “green gathering” at your firm, where you can educate interested individuals who want an environmentally-friendly service. You could additionally serve “green tea” and vegan and gluten-free snacks.

As directors are well aware, the increasing choice of cremation has surpassed burial...and more families are choosing to have a memo-

rial service when they choose cremation (40.4 percent in 2017 vs. 35.1 percent in 2015).

Some consumers know they can view a prepared but unembalmed body as part of a service before cremation (47.8 percent in 2017 vs. 39.7 percent in 2015).

Bottom line, educating families at-need is actually too late, mainly because now – as opposed to two decades ago – there are too many options. Too many options for the already over-wrought families to understand and make educated decisions about. Too many quick decisions to be made, which sends the family home to re-think and second-guess themselves as to whether or not they've done the right thing, made the right choices.

These are the main factors behind why pre-need education is necessary and critical to the family's satisfaction and peace-of-mind after the service and disposition.

(NFDA's Consumer Awareness and Preferences Study is conducted annually to measure consumer perceptions of funeral services. Invitations are emailed to a consumer panel consisting of Americans age 40 and older, with 1,013 individuals completing the study in 2017.)

Why Funeral Directors Should Promote and Be Part of Providing Death Education in their Communities

Death education includes such subject matter as the meanings and attitudes toward death, processes of dying and bereavement, and care for people affected by death.

Death education – also known as education about death, dying, and bereavement – is based on the belief that death-denying, death-defying, and death-avoiding attitudes and practices in American culture can be transformed. It also assumes individuals and institutions will be better able to deal with death-related practices as a result of educational efforts.

There are two major reasons for providing death education:

(1) First, death education is critical for preparing professionals to advance the field and accomplish its purposes.

(2) Second, it provides the general public with basic knowledge and wisdom developed in the field.

The main goals of death education are to promote the quality of life and living for oneself and others, and to assist in creating and maintaining the conditions to bring this about. This is accomplished through new or expanded knowledge and changes in attitudes

and behavior.

Death education varies in specific goals, formats, duration, intensity, and characteristics of participants. It can be formal or informal.

(1) Formal death education can involve highly structured academic programs of study and clinical experience. It can be organized into courses, modules, or units taught independently or incorporated into larger curricular entities.

It can be offered at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, in colleges and universities, as professional preparation and as short-term seminars or workshops for continuing professional and public education.

(2) Informal death education occurs when occasions arising in the home, at school, and in other social settings are recognized and used as "teachable moments."

In the home, the birth of a sibling or the death of a pet may naturally lead to interactions that answer a child's questions about death. At school, a student's sudden death or a school shooting may trigger educational follow-up, in addition to crisis counseling.

Two distinct methodological approaches to structured death education are the didactic and the experiential:

(1) The didactic approach (involving, for example, lectures and audiovisual presentations) is meant to improve knowledge.

(2) The experiential approach is used to actively involve participants by evoking feelings and thereby permitting death-related attitudes to be modified. This approach includes personal sharing of experiences in group discus-

sion, role-playing, and a variety of other simulation exercises, and requires an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Most educators use a combination of the two approaches.

Herman Feifel's book, *The Meaning of Death* (1959), marked the beginning of the "death awareness movement." Feifel and other scholars noted that the subject of death had become "taboo" in the 20th century and challenged individuals to acknowledge their personal mortality, suggesting that to do so is essential for a meaningful life.

Feifel pioneered the scientific study of attitudes toward death and pointed to the multidisciplinary nature of the field. At about the same time other pioneers focused on more specific issues concerning dying persons and their care and the experience of grief.

Optimally, every funeral home in this country should be involved in death education, hosting fieldtrips and making talks during the semester. At the very least, you as a director should open your doors to laboratory studies for students of all ages involved in death education courses.

Aside from public and private high schools, colleges and universities in general, you – the director – should reach out to nursing program at the community college and university level, as well as pre-med programs, counseling programs, religious seminaries and hospice organizations. All of these entities should become part of the community's death care team, of which funeral directors should be a part.



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The Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), has focused on death education for professionals and was the first organization to develop professional standards and certification programs for death educators and counselors.

In addition to its annual conferences, ADEC – for many years – has been offering a sequence of preconference basic and advanced academic courses and experiential workshops taught by leading professionals, as well as resources to assist members in preparing for certification. ADEC is at present revising its certification programs to certify professionals as grief counselors.

Death Education for the Public

As the field of death and dying evolved and the subject became acceptable for discussion, the print and electronic media reported on new developments and presented interviews and panel discussions with increasing frequency. Public information about end-of-life issues that evolved with medical and technological advances was instrumental in the establishment of citizens' advocacy groups, the public debate regarding patients' rights, and subsequent legislation.

Funding from generous philanthropies, designed to educate professionals as well as the general public, has been instrumental in recent educational activities. One of the stated goals of the Project on Death in America of the Open Society Institute is to “understand and transform the culture and experience of dying and bereavement in America.”

Among recent educational efforts are the National Public Radio series “The End of Life: Exploring Death in America” and the PBS television series “On Our Own Terms: Moyers on Dying in America.” There are thousands of web pages on end-of-life issues, various aspects of dying, funerals, and grief, as well as online support services.

Most professional organizations concerned with death offer a wealth of information and resources on their web sites. Citizens' organizations present their views and perspectives in print and on the web.

Many communities periodically offer adult education programs, lecture series, seminars, and similar formats. And many colleges, universities, hospices, and hospitals either design programs for the community or invite the public to conferences.

Professional organizations – such as TFDA and its regions, NFDA, ICCFA and CANA – all concerned with death, dying, and bereavement demonstrate leadership by developing, expanding, or refining standards of practice and providing educational resources. The concerted efforts to educate physicians and nurses in end-of-life care are impressive. They also illustrate the importance of financial resources in bringing about change.

Advances in the communications technologies enabling rapid information gathering –and sharing – and the increasing use of these technologies for online distance learning and teaching can greatly facilitate and enhance death education at all levels.

However, death education conducted by a local funeral director or sponsored by a local funeral home has proven to be the most effective and most helpful to the general public. In planning your year's events and your budget, consider making room for an informational gathering about the options and various ways to celebrate a life that has been lived...and don't forget to include information for individuals who may want to host a celebration of their lives before death occurs!



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SUNDAY June 10

Island Crawl

MONDAY June 11

Registration Open CEU - 6 hours

John Gathey Memorial Golf Tournament

Moody Gardens Golf Course

TFDA Board Meeting

Wine Pairing

Disaster Fundraiser

Emerging Leaders Event

WEDNESDAY June 13

Registration Open CEU – 1 hour

Ribbon Cutting

Exhibits Open (9:00 – 2:00)

- Lunch in Exhibit Hall

- Kids Zone

- Silent Auction

TFDA Board Meeting

President's Reception

Gala

- Awards Presentation

TUESDAY June 12

Registration Open CEU - 5 hours

Keynote Speaker, Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Sales Club Lunch & Business Mtg.

50-year Licensee Lunch & Awards Presentation

Past Presidents & Former First Spouses Lunch

Service of Remembrance

General Session

Quarter Century Club Reception

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Welcome Party & Expo Preview

- Entertainment: The Spazmatics

- Silent Auction

- 50/50 Raffle Drawing

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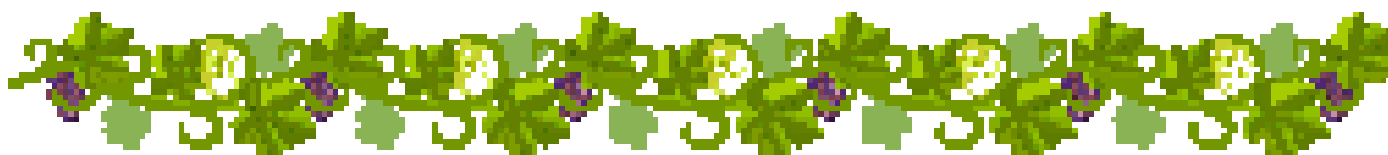
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Fragmented Families

Dylan Stopher



We've all been there: the call comes in, and a family is coming in to make arrangements, but one of them informs you that there is familial tension. Exciting, right? Wasn't it the first thing we all came to the profession for, to listen to people argue in arrangement conferences? Well... no, that probably wasn't on anyone's radar. But it is a reality, and you will face it. So how do we take that moment, and still deliver a smooth arrangement conference for the family? Let's look at some steps to accomplish that goal.

Before anything begins, you need to know you can mitigate a lot of tension by doing a little pre-work. By this, I mean when you make the phone call to set your appointment, if you take a moment to ask questions to gather vital information and potentially the hoped-for service date, you can begin to build forms. This eliminates time in the funeral home, which is a huge stressor for almost any family.

I've said it before, I'll say it again, the only people who are comfortable in funeral homes are the people who are strange enough to choose to work there. That's us. So if we do a little early leg work on the front end, and start on the correct foot, the stress of being in the

building itself will be immediately reduced.

With that said, let's first talk about seating. Practically, I always sit at the head of the table (if there is one) with my Family Service Counselor to my immediate right, and the Primary Next-of-Kin (PNOK) to my immediate left.

I arrange this seating before the family arrives by placing my folder and my keyboard (if you operate digitally) in front of my chair, the pre-printed forms I have for the PNOK in front of his/her chair, and the FSC has a folder in front of his/her chair. These are clear and established positions for ease of signature and discussion.

This, of course, lends to the fact that I am pre-

pared and ready for the family before they arrive.

Someone reading this is already thinking about walk-in families. I'll address that now: Yes, they happen. No, they're not the norm. When they happen, you'll have to drop back and punt. But you will be fine.

Let's return to the preparedness piece because when the family walks in the door and are greeted by their funeral director and FSC in person, all of the introductions can happen immediately. Do not make a family wait. That is awful. Just plain awful. And I would challenge any director in the nation who says otherwise.

Make no mistake, introductions are huge because your demeanor and tone clearly establish a pattern for the conference itself. If you are calm, warm, kind and seek to greet the PNOK first, you will non-verbally establish a pecking order that is supported by the law.

Now, let's discuss the law of kinship. It doesn't care how anyone feels and is inflexible. No one can sway the law. NOK is NOK, and there is a clear and established order you and I will respect and abide by to the tune of 100 percent or higher, or we risk losing licensure, employment, and potentially facing a lawsuit. Hopefully that is as clear to you as it is to me, and no further expansion is needed.

Now we return to the process in the arrangement conference. We've set up the seating, we've introduced everyone and now we clearly establish an environment for a successful discussion.

Bring in chairs if needed. Make every member of the family feel welcome. You're crazy if you don't allow them all to participate. Offer beverages, some polite small talk and then begin your overview of the arrangement process.

Give the family members clear expectations for the activities and discussions to follow. And, most importantly, convey a time frame. Then beat the time frame. Be the hero. Remember, they don't want to be here, they have to be here.

And then it comes. The one "Helpful Hannah," the "Third Base Coach" in the group, the loudest mouth in the room who is usually (in my experience) neither the financier nor the PNOK, begins to speak.

Tension rises. An argument is brewing, and this could be for myriad reasons, starting with the choice of service date, potential casket or urn selection, possible style of service, etc. And this is where we get our chance to shine.

You want to know what we need to do?

Hang on, because this is gonna floor you. In this moment, the first response is to put the pen down, and just sit there. Be silent. Wait. Don't get involved. Remember, you are not a member of this family and you are not (and will never be) aware of all the dynamics that play into this situation. Let it work itself out.

One strategy that's worked in almost every situation, believe it or not, is to simply stand up and leave the office. This is their issue, and if it gets too personal, I will let them handle it in private. In this instance, though, I would make a statement similar to, "Folks, I'm going to step away and allow you a few minutes to sort this out." This has, in the majority of the cases where tension exists, immediately ended the tension. The PNOK ends up saying I should stay, putting his/her foot down, and the argument ends. Then it's my job to return to the flow of the conference, unhindered by what has just happened.

We return to the flow, right where we left off, as though nothing happened. We don't focus on the concerning moment, for it has passed. We don't worry for the moments that might come, for they're not yet here. We are the epitome of professionalism and poise, focused on the right here and right now, ac-

complishing what we must in order to best serve the family.

Granted, this all assumes there is no serious and imminent threat. If that happens, and physical violence is a possibility, don't be a fool. Call the police, stating clearly that you're calling the police, and step away.

Sometimes this may be required by company policy, so be certain you're aware of what your company and/or leadership expect in situations like this. I can tell you, though, I have never once had to make that call.

As a funny side note, I do know of a time when a director was listening to an arguing family, and the situation was beginning to escalate. The director turned and grabbed the phone book, not leaving the room. He looked up the phone number to the closest immediate competitor in town, and wrote it on a piece of paper. Then he stood, handed the paper to the PNOK, and instructed them to call the other firm for an appointment.

Aghast, the PNOK replied that their entire family had used this firm for generations and they cannot use another firm now.

The director, in that moment, responded that if the family was going to remain here, they would conduct themselves with a little

more poise and reverence. There was a fantastic conference and funeral after that.

The main point, though, is to maintain our role. Remember, we are the guideposts. We are the professionals and the embodiment of the calm and resolve needed as a source of strength for the family. We are leading in the arrangement conference. And we'll lead in the visitation. And we'll lead in the funeral service. How we lead will directly translate into how the family responds. Never doubt that.

Ignoring the problem isn't the answer. Allowing the family space is the answer. Providing consistency is the answer. Exhibiting extreme professionalism is the answer. Adhering to the law is the answer.

I'll end with this: as funeral professionals, we will face difficulty in all forms. How we overcome difficulty is through a firm grasp of the law as our guideline, the family as our focus and professionalism as our chosen language.

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Though they weren't imposing in stature, they made the military men beside them seem feeble. These women are some of the last "moirologists" (professional mourners) in the southern

Greek peninsula town of Mani.

While most know Mani for its breathtaking cliffs and quaint coastal villages, it also is home to a tradition of ritual wailing (lament), dating back to ancient times. Considered an art, moirologia can be traced to the choirs of the theatrical Greek tragedies, where the principal singer would begin the mourning and the chorus would follow.

The origins of this particular tradition go back to at least the eighth century B.C., and started with family and friends improvising laments during the prothesis, when the body was set out in its former residence.

Over the centuries, it became a profession exclusively for women. Those who were especially adept at this improvisation, and could endure the physical and emotional traumas of the work, were hired by families to lead in the ritual.

While the particulars of the ritual vary, the general arc of the proceedings remains similar:

To begin the ritual, the professional mourners, sometimes alongside the women in the family, lay out the corpse and wash the body with wine, vinegar, or water.

They then seal the body's orifices and dress it in fine clothing, something the deceased

might have worn to church.

Candles are placed at the head and the feet, and flowers—particularly scented herbs like basil, marjoram, and mint—are scattered. Then a coin is set on the forehead or mouth of the deceased to ward off evil spirits.

In the afternoon, friends and family assemble at the house of the deceased.

As each mourner reaches the outer door of the house, the moirologists begin to repeat the word *adelphia*, which means "brother" or "sister."

The closest female members of the family and the moirologists stand around the corpse.

The most respected of the moirologists, usually one of the eldest, begins the lament.

As the momentum builds, the moirologists, sometimes accompanied by the other women present, remove their shawls and take down their hair, slowly pulling at the strands, swaying in time with the chant.

The verbal aspects of the lament can start in a handful of different ways. It may begin with praise for the dead, or it may start with a farewell to life from the point of view of the deceased.

These moirologists weave together religion, mythology, and village history in an im-

promptu performance to describe the life of the person being mourned, his relationship to those present at the funeral, and his journey to the afterlife.

Young descendants of Mani have likened this quick thinking to a rap battle.

When each woman finishes her part of the story, she both figuratively and physically transfers the lament to her successor, stretching her hand over the corpse to touch the hand of the woman who will continue the performance. As the woman crafts her story, the others continue their unceasing wails and moans.

The moirologists must be precise. There must be no break in the lament, as interruption is a grave omen for both the soul of the deceased and those present. Furthermore, they cannot begin the ritual too soon after death because it will prevent the soul from leaving the body.

The mourning ceases at sunset and all women are silent until the following sunrise. One moirologist stays to guard the body.

At dawn, the mourners—relatives, friends, and professionals alike—return. The priest performs a sermon and the body is carried to the cemetery, where the lamentation continues from the perspective of long-departed souls, who are asked to take care of the newly deceased person during his journey to the afterlife.

The dead give instructions to the mourners, including the performance of memorial rites, which take place on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after death, as well as the first anniversary.

During these memorial rites, both relatives and the moirologists make offerings, including locks of hair, oil, perfume, wine, honey, and garlands. The mourning period finally concludes after three years, when the body is dug up and placed in the village ossuary or family mausoleum. It is only at this point that the soul is said to be released to the afterlife.

While these laments were initially created to assist the deceased on their passage to the afterlife, they ultimately served to help members of the decedent's family on their journey to acceptance — a purpose the moirologists have served for centuries.

Editor's Note: This article is based on a story published in the February 14, 2018 issue of Atlas Obscura Online. The author is Ro Kalonaros, who witnessed the moirologists and their role in death during her grandfather's funeral in Mani.



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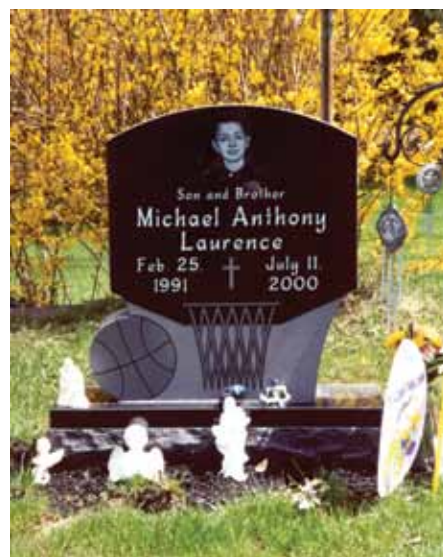
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Infant Graves and Tombstone Choices



It is hard for parents to choose gravestones for little ones lost at birth or early in life. Nevertheless, being able to offer a beautiful infant headstone or gravestone can be helpful to parents in remembering and memorializing their young child.

Infant gravestone designs mostly include designs like teddy bears and angels. In addition, people often opt for heart-shaped headstones for children.

Some parents may want to select a meaningful inscription or create an epitaph with personal significance. Having the ability to honor their beloved child in these ways may also bring some peace to a grieving family.

When writing an epitaph, encourage parents to keep it simple and short as there is limited space on a headstone or marker.

Gravestones for children may be carved with meaningful symbols or emblems along with the child's name, and dates of birth and death. Gravestones for stillborn babies feature only a single date.

One note about interpreting cemetery art: while some conventions exist, it is easy to over-think a marker. The presence of a primrose might represent eternal love, youth, hope, or sadness. Primroses also have many

medicinal uses.

The parents may only want the headstone to indicate hope. Or, simply, the design of the headstone may be purely fulfilling aesthetic reasons and have little to do with the deceased.

Listed below are some symbols and their meanings:

- **Morning glory flower** – youth, child death
- **Sleeping child** – Deceased child
- **Lamb** – Innocence
- **A pair of small, empty shoes** (one shoe is overturned) – Loss of a child

- **Daisy** – Innocence of a child
- **Acorn** – Young child
- **Naked child** – Purity and innocence
- **Cherub** – Marks the grave of a child
- **Dove** – Holy Spirit, innocence and gentleness
- **Angel carrying a baby to heaven**

Parents may include designs such as baby toys (building blocks, pacifier, bib, toy plane, train, baby booties, etc.), kitty, bunny, traditional rocking horse, favorite cartoon characters, a heart, child angel on a rainbow, Mary holding a baby, and other religious figures.

While composing a message, parents may find healing in religious quotes, whether from the Bible, The Book of Mormon, the Koran, Hindu scriptures, etc., poems, old books bearing epitaphs, and even nursery rhymes.

In addition, they also may want the gravestone to be personalized by getting an adorable picture of their child laser etched on the stone.

They also may want to visit the section of a cemetery dedicated to infants and children for inspiring ideas to honor their baby's memories.

When purchasing an infant gravestone with intricate design, choose a high-quality material that is easy to carve, with granite used most often because of its durability.

Headstones and markers for teens. Grave markers for teenagers can be inspired by their young and energetic personalities. They may be engraved with symbols representing their hobbies, interests, and passions like music, sports, etc., so it's possible to get a bike, sports car, guitar, musical note,

piano, a computer or a gadget or some other similar item engraved on the tombstone marking the youngster's grave.

Some may want to incorporate other meaningful symbols such as dove, butterfly, praying hands, angels, the Bible, cross, sacred heart, light/lamp, and so on. These traditional symbols denote peacefulness, eternal life, resurrection, etc. in the hope to bring comfort to the deceased. Partially bloomed rose, in particular, signifies a teenager.

In addition, you can consider adding an interesting inscription or epitaph on the gravestone. After all, it reflects the departed individual's personality.

So, you can add humorous and funny inscriptions, too, as teenagers usually have a great sense of humor.

If the departed teenager had a favorite song with meaningful lyrics, consider using a portion of the lyrics engraved on the gravestone to memorialize him or her. Or suggest to parents that they may take a few lines from a poem, or even compose a short poem themselves. Those more religiously inclined may want to include get a biblical quote engraved on the tombstone.

Counter to some beliefs, the headstone need not be of rectangular shape. Parents can choose from a variety of shapes such as oval, circle, heart, cross, scroll, Star of David, open book, or some other design. Plus, parents can add a matching vase and plaque, especially if it is a bronze marker.

The gravestone also can be personalized by getting a favorite photo of the teenager laser-etched on the stone.

Parents should be urged to purchase headstones from local monument companies. These firms usually are aware of the type of headstones that local and area cemeteries allow. Thus, their headstones are not likely to be rejected by the cemetery.

In case parents choose to buy online or from some other supplier, check the cemetery rules and regulations thoroughly so you can be a helpful guide as to the size, material, shape, style, and other aspects of headstones.

If the parents are adverse to a certain type of headstone material, they may want to consider granite, marble, limestone, bronze, fieldstone, slate, sandstone, soapstone, stainless steel, etc.

Of these, granite and bronze are the most popular because they are durable, attractive, and easy to maintain. Plus, apart from white, parents may select a color like black, grey, blue, green, pink, red, etc.

Inspirational Inscriptions

Gravestone verses can include meaningful and comforting quotes, sayings, scriptural verses, portions of the lyrics from the deceased's favorite song, excerpts from a poem, and so on.

The centuries-old tradition of honoring and paying tribute to the departed loved one also includes putting memorial sentiments in an epitaph.

Families may compose a short poem... and all in all, the inscription on the gravestone or tombstone should reflect the personality of the deceased and highlight the individual's commendable qualities.

Here are some examples of gravestone verses for you to consider:

*His Life A Beautiful Memory,
His Absence A Silent Grief.*

*It Broke Our Hearts to Lose You
But You Did Not Go Alone
For Part of Us Went With You
The Day God Called You Home*

*May The Souls Of The
Faithful Departed
Through The Mercy Of God
Rest In Peace*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave
his only Son, that whoever believes in him
should not perish but have eternal life.
- John 3:16*



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As the bird free of its cage seeks the heights,
So the Christian soul in death flies home to Gods
May you rejoice in the arms of the Lord for eternity.

I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
- Psalms 23:4

To live is Christ, and to die is gain.
- Philippians 1:21

But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead; he will surely take me to himself.
- Psalm 49:15

May the Irish hills caress you, may her lakes and rivers bless you.
May the luck of the Irish enfold you

And may the blessings of Saint Patrick behold you.
- St. Patrick blessing

Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.

Treasured Memories Like A Golden Chain
Link Us Till We Meet Again

Words are few, feelings deep, Memories of you are ours to keep.

Sadly missed along life's way
Quietly remembered everyday.
No longer in my life to share;
But in my heart
You are always there.

Remembering is an act of resurrection,
each repetition a vital layer of mourning, in memory of those we are sure to meet again.
- Nancy Cobb

Yet in this heart's most sacred place, thou, alone, shall dwell forever.
- Thomas Moore

What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.
- Helen Keller

Ideas for stillborn or very young deaths could include:

Shh...Baby Sleeping
God's garden needs flowers

Some people only dream of angels...
We have held one in our arms

An angel in the book of life wrote down my baby's birth. Then whispered as she closed the book 'too beautiful for earth

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Jamie Walker

to the RESCUE

By Alice Adams



Funeral director Jamie Reed Walker isn't prone to talk much about herself. So, let's begin her story with the words of her neighbor who was rescued from Hurricane Harvey's torrents of water and later wrote the following:

"I am blessed to call Matt and Jamie Reed Walker my friends. They are two people who would literally take the shirts off their backs and give them to someone in need.

"Matt and Jamie live two doors down from me...and while we were all worried about our homes being flooded that day, Matt and Jamie were walking the neighborhood, looking for fami-

lies that may have needed help.

"On the Sunday after Harvey, the Walkers rescued 86 people trapped in their homes by the high waters. Matt, who doesn't know how to swim, waded into rushing waters up to his waist to rescue a woman trapped in her car.

"Through all this devastation and fear, the Walkers brought so much kindness and caring for others...and I want everyone to know I am so thankful and grateful for the Walkers." (signed) Gena Smith

Anyone who knows Jamie knows she is passionate about her family and her profession. But, her passion encompasses about

anything she does. There's nothing half-way about her effort, and when she's involved in something, she's all in.

Just ask her fellow members in TFDA's Disaster Team.

"There's no quit in Jamie," said one veteran member. "If she commits, you know she'll get it done...and not just with mediocre effort. You can bank it'll be done better than it's ever been done. She always arrives, ready to go to work."

"If I'm ever in a tight spot, I want Jamie on my team," another Disaster Team member attested. "She's there when volunteers are

needed and she's ready to jump in with both feet. She's fearless."

On the other hand, Jamie Walker is always ready to learn more, to find better ways to get things done. "Jamie thrives in training courses and workshops. Her goal is to be the best and she doesn't back away for putting in the work when it comes to any job on the team she's given."

Licensed in September 1992, Jamie studied at Commonwealth Institute and has been the owner of All Saints Mortuary Service the past 16 years. "My work is satisfying," she said, "because I know I am helping and serving others."

The first service she attended (at age eight) was the funeral for her mother's brother. "I specifically remember being under a tent," she said, "and there was a casket, probably the first one I'd ever seen."

Later, when her grandfather passed away, Jamie remembered so many people crying and being under the same kind of tent... "but I didn't understand why we were

there," she said.

Growing up in the southeast Texas town of Vidor with a fairly large extended family, Jamie has spent her adult life in Houston.

This funeral director has been a member of TFDA the past 16 years and currently serves on TFDA's Disaster Team. She was deployed with the team during its assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike and also worked during Hurricane Harvey.

Her passion and dedication to the Disaster Team is palpable and she envisions the team being even stronger than it is today. "We're recruiting members and will soon be publishing an agenda that includes regular training sessions, teaching and learning more research-based skills for rescue and recovery," she said.

"The Disaster Team is a perfect niche for me since I am passionate about helping people in need and, as my family, co-workers and friends will tell you, I'm a fixer," she admitted.

"We have people of all ages on the team working together and, ideally, we should have men and women in each region who are trained for deployment when and if – and it's usually a matter of when – disaster strikes."

Jamie and Matt Walker, her husband of 28 years, have two daughters and one son.

She enjoys family time, volunteering at their church, sewing and quilt-making.

"I'm excited about seeing TFDA's Disaster Team grow and increase its skills and ability

to respond to both man-made and natural disaster," she said, "and I believe, once the team's goals are set, we cannot just reach but surpass those goals."

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THREE REASONS for Hiring Older Employees



In the 2015 movie *The Intern*, Robert DeNiro starred as a 70-year-old widower who returns to the workforce as an under-appreciated and seemingly out-of-step intern working for a young boss played by Anne Hathaway.

Initially, Hathaway's character can't quite relate to this baby boomer who ditched retirement out of boredom, but by the film's finale she comes to appreciate his skills and experience.

In real life you're unlikely to encounter many septuagenarian interns, but it's not unusual for people to re-enter the labor market or launch new careers when they are well into what was once

considered retirement age.

And that can be good for businesses that are willing to take advantage of all those decades of hard-earned experience, says Andrew Simon, a partner in Simon Associate Management Consultants (www.simonassociates.net) who himself is in his 70s.

"Starting a new career after 60 is not for everyone," Simon says. "But it can be rewarding for those with energy and commitment levels that are high, and who are willing to learn new skills and keep up with the constantly evolving technology."

The question is whether businesses will

balk at hiring workers who, in many cases, are old enough to be the parents of the people supervising them. Sure there are downsides, Simon says, but the upsides can be tremendous when it's the right fit for the right person.

He says a few things businesses should keep in mind as they weigh whether to hire older workers include:

Experience counts. Baby boomers come to the table with a whole set of experiences, including 30 or 40 years of interpersonal people skills that make them more adept at dealing with unique situations or different types of people. "On the flip side," Simon says, "some of them could lack the technical skills that we take for granted in today's workforce. So, be careful what you are asking them to do."

Self-motivation. The odds are older employees will be self-motivated. "If these potential workers would like to join an organization or start a new career after 60, they probably like the idea of work," Simon says. "They need to do something every day. Perhaps they view their job as intellectually stimulating." You do need to make sure of their motivation, though, he says. If they're just working for a paycheck, that might not cut it.

Different age groups have their own behaviors. Baby boomers often have a very different set of values than millennials. "Different things motivate them," Simon says. "The culture of an organization is very important and can be tricky. You want to make sure these older workers have an opportunity to thrive in your new environment." While it's best to avoid stereotyping the generations too much, in general baby boomers tend to be productive, loyal to the company, willing to put in long hours to get the job done and prefer to have conversations in person.

"Companies that pass on hiring older workers risk missing out on people who could become some of their most valuable employees," Simon says. "Age shouldn't be the issue. Instead, as with any hire, the issue is what skills and experiences each of these people can bring to the workforce."

Andrew Simon, a partner in Simon Associate Management Consultants (www.simonassociates.net), has had a 50-year career as a senior executive. He founded and ran Questar Assessment Inc. As a serial entrepreneur, Simon also developed and ran businesses in real estate development and did start-ups inside larger corporations, such as Citibank, Bankers Trust, Norcliff-Thayer and Lederle Labs.



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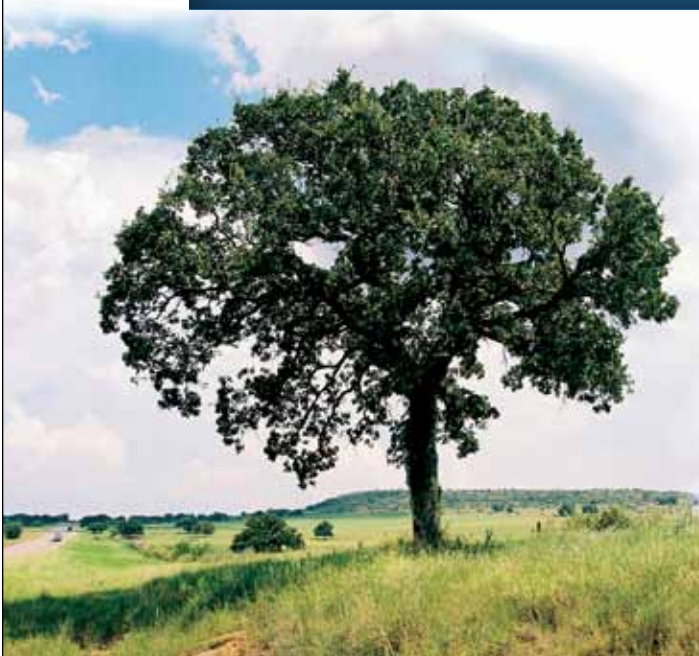
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Bailey

Mr. James E. "Jimmy" Bailey, 74, of Navasota, passed away January 28, 2018, at his home. He is the step father to Jeffrey Nobles with Nobles Funeral Home.

Jimmy was born in Houston, Texas, on July 26, 1943, to Daniel and Dorothy (McGinnis) Bailey. After graduating from high school, he proudly served his country in the United States Army. He then made his home in Richards, where he owned and operated the Richards Grocery Store for many years. He married Libby Werner on June 11, 1983, and the couple began their life together in Navasota. Jimmy worked for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for over 20 years before retiring, and he then worked as a carpenter, contractor, real estate agent, and truck driver before finally slowing down to enjoy retirement. Jimmy was very proud to be a member of the Navasota Evening Lions Club and the Richards Masonic Lodge. He also started the Bottom of the Barrell cooking team and was a regular at the Grimes County Go Texan coo-

koff. Jimmy loved hunting, fishing, camping, cooking, and entertaining friends and family.

He was preceded in death by his parents and niece, Victoria Ashley Gambini-Callihan.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Libby Bailey of Navasota; daughter and son-in-law, Jennifer & Mitchell NeSmith of Richards; son and daughter-in-law, Jeffrey & Natalie Nobles of Navasota; brothers and sisters-in-law, Danny & Margaret Bailey of Richards and Edgar Daniel & Drice Bailey of Pflugerville; sisters and brothers-in-law, Pamela & Ronnie Gambini of Missouri City and Sandra & Cut Out Nobles of Navasota; mother-in-law, Jeanne Werner of San Antonio; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Bob & Mary Werner of San Antonio; and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was a loving Paw Paw to Lexi, Zoe, and Maddie Nobles and Lane NeSmith.

Serving as pallbearers were Jeffrey Nobles, Mitchell NeSmith, George Bailey, Jan Matchett, Allen Kolby, and Clell Goodson. Honorary pallbearers included Danny Bailey, Victor

Becker, Wilbert Hilley, Phillip Vezorak, Tom Maynard, Al McGinnis, Larry McGinnis, Bob Werner, and the members of the Navasota Evening Lions Club, Richards Masonic Lodge, and Bottom of the Barrell cook team.

Jimmy's drive and determination was the main driving force for the Navasota Lions Club Hall that was built at the Grimes County Fair Grounds. For those who desire, memorial contributions may be made to the Navasota Evening Lions Club Scholarship Fund, PO Box 68, Navasota, TX 77868.

Funeral services were held February 1, at the First Baptist Church of Navasota with the Rev. Clyde Larrabee officiating. Masonic graveside services followed in Oakland Cemetery. Arrangements were under the direction of Nobles Funeral Chapel.

Tate

Ethelyn Tate died on January 26, 2018 in Kerrville, Texas. She was the owner of Ethelyn Tate Funeral Supply and a retired sales representative for Bass Mollett Publishers.

Mary Ethelyn Reed Tate was born to Harriet Ethel Polley Reed and Hervie Edward Reed on October 18, 1924 in Keller. She graduated from Fort Worth Technical High School in 1942 and married Lewis Inge Tate on his birthday, January 4, 1947 in Weatherford.

She and Lewis lived in Robstown and Corpus Christi during the late 1940s and early 1950s where he served families as a funeral director and she was in sales at Taylor Bros. Jewelers. They moved to Dallas in 1953 when he took a position with Weiland-Merritt Funeral Home and she became a personal shopper for Neiman Marcus.

In 1965 they began their 40-year career traveling as sales representatives for funeral home products. He joined the Caudle Engraving Company of Dallas and she opened her own company, Ethelyn Tate Funeral Supply.

They moved to Kerrville from Dallas in September of 1988 and retired from Bass-Mollett Publishers and her funeral supply company in December of 2005.

She and her husband were married 60 years and 1 month when he died on February 4, 2007. Her mother died in 1986; her father in 1989 and her sister, Betty J. Maloney in 1997.

The funeral service was held January 30, 2018 in the Kathleen C. Cailloux Memorial Mausoleum Chapel at the Garden of Memories Mausoleum and Cemetery in Kerrville, where Mr. Charles Gray officiated. Entombment beside her husband will follow. Services were at the direction of Grimes Funeral Home.

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Underwood

James A. "Jim" Underwood, Jr. passed away January 26, 2018. He is the father of Michael Underwood with Greenwood Funeral Homes & Cremations in Fort Worth.

James was born in Shreveport, La., July 30, 1925. Jim was the third of four children born to James A. and Estelle Ward Underwood. The family moved to Fort Worth when Jim was three years old. He graduated from Arlington Heights High School in 1942 and began working for the Texas & Pacific Railway (T&P) until he joined the Navy in May 1943. He served in the Pacific Theater aboard the USS Roi CVE 103 as a Fire Controlman during WWII. After the war, Jim worked in a local hardware store compiling and printing their catalog until he landed a job at Convair, which later became General Dynamics. He worked for General Dynamics and LTV for 16 years as a Technical Illustrator. Jim left LTV and with Bill Pierce, and Charlie Davis they formed an advertising company; Pierce Davis & Associates in Arlington. He retired and moved to Longview in 1988. He and Juanita moved back to Fort Worth in 2013, to be near family. He resided at Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living and Memory Care where he was nicknamed "Mr. Happy".

Jim was blessed with the God given gift as an artist. His oil paintings were given as presents to family, friends and co-workers. His hobbies also included gardening, clock building and repair, woodworking and electronics. "PawPaw" was known for his homemade pickles. He loved to hand out jars each time the grand kids would visit.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Bobby Juanita Underwood; son, James Don Underwood; and his sister, Josie Lindsey.

Survivors: Sons, Michael and wife, Gretch-

en, Kim Allen and wife, Sheila and Scott and wife, Wendy; daughters, Deborah Stangoni and Kimberly Wheelis; daughter-in-law, Sally Underwood; sisters, Nadine Nichols and Polly Ussery; grandchildren, Heather, Heidi, Nicholas, Michael, Lauren, Tyler, Chase, Chris, Aaron and Ian; 12 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews.

Jim was small in stature, but he was huge in the eyes of family and friends. He will be greatly missed.



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2018 TFDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Month	Event	Location	
March	15	North Texas Meeting	Dallas
	20	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
	20	Convention Committee Meeting	Austin
	21	Bylaws Committee Meeting	Austin
	21	Disaster Committee Meeting	Austin
	22	South Central Texas Meeting	Austin
	23	Track Training	Austin
29	East Texas Meeting	Sulphur Springs	
April	4, 5	South Texas Meeting	South Padre Island
	17	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
	18	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
	25-27	NFDA Advocacy	Washington, DC
	26	Southeast Texas Meeting	Houston
June	10-13	TFDA Convention	Galveston
	19	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
July	8-11	NFDA Leadership Conference	Asheville, NC
		TFDA Leadership Conference	Amarillo
August	6,7	TFDA Leadership Conference	Amarillo
		Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
October	14-17	NFDA Convention	Salt Lake City
	23	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
December	24	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
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Billy Graham

The Passing of a Giant in Global Evangelism



When 99-year-old Evangelist Billy Graham breathed his last in the early morning of February 21, a life in the Christian ministry came to an end, a life that began Nov. 7, 1918, into a Presbyterian farm family near Charlotte, North Carolina.

Services were planned for the following Monday, Feb. 26, with Graham laid to rest in a simple casket, fashioned by inmates at Angola prison. It had been in storage and had been reinforced by a professional casket maker for more than a decade. Billy Graham was interred next to his beloved wife Ruth, who died in 2007, at the Graham Library in Charlotte, North Carolina.

At his 95th birthday celebration, attended by more than 800 people, Graham was asked by newsman Brian Williams how he wanted to be remembered. His answer: I want people to remember I was steadfast in my mission and my love for my Savior...and I want my going to be as joyful as my coming."

Beginning his evangelistic

career in the 1950s, filling tents to large venues across the country, Billy Frank Graham was a pretty normal kid as a teen, mostly preoccupied with baseball and girls. He would later say he was moved by God after hearing a fiery revivalist in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Attending Bob Jones College for a time, Graham ended up at a Bible school in Florida, where he would preach at his first revival, and was ordained in 1939 by a church in the Southern Baptist Convention. He received a scholarship to Wheaton College near Chicago, where he met Ruth Bell, whose parents were missionaries in China. They married in 1943.

Rather than taking a pulpit pastorate, Graham went on the road, preaching in tents and building a following. His riveting delivery was explosive, rapid and emotionally-charged, earning him the title "God's Machine Gun."

His career breakthrough came with a 1949 Los Angeles tent

crusade that was scheduled for three weeks but extended to eight because of the overflow crowds attracted by the dynamic young evangelist.

The success of the Los Angeles campaign and the fame it brought Graham was attributed to newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, who had liked Graham's style and anti-communist stance so much, he ordered his newspapers to give Graham a boost.

Graham eventually outgrew tent revivals and would preach at some of the most famous venues in the world, such as Yankee Stadium and Madison Square Garden in New York and London's Wembley Stadium. He delivered sermons around the globe, including in remote African villages, China, North Korea, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

When some accused him of giving credibility to abusive governments and fundamentalists criticized him for going to godless countries and promoting peaceful relations with

them, Graham said he simply saw the trips as apolitical opportunities to win souls for Christ.

Graham concluded his career of religious campaigns in June 2005 in New York with three days of revival services, attracting more than 230,000 people. He turned over his evangelical association to his son Franklin. Graham's other four children were also evangelists.

Known for his reputation as pastor to the presidents, Graham's closest presidential relationship was with Nixon, who offered him any government job he wanted, including ambassador to Israel. It turned out to be a painful relationship for Graham, who said Nixon and his circle misled him on the Watergate scandal.

Graham and his wife, Ruth, had two sons and three daughters.

Author's note: This article is based on reporting by Ed Stoddard; Writing by Bill Trott; Editing by Frances Kerry and Diane Craft

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