

The PINNACLE

June 2009

West Virginia Cemetery & Funeral Association

www.wvcfa.net

**WVCFA
Annual
Convention**



**EMBASSY SUITES
CHARLESTON WV
AUGUST 13, 14, 15, 2009**

The Annual Convention for the West Virginia Cemetery and Funeral Association will be held at the Embassy Suites in Charleston W.Va. August 13, 14, and 15, 2009.

Make plans now to attend.

ATTENTION GOLFERS: The annual golf tournament will begin the weekend on Thursday, August 13, 2009, 1:00 p.m. at the Little Creek Country Club in South Charleston, W. Va.

The program for the convention this year will provide many interesting and informative speakers and presentations in regards to our business. Keynote speaker, David Whitener, will discuss Management Skills, and the "Passion for Selling." Other topics and issues will be provided which will benefit you and your organization as you plan for the future.

As always, lots of fun is being planned and activities to share and enjoy each other once again as we celebrate our Association and our friends. The annual auction is always exciting and a fun evening as we purchase all the wonderful treasures of the night. "Casino Night" will begin the evening followed by the ANNUAL AUCTION. An exciting evening of festivities is in store for everyone. Come one and come all!

**WEST VIRGINIA CEMETERY & FUNERAL ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONVENTION
EMBASSY SUITES
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA
AUGUST 13, 14 & 15, 2009**

**PLEASE REGISTER THE FOLLOWING AND STAR (*) THOSE ATTENDING FOR THE FIRST TIME
PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE**

NAME _____ TITLE _____ NICKNAME _____

CEMETERY OR FIRM _____ CITY/STATE _____

SPOUSE _____ NICKNAME _____

ADDITIONAL REGISTRATIONS:

NAME _____ NICKNAME _____

NAME _____ NICKNAME _____

____ 1ST CEMETERIAN REGISTRATION	200.00
____ ADDITIONAL / SAME CEMETERY	125.00
____ SUPPLIER REGISTRATION - WITH TABLE	250.00
____ SUPPLIER REGISTRATION - WITHOUT TABLE	125.00
____ SPOUSE REGISTRATION	75.00
____ NON-MEMBER REGISTRATION	250.00
____ NON-MEMBER GUEST	100.00
____ ONE DAY ATTENDEES	75.00
____ SPOUSE - ONE DAY ATTENDEE	35.00

**(CHILDREN - \$25.00 OTHER GUESTS - \$60.00 - IF ATTENDING THE SATURDAY LUNCH)
REGISTRATION INCLUDES ADMISSION TO ALL SESSIONS AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**

I/WE _____ WILL PLAY GOLF

CALL EMBASSY SUITES FOR RESERVATION 1-304-347-8700

JULY 23, 2009 LAST DAY FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS

THIS FORM DOES NOT RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM

**RETURN REGISTRATION FORM WITH PAYMENT TO:
WEST VIRGINIA CEMETERY AND FUNERAL ASSOCIATION**

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59th Annual Convention West Virginia Cemetery and Funeral Association

August 13th to 15th, 2009

Embassy Suites, Charleston West Virginia

Thursday, August 13, 2009

1:00 PM Golf Tournament – Little Creek Country Club,
99 Fairway Dr, South Charleston, WV

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM Registration

7:00 PM – 7:30 PM Board Meeting

Friday, August 14, 2009

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM Early Bird Drawing & Opening Comments
Tim Beavers Program Chairman & John Atilli, President WVCFA

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM Conducting Seamless Service between Funeral Home and Cemetery

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM Our Legislative Future and What we can do to protect our Business
Chad Robinson, Compensation Strategies, Charleston WV

11:00 AM – 11:15 AM Coffee Break

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM Vendors – How can we change with the times, Our Financial Future

12:15 PM – 12:30 PM Annual Member Meeting

Lunch on your own

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM President's Reception

7:00 PM - ? Auction & Game Night

Saturday, August 15, 2009

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM Welcome & Early Bird Drawing
Tim Beavers Program Chairman & John Atilli, President WVCFA

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM Surveying – Your Number One Key to Success
Jeff Phares, Sunset Memorial Park, Beckley WV

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM What are the Key Ingredients of a sale?
Jon Loftis, President Loftis Corporation

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM Coffee Break

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Philosophy of Management
David Whitener, Motivational Speaker

1:00 PM - Sales Awards Luncheon: Installation of Officers and Board Members
David Whitener, Passion for Selling

ANNUAL CONVENTION FEATURED SPEAKER, DAVID WHITENER

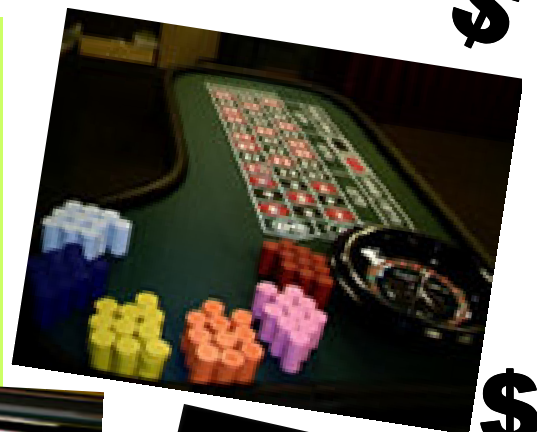
David Whitener will be attending and speaking at the August Convention in Charleston WV. We are excited to have him participating in our program and we would like to introduce him.

David Whitener is a graduate of Mountain State University and the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science. He started his death care career in 1973 with Legacy One based in Beckley, WV. He worked as a Funeral Director and Embalmer, and worked in sales, later moving into sales management. He became a division vice president over the Funeral Insurance Division and a Board of Director with Legacy One. In 1993, he joined Stewart Enterprises as the Vice-President of Marketing for the Southern Region of the Eastern Division, (NC, SC, GA, and TN). David was transferred to Dallas, TX as the Senior Vice-President of Marketing to rebuild sales for the Western Region of the Central Division, (TX, NM, OK, and AR). His responsibilities included overseeing the sales and marketing efforts at Restland Cemetery and Funeral Home, which is the largest facility in the Stewart chain and the second largest facility in the country.

David has received numerous awards as a national speaker and instructor for the death care profession and has conducted seminars, workshops, and speeches to death care professionals for over 30 years, in over 30 states. He has written numerous articles for trade magazines and has written and produced several videos. He is past president of the North Carolina Cemetery Association and has worked with Associations in WV, VA, OH, SC, TN and TX as well as the Southern Cemetery Association and the ICCFA. David retired in 2001 and now resides in North Myrtle Beach, SC.



Casino Night will entertain us on Friday night prior to the Annual Auction. Win your money to purchase those important and necessary items at the Auction.



WANTED
All those planning to attend the Annual Convention please start gathering items for the Auction to be held on Friday evening of the Convention after the Casino Night Games.

RECESSION LEAVES FUNERAL BUSINESS IN GRAVE STATE

NEW YORK (CNN) The saying goes, "Nothing is certain but death and taxes." But the current troubling economic times has even the "death" industry feeling a bit lifeless, as families look to cut funeral costs.

More than 21,000 funeral homes are in the United States, employing some 105,000 people, according to the National Funeral Directors Association. The \$11 billion-a-year industry is largely comprised of privately run firms, with 89 percent of all funeral homes being owned by families, individuals or small independent corporations.

One such family-run business is the John Scanlan Funeral Home in Pequannock, New Jersey, which has been assisting families with funeral preparations since 1954. John Scanlan's daughter, Kiera Scanlan-Wespestad, is the current funeral director, and she explained her business prepared 248 funerals in 2008. As for the cost of a full service funerals, "you're probably looking at around \$6,000-\$7,000 depending on how large the newspaper notices are or how many limousines you want," said Scanlan-Wespestad.

The Funeral Directors Association said an estimated cost of an adult funeral was approximately \$6,195 in 2006. With people cutting back during the faltering economy, expenditures on funeral-related goods and services have also been scaled back.

"We've definitely seen a rise in cremation" Scanlan-Wespestad told CNN. Her business has seen an 11 percent jump in cremation because of family financial considerations. "On average, a family can save up to \$4,000-\$5,000 by choosing cremation, so that is not really surprising in this economy," she said. The Cremation Association of North America reports the practice has been rising annually nationwide, with nearly 40 percent of all deaths in the US expected to result in cremation by 2010. The No. 1 reason for this pattern, according to the association, is cost - 30 percent of people surveyed said cremation saves money

Bob Gist of Rosedale Cemetery in Montclair, [New Jersey](#) explained the financial appeal of cremation. "Here at Rosedale the actual price is \$345, where if you were to bury someone it would run about \$3,000." In addition to the wider adoption of cremation by the public, Scanlan-Wespestad said that everything from funeral financing to casket quality has been adversely impacted over the past year as people cut costs in all aspects of life and death.

Ralph Rullis, owner of a headstone business, has seen demands drop as well. Rullis' Lincoln Monument Company has been around since 1945. He has seen a major drop off in business recently. "People are coming in looking for the cheapest, smallest monument that they could buy, which is not usual for most families who have lost a loved one," he said. Rullis said his business has dropped off by about 25 percent. "This is the quietist period" in his career selling gravestones and monuments, he said.

While economic struggles have prompted grave sacrifices when preparing for a loved one's funeral, there is an upside for the industry. "We're pretty sure all of us are going to pass away," Rullis said, so families will continue to desire a variety of available means to memorialize the recently departed.

By Evan Buxbaum
CNN



EXHIBITOR HIGHLIGHT

PINNACLE - June 2009



John McDowell graduated from West Virginia University with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1980. He worked as livestock specialist for West Virginia until 1984. In 1984, he started in the cemetery business as General Manager of the Kanawha Valley Memorial Gardens. In May of 1986, John started working with the West Virginia Attorney General's office as the Director of Pre-Need Funeral Services, shortly thereafter he was asked to serve as the Executive Secretary to the West Virginia Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. He took care of all consumer complaints for funeral homes and cemeteries as a representative of both the state board and the WV Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's office.

In 1991, John acquired a company called Pre-Need Associates, which provides insurance products and trust products to the funeral industry, continuing education programs, consulting and mediation of consumer complaints.

John is presently employed with Matthews Casket International as a Funeral Service Consultant and continues to operate Pre-Need Associates, Inc. John lives in Hamlin, WV on a farm where he enjoys "working in the dirt" and still dreams of being a farmer. Contact John via email at johnboy123@juno.com or 304-546-3500.

SYMPATHY EXTENDED

Sympathy is extended to the family of Edward "Skip" Broderick who passed away on April 24, 2009 at the Belmont Community Hospital, Bellaire Ohio.

Skip was a former member of the WVCFA and will be missed by members and colleagues.

Skip was a salesman/manager for Riverview Cemetery and Now & Forever Memorials in Moundsville. In addition he was a salesman for the former Mangano Auto Dealership.

He was born October 3, 1945 in East Liverpool, Ohio.

Survivors include his wife of 19 years, Maria Solterbeck Broderick; children, Nathan and Kerri Broderick at home, Kellie (Tom) Hayden of Lancaster, Ohio, Brent (Sandy) Broderick of Oregonia, Ohio; hi mother, Floreine Stillwagon Broderick of Bellaire; sister, Janet (Gary) Smith of Virginia Beach, VA and four grandchildren, Gwen and Hunter Broderick, and Sophia and Amelia Hayden.

Memorial contributions were suggested to be made to the Bellaire St. John's High School, 37th St & Guernsey Street, Bellaire OH 43906.

Government Relations

Nelson B. Robinson Jr.

Chad Robinson

**2210 Washington St.
East**

Charleston WV 25311

304-342-3769



79TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 79th Legislative session ended in April and the Special Session commenced May 26, 2009. The WVCFA foresees legislative concerns in the future which may impact our businesses.

It is always important to be prepared to discuss issues with our legislative leaders and actively participate in the legislative process to protect our businesses.

Stay-tuned for legislative updates.

Governments pay more burial costs in bad economy By JAMES HANNAH

DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — Renata Richardson had already picked a name for her first child: Jazmyn Rose. She was stockpiling gifts such as baby socks, hats and a bassinet. But the fetus died a month before she was to be born. Richardson was crushed not only by the miscarriage but because she knew she couldn't afford the cremation, which would have cost \$600 to \$1,200. She had lost her job as an advertising manager months before and couldn't find another in the slumping economy. "That's the last thing I wanted to do for her, and I knew that I couldn't do it," she said.

Richardson, 25, of Davie, Fla., joined a growing number of people seeking help with burial and cremation costs as the recession triggers layoffs and foreclosures and rocks the family budget. Local governments - already cutting their budgets - are stepping in with taxpayer dollars. The numbers are up at coroner's offices from Los Angeles to Dayton, Ohio, to Chapel Hill, N.C. States and cities have increased their budgets to meet the demand. "They basically tell me they can't afford it," said Lt. David Smith, who tracks down families of the dead in Los Angeles County. "Everybody we are able to contact is washing their hands of it."

The median cost of a funeral for a family, including casket and vault, is about \$7,300. The cost to governments, which don't arrange funerals, can range from \$150 for basic cremation to \$1,400 for burial. Most states don't require relatives to pay for the burial or cremation of the poor. Governments step in if the dead had no assets and the families cannot pay or cannot be found.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Broward County in Florida, which is partially funded through property taxes, paid for the cremation of Richardson's baby. The city of Dayton did the same for Debra Hunt, whose 32-year-old daughter, a cancer patient, died in February. Cremation would have cost \$1,000, and Hunt had \$400 in the bank after quitting her job with the Dayton school system to be with her daughter.

The need for financial help reached the point that Renee Donnell, owner of Alamance Funeral Service in Burlington, N.C., started a fundraising campaign to create a burial fund. Several families have applied for money since the fund was created in October. Donnell said the economy is partly to blame; a woman whose husband had just lost his job was among those receiving money.

In Dayton, the number of indigent cremations jumped from 37 in 2007 at total cost of \$24,000 to 53 in 2008 costing \$34,500. Over a six-month period, Los Angeles County handled 80 percent more indigent bodies from the coroner's office from 2007 to last year. At the North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Chapel Hill, the number of bodies relatives refuse financial responsibility has nearly doubled - from 17 in 2007 to 33 last year.

The economy is a common topic at meetings of the National Funeral Directors Association. "Based on what we're hearing from our members, families are reporting more difficulty paying for funerals given the recent state of the economy," said Jessica Koth, spokeswoman for the group. More people are asking the Funeral Consumers Alliance, a South Burlington, Vt.-based watchdog group, how to pay for a funeral "without going into bankruptcy," said Executive Director Josh Slocum. "People are unprepared for what the financial responsibility is going to be," said Clark County (Nev.) Coroner Mike Murphy, whose jurisdiction includes Las Vegas. "Some people are so financially strapped they don't have anything to give."

In the rough economy, more people in general are spending less on funerals and, in some cases, selling their cemetery plots. The recession is also reducing revenue for local governments. Layoffs and decreased consumer spending hurt tax revenue. Foreclosures cut into property taxes. West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin proposed an additional \$300,000 in his budget for indigent burials after the number exceeded estimates by 240 last year.

The northwest Ohio city of Findlay - where the number of indigent bodies has jumped from four a year to as many as 15 - paid \$11,745 for burial or cremation last year. This year, the city has budgeted \$14,800. Because of its own backlog, the Los Angeles County Morgue stopped cremating bodies from the coroner's office in February. The coroner is using \$45,000 from another fund to pay for the cremations until another solution can be found.

Some coroner's offices also report a jump in the number of unclaimed bodies, whose relatives can't be found. Local governments decide if indigent bodies are buried or cremated and many pick the less expensive cremation. Overall, cremations are becoming more common. In Franklin County, Ohio, the number of cremations increased from 2,926 in 2006 - before the economic meltdown - to 3,318 in 2008. Burials fell from 4,591 to 4,378. Cremated remains are often held for a time to allow families to surface or to find the money to pay for the cremation. If that doesn't happen, the ashes are sometimes poured into a common grave with a simple marker or spread over a body of water, a mountain or a canyon. Burials are in plots designated by the cemetery with little fanfare and often without markers. "It's sad," said Sandra Yocum, chair of the religious studies department at the University of Dayton. "There is something about honoring those who have died that is very deep in our human psyche. That's a loss to us as a whole."

FINANCIAL TROUBLES PROMPT RISE IN SALES OF BURIAL PLOTS

(The Wall Street Journal, Monday January 5, 2009) CALIFORNIA

Burial-plot brokers are reporting an up tick in the business of reselling grave sites, as money troubles prompt people to put their burial plots up for sale, often at a loss.

Baron Chu, who owns the burial-site resale business Plot Brokers, said he is doing nine or ten times as much business as usual.

He said people are getting only about a quarter of what their plots would have fetched six months ago because of the increased supply hitting the market. He said one client, who had just been evicted from her home, got \$500 for a plot which was worth \$6800.

In some cases, the sales are breaking up family plots held for generations. Southern California native Carol Lieberman said she is trying to sell two adjoining plots at a cemetery in the Mission Hills area where her parents and other family members are buried, saying that she needs the money.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

ADVERTISE IN THE PINNACLE

The Quarterly WVCFA Pinnacle is offering advertisement opportunities. Reach out to all members of the WVCFA by advertising in the Pinnacle.

Yearly Rates:

Full Page - \$750
Half Page - \$500
Business Card Size - \$250

If interested, contact Vickie at:

2210 Washington St. East
Charleston, WV 25311
(304-342-3769) Fax 304-343-4251
Email vickie@wvcsi.com

ICCFA Fall Management Conference will be held October 7 – 10, 2009 at the Renaissance Washington Hotel in Washington DC. The conference will provide CEO-level education, idea sharing and a behind-the-scenes tour at Arlington National Cemetery.

Please email any and all information that you would like to share with other members to Vickie Lively at vickie@wvcsi.com for publication in the *Pinnacle*.