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Texas Director

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Super Year

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CONTENTS

August 2018
Volume 67, Issue 8



HIGHLIGHTS

MEET TFDA'S NEW EXECUTIVE TEAM FOR 2018-2019

- 6** Meet TFDA's New Executive Director: Harvey Hilderbran
- 10** President Chuck Robertson
- 11** Vice President and President Elect Gene Allen
- 12** Secretary-Treasurer Troy Murray

TFDA HONORS ITS BEST AT ANNUAL CONVENTION

- 13** Jeffrey Nobles Named Funeral Director of the Year
- 14** Tiffany Aguilar Named Young Funeral Director of the Year
- 15** Jennifer Braun Named TFDA Supplier of the Year
- 16** Wayne Giese Earns Ed C. Smith Funeral Service Award

24 Meet Glenn Bower, Commonwealth's New President

26 Expect New Overtime Pay Rule in 2019

28 10 Things Great Bosses Do Every Day

30 Misclassifying a Worker as an Independent Contractor

46 In Memorial: John Munson Myers

DEPARTMENTS

- 4** TFDA Leadership | **32** Suppliers' Corner | **36** Director News
- 38** Community News | **42** Endorsed Providers
- 45** Calendar of Events | **45** Advertiser Index



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Meet TFDA's New Executive Director: Harvey Hilderbran

By Alice Adams

The TFDA leadership has recruited an outstanding coach for TFDA's team in Austin, and he's hit the ground running, so we were lucky to catch him, taking a rare breather at TFDA headquarters after a jam-packed two weeks on the job, including the annual Leadership Conference in Amarillo.

TFDA Executive Director Harvey Hilderbran, a Blue Lodge Mason, brings an impressive resume of experience, perfectly tailored to optimize association operations while maximizing TFDA's impact on the profession in Texas, expanding membership through enhanced benefits and broadening TFDA's scope of influence among Texas lawmakers.

Harvey's career has included lobbying in Austin, and Washington, a demanding political office and private sector experience as a business owner and association manager. Having amassed a many and varied skillset, you'll find this high-energy executive to be straightforward, plain-spoken and sincerely dedicated to building and growing the state's most powerful association of funeral directors.

Growing up in Uvalde, Texas, the new exec embraces the small-town values of his upbringing, strategically incorporating them into his business practices as well as his daily life. The fourth of four boys in his family, Harvey says "I have something in common with each of my brothers, but particularly with my oldest brother Vic."

"There was 10 years between my oldest brother and me, so – like most kid brothers – I saw Vic as my hero because he taught me how to hunt and fish, but also stood up to my other two brothers when they gave me a hard time". Even decades later, the two brothers continue to enjoy hunting and fishing together.

A former state representative, first elected in 1988 and most recently re-elected in 2012 by District 53, Harvey brings decades of valuable organizational and business experience to his new position, as well as a Rolodex filled with relationships at the capitol that will be helpful during future legislative sessions.



Calling himself a Texan's Texan, the new exec/lobbyist has wasted no time in reaching out to Texas directors to educate him about funeral service, visiting mortuaries and attending the recent TFDA Leadership Conference in Amarillo.

"I was impressed by the hands-on approach TFDA members took in the committee meetings I was able to observe," Harvey said, "and I was excited to see the members' energy and engagement as they planned their activities for the year."

Harvey brings a unique background of problem-solving and broad vision to the table. Exceptional examples occurred when he introduced and passed several far-reaching pieces of legislation, including welfare reform, nursing home reform, and a three-part tax passage offering \$710 million in tax relief to small businesses by making a \$1 million annual exemption permanent and reducing the margins tax by 2.5 percent each of the next two years.

"I think growing up in small-town Texas taught me to solve a problem when I saw it, to know right from wrong and to always do the right thing," he said. "That's why another of my bills brought about the indictments against men in the Fundamentalist Church of Latter Day Saints (FLDS) compound in Eldorado, Texas who were forcibly marrying multiple underage girls, following in the footsteps of their leader Warren Jeffs. It was

the right thing to do."

He remembered the impact of the first funeral he attended.

In Uvalde, the Hilderbran boys were friends with the McConaughey boys, who lived down the street. "Matthew was much younger than all of us – a toddler at the time. His mom, Kay, was my kindergarten teacher," Harvey said.

"We were spending the night with his older brothers and cousin Vince at his grandparent's house on an acreage, adjacent to our family's ranch one weekend," Harvey recalled. "Sometime during the early morning hours, they awoke all of us, saying Mr. McConaughey was very sick...and because our party-line phone system was down, they told me to run (barefoot) back to our house for help."

"My parents followed the McConaughey's car to the hospital and I remember my dad stopping at the Livestock Auction because there was a pay phone there, to call ahead to the hospital, telling them we were on our way with Jim McConaughey, Sr."

Unfortunately, the elderly man was pronounced DOA when they finally arrived at the hospital. He had suffered a massive heart attack.

As word of Mr. McConaughey's death quickly traveled the town's grapevine, people began coming to offer support and bringing food.

"Jim Sr.'s service was held in Houston," Harvey remembered. "It was the first funeral I ever attended and the first time I had ever seen a body in a casket. I must have been 10 or 11 and I remember being a little tentative when the minister asked us to pass by his open casket before we left the church."

"That first service definitely had an impact, but didn't make me afraid to go to funerals," he said, adding, "My wife, Tracy (they celebrated their 25th anniversary on Aug. 7th) is truly the best person I've seen when it comes to comforting those who have lost a loved one. She definitely is blessed with the gifts of understanding and

Continued on page 8.



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Continued from page 6.

empathy where I tend to be more stoic.”

As the upcoming legislative session looms, the new executive is eager to meet more TFDA members, get their input and encourage them to build relationships with their lawmakers from their communities and legislative districts.

“We also already have several projects underway, mainly to streamline the office and create more efficiencies within existing processes,” the new exec explained. “Priority One is building memberships and we’re also reviewing the association’s infrastructure, seeking ways to strengthen member benefits and, at the same time, optimize services.”

His time serving in the Texas Legislature and meeting the demands of running a multi-million-dollar state agency equips Harvey to bring TFDA into full bloom as a 21st century association...and his energy and enthusiasm is contagious, so the remainder of this year promises to be an exciting time within TFDA’s history.

“I am impressed with TFDA’s existing leadership, their ability to think outside the box and their commitment to progress,” he continued. “We have all the right pieces on the table. Now comes the challenge of putting it all together.”

A natural problem-solver with a charismatic personality, Harvey graduated from Uvalde High School in 1978, and enrolled at Texas Tech in Lubbock, where he majored in political science, pledged Kappa Alpha fraternity and was properly inoculated with mega-doses of Red Raider for Life (a condition for which there is no cure)!

“Harvey loves Texas Tech and is a huge fan of all the teams,” wife Tracy revealed. “Of course, when our daughter Haley decided to attend Tech, Harvey was over the moon, and during the school year, we make monthly trips to see her in Lubbock.”

As outgoing and energetic as her husband, Tracy is, obviously, the glue for the busy Hilderbran family, which includes their two daughters, 21-year-old Haley, a management information science major

in her junior year at Tech and 16-year-old, Kerrville Tivy High School Junior Carolyn “Callie” Reagan Hilderbran (named after her grandmother and her dad’s favorite U.S. president).

Both girls are well-spoken and decidedly opinionated, especially when it comes to their dad. “We’re both very close to Dad,” Haley said, “and he’s very involved in our lives and he’s always been a great dad. I also think he’s a very interesting person and tells lots of stories, but when he goes off on a tangent in the middle of a story, he makes me laugh.”

“My dad is the most caring dad I know,” added Callie, a member of her high school’s golf team, “and he taught us not only to think about our decisions but also to think about others, as well. He’s very involved in our lives and very protective...but in a good way.”

She said his most important advice has been: “Always shoot for the stars...that whatever I want to do in my life, he supports me and wants me to know I can do anything.”



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Chuck Robertson to Lead TFDA in 2018-2019

Third-generation funeral director Chuck Robertson, president and CEO of Robertson Funeral Directors in Clarendon, Claude, McLean, Memphis, Shamrock and Wheeler, was elected president of the Texas Funeral Directors Association. He becomes the youngest president in the association's history.

In addition to the "youngest" distinction, Robertson is only the sixth resident of the Texas Panhandle to head the association in its 132-year history.

A 2003 graduate of Clarendon High School, Robertson is the son of the late Patrick Robertson and his wife Vicky, and the grandson of the late Delbert and Patsy Robertson, all of Clarendon. When his birth mother, Edie, passed away, Chuck was only two, thus he grew up living with his grandparents at the family's funeral home.

"I've grown up with funeral service always in my life," Robertson said.

His first job at the funeral home was helping his grandfather dig graves (a job that continued until six years ago). "I learned at an early age to play quietly during funeral services, and if I needed something when my grandparents or dad were on the phone, to whisper," he recalled.

In his presidential acceptance speech, he remembered his grandparents and his father, thanking them for instilling the values and the compassion needed to counsel families after the loss of a loved one. He also thanked his mother, Vicky, and his wife, Amanda, for their support of his personal and professional goals as well as his journey to the TFDA presidency.

"Shortly after we married, my wife and I were talking about our individual goals as well as our goals as a couple and a family," Robertson remembered. "Among my goals was the opportunity to, someday, lead TFDA. In achieving this goal, my wife has been my cheerleader, my rock and my best friend and advisor."

Originally a mass communications major in college, the new TFDA president and his cousin Cameron decided to change their majors to funeral service and enrolled in the mortuary science associate degree program at Amarillo College.

"My grandfather wanted me to be a funeral



director all along," he said, "but my dad told me to follow my dreams. Since making my decision that day in 2003, I've never looked back, never regretted my decision and, to this day, feel privileged to serve the families of the Panhandle during this very difficult – probably the worst – time in their lives."

Robertson and his cousin earned their professional licenses in August 2005.

Like his father and grandfather, Chuck Robertson has been a member of the Clarendon Volunteer Fire Department since 2003, where he currently serves the rank of Captain/EMT and Secretary/Treasurer. He also is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and is a member and certified firefighter through the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association and as an EMT, is with the Associated Ambulance Authority/Clarendon EMS (since October 2004) and with the Shamrock Emergency Medical Service since 2015. His wife Amanda also has been an EMT with North Wheeler County since 2005.

Robertson enters the office of TFDA president with humility but also with a sense of pride. "My grandfather, with my grandmother by his side, served our community as a funeral director for more than 60 years. My father, also a funeral director, was a commissioner on the Texas Funeral Service Commission, appointed by Gov. Rick Perry."

He is the current president of the Citizens Cemetery Association in Clarendon, served as the president of the Panhandle Funeral Directors Association from 2010-2012 and served on the board of directors for the Panhandle Funeral Directors Association from 2008-2013 and came back on the board in 2015-2016. He also served on the Texas Funeral Directors Association Board of Directors from 2009-2012. He is a lifetime member of the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice, where he achieved his Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP) certification in September 2008.



Robertson is a member of the Clarendon Lions Club & Memphis Lions Club and has served as past president for Clarendon. He is also a member of the Shamrock Rotary Club where he served as past president and is a Paul Harris Fellow. Chuck is currently serving his second term on the Clarendon CISD Board of Trustees. Prior to being elected to the school board, he served on the CISD District Improvement Committee for 4 years. Chuck was awarded by the Clarendon / Donley County Chamber of Commerce for the 2009 Man of the Year.

"As the third generation of funeral directors in my family, I am responsible for carrying on this legacy of sacred trust as I serve the families of the Texas Panhandle," the new president shared, "so I look forward to additionally contributing to our state association of professionals, building its reputation in Texas as an outstanding and highly-valued group of servant leaders who not only serve their communities in times of personal loss but also are first responders in times of man-made disasters, such as the explosion that destroyed half of the city of West, Texas, as well as natural disasters, like the recent storms and flooding brought ashore by Hurricane Harvey"

Robertson and his wife, Amanda, live in Clarendon with his son, Jaxon, and their dog, Duke.

Gene Allen Named Vice President and President Elect of TFDA at Annual Convention

Raised in rural West Texas, Gene Allen attended Plains High School where he graduated and went on to attend South Plains College, where he earned a degree in criminal justice before continuing his studies at Wayland Baptist University.

It was during his collegiate career that Gene was called into funeral service and enrolled in the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. Earning a degree in mortuary science, Gene became a licensed funeral director and embalmer in Texas. Later, after successfully completing the exams prepared and required by the International Conference of Examining Board, he also was licensed to practice in New Mexico.

As a funeral service professional, Gene has spent most of his adult life in community service, volunteering on numerous boards, committees and civic organizations. He was elected to three terms on the Levelland City Council and served on the City of Levelland's Planning & Zoning Board before being transferred to the D/FW Metroplex.

Beginning his career in funeral service in Levelland and later in the Metroplex, Gene purchased Kerrville Funeral Home in December 2001. Almost a decade later, Kimble Funeral Home in Junction became part of the KHF family, allowing him to care for and serve families in the Junction area.

In December 2016, Gene's career came full circle, when he purchased the building for construction to begin on Krestridge Funeral Home, the third member of the KFH family located in the Levelland area. Krestridge opened, officially, on September 1, 2016.

Community service continues to be part of Gene's DNA.

He has served – and currently serves – many organizations. He's also on several boards in the Kerrville area and the State of Texas which include: Texas Governor-appointed Commissioner of the Texas Funeral Service Commission 2009 – 2015, serving as Presiding Officer from 2012 – 2015; President of the Hill Country Funeral Directors Association for 2003 – 2004, Membership Resource Com-



mittee for 2005 – 2007, Professional Development Committee for 2007 – 2008, Pursuit of Excellence Committee for 2011 – 2016 of the National Funeral Directors Association; Board Member of the Texas Funeral Directors Association for 2007 – 2009, a Board Member for 2005 – 2006, Secretary/Treasurer for 2006 – 2007, Vice-President for 2007 – 2008, and President for 2008 – 2009 of the TFDA South Central Region.

He also has served as chair of the TFDA Legislative and Ethics Committees for 2015 – 2017, TFDA Secretary/Treasurer for 2017 – 2018; the Funeral Ethics Association; the American Society of Embalmers; a member of the Cremation Association of North America; a past member of the Sciences Exam Committee of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards from 2007 – 2010, and is a current member and Past President (2004 – 2005) of the Kerrville Host Lions Club.

Gene was a member of the City of Kerrville Planning and Zoning Board for 2008 – 2011, elected to serve for a fourth term as Councilmember, Place 4, for the City of Kerrville and served as Mayor Pro-Tem (2011 – 2012 and 2014 – 2015), is past Vice-President

for the City of Kerrville, Texas Health Facilities Development Corporation and is former Chairman and Advisory Board member of Kerrville Main Street Project.

He is an advisory board member of The Haven Alzheimer's Care Center, a former board member of the K'Star Youth Shelter, the Hill Country Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Dietert Senior Center, a former member of the Starkey Elementary Campus Improvement Team and a former Kerr County Ambassador.

He is a member of the 20th Anniversary Class (2005) of Leadership Kerr County, a current member of the Kerrville Chamber, former member of the West Kerr County Chamber, the Junction Chamber and the Levelland Chamber of Commerce.

Gene is a 32 deg. Master Mason with membership of Kerrville Masonic Lodge #697, A.F. & A.M., the Scottish Rite Valley of San Antonio, the Alzar Shrine Temple of San Antonio, TX, a Past President of Hill Country Scottish Rite Club, a member of the York Rite Chapter #305, R.A.M., Council #240, R. & S.M., the Llano Commandery #54, the Brownwood Commandery #22, the Hill Country Shrine Club, the Hi-12 Club, and the Kerrville Order of Eastern Star #24.

In addition, he is a member of the Bandera Lodge #1123 (formerly the Medina Lodge #1319), Center Point Rising Star Lodge #429, Junction City Lodge #548, Levelland Lodge #1236, and the Tranquility Lodge #2000. Gene has served a six-year term on the Committee on Credentials for the Grand Lodge of Texas.

The fall of 2004 brought additional professional certifications and recognition for Gene. He completed the requirements for certification in the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice to become a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP), and successfully completed course work offered by the National Funeral Directors Association to become a Certified Preplanning Consultant (CPC).

The International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association hosted Gene to present at

the March 2006 International Convention that was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. Gene offered the Commencement Address for the summer graduating Class of 2011 at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in Houston, Texas and was invited to give the Commencement Address for the spring graduating Class of 2013 at the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service.

Despite his community involvement and his service to families, Gene remains committed to his role as husband and father. His wife, Katie, is a Licensed Professional Counselor

(LPC) and recently retired as a middle school counselor. She is also a Licensed Funeral Director as well as the Director of After Care and Grief Recovery for Kerrville, Kimble, and Krestridge Funeral Homes.

The Allens, now empty-nesters, have four children, and four grandchildren and are members of the First United Methodist Church, Kerrville, Texas.

In the daily management and ownership of the KFH family of Funeral Homes and Crematory, Gene's guiding belief and work ethic

has been adopted by his staff in Kerrville, Junction and Levelland, which is: "Serving one family at a time, we are committed to treat all families with dignity, pride, and honor."

Service is also of the highest priority, with the constant reminder that Kerrville, Kimble, and Krestridge Funeral Homes "serve one family at a time." Each family is as important as the other, and they should each be treated with the same respect.

Meet Troy Murray, TFDA's New Secretary-Treasurer

Troy Murray, 44, president and general manager of Croley Funeral Homes in Gilmer, Gladewater and Hawkins; Grubbs-Loyd Funeral Homes in Gilmer and Diana; and Sunset Memorial Park in Gilmer, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Texas Funeral Directors Association at the organization's 132nd Annual Convention at Moody Gardens in Galveston in mid-June.

A 1992 graduate of Gilmer High School, Troy earned a BBA before attending the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, where he graduated with honors. He began his career in funeral service in Beaumont at Broussard's Mortuary.

Steve Murray, Troy's father, joined the staff of Croley Funeral Home at 305 W. Harrison in Gilmer in 1974 as a partner and is now sole owner of one of the state's oldest and continuously operating funeral homes, founded in 1883.

Croley Funeral Home is celebrating its 135th year of service to the community with



a mission of "community involvement and community service." The firm proudly displays a State of Texas Historical Marker.

Troy returned to Gilmer to join his father in the family business in 2007. He is a board member and past president of the Gilmer Area Chamber of Commerce, President of the East Texas Yamboree Association – one of the longest running festivals in the state – and a member of the Gilmer Rotary Club, First Baptist Church of Gilmer, and Bethesda Masonic Lodge No. 142 A.F.&A.M.

He also has served as a past president of the East Texas Funeral Directors Association and on the board of directors of the Texas Funeral Directors Association from 2009-2011. He currently chairs the association's convention site committee and chairs the association's Political Action Committee.

In addition, he serves on several of that association's committees and has chaired, co-chaired and served committees at the state level over the past decade.

He and his wife, Jimi, have two children, Kade and Brettlee, and live in Gilmer.



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Southeast Texas Director, Jeffrey Nobles, Voted Funeral Director of the Year

Born in Brenham on June 27, 1978, Jeffrey Nobles is a third-generation funeral director who grew up in Navasota and, like most children of funeral directors, began doing odd jobs at his family's funeral home early in life. At the 132nd Annual Convention of the Texas Funeral Directors Association in Galveston in mid-June, he was named Texas Funeral Director of the Year, an honor voted and presented by his peers.

"Chester Nobles, my grandfather, and my father, Doug Nobles, opened Nobles Funeral Chapel in 1983," Jeffrey said, "and it became something of a second home for me as I was growing up."

Graduating from Navasota High School with the Class of 1996, Jeffrey attended Texas A&M University, earning a bachelor of science degree in agriculture development in August 2002. Three years later, he left behind a promising career in the world of big business to join his father in the family's funeral home, shortly after his grandfather's death.

"I found myself called into serving my community, my neighbors," he remembered, "and this calling grew even stronger as I prepared myself to serve."

Graduating with honors from the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in Houston in 2006, Jeffrey became a licensed funeral director and embalmer that same year. In addition to his professional duties, he now serves on the board of Southeast Funeral Directors Association as a past president and on the board of TFDA Services, Inc. Closer to home, he is a member of the Board of the Navasota ISD Education Foundation, the Board of the Grimes St. Joseph Health Care Council and the Board of the Friends of Grimes County.

He also is active in the Navasota Evening Lion's Club, where he is a past president and currently serves as club secretary, and is a member of Navasota Lodge #299 & Washington Lodge #18 A.F.&A.M., where he is a past Master and past District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District 29-B.

Jeffrey is a past president of the Navasota Grimes County Chamber of Commerce, for-



merly served with the Grimes County Jaycees and the Navasota Volunteer Fire Department.

In his rare leisure time, Jeffrey enjoys spending time with wife, Natalie, and their three daughters – Alexia, Zoe and Madelyn. The Nobles family are members of First Baptist Church of Navasota, where Jeffrey serves on the Board of Deacons.

"When it was announced I had been selected 'Texas Director of the Year,'" he admitted, "no one could have been as surprised and humbled as I felt at that moment. As I made my way to the stage, I felt my grandfather's presence and knew he was proud. I also, in looking back, am so humbled to know my peers in funeral service think so much of me as a professional."

"But I thank God first, for giving me the heart to serve and giving me a family who worked so hard and sacrificed so much to establish such a strong reputation for honesty and integrity in our community," he said.

"As a director serving the families of a rural area, I am entrusted with arranging and directing the final tribute, memorial service and celebration of life for people I know, people I worship with, people I love," said Jeffrey, who is one of the youngest recipients of TFDA's Funeral Director of the Year Award. "While each of these losses, of course, are all but unbearable for the family, but for me, as a friend and fellow citizen, each loss also hits home emotionally. I, also, grieve and miss each of

them as members of my extended family."

"My grandfather instilled in me that what we do is a service to humanity," the director continued. "As we create each service, each tribute and celebration of life, I begin seeing a broken family move from the darkness of sorrow into the light of remembering and honoring...and truly find it an honor and privilege for me to be able to help that family in their time of need."

He confessed, "I was surprised to be called into funeral service, but as God's plan for my life unfolded, I knew I was where I belonged. I also knew I was embarking on a journey that would not be easy. As a kid growing up, I sometimes didn't understand why my dad had to miss my important ballgame or why he and grandpa had to help a family whose loved one died just before our own family sat down to Thanksgiving dinner or they didn't get home in time to open Christmas packages."

"Only when I became a funeral director did I understand why it was important for my dad to sit with a young couple who had just lost a baby or to take time to comfort a newly-widowed neighbor. It's not an easy 9-to-5 lifestyle for anyone who has chosen funeral service as a profession, but the rewards of comforting a family, of helping them find meaning in the memorial service or the celebration of life. That's what makes everything else worthwhile for us."

He also remembers going for a meal at a local restaurant with his grandparents. "You learned they were well known in the community," Jeffrey said. "We also learned we weren't going to have lunch for a while because my grandparents were greeted by everyone in the restaurant and my grandfather would go around and shake everyone's hand before we could take our seats and order."

He holds his grandfather, who died in 2004, as his hero. "I learned everything from him, and I was privileged to witness his kindness for everyone, and how he always put the needs of others before his own. My dad, who is also my hero, taught me how the details make a difference, how even the smallest detail can mean so much to the family."

Now a member of a legion of Texas directors, those chosen as the finest in the profession, Jeffrey Nobles takes his rightful place as a role model for the next generation of men and women who continue to honor and celebrate the lives of Texans from every county, every walk of life as funeral service professionals. "I am blessed," the Navasota director said modestly. "I am truly blessed."

Tiffany Aguilar

Named Young Funeral Director of the Year

TFDA's Young Funeral Director of the Year, Tiffany Aguilar, is a licensed funeral director and embalmer and is the Managing Director and Embalmer of Palmer Mortuary and Cremations in Seguin.

A proud 2013 graduate of San Antonio College, she apprenticed at Palmer Mortuary (Seguin) and Zoeller Funeral Home (New Braunfels), where she learned many valued lessons through hard work.

This outstanding young director is an employee of Legacy Funeral Group since graduating, and in a mere two years with the company was named Legacy Funeral Group's Funeral Director of the Year.

This year Tiffany also was selected as one of 50 directors from across the country to attend the National Funeral Directors Association's



Meet the Mentors program at the Emory University Conference Center in Atlanta.

Tiffany has lived in Seguin for the last 10 years and is very involved in her local community. She

is currently serving on the Seguin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as Chairwomen and was the 2017 Chairwomen of the Year. She is active in many groups and organizations and can be seen volunteering anywhere help is needed.

Tiffany, 40, is the mother of daughters Kamille and Elisa and is married to TFDA and TFSA member Chris Aguilar.

A member of TFDA for several years, Tiffany also is a member of the South-Central Regional Funeral Directors Association and is currently serving as president of that association. She currently serves on several TFDA committees and is a member of the TFDA Board of Directors.

She enjoys spending time with her husband and family, which includes several dogs. She also will tell you traveling and taking naps are some of her favorite activities.

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Jennifer Braun

Named TFDA Supplier of the Year at 132th Annual TFDA Convention



Growing up in the D/FW area, Jennifer Rountree Braun worked in the funeral services industry, part-time, through high school and college. “That was in the ‘80s and ‘90s,” she said. “I worked on the supplier side of the funeral profession,” she explained. “I returned to work with, and support, my mom, Sherry Rountree.”

She serves currently as a managing partner at Doric Texas, a position she has held since 2015.

Upon receiving her award in Galveston during the Texas Funeral Directors Association Convention in June, Braun said she was both surprised and appreciative. “They don’t usually choose women for these awards,” she said.

A graduate of the University of North Texas, Braun has proven her expertise and earned the respect of her more experienced colleagues by being selected for the 2018 Distinguished Service Supplier of the Year Award North Texas Funeral Directors Regional Association and the 2016 Distinguished Professional Funeral Service Award for Dallas County FD Association.

Along with her professional honors, Braun also has managed to balance work with family life. She is married to Carl Braun, and they have a daughter, Monica Braun, currently a

Razorback at the University of Arkansas.

As she pointed out, “Most suppliers step up to donate services and merchandise when a tragedy occurs. It’s what we do as members of the community. Five years ago, for example, when the explosion occurred in West, Texas and 13 First Responders were killed, we were proud to donate the many stainless-steel vaults and urn vaults for the town of West and to write an article in the 2013 TFDA magazine depicting the many heroes who arrived and supported the entire region with their donations.”

As a supplier to the funeral service profession, Braun’s company also donates annually to Wreaths Across America to honor veterans at the D/FW National Cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery in Irving.

“At Doric Texas, we believe in building strong and enduring relationships and strive with partners to offer a strong marketing influence to achieve a cohesive bottom line,” she said, “and we also focus on training for the directors we serve in both pre-need and

at-need environments. We offer onsite training, educational tours of our manufacturing facilities, industry forecasting, specific market analysis as well as design and merchandising of traditional burial and cremation products.”

A past president and former vice-president and secretary/treasurer of TFDA’s Sales Club, Braun is currently an associate member of TFDA, serves on several committees and is a member of the 2018 Board of Directors of the Dallas County Funeral Directors Association. She previously (2013-2015) was a member of the North Texas Funeral Directors Association and serves as a sponsor for the East Texas Regional Funeral Directors Association and the West Texas Funeral Directors Association.

As do most suppliers, Braun and Doric work behind the scenes, volunteering and supporting initiatives against domestic abuse, religious and other community efforts to help the helpless and give voice to the voiceless.

Prior to joining Doric, she was at Wilbert of North Texas.

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Wayne Giese, Brenham Funeral Director, Honored with Association's Highest Award

A graduate of Aldine High School and Commonwealth College of Mortuary Science, Wayne Giese is Vice President of Memorial Oaks Chapel in Brenham, Strickland Funeral Homes in Somerville and Caldwell and Foehner Funeral Home in Burton.

In June, Giese was honored by his selection for the Ed C Smith Funeral Service Award, named for one of the founders of Texas Funeral Directors Association 132 years ago.

A pioneering Dallas undertaker, Smith established one of the first funeral parlors in downtown Dallas and then opened one of the city's first funeral homes, becoming the legendary voice of funeral service in Texas.



The honoree served two terms as President of the Texas Funeral Directors Association in 1888 and 1994 and also has served as

a Director for the Texas Funeral Directors Association for many years. In 2016, Wayne was honored by the Texas Funeral Directors Association for 50 years of service in the profession.

Upon receiving the award, Giese thanked his colleagues for their support and spoke of the thrill as well as being humbled by being selected for the award. "Funeral service has been my life," he said, "and I love the opportunity of being there for my friends, family and my community."

During summer vacations, Wayne worked at the infamous Blue Bell Creamery where he gave some thought to following in his father's footsteps with the local creamery, but he said fate intervened.

"My decision to become a funeral director came after conversations with Mr. Simank and Mr. Buske, whom I assisted on ambulance runs and jobs around the local funeral home. Mr. Simank and Mr. Buske encouraged me to attend Commonwealth College in Houston and to earn my funeral director's license," he said.

Wayne Giese is a member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brenham, where he has served on the Church Council and as an usher. He also has served as president of the Prairie Lea Cemetery Association from 1973-2016. Wayne was a member of the Brenham Fire Department for 25 years with 10 years serving as the Assistant Chief. He and his business partner, Clarence Gerke, organized the Goodfellows Association in Washington County where Clarence was President and Giese was vice president.

The veteran funeral director resides in Brenham with his wife of 50 years, Claudia. They are the parents of Sheridan Slocumb, Erin Giese and Eric Giese and have one grandson, Jeremy Slocumb.

His daughter, Erin, is a second-generation funeral director and learned from the best – her dad.



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Each year, it is one of TFDA's greatest honors to acknowledge and celebrate funeral directors who have been licensed for 50 (and 60) years. These directors have seen their communities through grief for generations and the foundation upon which each community is built. Our heartfelt appreciation in recognizing the lions in our Texas funeral service family.

Roy H. Black, Jr.



Roy attended Big Spring High School, North Texas State University and the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. He belongs to numerous Masonic lodges and served as president of his local Lion's club. He additionally is a member of the Pearsall Cemetery Association, TFDA and NFDA. Roy is married with children and grandchildren and has worked in many places, including Dallas, Pasadena, Jourdanton and Pearsall (30+ years with Hurley Funeral Home).

Robert H. Henneke



Robert graduated from Bishop Forest High School in Schulenburg, and the Commonwealth College of Sciences in Houston. Before striking out on his own, he worked at George H. Lewis & Sons. In 1969, he and his wife, Katharine, purchased what was then Untermeyer Funeral Home in Columbus. Henneke Funeral Home has been serving the Columbus community ever since. He and Katharine have two sons (Eric and Chad) and four grandsons.

He is a member of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce; Columbus State Bank Board of Directors; Past President & Director of Columbus Lions Club; Past Grand-Knight of Council #2971 3rd Degree Knight of Columbus; Columbus Cemetery Association; St. Anthony Catholic Church; Past President of St. Anthony Cemetery Board; Past member of Columbus Volunteer Fire Department and Columbus Community Hospital Board of Directors

He is additionally a member of Southeast FDA, TFDA, NFDA, and he received the St. Anthony School Distinguished Alumni Award in 1998.

"I am very proud and thankful that God has blessed me with the opportunity to give 50 years of service to a wonderful community where I grew up with my wife and helpmate by my side."

Larry S. Lawson



Larry graduated from Meridian High School and the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science.

He worked at Wilkerson-Hatch Funeral Home in Waco from 1966 to 1968 and has been the owner of Lawson Funeral Home since 1968.

He's been married for 52 years to Beverly. They have two children and three grandchildren. He is a member of the Lions Club; Economic Development Committee; the Meridian Chamber of Commerce; a former member of the Meridian Hospital Board; a former Meridian Mayor Pro-Tem; and a founding Board member and Chairman of the National Championship BBQ Cookoff.

He additionally is an NFDA member. He and his wife received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the city of Meridian.

Charles Franklin Malone (Charlie)



Charlie graduated from Ripley High School and John A. Gupton School of Mortuary Science. He worked at Oaks & Nichols in Columbia, TN; Clarksville Funeral Home in Clarksville, TX; Texarkana Funeral Home, in Texarkana, TX; and Madden Funeral Home in Ashdown, AR. He and his wife, Brenda, have two children, along with grandchildren and even a great-granddaughter.

He has served as president of the local Lions Club, as well as Mayor Pro-tem of the Clarksville City Council. He is most proud of serving as Scout Master of Scouts with Special Needs.

Hank Schmidt



Hank graduated from Royal High School in Brookshire and Commonwealth College with honors. He also attended Texas A&M and was a proud member of Texas Aggie Band. He and his wife, Sandy, have two children and four grandchildren.

Hank served as an usher at First United Methodist Church; chief of the Katy Volunteer Fire Department; president of the Katy Rotary Club; Mayor Pro-Tem and Mayor of Katy; and honorary chairman of Katy's 1st Relay for Life. He is a member of: the Katy Chamber of Commerce; Katy Heritage Society; Woodcreek Reserve MUD; All State & All-American Skeet Teams; life member of NRA; Texas State Rifle Association; U.S. Practical Shooting Association; Texas and

National Skeet Shooting Associations.

Hank served as president of the Houston Metropolitan Funeral Directors Association, the Southeast Texas Funeral Directors Association, and TFDA.

He has been named the Greater Katy Area Citizen of the Year, been the Texas State Skeet Champion in three events and was honored as the Texas Funeral Director of the Year in 1994.

Russell Todish



Russell graduated from Bay City High School and Commonwealth College of Sciences. He has worked for Taylor Bros. Funeral Home; Bay City Funeral Home; Wilke-Clay; SCI; Triska Funeral Home; Klein Funeral Home; George Lewis & Sons; Settegast-Kopf; and Todish Services (Slavik Funeral Home and Ganado Funeral Home). He and his wife, Debbie, have seven children and seven grandchildren!

He is a member of the Edna Rotary Club, the Ganado Lions Club, the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, the Jackson County Law Enforcement Association, the Texas Municipal Police Association and TFDA.

Russell was honored as Officer of the Year by the Fort Bend County Sheriff, Brazoria County Sheriff, and has served 48 years as a Texas Reserve Master Peace Officer.

"I am most proud of my family and 50 years as a Funeral Director."

Billy Howard Wiley

Billy graduated from Granbury High School and the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. He has worked for Martin's Funeral Home and has owned and operated Wiley Funeral Home in Glen Rose, Granbury, and Lipan. He and his wife, Sharon, have three children and four grandchildren.

He is a member of the Lake Granbury Chamber of Commerce (Board of Directors); United Way (Board of Directors); the Gran-



bury Volunteer Fire Department (Sgt.); and the Granbury Cemetery (Board of Directors)

Billy has been honored by the Chamber of Commerce, the Fire Department, United Way, the Masonic Lodge and the Granbury Cemetery.

"I'm most proud of my strong family and friends, with a solid belief in God." He's also a proud sponsor of Hood County School District Scholarships, the Granbury Athletics Association and Powerhouse Pete Provider.

These 50-year recipients were unable to attend the convention. We congratulate on their half century of service.

**Thomas Franklin
(Tommy) Kelso, Jr.**

John F. Blankenship, III

Richard Norton

John Alton Morris

Olen Massey

60 Year Awards

Lauro Hernandez

John D. McCarty

Larry King

Commonwealth Institute Honors Alumni Serving 50 Years at Convention Reception

On Monday evening, June 11, 2018, members of the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service Alumni Association honored graduates serving 50 years or more during the TFDA convention. A reception and social gathering at the Moody Gardens Hotel recognized these long-serving alumni for their dedication to funeral service.

Commonwealth alumni honorees included Bob Smiley, Wayne Giese, Bob Earthman and Hank Schmidt. Past TFDA presidents graduating from CIFS were also honored and included Velma Sue DeLeon, Bob Smiley, Wayne Giese, Bob

Earthman and Hank Schmidt.

During the reception, the current alumni board also was introduced by Commonwealth Alumni President Patsy Moreno. Alumni board members attending were a Chet Robbins - Vice President, Nancy Poston - Secretary, Jim Flippen, Elton (Andy) Anderson, James King, Craig Melancon, Jesse Moreno, Lois Keller-Nelson, Ray Shotwell and William Russo. A motion and vote were taken to continue the board in their respective positions. All alumni board members present agreed to do so.

Commonwealth's newly-appointed Presi-

dent Glen Bower was introduced and during his remarks, Bower reported Commonwealth's excellent performance during the recent American Board of Funeral Service Education Accreditation inspection. Former Commonwealth President John Rice also was recognized for his tenure.

Announcements about upcoming meetings and events were presented, including plans by the Commonwealth alumni board to host a reception honoring alumni serving 50 years or more in the funeral service profession at next year's TFDA convention, which will be held in Fort Worth.

The Commonwealth Alumni Association wishes to thank all in attendance who made this year's gathering a memorable and successful evening.



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Colin Owens Memorial Scholarships Presented at Convention



Just ask anyone who knew him and they'll tell you, Colin Owens spent his all-too-brief life serving others. At TFDA's annual convention, Colin was always there, lending a helping hand wherever he was needed.

His servant's heart, modeled after his parents' and grandparents' service to the community of Wolfe City and the surrounding area, came as no surprise, nor would his always positive attitude and ready smile, no matter what he was doing...and it seemed like he was always serving, whether attending regional or state TFDA meetings, at The Gathering, hosted each October for more than two decades by the Owens family in Wolfe City or working with the Wolfe City Volunteer Fire Department.

Colin graduated from Wolfe City High School, Texas A&M Fire Academy, Commerce and the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service and attended Paris Jr. College.

He was a member of Cross Trails Cowboy Church in Fairlie, Excelsior Lodge 505 in Wolfe City. He was also a member of the Texas Funeral Directors Association where he served on the membership committee,



50-year award committee, convention committee, Bill Pierce Golf Tournament Committee, and PAC committee and Sergeant at Arms at TFDA convention.

As he explained in an interview for *The Texas Director* while serving his apprenticeship after graduating from Dallas Institute, he grew up attending TFDA Conventions and had great role models in funeral service as his teachers while growing up.

Colin Owens died September 1, 2009, of injuries resulting from a car accident on FM 512, southeast of Wolfe City. The Wolfe City High School gymnasium was filled at his service, officiated by Robby Bates, Brother Jeff Bishop, Dr. Ed Lee, Brother Kevin Mitchell and Brother Monty Weaver.

"After Colin's passing, his mother and I wanted to give back as he always had done and because of all those who helped us through that time," remembered his dad, Director and veteran TFDA member and leader Dick Owens. "Ola came up with the idea of using money from The Gathering to fund scholarships to Dallas Institute and Commonwealth Institute."

Presented to the schools each year at Con-

vention, the Colin Owen Memorial Scholarships are used to provide help for students who need tutoring prior to sitting for the national exam.

"Colin had problems reading because of dyslexia," his father explained, "so his mom spent a week with him in Dallas, helping him study prior to taking the exam."

"This next year, we're planning on giving a third scholarship in Colin's name to the Mortuary Science Program at Northeast Texas Community College," Dick Owens added.

This year, the 10th year for Colin's Scholarship, The Gathering will be held Oct. 2nd in Wolfe City and Dick is already recruiting sponsors for the annual event.

"We have two levels of sponsorship," he said. Event Sponsorships are \$250 and Golf Sponsorships are \$100 per hole.

After a morning of golf, those attending will enjoy some of the best home cooking this side of the Red River in Webb Hill Country Club's dining room, famous for Shirley's golden chicken-fried steak and fruit cobbles.

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It's not too early to sign up to attend, so mark your calendars and plan to tee off at the Colin Owen Memorial Golf Tournament, October 2, 2018 in Wolfe City, Texas.

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 Victoria Mortuary & Cremation Services
 Woven Remembrance—Jennifer Branton





Pictured here are 2nd place winners Troy Murray, Andy Graves, Jim Hartung and John Lewis. 1st place winners included Charlie Hauboldt, Colt Ellis, Tommy Culver and Dylan Stopher. Congratulations to all of the golfers!



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Meet GLENN BOWER, COMMONWEALTH'S *New President*

Affable and approachable, third-generation funeral director Glenn Bower has taken the helm of the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in Houston. He sees his role of president as one of broadening the experiences of the Institute's students, community outreach and building closer ties with members of the Texas Funeral Directors and other statewide professional associations.

Coming to Commonwealth from the Mortuary Science Department of Cypress College in Cypress, California, Glenn holds a bachelor of arts degree in religion from California Lutheran University, a bachelor of arts degree in funeral service administration from the State University of New York at Canton and a master of arts degree from National University in San Diego. He also has earned a mortuary science certificate and associate degree from Cypress College. He is licensed as a funeral director and embalmer, crematory manager and cemetery manager in the State of California.

"I remember the first funeral I attended – I was in junior high," he said. "We hadn't attended services for my mother's side of the family because they lived so far away." My dad came home from the hospital after his mother died. It was the first time I had ever seen him cry. I also remember sitting in the family room

behind the modest curtain. Our family pastor officiated and when we were able to view my grandmother one last time, my older brother didn't want to. My aunt, however, insisted.

"It was a typical funeral and graveside service," he continued. "Nothing surprising. Her hair, make-up and clothing looked as if she was going to church. We also wore our Sunday best."

After he finished college, married and began his family, Glenn took a job in the aerospace industry, where he was responsible for in-process inspections and supply chain management. Arriving at his workplace at his usual 5 a.m., he noticed a group of co-workers standing at the gate. Getting out of his car, he joined them, only to discover a competitor had bought the company and its contract, according to a sign on the gate. The padlocks also had been changed.

On the drive home, the young father, hus-



band and provider worried about how he was going to pay monthly bills and the mortgage. He had been lucky. The aerospace industry in California was quirky, but he had been fortunate. He had been steadily employed... up to this point.

As it happened, his brother-in-law was a funeral director, and he was the one who suggested Glenn might want to look at funeral service. "He told me he thought I'd be great at making arrangements, and that layoffs in funeral service were rare," Glenn remembered. "So, I didn't have a mountain-top experience or a calling, per se. But when I was accepted into mortuary school, I remember being excited and working in funeral homes taught me no day is the same as the previous one."

Licensed in 1992, the director has worked at Fairhaven Memorial Park and Mortuary, Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary, Memory Garden Memorial Park and Mortuary, Hilgenfeld Mortuary and Saddleback Chapel in California.

He joined the Mortuary Science Department of Cypress College in 1999 and began teaching. In 2003, Mr. Bower assumed the duties of Department Coordinator and Program Director along with being a full-time faculty member. Mr. Bower joined the staff at Commonwealth Institute in January 2018.

As an educator, Glenn said his number one priority and greatest challenge is finding a passion for serving others in each student. "Many come into mortuary science because it's what they've always wanted to do," he said. "Others come, not really knowing the

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breadth and depth of study required for licensure. I see my role is finding students with a passion and then honing that passion," he said. "First and foremost, they must believe in what they're doing."

"Most educators love to learn as much as they love teaching," he continued. "Once we find a student's passion, we must give them a foundation – but that's easiest. Three-fourths of us are working and 80 percent of our students are in apprenticeships."

Glenn said he had seen a shift in the educational aspect of funeral service due to the need for future funeral directors to have a broader skillset compared to past directors. "I am fortunate," he added, "to be doing what I love and to have a larger stage from which I can share my passion and my knowledge to the next classes of directors."

He said the average age of students at Commonwealth is 26 and about 20 percent of the current classes are over 40. As far as attrition, he said of the 210 students enrolled in a class, 112 graduated with losses due to leaves of absence, financial constraints and grades. "Sometimes students just lose interest," he said, "and some leave because they really didn't understand what earning a license entailed."

If he were asked to counsel a potential student, Commonwealth's new president said there were a couple of things they needed to know about funeral service.

"First of all, you need to be flexible and adaptable. As much as we can plan for a service to go smoothly, a director needs to be flexible and be well-equipped with patience," he pointed out. "We also need emotional control because it makes it easier to adapt to the various needs of the family and to emphasize what's important to them."

When asked what he wished he had learned in mortuary school, Glenn said when he was in school, there was discussion about cremation. "We don't focus on disposition," he added, "but we now talk about the value of the service. I also wish we had learned more about personalization and about accounting."

"At Commonwealth, we're constantly updating our classes to connect our students with what's really happening," Glenn said. "We're emphasizing the soft skills but we're seeing new challenges across the curriculum. If students' eyes are not opened to new viewpoints, they will be lost in their practices. So much time is spent on social media before they arrive at Commonwealth, and we're finding ourselves going back to an emphasis on face-to-face communications

and what funeral homes tell us they need to see in new directors."

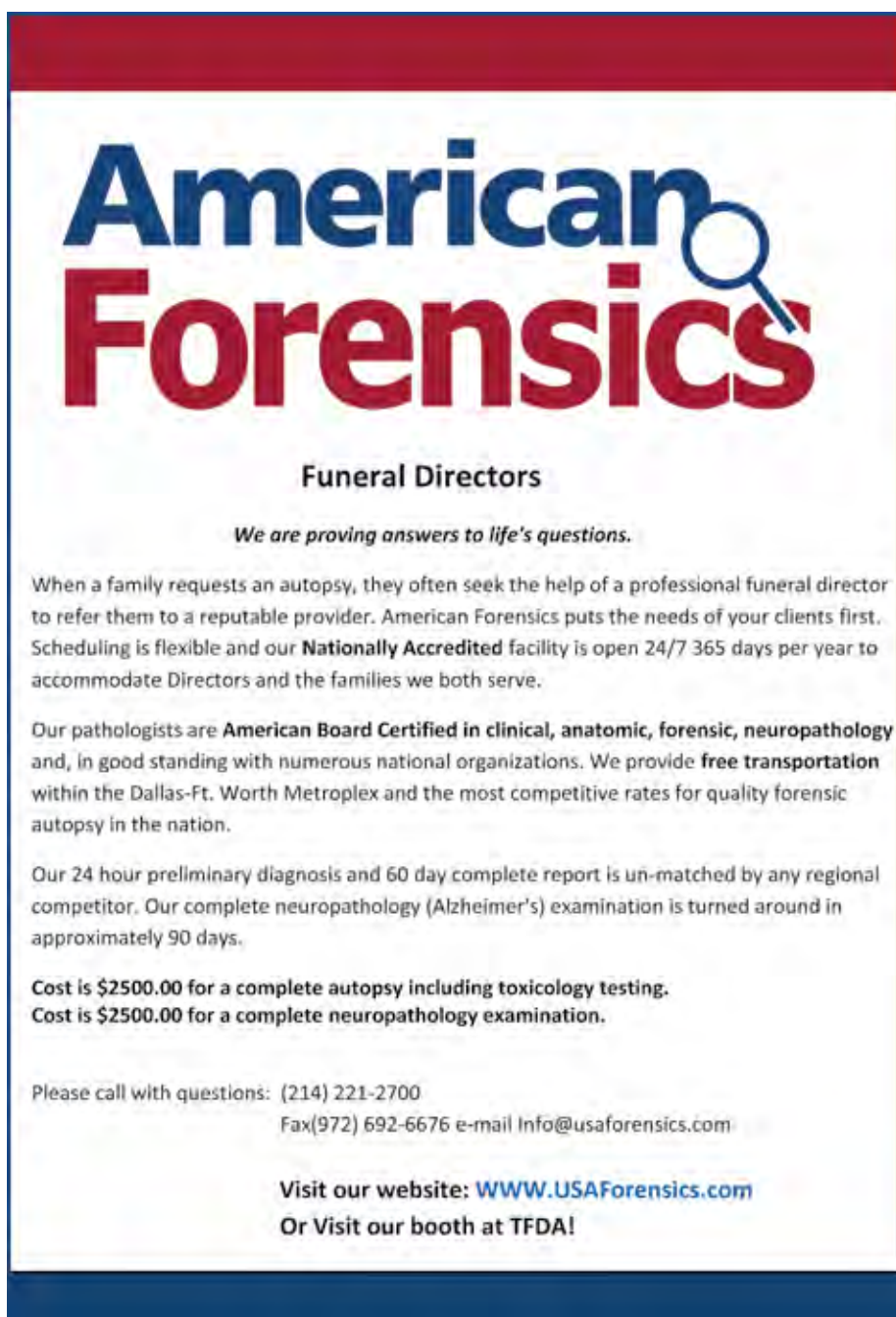
Then he added: "Technology very definitely has its place and value in funeral service, and young people are uncomfortable without it. But nothing replaces the use of the right words at the right time, the comfort of your director being there to answer your questions and to reassure you about your choices, your intentions and your need to remember a loved one with the perfect service and celebration of their lives."

This husband, father and grandfather enjoys spending time with his family, gardening and landscaping. He and his wife enjoy doing

genealogy together and taking road trips.

Glenn has been active in various local, state and national funeral director associations including the American Board of Funeral Service Education (Program and Curriculum Committees), California Funeral Directors Association (Professional Development Committee) and Orange County Funeral Directors Association (Continuing Education Committee and Past President.)

"I am thrilled to be here," he said in conclusion. "I feel I'm living the dream. Commonwealth Institute has a great staff, amazing students and I'm excited about the opportunity of taking my experience and sharing it."



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DOL: Expect New Overtime Pay Rule in 2019



The U.S. Department of Labor plans to wait until 2019 to release new proposed overtime rules for white-collar employees. The announcement, which was buried deep inside

the Trump administration's spring regulatory agenda document, merely stated the DOL will issue a notice of proposed rulemaking on "01/00/2019"—in other words, sometime

next year.

This delay comes as a surprise, since the DOL began seeking public input in July 2017 on raising the overtime salary threshold for employees qualifying for the Fair Labor Standards Act's executive, administrative, professional, outside sales and computer employee exemptions. The deadline for submitting public comments came and went last September.

Notices of proposed rulemaking usually follow shortly after an agency has considered public comments.

The current overtime salary threshold of \$23,660 was set in 2004. White-collar employees earning less than that per year qualify for overtime pay when they work more than 40 hours in a workweek.

The Obama administration tried to raise the salary threshold to \$47,476 per year, but that was met with opposition from business interests and conservative state attorneys general, who sued to block implementation of the rule. A federal court in Texas invalidated the final rule—three years in the making—just days shy of its effective date on Dec. 1, 2016.

Technically, an appeal of that stay remains on file with the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals,

but the DOL is unlikely to pursue it.

What would the new rule look like? Labor Secretary Alex Acosta has said he supports raising the overtime salary threshold.

In March 2017, during Senate hearings before he was confirmed as Secretary of Labor, Acosta said he endorsed raising the threshold to account for inflation since 2004. That would place the salary threshold somewhere in the neighborhood of \$33,000 per year.

Releasing the new notice of proposed rule-making will trigger another round of public comments, which the DOL must factor into a final rule. If all goes smoothly, expect the new overtime rule to be ready to go into effect in late 2020, sometime shortly after the presidential election.

Can comp time be offered in lieu of overtime pay? No, private sector employees are not permitted to offer comp time (i.e. extra time off for extra hours worked above a regular 40-hour workweek) in lieu of monetary overtime pay legally required under the FLSA. Comp time can be offered generally, but not as an alternative to legally required overtime pay.

How will the automatic updating of the salary threshold work? The new DOL

rule puts in place a process for automatically updating the salary threshold every three years, beginning January 1, 2020. Future updates will take effect on January 1, 2023, 2026, etc. Each update will raise the standard threshold to the 40th percentile of full-time salaried workers in the lowest-wage census region (currently the south/southeast), estimated to be \$51,168 in 2020. The HCE threshold will increase to the 90th percentile of full-time salaried workers nationally, estimated to be \$147,524 in 2020. The DOL will post new salary levels 150 days in advance of their effective date, beginning August 1, 2019.

Is there an exemption for small businesses? There is no small business exemption for the overtime rule or the FLSA. Generally, the FLSA and the overtime rule apply to employees of enterprises that have an annual gross volume of sales made or business done of \$500,000 or more. However, if your business is under the \$500,000 threshold, it does not mean that your employees do not enjoy any FLSA protections. Employees are still covered by the law if they are engaged in interstate commerce, which includes such activities as making out-of-state phone calls, sending mail, or handling credit card transactions. “Engaged

in interstate commerce” has been interpreted broadly to cover almost all workers.

How is the rule enforced? The FLSA is enforced by the Wage and Hour Division of the DOL. Investigators are stationed across the United States and are responsible for gathering data on wages, hours, and other employment conditions or practices, in order to determine compliance with the law. While some investigations are proactive, many are in response to an employee complaint.

It is a violation to fire or in any other manner discriminate against an employee for filing a complaint or for participating in a legal proceeding under FLSA. Where violations are found, the DOL may recommend changes in employment practices to bring an employer into compliance. A common remedy for violations is to require employers to pay any back wages that employees may be owed. Generally, a two-year statute of limitations applies to the recovery of back pay.

In the case of willful violations, a three-year statute of limitations applies. Employers who willfully or repeatedly violate the minimum wage or overtime pay requirements are subject to a civil money penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation.



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10 THINGS GREAT BOSSES Do Every Day



We've all heard the adage, "People don't leave bad jobs; they leave bad bosses." It makes great fodder for after-work gripe sessions, but is there really any data to back the claim up? As it turns out, there's a ton.

In one study, 61% of those working for bad bosses said they were looking for another job, while just 27% of those working for good bosses were considering alternate employment. And here's one that's really startling: 65% of people with bad bosses said they've sometimes misrepresented the truth at work, compared to only 19% of those with good bosses. Just as great bosses bring out the best in us, bad bosses bring out the worst.

Great bosses change us for the better. They see more in us than we see in ourselves, and

they help us learn to see it too. They dream big and show us all the great things we can accomplish.

"A good boss is a man who isn't worried about his own career but rather the careers of those who work for him." —H. S. M. Burns

Being a great boss obviously has a tangible value other than just being liked, but how do you know if you are one? And, if you're not, how do you get better?

When I ask audiences to describe the best and worst bosses they have ever worked for, they inevitably ignore innate characteristics (intelligence, extraversion, attractiveness, and so on) and instead focus on qualities that are completely under the boss's control, such as passion, insight, and honesty. This means that

any of us can study the unique qualities of great bosses in order to learn and improve.

1. A great boss shares information. Have you ever worked for an information hoarder? Some bosses seem to think that every piece of information they share reduces their power and authority. In fact, just the opposite is true: great bosses know that sharing information empowers their employees, instead of diluting their own power.

2. A great boss puts a lot of thought into hiring. Bad bosses think nothing of hiring a jerk with great credentials because they're only interested in how that person will perform. Great bosses think of the entire team. They recognize that their current employees are going to have to work with the new hire every single day, and they look for someone who will complement the team holistically, rather than just fill in a certain skills gap.

3. A great boss looks for and celebrates wins. Great bosses don't have a "Why should I praise you for doing your job?" attitude. They look for reasons to praise their employees, both privately and publicly, and they take the time to celebrate milestones, instead of just driving everybody on to the next project or deadline. They understand that getting a paycheck doesn't cancel out that inherent need to feel valued and appreciated.

4. A great boss respects your time. Great bosses don't give you the impression that their time is more valuable than yours. They don't keep you waiting for scheduled meetings. They show up prepared and get to the point, instead of trying to impress you. And they don't goof off on your time. It's not that they're unwilling to have fun at work, but they don't do it at your expense, causing you extra stress or making it necessary for you to stay late to catch up.

5. A great boss is empathetic. Bad bosses only see their employees from the perspective of how the employees reflect on them. If their employees are doing a great job, they look good; if their employees are performing poorly, they look bad. Great bosses, on the other hand, see their employees as more than just extensions of themselves. They're able to get inside their employees' skins and understand things from their perspective. That doesn't mean they're pushovers, or that they

just say, “Oh, sorry you’re having a bad day; don’t worry about that deadline.” But it does mean that they recognize their employees are human and that they treat them as such.

6. A great boss is accountable. Bad bosses are quick to point the finger when something goes wrong. They’ll throw their employees under the proverbial bus without a second thought. Great bosses understand that a large part of their job is being accountable for the team’s performance. They know that this just goes along with accepting a managerial role. That doesn’t mean that they don’t offer the team feedback on what is going wrong, but it does mean that they take the blame publicly. Even privately, they see the team’s failure as a failure of leadership on their part, and they act quickly to correct it.

7. A great boss says thank you. Bad bosses think the work their employees do is something the employees owe them. After all, they’re getting paychecks, right? That’s true—but great bosses look past work as a transactional relationship and realize that people are putting a huge part of themselves into the

work they do. They say thank you, even if it is “just part of the job.”

8. A great boss doesn’t forget that people have lives outside of work. Bad bosses tend to see people as one-dimensional: they show up and get the work done, and the boss doesn’t have to worry about them again until the next day. Great bosses, on the other hand, never forget that work is just one facet of their employees’ lives. They never forget that they have families, friends, hobbies, and other interests and obligations outside of work, and they don’t infringe on their “real” lives—by asking someone to work late, for example—without a very good reason. And when they do have a good reason, they acknowledge that they’re asking for a sacrifice and express their gratitude accordingly.

9. A great boss is a great communicator. It seems like some bosses will do anything to avoid giving a straight answer. They don’t want to say something they can be held accountable for later. Other bosses just don’t want to be bothered with clear explanations and solid answers. Great bosses say what they mean and mean what they say—and they say it clear-

ly, so that people don’t have to read between the lines or try to guess their real meaning.

10. A great boss creates leaders. Have you ever noticed how sometimes all the promotions come from within one manager’s team? That’s no accident. Great bosses pull the very best out of their people. They inspire, coach, and lean into people’s strengths, and when their employees are ready for new challenges, they gladly send them on their way.

Bringing It All Together

If you’re currently a boss, is this how your employees would describe you? If not, you’re leaving money, effort, and productivity lying on the table. You’re also probably losing some good employees, if not to other jobs, then at least to disengagement and lack of interest.

Dr. Travis Bradberry is the award-winning coauthor of Emotional Intelligence 2.0 and the cofounder of TalentSmart® the world’s leading provider of emotional intelligence tests and training serving more than 75% of Fortune 500 companies. His bestselling books have been translated into 25 languages and are available in more than 150 countries.

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Misclassifying a Worker as an INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

When She or He is Really an Employee Can Be Costly

By David Oliver, Ryan Lione and Laura Fowler

There are many areas in which Texas business owners can rejoice in their freedom to define their own destiny; misclassifying a worker as an independent contractor when they should be characterized as an employee is not one! Do not make the mistake of not understanding this area of employment law if you intend to associate your business with any human beings who will be compensated to perform tasks.

The following criteria must be met to characterize someone as an independent contractor:

1. The contractor will be allowed to come and go as she or he pleases to complete tasks. In other words, the focus of the agreement is on completing a project, not on hours worked or a schedule.

2. The freelancer will be largely autonomous, using her or his own equipment, systems of information, conferring with others of her or his choosing, or assigning others on a team of her or his choosing to assist in completing tasks.

3. The worker should own her or his own business with an EIN, perform contracts with other business entities, and perhaps employ others. The person should not be working full time for your business.

4. The person should not be someone who has recently been a W-2 employee for a business entity you own or a related enterprise.

The misclassification of employees as independent contractors puts the employer at serious legal risk under the law.

If misclassified and the worker is injured in the scope and course of doing what the business owner thought were independent contractor duties, virtually all defenses the business owner would have had vanish. In other words, the business owner becomes the literal insurer of that worker's injuries. At the same time, none of the benefits of the Texas workers compensation statute limits on the business owner's liability are available. The most likely way this arises is when a worker driving her or his own automobile in the scope and course of the business of the agreement between the owner and the worker has an accident and injuries herself or himself and/or others.

If an independent contractor succeeds in proving that she or he really should have been paid as an employee, the business owner typically will have no proof of the number of hours worked. Many categories of workers will be owed at the very least minimum wage plus time and a half for overtime. Because the business owner has no records, the presumption favors the worker who may invent a fanciful narrative which the owner is then largely defenseless to rebut. The penalties and back wages owed to a worker who succeeds are enormous.

The penalties the IRS may impose upon the business owner for failure to withhold and remit payment to the IRS are substantial. The penalties apply to all payments owed which the business owner failed to withhold and remit timely to IRS on the worker's behalf. Texas Workforce Commission Unemployment Fund can also inflict penalties upon those who do not pay because workers are misclassified as independent contractor's substantial penalties and interest.

Unless the business owner had the foresight to declare the worker and his or her activities on the business owner's liability insurance policies, any damage or injury caused by the worker is uninsured. Driving around in the car is the biggest source of exposure. Business owners should have a discussion with their local business insurance agent about this.

Not fully understanding the difference in classification between an employee and an independent contractor can lead to costly legal battles. Consulting an experienced attorney before you write up any agreement with a worker is recommended to ensure you can avoid such situations.

The preceding is part of a series of articles being offered by The Fowler Law Firm called Employment Law Summer School. These articles are designed to help you avoid costly legal mistakes. If you would like to attend Employment Law Summer School, email us at lfowler@thefowlerlawfirm.com for a list of conference sites, dates and times.

Davis Oliver serves as The Fowler Law Firm PC Managing Attorney Georgetown, counsels daily with many private employers and represents them in trial. Ryan Lione is a Senior Attorney at The Fowler Law Firm PC, having previously served as legal counsel to many employers including most recently as in house legal counsel to a large mental health care facility. Laura Fowler is the Managing Shareholder of The Fowler Law Firm PC. She is a regular speaker on a variety of business related topics. Email her at lfowler@thefowlerlawfirm.com to receive updates on dates, topics and sponsors of upcoming discussions at various locations around Central Texas and Austin.

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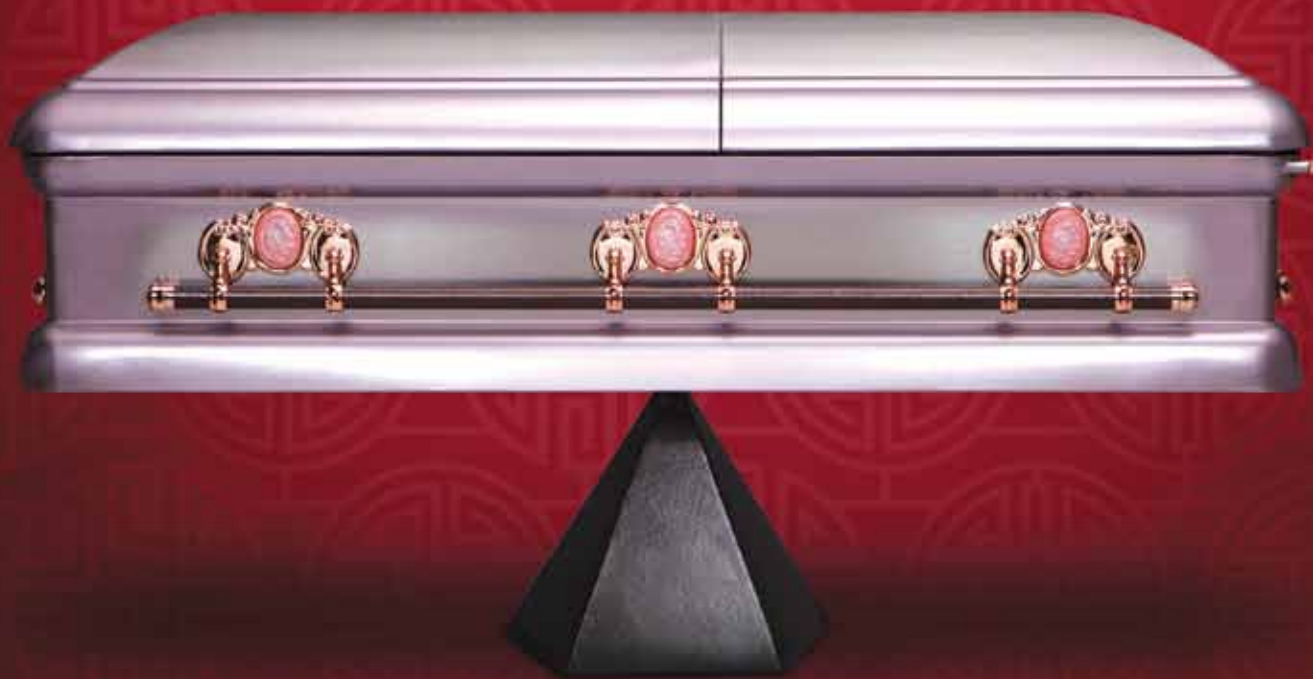


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TEXAS Funeral Suppliers Association

Editor's Note: Each month, Suppliers' Corner will feature a profile of the officers and members of the Texas Funeral Suppliers Association (TFSA). This month, you'll meet Ruben B. Ontiveros – CPC, Vice-president of Sales for Texas Service Life Insurance Company and 2018-2019 President of TFSA.

As soon as you meet Ruben B. Ontiveros, you know he's one of the good guys, and it won't take long to figure out why. His is an amazing and admirable success story. But not without some unique challenges, all of which took discipline and hard work to overcome.

Born in Monterrey, Mexico, when he was two months old, he lost his father and Ruben's mother moved the family to Nuevo Laredo, where his grandmother helped raise the infant and his siblings.

To help with family finances, Ruben began selling newspapers as soon as he was old enough. "When I was eight years old, I'd go out and call out the newspaper's name to get customers, and luckily, I began getting regular customers – a whole group of them – who bought a paper every day," he said.

Even at that early age, he was learning the basics for building a successful marketing ca-

reer. "I believe we learn from almost everyone around us," he said. "I've been fortunate to have a lot of people who have helped me along the way."

As a teenager, Ruben realized there was limited opportunity for him in Nuevo Laredo, so at 15, he left home, finding work on a surveying team in Mexico City. "The company that hired me had a three-year contract to map the entirety of the city in preparation for a new water system," he said.

His supervisors soon recognized Ruben's intelligence and his ability to learn quickly, so by the end of the contract, Ruben, then 21, had progressed to the job of surveyor, a position typically held by men twice his age.

Fifteen years ago, he joined the team at Texas Service Life Insurance Company. "I started out knocking on doors and I'm still doing it," said the vice-president, "and, like our sales team, I still spend a lot of time on the road. Like today, I'm making calls in the Rio Grande Valley, but I've learned to get the most from my time, so I'm seeing existing clients as well as calling on new customers."



He and his wife Isabel will soon celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary and are the proud parents of five children – three boys and two girls. They have one 3-year-old granddaughter and are expecting their second "grand" soon.

Making their home in a small town just outside of Austin, the Ontiveros family enjoys spending time with their extended family on vacations and holidays. "We love our time with family," Ruben explained, "and we believe it's important for our children to know and continue our traditions as well as who they are and how far their roots extend in every direction."

After a day's work (Ruben confesses he drinks a lot of coffee with clients) he – in his words – "comes home pretty wired. Rather than kicking the dog and yelling at the kids, I kiss and hug everyone and then go play music for five or 10 minutes and come out a new person."

He once played the keyboards and guitar in a praise band he founded at his church, playing for masses and other church-centered celebrations. "I've been playing music since I was a kid," he said. "It's my release from the tensions of everyday problems. As my professional responsibilities grew, I had less time to practice with the band until I had to give up playing regularly. But I still play for my own enjoyment."

Along with all-important family time, Ruben enjoys homemade comfort food, but also likes trying out new types of foods from different cultures at small, out-of-the-way restaurants. "I eat everything," he confessed, "but try to get as close as possible to original foods from mom-and-pop diners and cafes."

One of the proudest moments in his career came last year when he was awarded TFDA's Supplier of the Year. "My oldest son, Ruben, who works with me now, was in the ballroom and, seeing my pride in receiving this award, was able to know the reasons behind my long work hours, the times I missed his events because I was out of town. I also think he witnessed the possibilities for excellence that comes from hard work and from having a strong work ethic, which sometimes means sacrifice, not only

TFSA 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jul. Aug.	30 - 1st	M-W	*TFDA Leadership Conference & *Bill Pierce Golf Tournament	Amarillo
Jul.	31	TU	*NEW TFSA RECEPTION 3:30-5:30 PM TFSA HOSPITALITY SUITE	
Sep.	30	Sun	*Emerging Leaders University	Austin
Oct.	2	Tu	*The Gathering	Wolfe City
Oct.	14-17	S-W	NFDA Convention	Salt Lake City, UT
Oct.	24	W	TFDA Board Meeting	Austin
Oct.	25-26		Commonwealth Institute CE Seminar	Houston
Dec.	TBA		TFSA Mid-winter Conference & Meeting	Fort Worth

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for me, but also for the entire family.”

A member of TFDA for more than a decade, the newly-elected president of Texas Funeral Suppliers Association plans for the group to spend the next 12 months closing the communications gap between suppliers and TFDA members and building bridges between TFSA and TFDA, recruiting new members as well as educating funeral directors about the changes in TFSA’s strategies and initiatives.

“My goal is for the suppliers group to take a positive step forward this year, beginning with our participation in the upcoming Leadership Conference, in Amarillo, July 31st and August 1st,” he continued, “and will host a hospitality suite there. As we hope to build more understanding of our mission, and

to strengthen our relationship with TFDA members. These are my priorities.”

“To me, we’re repaying the suppliers and funeral directors of the last generation...and we hope others will come to know this generation of suppliers through our increased participation and visibility,” he continued. “This will be our year to grow or dissolve... and my priority is to make our organization a group seen as a game-changer, both for professionals on the supplier side as well as funeral directors.

“As an entity of TFDA, we’ve also changed TFSA’s by-laws to make it mandatory for our members to be members of TFDA as well as the suppliers organization,” the new president emphasized. “We’ve appointed ambassadors who will attend regional meetings, represent-

ing TFSA and we plan to be more visible at general meetings of TFDA,” he added.

“As a pre-need company, it is our goal at Texas Service Life to help funeral directors serve families,” Rubin explained. “As a supplier to the funeral profession, I personally owe so much to TFDA. Every member I’ve called on, every funeral home owner and director, every TFDA board member and every regional officer has shared their knowledge, taught me to be better in my job and as a person and how to reach higher. Now, as suppliers, we need to give back, and I know many suppliers who feel the same and want to help, to become more involved in TFDA, but don’t know how to. I’m hoping this year’s TFSA leadership can show them the way by first closing the gaps, uniting and then building bridges of understanding, education and support.”

As spokesman for Texas suppliers, Ruben is grateful to every employer, every business and corporation that allows staff the time to participate in association activities and who contribute so much every year to TFDA meetings, scholarships and events. He especially appreciates his own employer – Texas Service Life Insurance Company – for making it possible for him to assume leadership of TFSA this year.

Texas Service Life has a solid history with preneed funeral products and services, financial stability and profitability, which enables the company to establish stable partnerships with funeral professionals.

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Commonwealth Alumni Association to Host Continuing Education Symposium Oct 25-26, 2018

The administration, faculty, staff and alumni of Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service will host a two-day educational symposium,

October 25 and 26 (Thursday and Friday), from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

The symposium, which will be held on the

Commonwealth campus, 415 Barren Springs Drive in Houston, will offer 16 hours of CE credit required for the licensure/relicensure of Texas funeral directors and embalmers. Included in the offering will be the mandatory subjects of Texas Mortuary Law, Ethics and Vital Statistics.

Owners and managers of any licensed Texas death care facility are encouraged to attend.

Donuts, coffee or tea will be provided each morning as well as snacks and beverages during the afternoon break. Lunch will be served in the college dining hall each day.

A tour of the campus, including the National Museum, will be included and will feature the much-acclaimed tribute to Roy Rogers as well as permanent exhibits of funeral service memorabilia.

Cost for the symposium is \$125 per person and includes all 16 hours of CE credits, plus breaks and lunches each day.

A special rate of \$75 for this event will be offered by Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 125 Airtex Drive, Houston 77090. Room rate includes WiFi, shuttle to and from the hotel and complimentary breakfast each morning.

For additional information, contact the college's administrative staff at 800-628-1580.



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Gary

Danny Lin Gary, 69, of Pittsburg, Texas was born January 28, 1949 in Big Springs, Texas to Fletcher Henry Gary and Lois Blanche Wakefield Gary and passed away at his home in Pittsburg, June 23, 2018.

Danny served in the Army as a member of the 101st Airborne during the Vietnam War, member of the Greer Blvd. Church of Christ in Pittsburg, worked in the funeral industry at Texarkana Funeral Home in his early years and then in 1976 started working for Erman Smith Funeral Home in Pittsburg where he became co-owner before his retirement. He is also a member of Vietnam Veterans of America.

His is survived by his wife, June Rodden Gary of Pittsburg; daughters and their husbands, Amanda and Brian Trussell of New Braunfels, Texas and Morgan and Jeff Frost of Omaha, Texas. He is also survived by his two grandchildren, Avery and Trent Trussell, two

nieces, Sherry McFerran and Angie Powell, and a host of family and friends.

Danny was preceded in death by his parents, and sister, Lynda Brown.

Funeral services took place June 26 at Erman Smith Funeral Home Chapel, with the burial following at Rose Hill Cemetery in Pittsburg. Pallbearers included Allen Wisenbaker, Matt Harrel, Mike Reynolds, Mike Bailey, Dean Weeks, and Doyce Kennington.

Memorials in his honor may be made to ALS Therapy Development Institute 300 Technology Square, Suite 400, Cambridge, MA 02139 or the charity of your choice.

McNeil

Charles Richard “Dick” McNeil, 83, passed from this earthly life on June, 18, 2018.

Dick was the second oldest of five children born to Woodson Mabry McNeil and Tharah Lala Huggins on July 17, 1934, in Stamford, Texas. His dad was a baker and his mother a homemaker. They lived in Altus, Okla., Olney and Brownwood before moving to Fort Worth in 1951. He graduated from Poly High School in 1952. His decision to enter the funeral service was influenced by his next-door neighbor and friend who owned the Lunn Funeral Home in Olney. He became a li-

censed funeral director in August 1955 after serving an apprenticeship; formal schooling was not required at that time. He has served hundreds of families in the area during his years at Owens-Brumley and Greenwood Funeral Homes.

In 1995, then Governor George W. Bush appointed him to the Texas Funeral Service Commission where he served as Chairman during his tenure. He retired after 38 1/2 years from Greenwood in 2001, as Vice-President in charge of Greenwood Mount Olivet and Arlington Funeral Homes.

Military time was spent in the U.S. Army in Germany. He enjoyed hunting and collecting guns and later pocket knives, which he gave to friends. Past memberships included the Southside Lions Club, the Westside Optimist Club where he went through the local chairs and served as district lieutenant governor, Ridglea Country Club and the Fort Worth Club.

Dick married Barbara Tutor in 1959 and they were married 59 years. They enjoyed traveling stateside as well as abroad. Dick and Barbara were members at the former West Berry Church of Christ where he taught Bible classes and served on the Evangelism Committee, and then became members at Southside Church of Christ.



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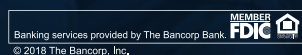
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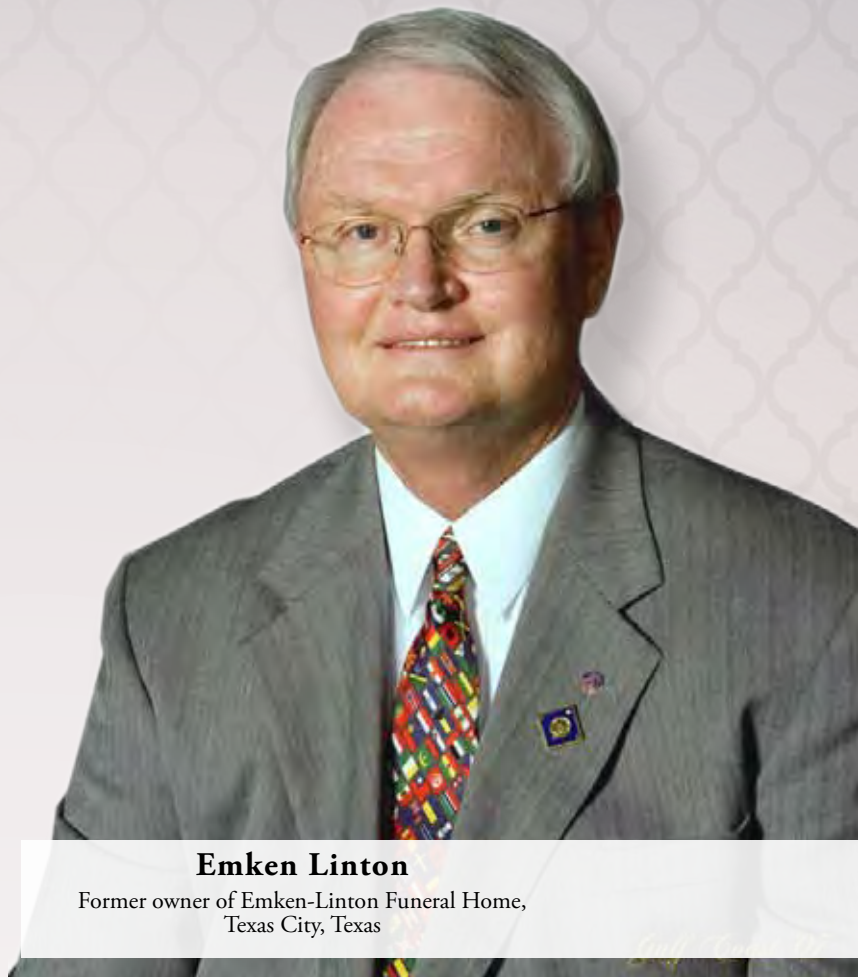


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Dick was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Don and David; and sister Nancy. Survivors: Wife, Barbara; brother, Jerry (Joyce) of Oklahoma City, Okla.; brother-in-law, O.B. Tutor, Jr. of Sacramento, Calif.; and large extended family and friends.

Payne

Larry W. Payne, age 64, of Woodway, passed away June 17, 2018 at Providence Hospice Place in Waco.

Larry was born July 28, 1953 in Fort Worth, the oldest son of the late Jonnie (Warren) and Alvin R. Payne Jr. The family moved to West in 1963 where Larry attended grade school and became a 1971 graduate of West High School. After attending Hill Junior College and the University of Houston, he graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Business Degree in Accounting in 1976. Larry worked several years as Chief Financial Officer of Citizens Fidelity Insurance Company in Waco before joining the family business, Aderhold Funeral Home in West in 1991. On December 28, 2001 he was united in marriage to Paula Spaulding in Woodway. He served as Chairman of the Board and was a licensed Funeral Director of Aderhold Funeral Home, Inc. He was a former member of the First Baptist Church in West where he served in many capacities including Church Treasurer and Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

Larry was recently elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Baylor Bear Foundation, where he was an avid Baylor

fan and season ticket holder for football, men's basketball and women's basketball. He was a very proud member of the Texas Funeral Directors Association and North Texas Funeral Directors Association and was recently elected to the Texas Funeral Directors Association Services, Inc. Board of Directors, as well as the North Texas Association Board of Directors.

Survivors include his wife, Paula Payne of Woodway; children, Valerie Payne of West, Timothy Payne and wife Kim of Lorena and Kaylee Payne of Woodway; grandchildren, Harrison, Kinley, Macie and Finn; brothers, Cappy Payne and wife Lynette and Robert Payne and wife Carla; the mother to his two oldest children, Glenda Payne Chartier and husband Dennis; mother-in-law, Mary Summers and husband A.B.; sisters-in-law, Ronda Tindell and husband Jody and Tanya Willingham; special friends Freddie and Janice Kaluza; and many nieces, nephews, beloved cousins, other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held June 22, 2018 at St. Mary's Catholic Church of the Assumption in West, with Dr. Mike Milburn, Dr. John Crowder and Rev. Ed Karasek officiating. Burial followed at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Pallbearers included Jack Warren, John Warren, Mike Alexander, Rick Baird, David McDowell, Danny Brantley, Warren Brantley, Jeff Brantley and Joseph Warren. Honorary pallbearers were John Bull, CJ Halik, Jeff Feyerherm, Gary Tully, Tommy Ross, Spencer Moore, Nick Rhodes, Bob Plsek, and Larry Volcik; All present

and past employees of Aderhold Funeral Home; and his friends from TFDA.

Memorials in Larry's honor may be made to the First Baptist Church of West Building Fund or Providence Hospice Place.

Peterson

Ruth Ann "Meme" Peterson died June 14, 2018 in Lamesa, TX. She is the mother of Sparky Clark, location manager of Sunset Funeral Home in Odessa, Texas.

Ruth was born in McCamey, TX on September 27, 1946 to Gilbert and Dorothy Tiemann. As a child, she moved around the Permian Basin with her family in the oil fields of West Texas and eventually moved to Odessa where she graduated from Odessa High School in 1965. She moved to Lamesa, TX in 1968 and was raising her two children there when she met and later married Jim Peterson in 1982.

Ruth worked for Cox Implement for many years before going to work for Caprock Federal Credit Union until her retirement in 2004. She was a lady of numerous talents and skills and loved working in her wood shop and yard as well as painting and building bird houses with her grandchildren. Her passions in life were her children, grandchildren and "fur babies". A wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend who will be greatly missed by all that knew and loved her.

Ruth is preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband Jim Peterson of Lamesa, TX; daughter Tammy Clark Wyatt of Lamesa, TX; son Sparky Clark and wife Dina of Midland, TX; grandchildren: Melissa Schuepbach and husband Matthew of Abilene, TX, Jonathan Wyatt and wife Jennifer of Aledo, TX, Kati Brandon and husband Luke of Bedford, TX, Hailey and Hannah Clark of Midland, TX; great-grandchildren: Kenna Schuepbach of Abilene, TX, Kyle, Kayla and Konner Scharlow of Aledo, TX; brothers: Owen Tiemann and wife Kay of Odessa, TX, Johnny Tiemann and wife Gay of Austin, TX, Henry Tiemann and wife Connie of Loma Linda, MO; sisters: Jeannie Gaither of Hewitt, TX, Janet Sloan and husband Jerry of Odessa, TX along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at First Presbyterian Church in Lamesa, TX with Reverend Sam Lanham officiating. The family requests that donations in her honor be made to the American Heart Association or to the Rheumatoid Arthritis Foundation. Arrangements are entrusted to Sunset Memorial Gardens and Funeral Home.



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approved all the continuing education modules. It is possible to get all 16 hours, including the required hours, through this program. You may study the modules and take the tests online, or order the modules through the website and have them mailed to you. The cost is reasonable and the process user-friendly.

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

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

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

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INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

American Forensics **25**
 ASD Inc. **24**
 Austin Mortuary Service, LLC **30**
 C & J Financial, LLC **35**
 Capital Mortuary Services **40**
 Commonwealth Institute
 of Funeral Service **41**
 Doric Texas **19**
 Express Funeral Funding **33**
 Funeral Directors Life **7**
 Kirk Mortuary Service of Houston **14**
 Legacy Funeral Group **39**
 Matthews Int'l Casket Division **27**
 Metro Mortuary & Crematory **16**
 Metropolitan Funeral Service **34**
 Miller & Sons **23, 29**
 Monarch Resources **36**
 Olinger Mortuary Service **8**
 Pierce Colleges **9**
 Security National Financial Corporation **26**
 Shields Southeast Sales Inc. **BC**
 Sich Casket Company Ltd.c/o LA ads **31**
 Southwest Professional Vehicles, Inc. **37**
 Texas Mortuary Service **36**
 Texas Service Life **IFC**
 The Bancorp **38**
 The Dodge Co. **45**
 Twin Wood Mortuary **5**
 Vaughan Specialty Auto **43**
 Victoria Mortuary Services **15**
 Wilbert Funeral Services **IBC**

2018 TFDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September

6, 7
 9 Sun
 11
 11 Tu
 13
 20 Th
 25 Tu
 30 – October 2

South Texas Meeting
 Southeast Texas Meeting
 Texas Funeral Service Commission
 South Central Texas
 North Texas Meeting
 West Texas Meeting
 East Texas Meeting
 Emerging Leaders University

Corpus Christi
 Houston
 Austin
 New Braunfels
 Dallas
 Abilene
 Pittsburg
 Austin

October

2 Tu
 7-13
 14-17
 23
 24

The Gathering
 Texas Funeral Directors Week
 NFDA Convention
 TFDA Services, Inc.
 TFDA Board Meeting

Wolfe City
 Texas
 Salt Lake City
 Austin
 Austin

December

3 M
 6 Th
 10 M
 11

Panhandle/West Texas Xmas Party
 Southeast Xmas Party
 Wreath Across America
 Texas Funeral Service Commission

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The staff and members of TFDA want to remember John Munson Myers, 89, president (retired) of Greenwood Funeral Homes in Fort Worth, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on June 9, 2018.

Born in Jackson County, Illinois, to Loren Cecil Myers and Mary Lillian Palmer Myers Rodenberg on May 23, 1929, becoming one of 10 children in the family.

John attended Royalton High School in Royalton, Illinois, where he graduated with the Class of 1947. He enrolled in Belleville Junior College before pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in economics and history from McKendree College – Lebanon, Illinois – in 1951. He was and received a BA degree in Economics and History from McKendree College in Lebanon, Ill. in 1951.

John married “the girl down the block”, Rose Marie Albanese, on October 6, 1951, and they spent 61 years together before her death, December 5, 2012.

John had served in the Illinois Army National Guard and, during the Korean War, was a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army (44th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis Washington), where he served as an artillery instructor.

He later attended Central Bible Institute in Springfield, Missouri, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

In 1955, John went to work at Greenwood Funeral Homes in Fort Worth, retiring as president in 2001. He also served for several decades on the Board of Trustees of the Mount Olivet Cemetery Association.

Arlie Davenport, general manager and CEO of Greenwood Mount Olivet Cemeteries and Funeral Homes, began working with John more than 45 years ago.

“I worked under his direct supervision for a few years as a young man, and later he and I worked together as officers and board members,” Davenport said. “I was able to observe him up close and personal over several decades, and I must admit, I have never met a finer executive anywhere. His administrative skills, his human touch, his honesty, his ability to compose written communications, and to speak in public, were amazing.

John and his wife Rose were faithful members at Christ Church Assembly of God in Fort Worth for almost 50 years,

where John took on many and varied responsibilities, from youth pastor, Sunday School superintendent, teacher, Royal Ranger leader and with Rose, led the Always Young Senior Citizen group. All of these roles brought him great joy.

“The inner John Myers was always showing,” Davenport remembered. “How fortunate I am, truly blessed, to have had a role model like him during my early years. I knew a gifted executive actively involved in the community; a loving husband totally dedicated to wife Rose; a dynamic father guiding his children, and a man of God leading his church.”

In later years, John and Rose were members of Harvest Baptist Church in Watauga and finally First Baptist Church of Keller.

John was an active member and a past-president of the Downtown Fort Worth Kiwanis Club. He also served one term as Lt. Governor of the Texas-Oklahoma Region of Kiwanis International, was a 32nd Degree Mason and a 50-year Shriner.

He was a strong Christian and his love for Christ was reflected throughout his life as he served others.

His colleague Arlie Davenport shared his gratitude for John’s friendship as well as his feelings of personal loss: “My memories of this wonderful man are many and varied,

but what I think of often and remember most, is how he radiated goodness, both publicly and privately.

“I admired him greatly as a mentor and a friend,” Davenport continued. “His personal qualities set him apart from everyone else. And though I missed his presence after he retired, I was fortunate to be present during earlier times to witness his influence on the evolving culture of Greenwood and Mount Olivet. It remains with me today. He was a rare human being; one of the most special people I have ever known.”

John was preceded in death by his parents, his beloved wife Rose, his brothers, Bob, Don and Ben Myers and sisters, Beulah Pendleton and Roma Myers.

Survivors: Sons, Rodney and wife, Joyce Myers of Brownwood, Bruce and wife, Hali Myers of Springtown; daughter, Cindy and husband, Wes Finstad of Keller; grandchildren, Ryan and wife, Keren Myers, Dr. Janelle and husband, Jonathan Perrone, Carolyn and husband, Wiley Wood, Anna Myers, Valerie Clary and husband, Ben Gardener, Stephanie and husband, Corey Choate, Dr. Whitney and husband, Michael Huddleston, Daniel and wife, Emily Finstad; 11 great-grandchildren; sisters, Jewell Grissom, Beverly and husband, Ron Spiller, Brenda and husband, Tommy Smith; brother, Leon Talley; and numerous nieces and nephews.

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