

Texas Director

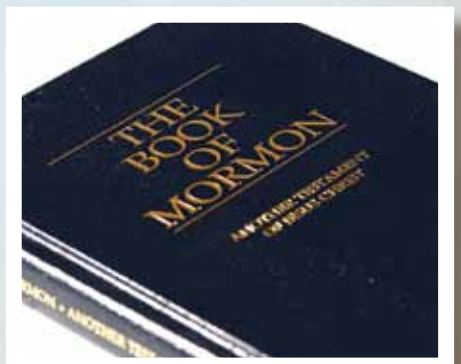
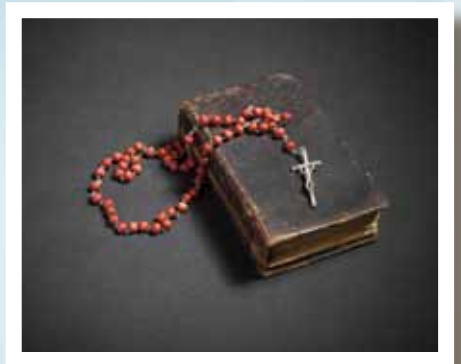
The Official Publication of the Texas Funeral Directors Association

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National Funeral Museum Hosts Tribute to George Barris



America's Changing Religion

Shifting belief systems to
impact funeral service



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Shifting belief systems to impact
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Texans Helping Texans

Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together.

— James Cash Penney

I want to begin this month's message by reminding every member that TFDA will always stand with you – rain, wind, sleet or snow. We are one, we work together. And when one experiences disaster, we all are affected.

Hurricane Harvey has been called many things, including the worst hurricane to hit Texas in history, the most damaging and the most expensive on record. But, as we recover from this monster storm, as a state, communities and individuals, we've also witnessed one of the most impressive individual and group responses in our time.

Texans helping Texans – from the individuals bringing their boats to rescue homeowners from the rising waters of the flood to physicians walking miles in water over their waders to be able to begin a cancer patient's treatment on time, to college students, going door-to-door, offering sandwiches and cold drinks.

Our own Disaster Team deployed on its first state-mandated mission, from Aug. 26th (as soon as the rain stopped and water receded in San Antonio) to Sept. 12, when the last team member returned home.

During their deployment, the team was involved in the logistics of positioning and repositioning TFDA's and state trailers in areas needing cold storage, serving as subject matter experts (SMEs) to assess cemeteries

(two in Orange County, one in Jefferson County) and SMEs on cold storage capacities.

Funeral homes experiencing rising waters were able to work with competitors in the care of bodies in their possession, and volunteers were available to help re-establish operations and make repairs to continue operations in Harvey's path.

As president of TFDA, I am so proud of our members – brothers and sisters in the profession. I also encourage all of you considering joining TFDA's Disaster Team to contact Terry Edwards or Heather Hauboldt, co-commanders of the team, and to be sure and attend the next training session.

As a member of the team, you'll have the opportunity to learn, work with First Responders and make a difference in the lives of disaster victims and their families.

To all of you on the Disaster Team and those who volunteered or contributed, I say a sincere thank-you.

Fall meetings have begun, and I attended the South Texas Region's meeting last week. My hat is off to South Texas for offering six hours of outstanding CEUs during their meeting. Although attendance was not record-breaking, this is the first time in a few years that CEUs were offered, and those seeking credits were extremely grateful.

More meetings are on the calendar over the next few months. However, I will be taking time off, Sept. 22 through Oct. 1, to join my wife, Judith, and our Miquel Alexander, age 2, in welcoming our second son,

Marcello, scheduled for delivery on the 22nd. Of course, we're excited, and I'm going to enjoy my role as Mr. Mom, helping Judith with our boys and cooking or bringing in carry out... mostly the latter.

In my absence, our board will be filling in, and I can say, you'll be in good hands.

If you missed the Sept. 12th Texas Funeral Commission meeting, followed by lunch and meetings of the legislative and membership committees at TFDA headquarters, you missed some productive gatherings. Both committees are moving forward and are making progress.

Our sincerest congratulations to R.W. Owens Funeral Home in Wolfe City and to Dick and his dad on the 25th Anniversary of The Gathering. This has become a highlight of TFDA's year, and I encourage all of you to attend this year's Gathering for CEUs, the world's greatest chicken fried steak and homemade fruit pies and golf. All proceeds go to the Colin Owens Memorial Scholarship Fund, which provides special help for mortuary science students at the Dallas Institute.

At this year's Gathering, Dick and TFDA will host students from North Central Texas Community College's Funeral Service program. This program, headed by Rebecca Robidas Gardner, is the newest mortuary science program in the state. Be sure and be there to welcome these students into our family.

I also want to remind all of you – this is YOUR magazine. Please let us know of any special events, family celebrations

and achievements of colleagues in your firm. We also would LOVE any pictures of birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, house-warmings, sports teams, cheerleaders, athletes, new babies and grandchildren. If you don't make sure we know about any special events or activities, we may miss the opportunity to congratulate you.

Thank you to Ann, Joyce and Susi for keeping us in line and maintaining our focus. They do a great job for all of us – and especially your president and the board.

Halloween is just around the corner, followed by Dia de los Muertes, so I'd like to share a glimpse from my childhood.

Our neighborhood was never a good place for trick-or-treating. If we knocked on their doors, they'd open them in time to shout at us to get off their porch. Some wouldn't turn on their porch lights, and if they had candy, it wasn't any of our favorites.

That's why the neighbor kids and I would pile into cars and travel to the north side of town where the more affluent neighborhoods were located. In these neighborhoods, every porch light was aglow and we couldn't run fast enough between houses to fill our baskets, not with what was handed out in our home neighborhood but GOOD candy – M&Ms, all sorts of chocolate bars and miniature Almond Joy, my favorite.

As a kid, we had no candy in our home except at Halloween. My father taught us to believe candy was poison...probably the reason I have an oversized Sweet Tooth! To this day, my favorite candies are Peanut M&Ms and Almond Joy, candy I was introduced to when we went trick-or-treating on the northside of town.

Until next month...

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TFDA Disaster Team Reaches Out to Cities, Directors Affected by Hurricane Harvey

As the size and power of Hurricane Harvey was tracked and reported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, TFDA's Disaster Team was on alert.

This was not the first time that they followed the hour-by-hour reports of a storm in the Gulf of Mexico. And when NOAA determined landfall somewhere between Corpus Christi and Houston, it was time to gear up.

By August 26, the initial deployment was underway with team members securing state-owned and TFDA trailers and towing them to areas where they were needed.

David Patterson, a veteran member of the TFDA Disaster Team, said, "Without any doubt, on this, our first full-fledged state mission, we were successful not only according to the requirements of the state mission, but also according to our standards."

"By the time the mission ended, TFDA's Disaster Team had been called upon for its expertise and knowledge of logistics, flooded cemeteries and storing bodies within a disaster environment," Patterson added.

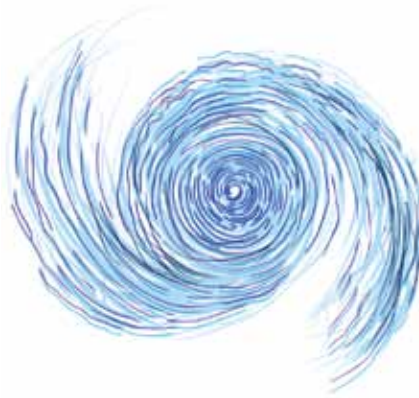
"We provided a great deal of assistance to the state and a lot of input for establishing a mobile morgue. Overall, our response, input and assistance contributed to the success of the mission, at least in my eyes."

Patterson added that, along with the state mission, TFDA was contacted by three funeral homes on behalf of JPs or coroners for morgue trailers for victims.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, some Texas funeral homes were lost. Some were not covered by insurance. "However, two weeks after the storm, most funeral homes were operational, using competitors' facilities to bridge any operational gaps."

Cemetery washouts were minimal, and in most instances, communities were quick to restore any graves that were disrupted by flood waters.

"We did assessments in two counties. Two cemeteries experienced wash-outs in Orange County and one was in Jefferson," Patterson said. "The largest was 10 graves disturbed by flood waters, the smallest lost three graves, but these were quickly restored."



DMORT was not deployed, but TFDA Disaster Team members who were not occupied with clean-up and restoring operations in their firms were told to gear up for a five-day mission. "Originally, we were deployed on Aug. 26, but the first crew had to wait for the rain to stop in San Antonio before positioning the trailers," Patterson said. "The final team came home Sept. 12."

"We had a total of 12 Disaster Team members to assist throughout the mission, and teams worked 12 hours each day for a total of 196 hours," Patterson said.

Among the volunteers were Chet Robbins, Tony Aguilar, Cris Aguilar, Michelle Nowak and David Patterson.

Michael Land served as spokesman for

any press inquiries in the aftermath of Harvey's destruction and Gene Allen was instrumental in obtaining exemptions for funeral homes needing to be rebuilt from the Texas Funeral Service Commission. Charlotte Chism Waldrum and Susi Tyler, the most recent addition to TFDA's administrative team, also proved invaluable in reaching out for any help needed, as well as putting volunteers where they were needed.

Although an official debrief and after-action report hadn't been filed at the time of this writing, Patterson said TFDA equipment would require upgrading and the team would physically need a roster of trained personnel they can call from.

"We have people who volunteer, and after Harvey, we had many who stepped up," Patterson said. "Some of the volunteers came for two days and we spent one of those days training them, which didn't leave them much time to work."

"Now we have a clearer picture on what the state gives us, so we have something to train on, where before, we didn't have specifics."

He said training sessions would be scheduled as soon as the debrief was finalized. He also encouraged interested volunteers to contact the TFDA office to sign up so they could be notified about upcoming training sessions.



Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund

Funds have and are being collected for victims of Hurricane Harvey through the "Hurricane Harvey Funeral Director Relief Fund" and the "Funeral Service Foundation".

Some funds are specifically allocated for funeral directors and their family's personal needs and some for funeral establishment's business needs. If you are in need of financial assistance, due to hurricane damage, please fill out the form we've included in this issue, or visit www.tfda.com.



Hurricane Harvey Relief Assistance Application (Texas)

Treasured Memories and the Funeral Service Foundation have started a fund to help individual funeral directors and their families with basic necessities such as clothing, food, children's toys, etc.

If you are in need of financial assistance due to hurricane damage, please complete this application by **December 31, 2017** and mail or email the application to TFDA Hurricane Harvey Relief Task Force, susi@tfda.com, at the TFDA Office, 1513 S. Interstate 35, Austin, TX 78741.

Contact Information

Provide the director's contact name, address of the property where the damage occurred, phone number and other contact information.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address: _____ Phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Insurance Information

Describe the type(s) of insurance coverage you have. This could include coverage under policies like homeowners, flood, automobile, or mobile home insurance. Please provide documentation on damage estimation and insurance coverage.

Damage Information

Describe the damage caused by the disaster. Include the type of dwelling, vehicle, items destroyed and where damage the damage occurred

Financial Information

Provide information on insurance coverage, deductible and items/property not covered by insurance. Also, please describe any other relief assistance you are receiving.

Financial Request

Please indicate the amount you are requesting and how funds will be used.

When funds are needed Please indicate a date funds are needed.

Please mail or email this form to: TFDA Hurricane Relief Task Force
1513 S. Interstate 35
Austin, TX 78741
susi@tfda.com

Application deadline: **December 31, 2017**

Questions? Call Susi at the TFDA Office at 512-442-2304



Remembering our Fallen



Bobby Withrow has been working for more than a year to allow funeral homes and people across the state to honor our fallen. Thank you, Bobby. TFDA is a proud sponsor of this exhibit.

Galloway Funeral Homes, Angelus Funeral Home Join Legacy

Legacy Funeral Group®, owner of over 100 funeral home & cemetery locations across the Southern and Southeastern United States, is proud to add to the family, Galloway Funeral Homes and Angelus Funeral Home located in Beeville and Three Rivers, Texas and a chapel facility in George West, Texas.



Galloway Funeral Homes has served the community for almost 100 years and have prided themselves on a reputation on honesty, respectfulness, and compassion. Under the guidance of third generation funeral director John Galloway, Galloway Funeral Homes have provided for the death care needs of families in the Beeville area for many years with care and compassion and will continue to do so as a part of the Legacy family tree. With Galloway's dedication to family service, Galloway and Angelus Funeral Homes are a welcomed addition to Legacy Funeral Group®, where Legacy hopes to learn from him and help Galloway and Angelus Funeral Homes continue to serve one family at a time.

Michael Soper and son Perri welcome John Galloway, his wife Elizabeth and son Andy.

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When you look at the way Legacy does business, well the facts speak for themselves!”

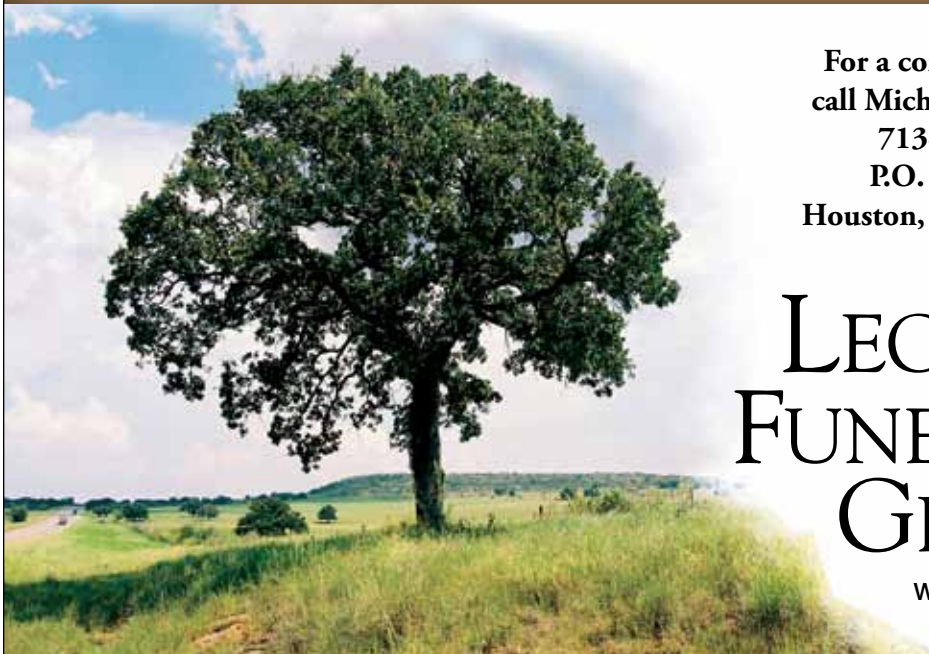
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Texas Funeral Directors' Week

October 8-14, 2017

A Celebration of Professionals

Each year, in early October, Texas funeral directors are recognized and honored for their long heritage of serving Texas families in their time of need. Although the governor has formally proclaimed Texas Funeral Directors Week for the past seven years, it is the responsibility of individual funeral directors to request proclamations from their local mayors, county commissions and/or city councils.

Funeral directors around the state plan special events during this week, requesting media coverage and/or sending press releases (similar to the one provided at the end of this article.)

The following are some suggestions (and



thought starters) to help firms around the state take advantage of this opportunity for regional visibility:

Hold a special reception to recognize fu-

neral directors in your community. Banding with other firms, the directors selected could be recognized for their services as members of the National Guard, the TFDA Disaster Committee, DMORT, schools, local government, church work, civic involvement, volunteer service or their commitment to the funeral service profession over the years.

Partnering with a local physician, home health service, nursing school or clinic, co-sponsor a free health fair, conducting preventive screenings in underserved areas, organizing a walk-a-thon, etc.

Host a seminar for parents and teens on not texting while driving. Call on the DPS or Texas Rangers to discuss new laws and



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co-host the event.

Ask a local historian to write an article about the community's first undertakers. Then have it printed in the local newspaper or Chamber of Commerce website.

Invite a politician, local, state or federal – to visit your firm so they may see funeral directors at work – and it offers good media coverage potential.

Sponsor a community-wide event, such as "Alive at 25" Driver Awareness class for teen drivers and their parents. This program is available through the DPS and is designed to help keep teens alive as they get old enough to get behind the wheel.

Partner with local schools, historical commissions and libraries to set up a special display recalling the days when funeral homes provided ambulance service. Ask citizens to come in and record their experiences with the funeral home ambulances of yesteryear.

Host a town meeting at your firm, emphasizing healthy living – including home safety (expert), child safety (police and child protective services) or a fire evacuation plan for families (fire department), roadway safety (DPS), healthy lifestyles (physician or nurse), pedestrian safety (police) and safety in the workplace (corporate safety officers). Invite speakers to present.

Host a fund-raiser, i.e., box supper auction, garage sale, etc., and donate to a local charity that helps families. Pay tribute to a local funeral director or publicly recognize all funeral directors who selflessly provide caring assistance, 24-hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Host a candlelight vigil during Texas Funeral Directors Week, partnering with a local cemetery to honor those in the community who have died in the past year. Ask local clergy, politicians and funeral directors to recognize those who have died – or have someone read the names. Invite special music, vocalists.

Partner with other funeral directors, mortuary schools and funeral homes, crematories and cemeteries in your community to hold an event in recognition of Texas funeral directors, past and present, who have been pillars in the community.

While these suggested events and sponsorships are being touted for Texas Funeral Directors Week, they don't have to be used exclusively during this time period. All of these events are appropriate ways for directors to connect year-round with the communities they serve.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR TEXAS FUNERAL DIRECTORS WEEK

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release	Contact:	(Your local contact person's name)
Month Day, Year		(Your local contact's telephone number)
		(Your local contact's e-mail address)

(Use your firm's letterhead)

**Texas Funeral Directors Week To Be Observed
October 8-14, 2017.**

(Your City, your State) – Applauded by the business community and commended by the governor, Texas Funeral Directors Week is held each year to focus attention on the 5,000 licensed funeral professionals in Texas and the help and support they provide families during one of life's most difficult times.

The Texas Funeral Directors Association, celebrating its 131th year as the state's largest professional association for funeral directors, supports this week of recognizing funeral directors throughout the state and the selfless contributions they make to the communities they serve.

In honor of Texas Funeral Directors Week, licensed funeral directors, embalmers and mortuary science students across the state will be participating in special activities in the area and will be recognized by the official "TFDA Pin" they proudly wear.

TFDA, through its state and regional associations, continues to advance the funeral service profession by fostering high ethical standards, promoting educational opportunities for licensed directors, offering Texas communities a positive and realistic view of the funeral service profession and lobbying the Texas legislature and regulatory agencies on issues affecting funeral service and the public.

Traditionally, Texas Funeral Directors Week is devoted to highlighting the diverse ways in which licensed funeral directors work to assist families and support them through their time of sorrow as well as how they contribute regularly to the growth and quality of life in their communities, often at great personal sacrifice of themselves and their families.

Please join us in this annual observance of Texas Funeral Directors Week, Oct. 8-14, 2017, by participating in (a public candlelight vigil, safety education seminar, etc.) to be held (day, time, place). The public is welcome to attend.

Celebrations

To all **TFDA members** who volunteered to work with the Disaster Team in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Also to **Susi Tyler**, the newest member of TFDA's administrative organization, for her work with the logistics of getting people in the right place at the right time. Call it "baptism by fire." Good work all!



ABOVE To **Ray and Carol Shotwell**, who celebrated their golden 50th wedding anniversary on September 9! May many more beautiful years follow this landmark achievement.

To **Christina Morales** and the staff at Morales Funeral Home in Houston, as they plan and prepare for the Fourth Annual Death By Chocolate Gala, October 26th from 6-9 p.m. Come and enjoy chocolate in all its glory and bid on some amazing silent and live auction items. All proceeds benefit NABA Shoes for Kids and SER Jobs For Progress Flood Relief Fund. Morales Funeral Home also has served as a community center for the distribution of numerous needed items for clean-up and sustenance in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.



ABOVE To TFDA President **Lee Castro**, who celebrated Mexico's Independence Day with some of his pre-need agents during their monthly luncheon.

To **Sabrina Young**, FDIC of **Harper-Talasek Funeral Home** in Temple, for participating in the POW-MIA wreath ceremony for the soldiers and civilians at Darnall Hospital on Ft. Hood Reservation. The ceremony was blessed with the presence of state congressfolk, as well as Hugh Shine and John Carter families of POWs/MIAs, local VFW and American Legion Post members. Sabrina currently volunteers at the Central Texas Veterans Cemetery in Killeen, laying wreaths and organizing remembrances for the families.

To **Cody & Chelsea Jones, Callaway-Jones Funeral Home**, Bryan - on their trip to the West Coast. Had time to enjoy Malibu Beach, too. Many are envious.

To **Arvin Starrett**, "Happy Birthday!" Arvin celebrated Sept. 15th. May your year be filled with beautiful music!

To **Velma Sue and Leon DeLeon**, funeral directors and owners, **Memorial Fu-**

neral Homes, San Juan and Edinburg, seen having fun and rockin' out at the PSJA Education Foundation's annual gala with friends, dancing to the Spazmatics.

To **Tres Hewell**, owner, funeral director and embalmer at **Tres Hewell Mortuary** in Seguin, and his better half on their recent getaway to "The Windy City" while attending a professional meeting. In their free time, they sent back pictures of their adventure, including a visit at the iconic Wrigley Field.

To **Amanda Robertson**, wife of **Chuck Robertson**, funeral director and owner of **Robertson Funeral Directors**, for going to Chicago in her hubby's place so he could take care of business back home. Amanda went to Wrigley Field, too!

To **Troy Murray**, funeral director and president of **Crolley Funeral Homes**, for posting this: "I made a couple trips last week to deliver hay to ranchers affected by Hurricane Harvey. The gratitude and kindness of everyone was truly sincere, but the respect between those needing help and the ones helping was remarkable! You could see it in their interactions. We unloaded the hay, shook hands and I headed back to Gilmer. Driving back I kept thinking of that hand shake and remembering my dad talking about a time when a man's handshake was his word. You made an agreement, shook hands and out of respect for that man, it was a done deal. Now days it seems that handshake and a man's word...well it doesn't mean the same thing. You can shake hands, even sign a contract maybe even one with provisions. If that man doesn't have any respect for honesty, or integrity and doesn't live up to his agreement, it doesn't say much for him. This is extremely sad but true. Respect and honor...a thing of the past? I truly hope not."

To **Cris Aguilar** for supporting the **Ronald McDonald House** in Harlingen and the Port Isabel Police Department's annual "National Night Out" on Oct. 3.



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America's Changing Religion

Shifting belief systems to impact funeral service



White Christians are now a minority in this country. This is what the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) reports in their 2016 study, calling the trend a “dramatic transformation” taking place across the United States. The report found the drop in white Christians in the U.S. is due to immigration, as well as by a growing trend of Americans who reject organized religion altogether, no matter what the denomination or ideology.

These findings should serve as a compass for funeral directors as they position their firms to offer services to a continually fluid popu-

lation. The drop in white Christians foreshadows a continuing trend for fewer services at need, more humanistic services and more memorial gatherings held several days, weeks or months after a death.

Because of the strengths of some trends found in the survey of America’s religiosity, funeral directors may find themselves hosting overnight visitations and learning the ropes for natural burials within 24 hours of the death, required by Muslims, some Buddhists and some of the more orthodox Jewish sects.

The growing numbers of religious minorities also portends a need



for bilingual funeral directors, a steady number of Catholic church services, more wakes and larger services.

As younger religious Americans mature, funeral directors also may need to increase their understanding of the requirements of Muslim and Hindu funerals if numbers of young believers are any indication.

As one director pointed out, "We have been trying to steer our directors away from being tempted to arrange so-called cookie-cutter funerals for years. With the increasing diversity of religion in this country and this state, those directors will either broaden their skill-sets and knowledge of the demands of once-minority religions or find themselves looking for jobs in rural, mostly-Christian communities."

The 2016 survey, which consisted of more than 100,000 respondents identified two significant findings: (1) White Christians now make up 43 percent of the population, down from 81 percent in 1976; and (2) Fewer than half of US states have a majority population of white Christians.

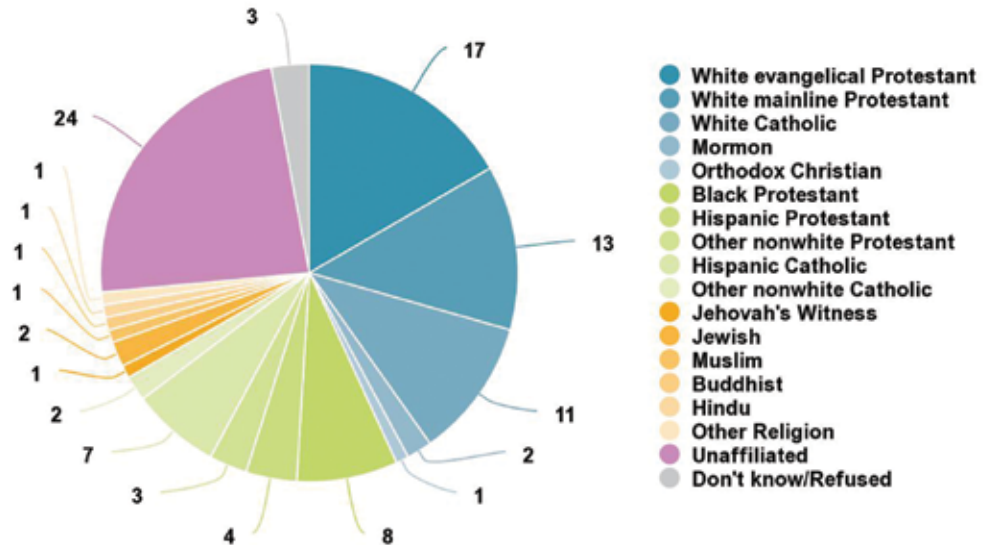
Released in early September, the new PRRI report said Christians overall remain a large majority in the U.S., at nearly 70 percent of Americans. However, white Christians, who were once predominant in the country's religious life, now comprise only 43 percent of the population. Four decades ago, about eight in 10 Americans were white Christians.

The 2016 PRRI survey was conducted from January 2016 to January of this year and has a margin of error of plus or minus 0.4 percentage points.

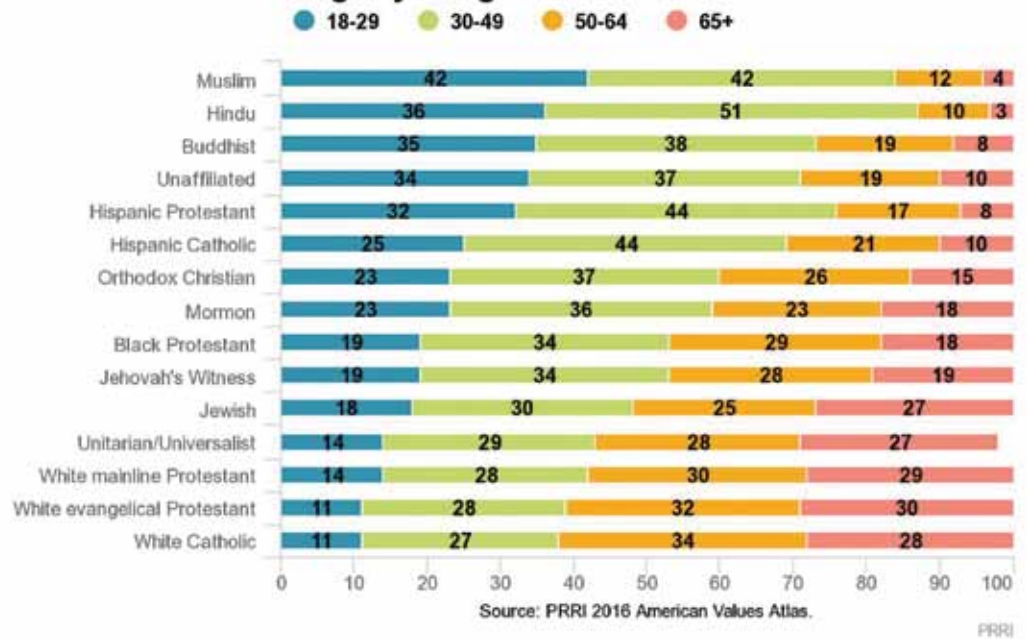
Previous surveys had found the Protestant majority shaping American history had dropped below 50 percent around 2008. The PRRI poll released recently included a more in-depth focus on race and religion.

Growth among Latino Christians, for example, and stability of

The American Religious Landscape in 2016



Age by Religious Affiliation

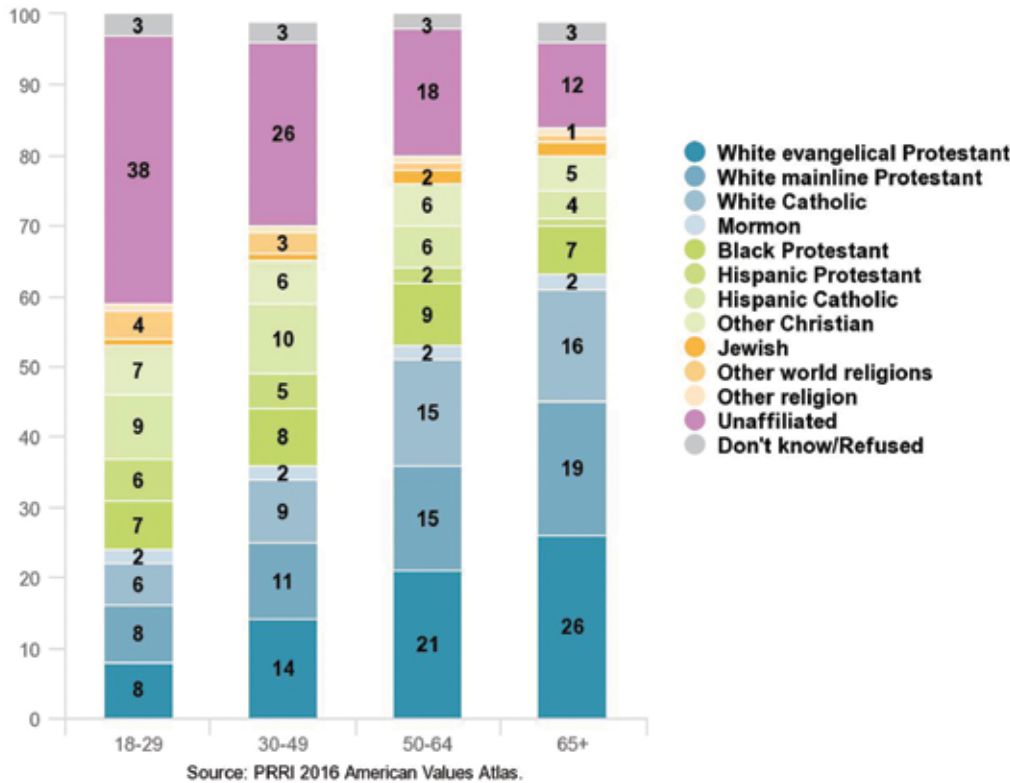


the numbers of African-American Christians had partially obscured steady declines among white Christians in all denominations.

New survey data indicated sharp drops in membership in predominantly white mainline Protestant denominations such as Presbyterians and Lutherans; an increasing Latino presence in the Roman Catholic Church as some non-Hispanic white Catholics are leaving, and shrinking ranks of white evangelicals, who until



A Generational Shift in Religious Identity



about 17 percent. The conservative Southern Baptist Convention, the largest U.S. Protestant group, dropped to a membership of 15.2 million last year, its lowest number since 1990, according to an analysis by Chuck Kelley, president of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

“So often, white evangelicals have been pointing in judgment to white mainline groups, saying when you have liberal theology you decline,” said Robert Jones, chief executive of PRRI. “I think this data really does challenge that interpretation of linking theological conservatism and growth.”

Other strong trends noted:

* In 20 states, people with no religious affiliation outnumber those of any single religious affiliation, with Vermont (41 percent), Oregon (36 percent), and Washington (35 percent) leading the way. In general, reported *The Atlantic Magazine*, America’s non-religious states are concentrated west of the

recently had been viewed as immune to decline.

Among American Catholics, 55 percent now identify as white, compared to 87 percent 25 years ago, amid the growing presence of Latino Catholics, according to the report.

Over the last decade, the share of white Catholics in the U.S. population dropped from 16 percent to 11 percent. Over the same period, white mainline Protestants declined from 18 percent to 13 percent of all Americans.

Major trends identified in the new survey have caused anxiety about the place of Christians in U.S. society, especially among evangelicals, distraught by national support for gay marriage and the increasing number of Americans – about one-quarter – who don’t identify with a faith group.

Candidate Donald Trump promised to protect the religious liberty of Christians. For that promise, Trump earned 80 percent of votes by white evangelicals, a loyal constituency remaining his strongest base.

The survey found more than a third of all Republicans said they are white evangelicals, and nearly three-quarters of the Party of Lincoln (Republicans) identify as white Christians. By comparison, white Christians are now a minority in the Democratic Party, sliding from 47 percent a decade ago, to 29 percent today. Forty percent of Democrats said they have no religious affiliation.

A decade ago, more than 23 percent of Americans identified as white evangelicals. The survey found that number had dropped to

Mississippi River.”

* As *Quartz Magazine* pointed out: “Religion in white America is dying, while religion in non-white America is holding strong.” Indicators in the new PRRI survey point to a continuation of that trend.

* Religions in the U.S. with the highest percentage of members ages 18 to 29 are Islam (42 percent) and Hinduism (36 percent), far higher than white Catholics (11 percent), white evangelical Protestants (11 percent), and white mainline Protestants (14 percent).

* Non-Christian religious groups may be growing, but they still represent less than 10 percent of Americans. Jewish Americans are at 2 percent, with Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus each at 1 percent. All other non-Christian religions amount to another 1 percent.

* According to an article in *USA Today*, white Christians still make up nearly three-quarters of the GOP. In contrast, they constitute less than one-third of Democrats, down from about half 10 years ago.

* Analysis of the PRRI summary calls Mississippi the least diverse in the nation in terms of religion. It is mostly Protestant, and six in 10 of those Protestants are Baptist. New York is the most diverse state.

* Religious News Service summarized the 2016 PRRI survey findings this way: “The future of religion in America is young, non-Christian, and technicolor.” The decline in American evangelicals, a group previously immune from falling numbers, is particularly significant and will remain so, going forward.



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Ellen Fuller

One of 800,000 Volunteers Who Supply the Energy Behind Wreaths Across America

When you hear the words, “Wreaths Across America,” what comes to mind?

Is it Taya Kyle, widow of Chris Kyle, The American Sniper, delivering an inspiring and heartfelt message last year on the Texas Capitol steps? Is it taking part, for the first time, in laying wreaths on the graves of heroes buried in the Texas State Cemetery, remembering America’s fallen heroes... and the great sacrifices made through history to guarantee or protect our freedoms?

When Ellen Fuller, volunteer co-chair for Wreaths Across America, was visiting Arlington National Cemetery the Christmas after her father, Capt. Raymond O’Neill, passed away six months earlier in 2011, she found a beautiful wreath on his grave and inquired about its origin. “It was so touch-



ing,” she recalled from her home in College Station, “so powerful a complete stranger would lay the wreath.”

Her parents’ care taker through their later years, Fuller’s mother, Patricia O’Neill, died the following month, joining her husband of 58 years. (“Whenever my father, a Navy veteran, was re-assigned, he usually went ahead of the rest of us, as he explained, “to get quarters, put food in the fridge and sheets on the bed.” This is how I imagined things went when he was called to Heaven – to get quarters, groceries and sheets on the beds in preparation for my mother to join him.”)

Left with some free time, Ellen connected with WAA and the next December, in 2012, she was volunteering for the first time. Then, when she and her husband re-

located to College Station in 2014, through her research she learned 20,000 students from Texas A&M University had served in World War II.

Not being one to slow-walk an opportunity, the next December, she was participating when the first wreaths were placed at the Aggie Field of Honor, joined by other volunteers out of New York and New Jersey.

“Last year, I connected with Charlotte Chism-Waldrum, Darryl Thompson, Michael Land and Brad Shotts with TFDA and worked with them to place wreaths at the Texas State Cemetery,” said the uber-volunteer who helped with fundraising and publicity for the event. “It was wonderful to have their expertise.”

Recognized for her commitment to WAA and America’s veterans, Ellen terms her work as “a simple gesture of gratitude.”

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240,815 remembrance wreaths placed by 70,000 volunteers. In addition, more than 600,000 more were placed by volunteers in approximately 1,200 participating locations on National Wreaths Across America Day, in all 50 states plus Normandy and Belgium.

WAA volunteers come in all shapes and sizes. They include business professionals, like funeral directors, who coordinate ceremonies in their various communities, truckers who deliver the wreaths at no charge, community members who place the wreaths on the graves, and businesses that donate the wreaths, which are \$15 each and can be ordered until Nov. 28th. TFDA holds an annual ceremony at the Texas Capitol.

The annual TFDA Wreaths Across America will be held Monday, Dec. 11, on the south steps of the Capitol, beginning at 11 a.m.

This year's guest of honor is Gold Star Parents National President Cindy Martin.

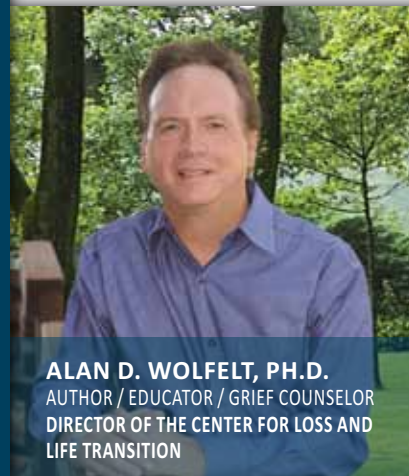
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Cypress-Fairbanks Funeral Home Continues Sponsorship for 13th Annual Nun Run

By Alice Adams



Think you've seen it all? Bet you haven't seen too many nuns riding big Harleys...and if your mental picture includes images of women in flowing black-and-white habits with veils and wimples covering their heads, you need to know that most women's religious orders have adopted modern street dress for their congregations.

But every year for the past 12 years, the Houston-based Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word have hosted an annual 40-mile motorcycle Nun Run from Houston to Galveston, and many enjoy sitting behind an experienced rider for the trip.

This year's ride is planned for October 14th with breakfast served, beginning at 7 a.m. The ride begins at 9 a.m.

The Nun Run's \$50 registration includes free admission to a kick-off party, commemorative t-shirt, annual nun run lapel pin, breakfast and lunch the day of the event.

"The sisters absolutely love it," said Sister Deenan Hubbard, one of the run's organizing founders. "We lost one of our best riders two weeks short of her 100th birthday...and she loved everything about this event."

While it's "Kickstands Up" at 9 a.m., 350-plus riders begin arriving at about 7:30 a.m. for breakfast, music and fun festivities at St. Austin Center, part of the Order's complex

and adjacent to Villa de Matel Convent in Lawndale.

It isn't unusual to see people dancing and nuns riding around the grounds on the back of motorcycles as well as in sidecars and there's plenty of dancing before the Nun Run roars to a start.

Over the years, the Nun Run has followed different routes as the number of riders has increased. Because their numbers have outgrown Moody Gardens, a recent destination, this year's rally will end with awards, more music and lunch at Top Water Grill in San Leon.

All proceeds go to support Keeping Children Healthy, CHRISTUS Foundation's School-based Clinics that provide healthcare to children on-campus in 20 low-income neighborhood schools around Houston.

During the 2014-15 school year, more than 6,000 children received care and student absences were reduced.

"These clinics allow children access to health care, immunizations and mental health counseling without their parents taking time from their jobs," said Sister Deenan, the run's go-to person extraordinaire.

"My brother Ted is an avid rider and organizes runs for local charities on the West Coast," she said, "and when we found out a

number of our employees were motorcycle enthusiasts, I talked to my brother about the possibilities of having our own bike ride. We saw no reason why we couldn't have a motorcycle run and that's how the Nun Run came about."

Among the Order's employees was Vince Hefley, a member of a Houston motorcycle club called "The Retreads" because it's members are older.

"Vince has since retired, but because he was a founding organizer, we created 'The Vince Award,' presented at the end of the run during an awards ceremony to the most helpful individual to our CHRISTUS Foundation for Healthcare," Sr. Deenan said.

Other prizes are awarded, including one for the rider coming the farthest distance.

Last year, 450 bikes and their riders and passengers participated.

Continued Support from Cypress-Fairbanks FH

Funeral director Kathie Brady for Cypress-Fairbanks Funeral Home, owned by Carriage Services, said she first learned about the Nun Run while directing a funeral at Villa de Matel and saw a photo of the decedent on a motorcycle displayed at the service.

"Of course I had to ask about that picture," said Brady, a lifelong Catholic, "and that's when I found about the Nun Run. When I went back to the funeral home and talked about it, we decided to participate."

This year, as last year, Cypress-Fairbanks Funeral Home is providing bottled water for the event and the run's lead car – a convertible used by the Sisters – usually older but nonetheless enthusiastic – waving pom-poms and encouraging crowds to cheer riders coming behind them.

Brady, born and raised in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and licensed in 2006 after completing her studies at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Services, said she was inspired to choose funeral service as a career after meeting a very kind and caring New Jersey funeral director who helped her after her father's death.

For the Nun Run, she works closely with Sister Deenan. "When I asked Sister Deenan about the event, I soon found myself on the committee," Brady said. "I don't have a motorcycle, but I like being a passenger, and have great respect for the participating bikers," the director added, "and when I saw the photograph of the nun on the motorcycle, I was simply dumbfounded."

Brady said the Nun Run allows volunteers and sponsors "a wonderful opportunity to be of service for people who need it, whether they know your name or not. "My personal approach is one of being humble and doing our best to make the run a success," she said. "That's what it's all about."

Now, not only does Brady participate, but her renowned musician-husband Jim Brady is also involved, bringing musician friends, including vocalist Brook Fowler, to perform each year and arriving at St. Austin's before 7 on race day. "It's become a family affair for us, Kathie Brady said.

Other "Nun Runs" Have Followed

Since the first successful runs, the idea has been replicated in a number of other communities in Texas and Louisiana, where the Sisters of Charity and affiliated CHRISTUS Hospitals are located.

"Each year, Rev. Joseph Anthony Fiorenza, Archbishop Emeritus of the Houston-Galveston Diocese, blesses each of the bikes and riders before the run begins, and I think the bikers -- Catholics and non-Catholics, too -- really appreciate this ritual," Sister Deenan said.

The Nun Run, over its tenure, has at-



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tracted many celebrities and many donors of prizes, including Houston's Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale (owner of Gallery Furniture) as Master of Ceremonies and the late Houston Rockets 5-Time All-Star Moses Malone, among others.

Houston's Blue Knights, an international law enforcement motorcycle club, sets the route and escorts the ride, start to finish. "These wonderful volunteers get all the necessary permits, close off all intersections along the route and provide VIP escort all

the way," Sr. Deenan said.

The founding organizer also speaks highly about the Nun Run's participants. "When you say motorcycle clubs or bikers, like most people, I immediately had the image of outlaws on motorcycles," Sr. Deenan said, "but I've learned, that's not an accurate image. These men and women are doctors, lawyers and hard-working professionals who are some of the most giving and generous groups I know about in Houston."

"They've been amazing supporters of our charity run and help us in any number of ways, including helping participants safely park their bikes at the start and finish of the run. They also ride in charity runs benefiting children, senior citizens and veterans and are a lot of fun to be around."

She said the motorcycle clubs often invite the sisters to ice cream socials and Christmas parties in their garages during the year, and in return, sisters invite them to dinner at the convent. "They share fascinating stories with us, we exchange Christmas cards and are simply really lovely to us."

This year's race begins at St. Austin Center, 2002 S. Wayside Drive, and ends at Top Water Grill at 815 Avenue O in San Leon.



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<i>Sun Sep. 17</i>	<i>at Denver</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Mon Sep. 25</i>	<i>at Arizona</i>	<i>7:30pm</i>	<i>ESPN</i>
<i>Sun Oct. 1</i>	<i>Los Angeles</i>	<i>Noon</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Oct. 8</i>	<i>Green Bay</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Oct. 15</i>	<i>BYE</i>		
<i>Sun Oct. 22</i>	<i>at San Francisco</i>	<i>3:05pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Oct. 29</i>	<i>at Washington</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Nov. 5</i>	<i>Kansas City</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>CBS</i>
<i>Sun Nov. 12</i>	<i>at Atlanta</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Nov. 19</i>	<i>Philadelphia</i>	<i>7:30pm</i>	<i>NBC</i>
<i>Thu Nov. 23</i>	<i>Los Angeles</i>	<i>3:30pm</i>	<i>CBS</i>
<i>Thu Nov. 30</i>	<i>Washington</i>	<i>7:25pm</i>	<i>NBC</i>
<i>Sun Dec. 10</i>	<i>at New York</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
<i>Sun Dec. 17</i>	<i>at Oakland</i>	<i>7:30pm</i>	<i>NBC</i>
<i>Sun Dec. 24</i>	<i>Seattle</i>	<i>3:25pm</i>	<i>FOX</i>
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Museum Hosts Tribute to George Barris Through Year-End



Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the National Museum of Funeral History is proud to present a new exhibit, A Tribute to George Barris, through Dec. 31, 2017.

George Barris, known throughout the world as the 'original' King of Kustomizers, created iconic automobiles including the original 1966 Batmobile, the "Beverly Hillbillies" jalopy, the Munster Koach and casket turned dragster (the "Drag-U-La") for "The Munsters," and KITTs, the short name of two fictional characters from the adventure television series "Knight Rider."

The Museum will display a replica of the 1966 Batmobile, a replica of the casket Barris was buried in, a memorial folder from Barris' funeral along with other personal memorabilia.

President of the National Museum of Funeral History Genevieve Keeney stated, "We have a wonderful gentleman who is on our board, Buck Kamphausen, who collects cars. He has fascinating hearses that are on exhibition in the museum and an outstanding private collection of unique automobiles. Mr. Kamphausen owns the replica of the 1966 Batmobile and the replica of the casket in which Barris was buried. It is a unique opportunity to display these items in A Tribute to George Barris."

Richie Valles, owner of Unique Twist Celebrity Caskets in Burbank, CA, and George Barris, were close friends. Upon George's passing, Richie designed and created the casket Barris was buried in, which is bright yellow and embellished with Bat-

wing style fins. Richie also created a replica of the casket on display in the Tribute to George Barris exhibit. More about Rickie Valles on www.uniquetwist.net

Born in Chicago in the mid-twenties, Barris moved to Roseville California with relatives after his parents died in 1928. He pursued a passion for building scratch-built model airplanes and model cars that resulted in winning competitions for construction and design.

His interest in cars intensified during his teenage years as he discovered "the black art" of body work by hanging out after school at local body shops.

Barris created his first full custom car from a used 1936 Ford convertible before he graduated from high school that led to his first commercial customer.

Shortly after, Barris formed a club called

Kustoms Car Club where the first use of "K" for kustoms appeared.

He later moved to Los Angeles where his talents began to flourish. Barris opened his first shop in Bell, a Los Angeles suburb in late 1944.

As movie studios took note of Barris kustoms on the streets and at races, the studios and came to George for cars for their films. This included customizing the personal cars of the stars, as well.

As the sixties began, George shifted gears and bought a new shop in North Hollywood where he designed and built award-winning cars.

Kamphausen, who is a funeral director, stated that he had attended the funeral for Barris. "It was a WOW! I knew he would have something different. I have fond memories of George. He was a great part of the automobile world."

October at the National Museum of Funeral History

7th Annual Halloween Haunted House

Oct. 1 through Nov. 4

10th Annual Halloween Classic Car Show

Oct. 28

Dia de los Muertos Celebration

Nov. 1 through Nov. 4

Funeral Directors Life to Host John Maxwell Book Signing

Funeral Directors Life is proud to sponsor keynote speaker John C. Maxwell for the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo.



“John Maxwell’s books have had a huge impact on me personally and on our company,” said Kris Seale, President and CEO of Funeral Directors Life. “It’s an honor to sponsor Maxwell at this year’s NFDA Convention.”

John C. Maxwell is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author, coach, and speaker who has sold more than 26 million books in 50 languages.

John Maxwell will be speaking at the 2017 NFDA International Convention & Expo on Monday, October 30th at the Opening General Session with a book signing following immediately at the Funeral Directors Life booth, #2361.

“In the funeral profession, our job is about connecting; it’s all about relationships,” said

Seale. “Maxwell will have a lot of valuable information to share for us about connecting with the families we serve. We welcome everyone to come and get your books signed following the session in our booth, #2361. We’re very excited to be able to offer this opportunity!”

Books will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Selected Independent Funeral Homes Educational Trust Announces Board Positions

Selected Independent Funeral Homes Educational Trust announces the selection of two new members of its Board of Trustees to fill open positions. The new Trustees will officially assume their roles during the 99th Annual Meeting of Selected Independent Funeral Homes held at the Radisson Blu Aqua in Chicago.

Cary Bliley is a fourth generation President and CEO of Bliley Funeral Homes in Richmond, VA. Growing up at Bliley’s helped shape his personal belief that this work is not just his profession, but his vocation. Bliley will replace Lawrence Schildmeyer Sr. who is completing his term this year.

Bliley is active in Selected’s NextGen Program, is a former Selected Study Group member, and he hosted the Selected Connections Program at his firm earlier this year. He also serves on several boards in the Richmond area and was chosen as a mentor for NFDA’s “Meet the Mentors” program in 2014.

Al Asta is co-owner of Whitney & Murphy Funeral Home in Phoenix and a management consultant with Johnson Consulting Group. He has worked with hundreds of funeral homes throughout the U.S. and Canada and has already stepped into his role. Asta joined the Trust Board in 2016 to fill a one-year interim term that had been vacated. Asta will now begin a full three-year term.

Asta has served on numerous boards and committees including Past President of the Arizona Funeral Directors Association, and he participates in Selected Study Groups.



M. Carey Bliley



Al Asta

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Oley Steven Sansom

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Barcheers

Martha Ellen Procell Barcheers, beloved mother, devoted aunt, dedicated grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away September 10 at her childhood home in Hemphill, just a day after turning 85. She is the mother of Bill Barcheers, funeral director with Starr Funeral Home in Hemphill.

Martha was the third of seven children of Pete and Rosilee Hatchl Procell, a Hemphill High School basketball player, a dance instructor, a pharmacy manager and the officer manager at Mary E. Dickerson Memorial Hospital in Jasper.

Despite never learning to drive, Martha never hesitated to travel, riding a bus to visit her son, Bill, when he lived in El Paso, traveling to Rome with her sister, Mary, and living in a Sawmill town on an Apache Indian Reservation in McNary, Arizona, while her favorite destination was found in the arms

of her grandchildren and great-grandchild.

Martha never gave second thought about helping and she never had to be asked. She just saw a need and filled it, oblivious to even the idea of recognition. She constantly put other's needs before her own. Even when she needed to receive, she never expected it and was surprised and humbled by the love and attention she received.

She is survived by her son, Bill Barcheers and wife, Patricia, of Hemphill; granddaughters, Alicia Barcheers and fiancé, Josh Woodward of Shreveport, LA, and Stacey Brown and husband, Simon, of Haughton, LA; great-grandson, Preston Barcheers, of Haughton, LA; sisters, Shirley Marsh of Jasper and Linda Wright and husband, Jim, of Beaumont; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral mass was held at St. Pius Catholic Church in Hemphill with burial in the Procell Plot of Hemphill Cemetery. Services were under the direction of Starr Funeral Home.

Brown

Richard "Rick" Edward Brown, son of Jeanne Fields Brown and the late Ben F. Brown Sr., passed away September 12 at Baylor Scott and White in Irving. His mother is the owner of Brown's Memorial Funeral Home in Irving. His late father had served as TFDA President.

Rick is a former funeral at his family's home.

Funeral services were held at Brown's Memorial Chapel, with interment at Oak Grove Memorial Gardens. Services were under the direction of Brown's Memorial Chapel.

Conrad

Tommy Conrad, age 51, died peacefully surrounded by his loved ones on September 7. He was a funeral director with Brown's Memorial Funeral Home in Irving.

He was born in Irving, Texas to Dale Emerson and Tommie Jeraldine (Hunter) Conrad on August 17, 1966. Tommy was a lifetime Irving resident, and a member of the First United Methodist Church since his childhood. He attended Nimitz High School, where he played for the Vikings Football team, participating in their district championship in 1982, and was a part of the 1984 graduating class. After graduation, Tommy began his 16-year employment with UPS, during which time he was working to obtain his Funeral Directors License.

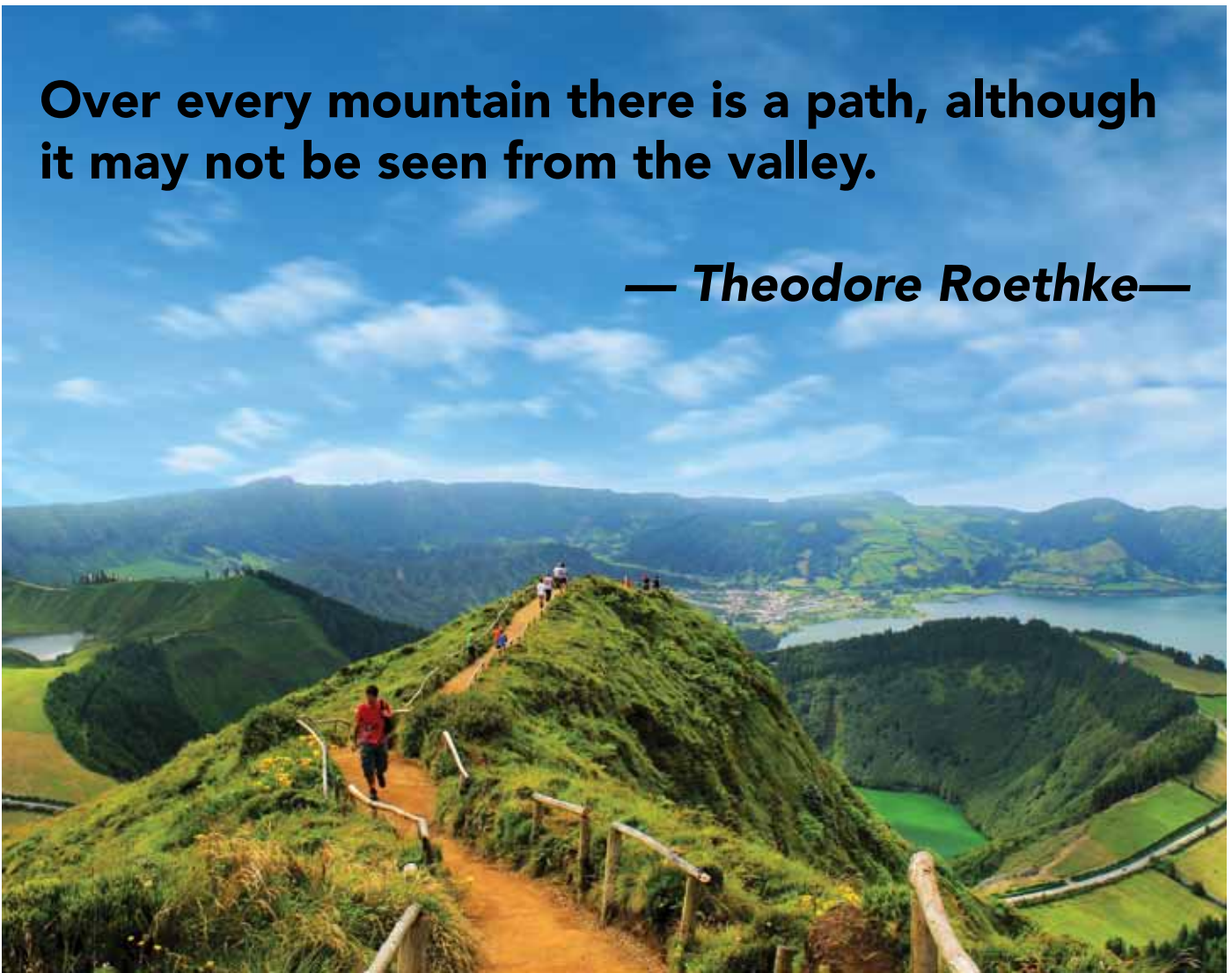
In 2008, he graduated from Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, as a Funeral Director and Embalmer, later earning his certification as a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP). He worked briefly at the former Chapel of Roses Funeral Home and then established his professional career at Brown's Memorial Funeral Home where he was revered, respected and loved by not only the people he worked with, but the families he served as well.

He was instrumental in the Wreaths for Veterans of Irving/Wreaths Across America memorial celebration each December, where he took great pride in honoring all U.S. Veterans. Tommy enjoyed every aspect of the Scottish history and heritage, and from 2004 until 2008, proudly competed in the Scottish Highland Games. He is preceded in death by his dad, Dale Emerson Conrad, both sets of grandparents, John and Gertrude Hunter and James and Dorothy Conrad, and aunt Rosalee Hunter.

Left to cherish his memory and the time they had with him is his mother, Jeri; aunts Glenda and Jeanette Hunter; his lady love

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it may not be seen from the valley.**

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Cindy Morgan; along with numerous extended family, and lifetime friends.

A memorial service to celebrate Tommy's life and the impact he had on everyone he met was held at First United Methodist Church in Irving. Services were under the direction of Brown's Memorial Funeral Home.

The family requests memorials in his honor be made to the American Heart Association at <https://donatenow.heart.org/> or to FUMC at <http://www.fumcirving.org/giving/>.

Moore

Marsha Seale Moore, 68, passed away on August 30, 2017. She is the sister of Kris Seal with Funeral Directors Life Insurance

Co. in Abilene.

Everyone who knew Marsha experienced the joy and vivacity she shared with the world. Her comedic timing was always impeccable, and she could always be counted on to liven up a party. Marsha loved passionately and well. Her children and grandchildren were of utmost importance to her, and she loved showering them (and everyone) in gushy, smooch hugs and kisses. As Chacha (grandmother) to three grandsons, Marsha reveled in loving and playing with Eli, Ari, and Isaac.

Marsha was also a renown cook, and her award-winning salsa is enjoyed in many circles throughout Abilene. She was an avid lover of movies, and could always be

counted on to know the best actors and directors. Catching Marsha dancing and singing wasn't unusual, and she loved singing with and to her grandsons. Marsha's love for performing and bringing light and life was shared with many, including the Colorado Playhouse and with her theater students.

On June 1, 1949, the bundle of fun and light known as Marsha entered the world in Memphis, Texas. Born to Bill and Finnie Seale, Marsha grew up in Matador, Texas and graduated from Snyder High School. Following her high school graduation, Marsha attended Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, and Sam Houston State in Huntsville, Texas, ultimately earning a degree in Theatre and Education. She then went on to share her love of theater and performing arts with students in Colorado City, Sweetwater, and Merkel, Texas. In addition to her love of theater, Marsha had a love of God, and enjoyed the fellowship of Believers at Elm Valley Community Church and Beltway Park Church in Abilene.

Marsha will be missed by her son, Dylan Moore of Abilene; daughter, Amy Paquette and husband David of Buffalo Gap; brother, Kris Seale and wife Melinda of Abilene; three grandsons, Elias, Ari, and Isaac Paquette; two nieces, Amanda Farrow and husband Clayton, and Shannon Seale; one nephew, Drew Seale and wife Christina; and two great-nephews, Graham Farrow and Duke Seale.

Visitation and funeral services were held at The Hamil Family Funeral Home Chapel.

Memorials in her honor may be made to Gold Monarch Healing Center, 1753 Iberis Rd., Abilene, TX 79606; or All For One Missions International, P.O. Box 5024, Abilene, TX 79608.

Richardson

James Howard "Jim" Richardson of Nederland, passed away peacefully on the morning of September 5, 2017, at Forever Young Assisted Living in Groves at the age of 85 years, 6 months, and 19 days. He is the grandfather of Colby C. Davis, a funeral director at Cason Monk-Metcalf in Nagogdoches.

He was born February 17, 1932, at his parents' home in Lafayette, Texas, to parents Henry Clay Richardson and Lee Ella (Weaver) Richardson.

Mr. Richardson met his wife of 62 years, JoAnne, in Beaumont and married in 1955. He was a veteran of the Korean War, serv-



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ing in the United States Air Force. He was always very proud of his country and his time serving in the military. After returning from his time serving, he was the Commander of the Post 6384 of Nederland Veteran's of Foreign Wars. He was also a member of The American Legion and The American Eagles.

Some of his hobbies were hunting and fishing, but he got the most pleasure in life from watching his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren grow up. Jim, or PawPaw as he was best known, attended almost all of their sporting events, dance recitals, and other activities. He would often help out where he could, providing rides and water for the teams. The family knew that if they ever needed anything at all they could rely on PawPaw. His face really lit up when he would hold his great-grandchildren, especially over his last few years.

He was preceded in death by his parents; stepfather, GC Hartman; brother, Tommy Richardson; and sisters Ann Hunt, Mary Townsend, and Doris Stevenson.

Leaving behind to cherish his memory is his wife, JoAnne Richardson. He is also survived by his son, Gary Richardson and wife Kathy; and daughters, Glenda Davis and Ginny Parker and husband Steve. He was the proud PawPaw of Brock Richardson and wife Racheal, Megan Ewing and husband Ranger, Colby Davis, Jessi Farmer and

husband Dylan, and Seth Parker; and great grandchildren, Ayden and Asher Richardson and Claire and Evelyn Ewing; sister, Jo Brown; sister-in-law, Reta Richardson; along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends.

This family is eternally grateful to Penny Lee, Tasha Broom, and all his caregivers at Forever Young, who provided him extraordinary care during his final months on this Earth.

Memorial contributions in his honor may be made in Mr. Richardson's name to the Wounded Warrior Project.

A funeral service was held at Grammier-Oberle Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Cazy Francis officiating. Pallbearers included his grandsons and great-grandsons: Brock Richardson, Ryan (Ranger) Ewing, Colby Davis, Dylan Farmer, Seth Parker, Ayden Richardson, and Asher Richardson.

Arrangements were under the direction of Grammier-Oberle Funeral Home, located in Port Arthur, Texas.

Sansom

Oley Steven Sansom was born February 19, 1928, in Seymour, Texas to Oley Sr. and Effie Alma Thomas Sansom and passed away September 13, 2017 in Corpus Christi. He is the father of Steven Sansom, former owner of Croley Funeral Home in Gilmer.

Mr. Sansom graduated from Kilgore High School and joined the U.S. Navy at

the age of 17. He served in the Pacific at the end of World War II. After the war and receiving an honorable discharge he returned home to attend school to become a journeyman electrician by the age of 18. Fredda and Oley lived in Gilmer for 18 years before retiring to Corpus Christi in 1999. They were active members of the First Assembly of God in Gilmer where Oley served as Sunday School Superintendent and was instrumental in the construction of the new church building. He was also an avid supporter of the Upshur County Library.

Survived by his wife, Fredda; children, Steven and Ray Nell Sansom, Stanley and Mary Sansom, Tim and Kathy Sansom, Carol Mayer, and Jane Sansom; nine grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Rosewood Park Cemetery in Longview with Thomas Ferguson officiating.

Donations in Oley's honor may be made to the Upshur County Library 702 Tyler St. Gilmer, TX 75644.

Services were at the direction of McWhorter Funeral Home in Gilmer.

Stevens

Jane Stevens, 77, of Beaumont, died September 2. She is the wife of Ken Stevens, former owner of Memorial Funeral Home in Buffalo.

She was born on January 5, 1940, in Port Arthur, to Viola Jones Cloar and Leslie Cloar. Jane was the owner of Children's Little Shop in Nederland for over 20 years. She retired from the Texas Department of Corrections, and was First Lady of Buffalo, Texas from 2005 to 2009.

Jane is survived by her husband of 34 years, Ken Stevens, of Beaumont; sons, Robert Bell, and Al Bell and his wife, Dana; all of Nederland; step-daughter, Ashley Stevens and her partner, Andy Gonzales, of Beaumont; grandchildren, Damien, Cody, Macie, Caymon, Derien, Kenzi, and Jaden; and sister, Ida Winters and her husband, Vic, of Austin.

A gathering of Jane's family and friends was held at Broussard's in Beaumont. Her funeral service and interment was held at Houston National Cemetery in Houston.

Memorial contributions in her honor may be made to El Mina Shrine, Attention: Brad Corley, 1616 Tremont, Galveston, Texas 77550. Services were at the direction of Broussard's Mortuary in Beaumont.

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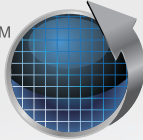
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2017 TFDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

12	North Texas Meeting	Fort Worth
24	TFDA Services, Inc. Board	Austin
24	Long Range Planning Cmte. Mtg.	Austin
24	Budget Committee Meeting	Austin
25	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
29 – Nov 1	NFDA Convention	Boston, MA

November

7	Panhandle Meeting	Austin
9	West Texas Meeting	TBD

December

11	Wreaths Across America	Austin
12	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin

2018 TFDA Calendar of Events

January

23	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
24	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
24	Phone-A-Thon	Austin

March

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	South Padre Island
12	Southeast Texas Meeting	TBA
17	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
18	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
25-27	NFDA Advocacy	Washington, DC

June

11-14	TFDA Convention	Galveston
19	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin

July

8-11	NFDA Leadership Conference	Asheville, NC
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September

11	Texas Funeral Service Commission	Austin
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October

14-17	NFDA Convention	Salt Lake City
23	TFDA Services, Inc.	Austin
24	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin



Hearse Stories



Hearse Driver, Funeral Director Stop for Coffee on Way to Vet's Funeral:

ABC's Alyssa Pone reported this story in May 2015.

Rob Carpenter said he confronted a hearse driver and a funeral director when he spotted the hearse with the flag-draped coffin of 84-year-old Lt. Col. Jesse Coleman unattended at a Dunkin' Donuts in New Port Richey, Florida. Carpenter then started taking photos and video because the driver did not seem remorseful about the incident, he told ABC News. The video went viral.

The hearse was driving from Veterans Funeral Care in Clearwater to the service in Lecanto, less than 90 miles away.

Veterans Funeral Care President Jim Rudolph said sometimes the drivers stop for bathroom breaks, but someone is supposed to stay with the vehicle at all times. During a military transport, however, the hearse is not supposed to make any stops, he said.

"When a car leaves the funeral home with a flag on it, it's on a stage ... and we're in ceremony mode," Rudolph said. "Going into buy a doughnut with a flag-covered casket in your coach was a terrible lack of judgment."

Rudolph declined to comment on why the decision was made to fire, rather than suspend, the hearse driver and funeral director.

What Would the Colonel Say? A Cardiff, Wales, undertaker was caught on camera apparently trying to drive his hearse to a drive-through branch of fast food chain KFC. The report appeared in a 2014 issue of DailyMail.com.

The funeral vehicle, complete with a clearly-visible coffin in the back, was spotted attempting to drive under a barrier to reach the order window of the restaurant.

However, an onlooker said the hearse was too large to fit under the red and white frame, so the unknown

driver reversed and instead headed to a neighboring Starbucks.

Twitter user Craig Davies said he saw the hearse trying to get into the restaurant in Cardiff, Wales, and posted a snap of the car with the caption, "#itswhathewouldhavewanted".

He wrote: "I couldn't believe it. It was too wide for the posts so they parked up and went into Starbucks instead!"

Although some Twitter users questioned whether the photograph was real, Mr. Davies, who said he saw the hearse at the Cardiff Gate branch, has maintained it is genuine.

"Business was slow," he said. The driver of a hearse filled with 68 pounds of marijuana told federal agents he had taken up smuggling because his Tucson funeral-services business "had been slow."

Christian Lee Zuniga, 28, a U.S. citizen from Nogales, Arizona, was arrested after agents became suspicious and found the pot, court records show. He was charged in Arizona U.S. District Court with possession and possession with intent to distribute.

This is the second headline-making smuggling failure for Zuniga. The Nogales resident made headlines in 2015 after Sierra Vista police arrested him and an alleged accomplice for trying to smuggle 19 manure-covered bales of marijuana

in a horse trailer. He and the other man were never charged in that case.

Zuniga allegedly tried his luck again in a different kind of smuggling vehicle.

When asked for identification, Zuniga said he didn't have any, which agents found odd for a hearse driver. He reportedly gave the name of a fictional funeral home in Nogales, but an agent who knew the border town informed him that Nogales has only two funeral homes, neither with the name Zuniga had mentioned.

Agents could see the coffin inside the hearse and asked Zuniga if he was smuggling narcotics in it. A drug-sniffing dog soon alerted to the 30.71 kilograms of pot in the coffin. Several bags of manure had been placed on top of the packaged bricks in a futile attempt to mask the marijuana's scent.

Zuniga waived his Miranda rights and told agents "he owns a funeral services business in Tucson, Arizona, but business had been slow," records state.

A "former friend" offered him \$3,500 to \$4,000 to smuggle the pot to Tucson, Zuniga reportedly told authorities. He had loaded the coffin in Douglas with the help of some "ranch hands," he told agents.

Zuniga works for himself, said a Tucson funeral worker who knows him.

He bought the hearse and "tried to set up a removal and transport business," said the worker, who didn't want to be named.

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