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## *Making Independent Funeral Homes Exceptional*

### Inside

- 5 OGR: Relocated, restaffed, restructured—now stronger, healthier** President *Koven L. Brown* explains and clarifies the changes OGR is undergoing.
- 6 Fall Forum Review** Attendees from across North America come up to speed on technology and the Internet.
- 7 Training the exceptional staff; achieving exceptional performance** *JoAnn Baldwin, CFSP*, shines a light on four key concepts she believes are necessary for training the exceptional staff.
- 11 Internet growth meets the needs of grieving families; provides connect points for support and sharing** *Scott Simons* and *John Heald* team up to take a close look at where internet technology is headed and explain how to maximize funeral home value.
- 13 Best practices for funeral directors to use Facebook** Funeral Futurist *Robin Heppell* cuts through the noise to give you the straight goods on online relationships and short-cuts the learning process to build a dynamic community on Facebook.

### Departments & Association NEWS

- 14 Member Services**
- Music license renewal
- 15 Staying Informed**
- New e-newsletter
  - Resource guide
- 16 Member News**
- Milestone anniversaries
  - Contribution acknowledgement
  - In memoriam
  - New members
- 18 Identity/Outreach**
- For Exemplary Service
- 20 Learning Opportunities**
- Annual Conference preview
- 24 Recognition Programs**
- Scholarships
  - Golden Light Award
  - Golden Rule Community Service and Supplier of the Year Awards
- 27 Business Solutions**

Take a sneak peek at **OGR's 2010 Annual Conference** in Colorado Springs — one of the most important meetings in the association's history. See back cover to register.

**Pg. 20**

Keep up with OGR. Visit [www.ogr.org](http://www.ogr.org) regularly for the latest news, updates and announcements.



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# 2010

# 2009

**Dec. 17**

Audio seminar: "What to Know Before Expanding or Acquiring a New Facility"

**March 1**

Spring issue of *The Independent* published

**April 15**

*2010/2011 Resource Guide* published

**April 22-24**

Annual Conference, Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo.

## Ad Index

C&J Financial, LLC . . . . .	8
Jamie Meredith, tel: 800-785-0003	
Eagle Coach Company . . . . .	2
Mike McKiernan, tel: 800-537-2963	
Macular Degeneration Foundation . . . . .	7
tel: 888-622-8527	
Pierce Companies . . . . .	19
Sharon Carol, tel: 214-333-4230, fax: 214-337-3658,	
Red Book, National Directory of Morticians . . . . .	10, 13
tel: 440-247-3561, <a href="mailto:redbook@funeral-dir.com">redbook@funeral-dir.com</a>	
Thomas-Pierce & Company, Inc. . . . .	16
Jon Thomas, tel: 888-323-5582, 850-322-8460	



# OGR: Relocated, restaffed, restructured – now stronger, healthier

Koven L. Brown

If you missed our Fall Forum in San Antonio, you missed an excellent opportunity to see what an important role technology can play in the everyday operation of your funeral home. During this event, it became apparent that we had failed miserably in our efforts to keep OGR membership informed about the issues within OGR that would lead the Board to act on making needed personnel changes, organizational restructuring and the decision to move staff offices from St. Louis to Austin. As President, I assume responsibility for that and apologize for not doing a better job of keeping you informed. I would like to address the move in as simple a way as I know.

First, our lease on the building in St. Louis was set to expire in January and we were going to have to move to a new location regardless because we were paying for entirely too much square footage for the requirements of current staff and operations. For many reasons, membership in recent years has been declining and when that occurs, revenues decline as well. However, expenses were not being brought in line to the existing revenue over an extended period of time. Costly programs and personnel allocations were not evaluated on their relative value to member use or needs.

The move to Austin allowed us to cut office space and expense in half and in the process, save thousands of dollars. During the first year in Austin, there will be a savings of almost \$98,000 due to the lease our Interim Executive Director negotiated. The savings in personnel related expense is expected to be reduced by close to 40% with restructuring of staff relevant to program services.

Although it was painful to have to leave some of the former staff in St. Louis, the process of putting together a well qualified staff in Austin that will work cooperatively is in process; one that will work together in the best interests of all OGR members to be successful in accomplishing our collective goals. Your Board of Directors is determined for OGR to be even stronger and better than in the past. In the upcoming months, we will introduce some new programs, fine tune others and eliminate those you no longer use.

The leadership of your Immediate Past President, Guy Linnemann, set us on a path of assertive fiscal responsibility this past year and with our Interim Executive Director, Dianne Hughes, focused on our financial and operational well being, we will continue on a positive path...one that will lead OGR into a progressive future.

Change is never easy and its uncertainty can foster criticism, but these changes are necessary if we want to continue to be on the cutting edge of funeral service. It is my belief that OGR will emerge from this phase of important transition, to become stronger and better. The physical location of OGR offices is a place where the business of OGR is conducted and few of us ever find ourselves in those offices. The actual heart and spirit of OGR is its members, which is activated when we come together to share and serve the values that we share in common as independent funeral business owners. Simply stated, OGR is its members and their spirit without which there would be no staff or office.

Together, we as members have a special opportunity and privilege to provide counsel and leadership for this association to the Board and staff. Through our collective efforts, we set the course to reach new heights for OGR, for our businesses and for the communities that we serve. ■

*Koven L. Brown, CFSP, is owner and president of K. L. Brown Funeral Home and Cremation Center in Jacksonville, Ala., and the K. L. Brown Memory Chapel in Anniston, Ala.*

# 2009 Fall Forum Review

OGR members from across North America gathered in San Antonio in early November to learn how some of the latest technology and training trends and developments could benefit their funeral homes. "At the conclusion of the forum,

attendees were in agreement that the evolution of technology and trends in training are each happening fast, and that there is a constant pull to understand how to implement the changes in the independent funeral home," said OGR President Koven Brown.



Presenters included **Robin Heppell, CFSP**, president, Heppell Funeral Solutions; **Scott Simons**, president, SRS Computing, and **John Heald**, vice president-sales and business development, Tributes.com; **Frank Sessions**, principal, Graystone Associates, Inc.; **Taron Smith**, general manager, D.O. McComb & Sons Funeral Home; **JoAnn Baldwin, CFSP**, manager of professional development, Aurora Casket Company.

Event partners were Aurora Casket Company, SRS Computing, Tributes.com, Compliance Plus and Pierce Companies, and the Welcome Reception was sponsored by Polyguard and Co.

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# Training the *exceptional* **STAFF;** achieving *exceptional* **PERFORMANCE**

By JoAnn Baldwin

Asked to define the word “exceptional,” most of us would struggle to find a clear definition amid a rush of personal experiences with all sorts of co-workers and levels of performance. A precise definition, it turns out, is elusive. Most of us would decide fairly quickly that while we have a hard time defining the word, we all pretty much agree that we can recognize exceptional performance when we see it. So the question becomes how do we as leaders and thereby trainers motivate our staffs to perform at exceptional levels, especially when as many as three and often four generations are represented on funeral home staffs?

I believe there are four key concepts that are critical to a successful and ongoing training program that will produce the exceptional staff. These concepts are:

**trust, communication, leadership, inspiration.**

Before taking a close look at these key concepts necessary for training an exceptional staff, the first thing may be to examine how training can be delivered, where the work of training takes place and what sorts of people are going to be trained.

## Training Programs

*In-house training programs* are used more frequently than any other — they are generally easy to do, require minimum time away from the office and appear to incur less cost. This is also often one of those areas in business where cost savings may be illusory. Certainly there is little initial outlay, but there very well could be hidden

“I think people want to be magnificent. It is the job of the leader to bring out that magnificence in people and create an environment where they can feel safe and supported and ready to do the best job possible in accomplishing key goals. This responsibility is a sacred trust that should not be violated. The opportunity to guide others to their fullest potential is an honor and one that should not be taken lightly. As leaders we hold the lives of others in our hands. These hands need to be caring and gentle and always available for support.”

~ *Ken Blanchard*, Management of Organizational Behavior

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costs in poor performance and lost business.

**Outside trainers:** If you don't have time or the expertise, look to others in your firm who have good information to share. Most importantly, remember, *Quality* of the program is important, if it is to be taken seriously.

While there will be initial cost, outside training resources may be the way to go. Online programs are good for continuing education credit, but may lack sufficient interaction and feedback which can decrease long term value. A better choice may be in-person training. Select a trainer with values similar to yours. And look for a relationship with the training provider that has long-term promise — someone who will be available to follow-up If necessary.

**Staff Meetings** can often result in a collective sigh, but they can be excellent blocks of time that can be used by staff to share, reinforce good traits and discover how others would solve problems. Along this same vein pairing up cross-generational teams continue to show surprising results. "Old dogs" and "puppies" can learn from one another especially since the younger generation likes collaboration.

**Mentors** usually work on a one-to-one basis. Because such arrangements often generate higher levels of trust through a great reliance on counseling skills and teaching by example, mentors can also be great motivators and sounding boards. Mentoring requires a high degree of personal commitment, inasmuch as most mentor pairings are ongoing over long periods of time while relying on regular meetings.

Regardless of which course of training you choose, the overriding consideration for success can be summed up in three words: practice, practice, practice. The biggest cause of training failure comes from a lack of consistently applying the skills learned. Staff meetings and slow periods are good times to revisit skills. Along with opportunities for practice, top management must reinforce the value of the training.

After training programs, talk to your staff about what they learned. Hold them accountable for letting you know what they brought home from the training that they can use and be clear on your expectations about when they intend to begin using the skill. Finally recognize their performance as it demonstrates the new skills. Practice what you preach. Your credibility with your staff boils down to "Do as I say *and* as I do."



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## Training the “new” generation

In our industry much of the time, energy and money we spend in training is spent on the “new” generation, those coming into the profession who are largely between 19 and 29. And the greatest success will accrue to trainers who have the greatest understanding of just who the people are that comprise this “new” generation. It is important to know that your trainers have this understanding.

Two of the most salient books that can help give us this understanding by providing analysis and insight through extensive examination of the question of who they are: *Employing Generation Why?* by Eric Chester and *Millennials Rising*, by generational historians William Strauss and Neil Howe. These authors not only agree on many observations and conclusion, but also offer a number of training strategies for business. The sampling of the “new” generation proposed by these authors is on the right.

## Expectations

A survey in 2008 by the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), in cooperation with the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), shows that funeral directors will become more diverse, in terms of gender and race, as students graduate from mortuary science school.

Among findings, the “Mortuary Science Student Expectations Survey,” in 2008 shows a shift in the expectations students have about the duties they expect to perform as new graduates. Compared with results from a survey in 1995, Students have higher expectations about performing funeral-related tasks and lower expectations about performing administrative tasks. The top six duties students expected to do when they join a firm are:

DUTIES EXPECTED	2007	1995
Embalming	94%	—
Funeral Arranging	92%	79%
Funeral Directing/Embalming	91%	88%
Restorative Art	90%	70%
Funeral Directing	88%	—
Community Relations	82%	56%

Contact: *Jessica Koth* (jkoth@nfda.org) or *Celine Clark* (cclark@nfda.org)

## “NEW” GENERATION SNAPSHOT

**CHARACTERISTICS** Age: 19-29 ■ Sociable ■ Well-educated ■ Confident ■ Civic minded ■ Strong sense of fairness and ethics ■ Respond to humor ■ Value straight talk

**ATTITUDES HAVE BEEN SHAPED BY** 911 and Columbine ■ Kosovo ■ Oklahoma City bombing ■ Clinton impeachment trial ■ O.J. Simpson trial ■ Rodney King riots ■ Lewinsky scandal ■ Fall of the Berlin Wall ■ McGwire-Sosa Home run derby

**VALUES AND BEHAVIORS:** Will have four or five careers-some don’t even exist today ■ Raised with positive reinforcement and lots of choices ■ Life is short, they want to make a difference ■ Realistic ■ Great multi-taskers ■ Expect things at work to go well ■ Feel comfortable building and working ■ In networks ■ Spent most of their life as part of a team ■ Expect a toy with their meal ■ Lots of parental planning

Furthermore, the “new” generation tends to share a host of qualities — some good and some not so good, but nearly all of which would be useful for trainers.

(+) QUALITIES	(-) QUALITIES
Goal oriented	Dislike menial work
Positive	Over-confident
Collaborative	Lack experience
Technologically savvy	Impatient
	Lack skills with difficult people

*“It is important to talk and respond to your staff, to take the time to explain what will be happening next, what the plan of action is and what benefit will come from taking part in the task.”*

Again the results demonstrate that there is a generational difference among staff. The important lesson from the survey is that old training approaches and programs may not work very well, if at all, when working with the “new” generation.

Now that we have taken a look at types of training and the characteristics of likely trainees, it is time to pick up the discussion of the four key concepts of critical importance in putting in place a successful training program aimed at exceptional performance. They not only bear repeating, but also need a fuller discussion.

### Trust

You build trust through respect and understanding. In the eyes of staff, every trainer will represent the agenda of top management. Because of this and because it is the right thing to do, top management must pay special attention to demonstrated respect for all employees. This can be accomplished by looking, acting and sound-

ing the part; showing you know what you are doing and establishing good rapport.

Areas where top management needs to show staff understanding include anxieties, uncertainty, feeling overwhelmed and feeling nervous.

### Communication

It is important to talk and respond to your staff, to take the time to explain what will be happening next, what the plan of action is and what benefit will come from taking part in the task. Generally it is best to communicate openly and in a straight-forward manner during discussions of job responsibilities, before any learning opportunity and before staff meetings or one-on-one conversations. And always remember that good listening skills are a vital part of good communication.

### Leadership

Leaders can only lead if they have followers. And that means giving staff the motivation to want to help you achieve

your vision for your funeral home. And this vision must be clear. Leadership also arises from setting performance goals and standards, assigning tasks in a respectful way, modeling behavior you expect from

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



*JoAnn Baldwin, CFSP, ASTD, is former manager of professional development for Aurora Casket Co. She develops and delivers training programs to funeral directors across the U.S. She offers a unique perspective on customer service and staff development. JoAnn Baldwin is the author of Lifetimes, A Balanced Funeral Arrangement. She co-developed the widely accepted Aurora arranger training program-Lifetimes.*

your staff and recognizing a job well done.

### Inspiration

The fourth and final key concept in implementing a superior training program involves the sometimes vague concept of inspiration. It is part motivation, part enthusiasm and part excitement working in combination to bring about some outcome such as reaching a goal. While we recognize inspiration when we see it, there are some steps you can take to help it along — sharing experiences, involving staff in your vision, inviting new ideas, innovating and having fun.

Keep the idea of trust, communication, leading and inspiring uppermost in your mind as you bring your staff on board and prepare to move into the future. And add your presence, as perhaps your most valuable training tool. Don't be afraid to work side by side. Share what you have learned as you've solved problems. Open up your creative side. Don't just be a teacher, strive to also learn something new. You'll go a long way toward helping your staff learn, grow and satisfy all of your families in a meaningful way. **I**

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# INTERNET

meets the needs of grieving families; provides connect points for support and sharing

By Scott R. Simons and John Heald

**R**ESPONDING TO WEB users and the burgeoning market they represent, the Internet continues its explosive growth in outdistancing newspapers and other print media in becoming the news source of choice. And that is barely the half of it. From the funeral home perspective, it is becoming clear that the web is changing everything, especially how more and more people are choosing to grieve.

Since the dawn of history in all likelihood, grieving has included a public outpouring of condolence and support just as it does today. In the time before the Internet, grieving not only occurred locally, but also at a single point in time. And a common component of this grieving was the obituary in the newspaper. Today most families are far-flung throughout state and nation which is making the newspaper obituary obsolete and making sharing in the grief much more difficult, if not impossible.

During the last few years a surge in the growth of online obituaries on the web is quickly beginning to eliminate the

importance of time and space as a requirement for grieving. Furthermore, this growth in online obituaries is displacing print obituaries. The Internet through specialized web sites and social media is fast becoming the preferred method for providing a virtual public time and place where people can grieve and receive support. And they can do so at anytime of the night or day, important since grief is no respecter of ordinary schedules. The web allows grieving in our own way and at a time of our choosing. The web allows us to externalize our grieving without fear of reprisal and it is where we can connect during times of greatest need.

## **Obituaries, yes, but much more**

Online obituary web sites are much more than a place to simply publish an electronic version of a newspaper obituary. Sites such as tributes.com and legacy.com provide a broad kind of interactive social networking where people can celebrate a life by creating memorials and tributes with artwork, photos and videos and where they can form or join groups of people with similar experiences for sharing and support. And online obituary web sites also allow sophisticated searching for researching death notices and other records.

While funeral homes have a critical role in serving families at a time of grief, you can not lose sight of the fact that funeral homes are also businesses. Newspaper obituaries can be costly for families and they lack any capability for the creation of lasting tributes or memorials. Rather than being an obituary referral source for newspapers, funeral homes are moving this business online and in so doing this business can become a

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**Scott Simons**, president of SRS Computing Solutions, founded his company in 1999. Under his leadership SRS Computing Solutions has become one of

today's leading producers of funeral home management products customized exclusively for increasing productivity and enhancing efficiency. More information available on [www.srscomputing.com](http://www.srscomputing.com)



**John Heald**, a fourth generation funeral director licensed in Massachusetts, is vice president of sales and business development for Tributes.com. He is founder of a pre-need insurance agency which has been recognized multiple times as a top producer nationwide.

Adults 50+, the sweet spot of obituary readership, are becoming more technology savvy every day and it is clear that the \$750M to \$1B newspaper obituary market will migrate online just as all other print classifieds have done

profit point. Furthermore, newspapers are continuing a slide into obscurity with many ceasing publication entirely as readership and advertising dwindles. Experts continue to struggle with a solution to charting a future for newspapers, while online news delivery including obituaries and tributes, grows every day.

A press release from [tributes.com](http://tributes.com) states: "In today's mobile society, education, marriage and career shifts have caused people to be more geographically dispersed, making it more challenging to maintain relationships than it has been in the past," notes Elaine Haney, president of Tributes.com. "The Internet has become the glue that keeps our social networks together in this distributed world. Combine that with the fact that adults 50+, the sweet spot of obituary readership, are becoming more technology savvy every day and it is clear that the \$750M to \$1B newspaper obituary market will migrate online just as all other print classifieds have done."

### Funeral home management solutions

An equally important area that sparked interest during the Fall Forum Idea Exchange focused on software applications designed exclusively for managing the funeral home.

Among many others, one of the most challenging aspects of operating a funeral home involves taking the right steps to maximize the advantages brought on by the relentless evolution of technology and especially that of management software designed to make funeral home operations more effective and efficient.

Because operating success is largely the result of how well the firm manages client-family relationships, it is imperative that the funeral home have a consistent method for client-family interaction. Customer relationship management (CRM) software is the broad term that refers to a wide variety of such methods. It includes all facets

of client contacts and takes many different forms. Nevertheless there are some general concepts that may well be adopted by all funeral homes.

The proliferation of handheld or mobile devices, commonly known as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), is making it nearly impossible to operate a business without such a device. While the selection process can be staggering, each device generally serves as a phone, address book, e-mail client, fax client, internet browser, and much more.

### CRM and the next level of service

With a comprehensive CRM program in place, PDAs can help funeral professionals deliver the next level in customer service from essentially anywhere at anytime. We are intimately acquainted with the reality that death can strike a family at any hour which may require our immediate attention. A handheld device has the power to give your client-families and staff the reassurance that you can be available when they need you. And you can't minimize the fact that using mobile devices projects a more professional look to your firm.

What's more, these devices and in similar fashion, laptop and notebook computers, can be an important tool in helping a funeral home to grow. In addition to providing superior service, PDAs can also be instrumental in collecting information and data you can use in developing a marketing strategy to strengthen your competitive position. They can become critical in finding a data-based answer to why people use your funeral home. **I**

# Best practices for funeral directors to use Facebook

by Robin Heppell

When I was young and visiting my Grandparents at the family funeral home – [EganFuneralHome.com](http://EganFuneralHome.com) in Bolton, Ontario – I would spend a lot of time with my Grandpa walking into town, going to the post office and running other errands. I was always amazed about how many people knew him and that he knew them. His success – just like other past generation Funeral Directors – could be attributed to being a helpful member of community, whether professionally or in other activities. They knew him, they liked him, and when they needed his services, they could trust him.

Since life is different nowadays and there are a lot less people in the “social hubs” than there were 50 years ago, it doesn’t mean that you have to go to the same places where Gramps hung out – he was where the people were. You should apply the same philosophy – Go To Where The People in Your Community Are!

Now, I’m not saying quit all the groups that you are currently involved with – but you should take some quick inventory on your time invested vs. the exposure and reach that you get.

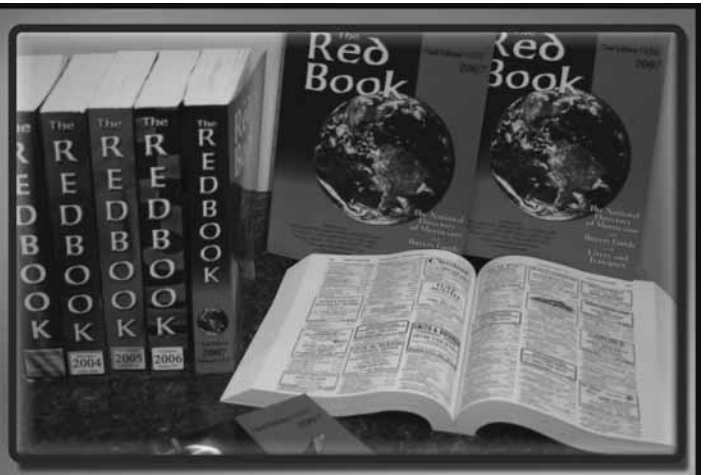
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## Members Receive Lowest Rate for Music License Renewal



Members of OGR receive the industry's lowest rate of \$223 for their 2010 music license renewals, thanks to the association's alliance with the Funeral and Memorial Information Council (FAMIC) and affiliation with NFDA. By renewing your license, not only do you maintain copyright protection by the three music licensing agencies, BMI, ASCAP, and SESAC, but you ensure you are following the 1984 copyright law and avoiding potential penalties of up to \$30,000.

To renew or apply for your initial music license, contact the membership department at (800) 637-8030, or download the 2010 music license form from [www.ogr.org/memberbenefits.php](http://www.ogr.org/memberbenefits.php).

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Robin Heppell, CFSP**, president of Heppell Funeral Solutions, assists funeral directors and ceterians to become more competitive,

more profitable, and provide the best possible service for the families they serve. To learn more visit [www.funeralfuturist.com](http://www.funeralfuturist.com).

If you think that I am just pushing this Facebook stuff on you because I am a bit of a techie – you're wrong. I'm trying to tell you that it is probably one of the biggest networks in your town and you need to be there! The purpose of this "Best Practices" article is to cut through all of the noise and give you the straight goods and short-cut the learning process for you as I teach you to nurture your online relationships to build your community, increase your credibility and visibility because people want to do business with people that they Know, Like, and Trust – Facebook can help you achieve that!

I don't want Facebook to be a new time-waster although I must warn you: if you are new to Facebook, it is easy to get sucked in, connecting with old friends, checking photos, playing games, taking quizzes, etc. Anyway, after the initial rush wears off, it will be back to business – relationship building business that is!

Before we get into the nuts & bolts, we need to know the difference between Profiles and Pages and the pros and cons of each.

	(+) Pros	(-) Cons
Facebook Profile	You develop an interactive list of Friends	You need to have mutual agreement for friending
	You create a feeling of a more personal connection	People must be Facebook members and be logged in to view
	You gain "perceived" credibility with more Friends	You can't message all friends at once or you could get banned You could get inundated with messages in your Inbox
Facebook Page	You develop a list of Fans (like friends in Profiles)	It is sometimes hard to get people to become Fans
	You can have an unlimited number of Fans	The term "Fan" is a little weird, especially when applied to a funeral home
	You can message an entire group	Doesn't feel like a personal connection
	Your page can be accessed and searched by the public (no Facebook login required)	You don't have the same personal relationship as you only post as the "Business" not as yourself

## Facebook Nuts & Bolts

### Profile Set Up – Phase 1 (takes about an hour)

1. **Select** an appropriate photo, one that best connects you to your audience.
2. **Upload** Contacts from E-mail Accounts/Outlook (I skip the “Invite Others To Facebook”).
3. **Complete** the Profile information. Make it as complete as possible but keep within your comfort level.
4. **Complete** Education and Work Profile Information. This makes it easier for your old contacts to find you.
5. **List** all of your websites under contact information.
6. **Create** Memorable Web Address.

### Profile Set Up – Phase 2 (1 to 2 hours + ongoing)

1. **Search** Friends’ Friends List.
2. **Search** Groups and Fan Pages for possible contacts. You don’t even have to join the group – just see who the members are. But join if you think that it would be valuable.
3. **Search** Your Competitor’s Friends. Click on the View Friends link and add any friends that you think would be appropriate to Friend.

### Fan Page Set Up – Phase 1

1. **Choose** the Category Local > Event Planning Service OR Professional Service.
2. **Choose** the Right Name. Place Important Keywords together with your company’s name such as ‘Your Town’ Funeral Homes (unless that is a competitor’s name).
3. **Upload** your logo or an appropriate photo. Make sure that it is recognizable and if possible, have some personality.
4. **Complete** the Edit Information.
5. **Upload** photos and videos and Tag yourself or staff members if appropriate.
6. **Add Links** to helpful information from your website.

Please remember, *Facebook Pages* and *How Funeral Homes Can Use Facebook*, are works in progress which are some general best practices (for now). Here are some examples of Facebook Pages that you can use as a guide to creating your Page:

<http://companies.to/mccallbros>

<http://companies.to/rmdfuneralhome>

<http://companies.to/maquoketaareaobituaries>

For more information visit

[www.FuneralFacebookFormula.com](http://www.FuneralFacebookFormula.com). **I**



## E-newsletter debuts; social media, blog to follow

The OGR reorganization has resulted in a number of changes in the association’s operation and one of those has been the move to publishing OGR’s magazine, *The Independent*, quarterly. While it may seem this is a reduction in how frequently information is delivered, it actually heralds an increase in that frequency with the introduction of a new online e-newsletter, *The Independent Brief*.

The first issue of *The Independent Brief* was sent via e-mail in early October. Subsequent issues will be e-mailed four times a year to come out in-between issues of the magazine and at other times as situations warrant.

As OGR improves its electronic communications, you can expect to see more features such as interactive capabilities for collecting feedback and other commentary from members including a blog and social media in response to an interest members recently expressed.

## Resource Guide arrives April 2010

The 2010-2011 OGR *Resource Guide* is now in production. Full of updated and new information, this comprehensive resource guide is your must-have reference for the international Order of the Golden Rule. It includes a brief history and current staff plus details about programs, products and services - all designed to make your funeral home exceptional.

## Milestone Anniversaries

### 50 Years (1959)

AUGUST  
**McAvoy O'Hara Company -Evergreen Mortuary**  
San Francisco, Calif.

SEPTEMBER  
**Herrmann Funeral Home, Inc.**  
McCook, Neb.

**Seaver Funeral Service, Inc.**  
Princeton, W. Va.

OCTOBER  
**Frost Funeral Home, LLC.**  
Abingdon, Va.

### 45 Years (1964)

AUGUST  
**Alden-Waggoner Funeral Chapel**  
Boise, Idaho

**McDonald Funeral Home, Inc.**  
Picayune, Miss.

SEPTEMBER  
**E. O. Curry Funeral Home, Inc.**  
Peekskill, N.Y.

**35 Years (1974)**  
OCTOBER  
**Russell Funeral Service**  
Middlefield, Ohio

**30 Years (1979)**  
AUGUST  
**Olson Burke/Sullivan Funeral & Cremation Center**  
Chicago, Ill.

**Stanfill Funeral Homes, Inc.**  
Miami, Fla.

SEPTEMBER  
**A. W. Bennett Co., Inc.**  
Richmond, Va.

**25 Years (1984)**  
AUGUST  
**Ashton Funeral Home, Inc.**  
Easton, Pa.

**Austin F. Knowles, Inc.**  
Port Washington, N.Y.

**Finley Funeral Home**  
Livermore Falls, Me.

**Harry McKneely & Son, Inc.**  
Hammond, La.

**Joseph A. Butler & Son**  
Kansas City, Kan.

**Lawrence H. Woodward**  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

**Morgan Funeral Chapel & Crematory**  
Attalla, Ala.

**Muehlebach Funeral Home**  
Kansas City, Mo.

### 20 Years (1989)

SEPTEMBER  
**Bolger Funeral and Cremation Service**  
Minocqua, Wis.

**Turner Funeral Home, Inc.**  
Chattanooga, Tenn.

OCTOBER  
**Bradley Funeral Home**  
Marlton, N.J.

**10 Years (1999)**  
AUGUST  
**Shelley Funeral Chapels, Inc.**  
Little Falls, Minn.

**Wenner Funeral Home**  
Cold Spring, Minn.

SEPTEMBER  
**Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc.**  
Quezon City, Manila, Phillipines

OCTOBER  
**Higby-McQuiston Mortuary, Inc.**  
Aurora, Neb.

**Rembs Funeral Home, Inc.**  
Marshfield, Wis.

**Seawright Funeral Home**  
Inman, S.C.

**5 Years (2004)**  
AUGUST  
**Berndt-Ledesma Funeral Home**  
Hartford, Wis.

**Martin & Hightower Funeral Home**  
Carrollton, Ga.

SEPTEMBER  
**Austin A. Layne Mortuary, Inc.**  
St. Louis, Mo.

**Beyers Funeral Home & Crematory**  
Leesburg, Fla.

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## Contribution Acknowledgement

The following donations were made recently to the Awards of Excellence Scholarship Fund.

GEORGE IRVIN GREEN  
FUNERAL HOME, INC.

*In memory of*  
GRAHAM VINZANT JR.

IOGR  
*In memory of*  
GRAHAM VINZANT JR.

ONTARIO FUNERAL  
SERVICE ASSOCIATION  
*In memory of*  
HORACE K. BROWN

WENIG FUNERAL HOMES  
*In memory of*  
HORACE K. BROWN

## *In Memoriam*

**M. Graham Vinzant, Jr.**, father-in-law of John Dallas "J.D." Slack (OGR member, former Board member and committee member), died on August 27, 2009, at the age of 78. Mr. Vinzant is survived by his wife, the former Beverly Kessler. He is also survived by a son, Mike Vinzant of Sparks; four daughters, Pat Lindh-Slack, Meredith Howard, Jeannie Vogel and LeAnn Batty; 13 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Mr. Vinzant's former wife, Dorothy M. Vollmerhausen died last year. Memorials to: the OGR Award of Excellence Scholarship Fund. The family may be contacted at slackfh@aol.com or (410) 465-4400.

**Horace K. (Jap) Brown**, father of Koven L. Brown (OGR President), died on August 22, 2009, at the age of 83. Mr. Brown is also survived by his wife, Faye M. Brown; four sisters, Ruth Huston, Burma Bible, Martha Denney and Inez Clark; two brothers, Lamar Brown and Dan Brown; four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Memorials to: the First United Methodist Church of Clanton, P.O. Box 1976, Clanton, AL 35046 or SIFAT (Servants in Faith and Technology), 2944 Co. Road 113, Lineville, AL 36266. Condolences may be posted at [www.klbrown-funeralhome.com](http://www.klbrown-funeralhome.com).

**Anna Belle Walter**, mother of Mark Walter, employee of Colvin Funeral Home, Inc., Princeton, Indiana (OGR member firm), died on July 14, 2009, at the age of 82. Mrs. Walter is also survived by her husband, Rev. Dr. William M. Walter; two other sons, Jerry Walter and Patrick Walter; six grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Memorials to: The Good Samaritan Fund of Aberdeen Village, 17500 119th St., Olathe, KS 66061. Condolences may be expressed at [www.colvinfuneralhome.com](http://www.colvinfuneralhome.com).

## *Welcome New Members*

### Student Members

<b>John G. Ligda</b> Worsham College of Mortuary Science Evergreen Park, Ill.	<b>Joshua E. Allen</b> Northampton Community College Bloomsburg, Pa.	<b>Nina Dohoda</b> Cypress College Whittier, Calif.	<b>Veronica F. Dugan</b> Simmons Institute of Funeral Service Groton, N.Y.	<b>Jerri Reed</b> Worsham College of Mortuary Science Broadview, Ill.
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# For Exemplary Service

## *Alden-Waggoner Funeral Chapel*

*Boise, Idaho*

“Everyone I encountered was professional and caring, from the young man that came for my mother’s body to the staff that served as pall bearers. I buried both of my parents on the same day. I would not have made it without the staff. Other funeral homes should try and match their standards!”

## *Barkdull Funeral Home*

*Shelby, Ohio*

“**Leslie** took care of every detail, even coming to the house several times. She went way beyond what was expected, even in her grief she put us first. The **Barkdulls** put our needs before their own, even though their father was dying. In fact, he died on the day of our calling hours. That is way beyond the call for professionalism. You don’t get any better service than what they provided.”

## *Faulmann & Walsh Golden Rule Funeral Home*

*Fraser, Mich.*

“My mother was cremated the day she died, but **Sara** helped me to have a very non-traditional service for my mother before the cremation. I asked for a personal time with my mom. I wanted to symbolically bathe her and give her two roses from her children. **Sara** was so open to this. She had my mother laid out with a blanket over her. She had soothing music, candles lit, warm oiled water and cloths for me to bathe my mom’s face, arms and legs and a towel to dry her. **Sara** stayed by me and comforted me. It was simple, spiritual and the closing that was complete. I thanked **Sara** from the bottom of my heart.”

## *Freeman Funeral Home*

*Freehold, N.J.*

“**Glenn Freeman** – the integrity and compassion he’d shown is beyond words to describe – He’s awesome! Many thanks for making our Mama’s Funeral a perfect ‘A’. Please be reminded that you just gained an endorser not only to our Filipino Community but to all other people we’ll meet in this lifetime. *Salamat Po!*”

## *John L. Ziegenhein & Sons Funeral Home*

*St. Louis, Mo.*

“Just wanted to commend **Brad Martin** at your South County location for a great job, during a very difficult and stressful time for my brothers and sisters. **Brad** was very professional, accommodating and compassionate. When I asked him about the tight schedule between church & cemetery he said, ‘You grieve with your family and don’t worry about that – you have more important things to contend with.’ When we arrived (late) at Jefferson Barracks, I asked if we could stop in front of the Admin Building to allow my father (86) to use the restroom. **Brad** immediately agreed when I knew this was throwing yet another delay to the schedule.”

## *Kapinos-Mazur Funeral Home*

*Ludlow, Mass.*

“**Ed Mazur** was absolutely wonderful to work with planning our mother’s funeral. He was always professional in his manner and very accommodating to our individual needs. The room and atmosphere was comfortable. We loved the fact that the large windows allowed the sunshine to come through – giving an uplifting and welcoming environment even though the circumstances were sad. The staff were well-dressed. The funeral cars were a beautiful soft green metallic. There is not a thought of anything that we would have changed. We could have not asked for any nicer process from start to finish – we thought it went perfectly.”

## *Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels*

*Enfield, Conn.*

“The hardest phone call I have ever made was to the funeral home. They had heard of our son’s accident and were ready to help. They made the phone calls to get our son back from the medical examiners. They assured us we would have our son and explained why we should not view his remains.

**Cassie** told me she personally would check his condition to see if there was anything they could do to make viewing him a possibility. She suggested we should not, for our own personal well-being. I thank her for that. There are no words that can bring our son back, but the **Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels** helped us through a difficult time with compassion, kindness and understanding.”

*Milkins Funeral Home, Inc.  
Temple, Pa.*

“**Jeff Milkins** is the embodiment of the ‘perfect funeral Director’. He should give seminars on the subject. The staff was congenial and went the extra mile for me. They took 21 brown eyed Susan plants to repast at Sterling (restaurant), etc., etc. The facility is the most beautiful in Berhs County. The landscaping is gorgeous and the interior is museum-like. The ceremony was conducted flawlessly. Couldn’t have been better orchestrated. There was nothing else I needed or desired except, perhaps, the funeral home could write my thank you notes! I would recommend **Milkins** to any person desiring a stress-free experience. I was especially happy that I had pre-planned the funeral. Best way!”

*Shinn Funeral Service  
Russellville, Ark.*

“I have wanted to write this letter to **Ormond Peters** and the staff of **Shinn Funeral Service** since the day following the service but was unable to because I wouldn’t find the appropriate words to express the appreciation of our family for their outstanding attention to our needs. Thank you is

*The members shown here have been cited for providing exemplary service that goes beyond the normal and expected level. The comments were submitted by families responding to Family Contact survey forms. These members are now eligible for the 2010 Gold, Silver and Bronze Exemplary Service Awards. The winners will be honored at the 2010 Annual Conference.*



such a small expression for the courtesy, professionalism and personal attention the staff of **Shinn Funeral Service** extended to us. **Ormond Peters** and his staff are truly a credit to the funeral industry and the Order of the Golden Rule and if my memory served me appropriately I would acknowledge each individual by name. However, I do remember **Paul** and **Jack** being particularly helpful. I don’t know what benefit, if any, the results of this ‘Evaluation of Service’ and this letter will be to **Ormond Peters** and his staff. If they should happen to be the recipients of some form of recognition, it will have to be sizeable to signify their big hearts.”



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# OGR 2010 Annual Conference: Fresh Tomorrows – New Heights,

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WHAT BETTER VENUE and personal experience to fuel your imagination and inspire personal and business renewal than to take in the power and

sweep of the soaring Colorado Rocky Mountains and Pikes Peak. The 2010 OGR Annual Conference brings this experience within your grasp April 22-24, 2010, from the spectacular, five-star Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Never before has the independent funeral home industry faced the triad of threats it faces today and will continue to grapple with tomorrow. It is time to examine these threats, develop strategy and take action. And there is no better place for it than in the shadow of Cheyenne Mountain at the world-famous Broadmoor.

Watch for details and the registration form coming in a Conference brochure in January

INVITE A PROSPECTIVE OGR MEMBER, GET A DISCOUNT

If you know a prospective OGR member, invite them to attend the conference and you will receive a \$50 discount off your conference registration fee if they register. In addition, the prospect will be able to register at the member rate, if referred by a current OGR member.

# New Opportunities

## CALL FOR MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

OGR wants you to share your ideas, knowledge and experience with the attendees of the 2010 Annual Conference to take place April 23-24, 2010, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Members sharing with members is what makes OGR great, so reinforce your commitment to your profession by submitting a proposal today.

### OVERVIEW

- All proposals must be submitted online at [www.ogr.org](http://www.ogr.org) no later than January 10, 2010.
- Each presentation should be one hour in length.
- Presentations must fall into one of the following content areas:
  - a step-by-step tutorial implementing technology (especially social media),
  - innovations that have made a difference in your marketing/PR in a new economy,
  - interim financing solutions for arrangements planning and/or operational growth, or
  - your "best practice" in caring for the family in

making funeral arrangements (this may cover care of the family in planning and/or care of the deceased).

- Presenters are expected to provide handouts for inclusion in the proceedings manual 45 days in advance of the conference.
- Presentations must focus on educating attendees; promoting a company, service or product is not allowed.

### BENEFITS / COMPENSATION

All presenters will be recognized in conference materials, increasing your visibility among your peers.

Presenters will receive a 25% discount on their conference registration. Travel, accommodations and meal expenses are the responsibility of the presenter.

For more information, contact Lisa Krabbenhoft, Director of Education, at [lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org](mailto:lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org) or 800-637-8030.

Apply online at  
[www.ogr.org/2010conf\\_presentationcall.html](http://www.ogr.org/2010conf_presentationcall.html)

**TO REGISTER:**  
 Online: <http://www.ogr.org/>  
 Mail: OGR, 3520 Executive Center Dr., Suite 300, Austin, TX 78731  
 Email: [education@ogr.org](mailto:education@ogr.org)  
 See back cover of this magazine to register today.

# Educational Program

## GENERAL SESSIONS

### Keynote Speakers

#### Brian Grubb

*Director of Learning and Content Delivery,  
The Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center*

Discover how The Ritz-Carlton through its Leadership Center has taught the principles of superior service to more than 50,000 executives worldwide. The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company is the only organization that has twice won the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

In addition, The Ritz-Carlton has won every major award from the hospitality industry and leading consumer groups. The skills you will learn set the stage for empowered employees, effective processes and motivated productivity.

#### Dr. Alan Wolfelt

*Founder and Director, The Center for Loss*

Center for Loss director, Dr. Alan Wolfelt is known around the world for his compassionate messages of hope and healing in grief. Perhaps best known for his model of "companioning" rather than treating the bereaved, Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well so that they can live well and love well.

A noted educator, grief counselor and author of many books and resources helpful to both caregivers and grieving people, Alan will examine and discuss the latest trends in celebration.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A broad range of concurrent sessions focused on issues that are business-critical and success-driven plus special presentations will round out each day as attendees examine the opportunities that await independent funeral home owners and professionals.

Concurrent sessions will drill into the threats we face, help develop strategies and finally create action plans we can use to maintain positions of leadership in the industry and the communities we serve.

## MEMBERS-ONLY SESSIONS

Concurrent volume breakout sessions and the always popular member exchange will help clarify challenges and solutions, and unwrap hidden opportunities from the perspective of working funeral service professionals.

More details plus presenters  
and facilitators will be  
announced in January.

## MEMBER PRESENTATION SESSIONS

OGR invites you to share your knowledge as a funeral services professional at the 2010 Annual Conference at a workshop you

help develop. Sessions normally run 50 minutes. Presentations are invited in the form of papers, slides, discussion panels, and similar.

Topics can include all aspects of the funeral service business or funeral home operation. You may access detailed criteria and submission guidelines online at [www.ogr.org/2010/conf\\_presentationcall.html](http://www.ogr.org/2010/conf_presentationcall.html).

# Social & Networking Programs

## WELCOME RECEPTION

Re-connect with old friends and make new ones at the Welcome Reception Thursday evening.

## AWARDS LUNCHEON

Help honor the winners of the 2010 Member Awards.

## SUPPLIER SHOWCASE

Plenty of time plus a buffet lunch to see the latest supplies and products from industry suppliers. For information about tabletop exhibits, contact Dianne Hughes.

## DUTCH-TREAT DINNERS

These optional dinners will allow you to enjoy some of the area's outstanding restaurants along with OGR colleagues. Each group will be hosted by a Board Member. More to come.

## PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION AND ANNUAL BANQUET

A spirited gala will offer you more fun with good friends. It features a cocktail reception followed by an elegant banquet and exciting entertainment.

## ANNUAL MEETING

Installation of Board members will take place during the State of the Association meeting.

## Accommodations

### The Broadmoor



The Broadmoor is located on 3,000 lush acres under the shadow of Cheyenne Mountain and offers an award-winning spa, fitness center, two swimming pools, three outdoor hot tubs, one lap pool; 54 holes of championship golf, six tennis courts with camps run by Hall-of-Fame member Dennis Ralston; children's programs; 24-hour room service and 25 specialty retail shops. If you are not registered for the conference, your room reservation will be cancelled.

#### Room Rate/Reservations/Deadlines

OGR has reserved a limited number of rooms at The Broadmoor at the special rate of \$205 plus taxes and resort fee, per night, for the nights of April 22, 23 and 24, 2010. Call The Broadmoor at 800-634-7711 and reference OGR to receive this rate. The hotel room/rate reservation deadline is **March 26, 2010**. However, this rate is only guaranteed as long as rooms are available in the OGR room reservation block, so we suggest making your room reservation early. If the room block is full, or it is after March 26, 2010, the hotel will take reservations on a rate and space availability basis only.

Located 60 miles south of Denver and less than two hours from world-class recreation, Colorado Springs is a vacation mecca, drawing over 6 million visitors annually.

## Things To Do

**FROM WILD TO MILD**, you'll find something new and exciting to do every day in Colorado Springs. With over 50 major area attractions, there's always another adventure waiting around the next mountain pass. Or the next block.



**SIGHTSEEING TOURS** range from a ride on the world's highest cog train to the top of Pikes Peak, to the Garden of the



Gods, a tour of the U.S. Air Force Academy, and a visit to the 1,000 foot deep Royal Gorge among many other world-class sights. For details go to <http://www.visitcos.com/Things-To-Do-in-Colorado-Springs>.

**OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES** that include fly-fishing, horseback riding, rock climbing, ballooning, and more can be arranged through the hotel concierge.

# Awards of Excellence Scholarships now available

OGR 2010 Award of Excellence Scholarship applications are available for qualified mortuary science students. Two scholarships will be awarded: one for \$3,500 and one for \$2,000. Scholarships are awarded based on merit as determined by a review panel of OGR Board members.

Awards will be presented at OGR's 2010 Annual Conference in Colorado

Springs, Colorado on April 22 or 23, 2010. OGR will provide airfare and one night of lodging to the \$3,500 scholarship recipient (the top scholarship award winner is strongly encouraged to attend the awards banquet).

For questions about the Awards of Excellence Scholarships contact Lisa Krabbenhoft, at 800-637-8030, or at [lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org](mailto:lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org).

### Eligibility requirements:

1. *Currently* enrolled in a mortuary science degree program at an accredited mortuary school or college.
2. Scheduled to graduate after December 31, 2009 and before August 15, 2010.
3. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in mortuary science courses.
4. Involved in community service activities and school activities.
5. Demonstrate excellence in the pursuit of knowledge in mortuary science.
6. Commit to working for an independently owned funeral home.

### How to apply

1. Access the application online at [www.ogr.org/scholarships.php](http://www.ogr.org/scholarships.php). Save the pdf form to your computer, complete (the form is fillable) print, and sign.
2. Include a copy of your mortuary school program transcript.
3. Include an essay in response to the question found in this application.
4. Submit the application no later than Jan. 15, 2010, directly to the International Order of the Golden Rule at: Education Dept., 3520 Executive Center Dr., Ste. 300, Austin, TX 78731.

## Contributions from members make Awards of Excellence Scholarships possible



THE AWARDS of Excellence Scholarships would not be possible without the annual generous support of many OGR members. Contributions can be made directly to the fund, and designated in someone's memory or in honor of a person or event. Make your commitment today using the form below or online at [www.ogr.org/scholarships.php](http://www.ogr.org/scholarships.php) and help OGR continue to bring these educational opportunities to the next generation of funeral directors.



## Can We Count on You?

Show your support with a contribution to OGR's Awards of Excellence Scholarship Fund



**Yes,** I'm glad to support the OGR Awards of Excellence Scholarship Fund.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Home/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State or Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is in memory/honor of: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable in USD to "OGR Awards of Excellence" and mail to: OGR Education Dept., 3520 Executive Center Dr., Ste. 300, Austin, TX 78731. For questions, call (800) 637-8030, email: [lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org](mailto:lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org), or visit [www.ogr.org](http://www.ogr.org) (OGR Resources, Awards & Scholarships).

# Entries for 2010 Golden Light and Golden Rule Awards Due January 31

OGR invites you to nominate candidates for the 2010 OGR Golden Light Award and for the two Golden Rule Awards - Community Service and Supplier of the Year. These awards are presented annually to members and a supplier who inspire you through leadership and service to the profession and community -- someone who defines success in terms of what he or she gives back.

## Golden Light Award

THE OGR GOLDEN LIGHT Award, now in its eighth year, honors an individual (not a firm) who has made specific, meritorious contributions to society through his or her profession, community or field of voluntary service as lifetime achievements. The winner will receive an engraved trophy and a press release, be recognized at the 2010 Annual Conference, and be acknowledged in *The Independent* and on the OGR web site.

### ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- Any person affiliated with an OGR member firm including owners, managers, staff and self-nominations is eligible to enter;
- Entries must include answers to the questions on the form, where appropriate;
- Consideration will be given to community service activities, contributions to the funeral profession, and development of programs that exemplify "service measured not by gold, but by the Golden Rule."

.....  
For questions about the Golden Light Award, contact Lisa Krabbenhoft at [lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org](mailto:lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org).

Download the Golden Light Award Entry Form at <http://www.ogr.org/scholarships.php>.



# Golden Rule Community Service and Supplier of the Year awards

AS A GOLDEN RULE funeral home, you work hard to distinguish yourself in your community as you serve families with care and compassion. You may also be active in local community service initiatives. This exceptional service may be through your own work or through a special relationship with a particular Golden Services Group supplier that has benefited your funeral home, your families and your community.

## *Community Service Golden Rule Award*

Great funeral firms extend service well beyond what is required in day-to-day operations. OGR members frequently involve themselves in their communities by giving of their time, talents and resources. This award recognizes outstanding community service.

Funeral homes applying for the Community Service award will have:

- Become involved/volunteered in civic organizations, churches or school districts, service organizations, or government entities;
- Sponsored/organized a community event, fund-raiser, campaign, charity event or other activity that benefitted a segment of the community or the population as a whole.



## *Supplier of the Year Award*

Members often develop valuable relationships with Golden Services Group suppliers, enhancing the funeral home's ability to serve families and maximize their operations, while strengthening the supplier's commitment to the association.

Members nominating a Supplier of the Year should show how the company has demonstrated exceptional service to your funeral home above and beyond expectations by —

- Providing accessibility and/or outstanding customer service;
- Addressing problems or concerns with a product and/or service;
- Providing staff training, professional development and/or advisory support.

## ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- All member firms are eligible for the Community Service Award;
- All member firms are eligible to submit the name of a Golden Services Group supplier for consideration of the Supplier of the Year Award;
- Entries must include answers to the questions on the form, where appropriate;
- Support materials should show evidence of the activity or service, such as press clippings, letters of thanks, testimonials, photos, or governmental citations;
- A firm may win this award only once every three years;
- Winner will receive an engraved trophy and a press release, be recognized at the 2010 Annual Conference, and be acknowledged in *The Independent* and on the OGR web site;
- If appropriate, a second- and third-place entry may be cited for Special Recognition. These entries will receive a certificate and press release and be acknowledged in *The Independent* and on the OGR web site;
- Remaining entries will be cited for Honorable Mention and will receive a press release.

For questions about the Golden Rule Awards, contact Lisa Krabbenhoft at [lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org](mailto:lkrabbenhoft@ogr.org).

Download the Golden Rule Awards Entry Form at <http://www.ogr.org/scholarships.php>.

OGR's Golden Services Group is dedicated to helping you operate a profitable, thriving business, while providing families with the latest in memorialization options. For information or to place an order, contact products and services, (800) 637-8030, [mhayes@ogr.org](mailto:mhayes@ogr.org), unless otherwise noted. Visit [www.ogr.org](http://www.ogr.org) regularly for a complete list of GSG products/services, new suppliers, announcements or to order OGR resources online.



*Remember — Supporting our suppliers,  
supports your association.*

## Products

### Deaton-Kennedy Company: High-quality stationery at affordable prices

Now in its third generation, Deaton-Kennedy is a growing, family-owned and operated company that provides *high-quality stationery products* to the funeral industry at affordable prices. Its stationery merchandising solutions are guaranteed to ensure profitability for your funeral home and complete satisfaction for your families.



The following free services/supplements are available:

- ▶ Display product for any stationery merchandising set-up
- ▶ Solid wood display unit with shelving and custom signage (with minimal commitment)
- ▶ Imprinted promotional calendars
- ▶ Telephone support/consultation
- ▶ Software for customizing all Deaton-Kennedy stationery items
- ▶ Gold- or silver-foil imprint on all magnetic retail box sets

*Member Advantage: 100% customer satisfaction and funeral home profitability guaranteed.*

**Contact:** Roberta Bridges, [rbridges@deatonkennedy.com](mailto:rbridges@deatonkennedy.com), or

Dawn Lewis, [dlewis@deatonkennedy.com](mailto:dlewis@deatonkennedy.com), (877) 434-9035.  
[www.deatonkennedy.com](http://www.deatonkennedy.com)

### Meadow Hill creates precious, lasting memories

While keepsakes have long provided comfort to the grieving, jewelry is a meaningful and elegant way to keep a loved one near, even the memory of a cherished pet. Meadow Hill established itself with its line of *Thumbies*, replications of fingerprints, or infant handprints and footprints, used to create unique charms for necklaces bracelets, tie tacks, etc. Thumbies took off so well that Meadow Hill created the *Buddie*, a similar charm but with the paw or nose print of a beloved family pet.



The charms:

- ▶ Are available in sterling silver or 14 K yellow or white gold
- ▶ Contain prong settings made from the same precious metal as the charms
- ▶ Come in standard or grand size
- ▶ Offer single- or double-stone versions
- ▶ May include a synthetic birthstone of the deceased, cubic zirconia, or a certified or Life Gem-created diamond

Marketing materials and a starter kit are provided at no charge.

**Member Advantage:** Wholesale prices.

**Contact:** Adrienne Kalmes, at (877) 848-6243, a.kalmes@meadowhillco.com. [www.thumbies.com](http://www.thumbies.com)

### "The Ride Doesn't Have to End" thanks to Motorcycle Memorials

With an increase in calls direct from consumers, Motorcycle Memorials is quickly trying to expand its retailer base. Since the company doesn't sell direct to the public, it needs funeral homes to direct the business to. This opportunity not only provides you with added internet visibility, but provides your families with something truly unique.



For non-motorcycle enthusiasts as well as those who love the thrill, these *custom tank urns* are so beautiful and appealing, they sell themselves to both ends of the spectrum.

Holding 500 cubic inches of cremated remains, these distinctive urns:

- ▶ Are created to scale, with the Harley Davidson design (a Fortune 500 company product) ensuring decal application from all motorcycle manufacturers
- ▶ Come in popular colors
- ▶ Have professionally polished finishes
- ▶ Include custom pin-striping for a blend of decorative art and hand-crafting
- ▶ Are created with custom artwork to reflect a personality, hobby or lifestyle

Please view the marketing video at [motorcyclememorials.com](http://motorcyclememorials.com) to see how you can use its art department in favor of meeting your families' personalization needs.

Purchasing a half-tank wall mount, a half-tank table/mantle mount or a full-tank to keep on display in your funeral home qualifies you as a retailer. Families can mount the half-tank on blonde, oak or mahogany wood finishes. The half-tank wood piece includes an area to display a photo along with a brass plate suitable for personalized engraving.

**Contact:** Maureen Hayes at OGR, (217) 532-6591, to become a retailer or Jim Moritz at Motorcycle Memorials, (414) 429-4661, for product information.

### Mutual Distribution brings the beauty of Howard Miller clock products

Howard Miller *clock products* add beauty and charm to funeral homes around the world, and its memorial chest urns make beautiful accents to the homes of your families.



Join the countless Golden Rule firms that have already accentuated their businesses with one or several of the quality items offered by Mutual Distribution Systems:

- ▶ Mantel clock
- ▶ Floor clock
- ▶ Plaque clock
- ▶ Wall clock
- ▶ Table clock
- ▶ Display cabinets
- ▶ Memorial chests (personalization available)
- ▶ Keepsakes/gifts
- ▶ Pet memorials

Call today to request the new holiday brochure, featuring great gift ideas for staff, clergy or anyone on your holiday gift list.

**Member Advantages:** 55% off retail on clocks; 10% off wholesale price on urns and keepsakes.

**Contact:** Amy Grigsby, (866) 603-2182, amy@mutualdistribution.com. [www.mutualdistribution.com](http://www.mutualdistribution.com)

### Passages leads in green and biodegradable funeral products

Like yours, Passages International, Inc. is a family-owned and operated business. The affordable, *environmentally friendly alternatives to traditional funeral merchandise* it offers are quickly becoming some of the most frequently purchased products by families.



Selections include:

- ▶ Earthern biodegradable urns (including those for deep water or those that can be written on)
- ▶ Scattering tubes — *very popular*
- ▶ Cornstarch EcoUrns
- ▶ Keepsakes
- ▶ The Shell Urn
- ▶ Eco-friendly green caskets

**Member Advantage:** 10% discount on caskets; 13% discount on urns. [www.earthurn.com](http://www.earthurn.com)

## The Regal Line dignifies memories

The Regal Line has been a trusted name in funeral home stationery products for years. Regal appreciates the role you play in helping families cope with one of the most difficult transitions in life and realizes that your services and offerings add to the memories they hold dear. Having choices is important to families. Regal is always interested in your feedback or suggestions.



Regal Line offers *fine printed products*, including:

- ▶ Prayer cards
- ▶ Clergy record folders
- ▶ Register books
- ▶ Service records
- ▶ Floral record books
- ▶ Bookmarks
- ▶ Acknowledgement cards

**Member Advantage:** 20% discount. [www.regalline.com](http://www.regalline.com)

## Services

### Aurora helps you maximize space and increase profits

The Family Advisor Arrangement System developed by Aurora Casket Company is a comprehensive, yet simple and efficient way to make arrangements with families. Through its *convenient software system*, compatible with SRS Computing management software, the process becomes more comfortable for families, more efficient for your staff and a better use of your floor space.



Lifetimes...A Balanced Funeral Arrangement is a one and one-half day training program designed to help you build long-lasting relationships with your families and balance their needs with the needs of your business. The program is conducted at Aurora's headquarters in Aurora, Ind.

During the training, you'll learn how to:

- ▶ Use the Family Advisor system
- ▶ Provide more personal and meaningful services
- ▶ Effectively showcase the range of options available to families at-need and pre-need

**Member Advantage:** Convenience and savings due to system compatibility.

**Contact:** Aurora, (800) 457-1111, for information about Family Advisor or to enroll in Lifetimes.

## Director OnCall is the answer

With the success of your business on the line, who better than Director OnCall to take calls when you are unavailable? *Answering calls* to funeral homes for over 60 years, Director OnCall puts care, compassion and professionalism into every call answered. Operating with sophisticated software, callers receive world-class customer service round the clock from experienced telephone receptionists, who receive continuous training, while multiple layers of backup are in place to protect against hardware failure and loss of service.



Additionally, for greater peace of mind, Director OnCall has a licensed funeral director available at all times who, with your permission, can assist callers following your exact instructions. You're guaranteed to never again miss a first call!

Optional services include:

- ▶ Voice record (remote access to recorded calls)
- ▶ Email/PCS message delivery
- ▶ Fax message delivery

A base monthly fee includes a set number of usage minutes calculated per second. Charges for additional call minutes are assessed after your base number has been used.

**Member Advantage:** 10% off regular fees.

**Contact:** Linda Murphy 866-847-8010  
[linda@directoroncall.com](mailto:linda@directoroncall.com)

## FFDA serves the accounting needs of independents

Federated Funeral Directors of America (FFDA) has been helping funeral homes *run their business operations* successfully since 1925. Federated's reputation for value and service has attracted over 1,300 independent funeral home clients across the United States, many of which have worked with Federated for over 50 years.



Its field representatives, who come from the funeral profession, bring the Federated advantage right into your office and include:

- ▶ Funeral home accountants
- ▶ Funeral home tax experts
- ▶ Funeral home specialist advisors

Tax season is approaching. Rely on the best preparers in the business.

*Member Advantage: Assuring that your finances will be handled and reported properly.*

**Contact:** FFDA, (800) 877-3332. [www.ffda.com](http://www.ffda.com)

## Interment Trust Services manages all aspects of pre-need trust

Feel confident using the Golden Rule Funeral Trust through ITS (Interment Trust Services), managing all aspects of *pre-need trust*, recordkeeping and investments for 27 years. The Golden Rule Funeral Trust program provides the most important components of a trust fund — relative security, earnings and convenience.



It features:

- ▶ Federal and state regulation compliance
- ▶ Low-risk and relative security by investing in U.S. government and government agency-backed securities
- ▶ Trust tax documentation and preparation, including 1099 reports when required
- ▶ Monthly reports of earnings and accumulation
- ▶ Year-end summary of deposits and withdrawals
- ▶ Easy operating procedures and forms
- ▶ Service agreements
- ▶ 24/7 online account access

If you want flexibility in addition to security, you'll appreciate the optional Tax-Free Trust, which has proven to be a great value for many OGR members. With this, the funds are invested in tax-free instruments, and earnings are exempt from state and federal taxes (and municipal taxes where applicable). Note: Past performance of trust asset investments is not indicative of future results.

*Member Advantage: Exclusive program for Golden Rule funeral homes*

**Contact:** Christopher Chigas, (800) 487-8220, x8233.

## Professional Collection Services cares about your business

For various reasons, you most likely have families in debt to you. With over 44 years' experience in *commercial* and *consumer collections*, and a 75 percent recovery rate within the funeral industry, PCS (Professional Collection Services) is your answer to debt collection. PCS understands the sensitive nature of your business and trains its employees to use a tactful, professional approach when collecting debts. Even your families will appreciate the courteousness expressed by the PCS staff. Here is what fellow member James Shure has to say about PCS's service: "I was apprehensive about calling on a collection agency. This was my first experience with one in the 66 years I've been in business. PCS was professional, caring and informative. The follow-through far exceeded my expectations and put my mind at ease."



PCS prides itself on:

- ▶ Strict adherence to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act
- ▶ Protecting clients' image and public opinion
- ▶ Utilizing prominent legal representation
- ▶ Comprehensive bonding for clients' protection
- ▶ A dedicated collection program, based on clients' needs
- ▶ Timely and accurate reporting
- ▶ Immediate attention to client requests

*Member Advantage: Services performed on contingency; no collection, no fee.*

**Contact:** Jim Dorsa, (631) 265-8600.

## Tributes.com – the place for everything obituary-related.

The obituary section of the newspaper is migrating to the Internet. Obituaries have long been a significant revenue stream for the newspaper, and the cost to place an obituary for a day or two in a lot of markets has become extremely expensive. Tributes.com is part of the movement bringing *obituaries* to the web, both locally and nationally, while providing families a place to build their own tributes. Your funeral home can be an integral part of this trend – and create a new revenue stream as a result of it.



Benefits include:

- ▶ Emailing obituaries and a photo, free of charge, to [obits@tributes.com](mailto:obits@tributes.com)
- ▶ Increasing traffic to your web site through exposure on the Obits and Tributes sections of the site, where your logo and URL promotion will appear
- ▶ A share of the revenue on Tributes
- ▶ Increased number of online condolences
- ▶ Promoting additional services, such as pre-planning or flowers
- ▶ A preferred listing in Funeral Home Finder within local markets
- ▶ Customizable, free funeral home profile pages
- ▶ And more to come

Be a part of the migration today. Don't let this opportunity pass you by.

**Member Advantages:** Free trial and 10% discount on Tribute products.

**Contact:** John Heald, (617) 337-9442, [john@tributes.com](mailto:john@tributes.com)

## OGR Resources

### Friendship Record

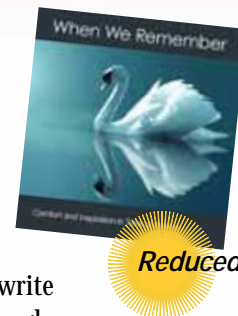
Help families keep track of the kindness shown to them during a difficult time. Includes numbered labels.

10803108U (unimprinted)	
100	.....\$60
250	.....\$143
500	.....\$271
1,000	.....\$520



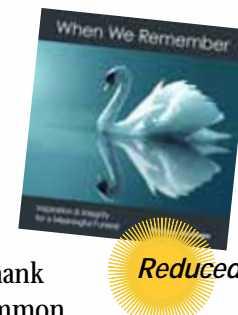
## When We Remember: Comfort and Inspiration in Time of Sorrow

A complement to Melissa Abraham's other book, *Inspiration & Integrity for a Meaningful Funeral* (below), this volume has been used as a substitute for the standard register book. It has pages for families to acknowledge significant dates, gathering/committal details and floral tributes and a place for visitors to write their names and addresses. Included throughout the book are many of the world's best-loved poetry and readings, over 100 song titles from many decades, a professional music CD, and stunning inspirational photographs. . . . . \$29.95 ea. (plus shipping and handling)



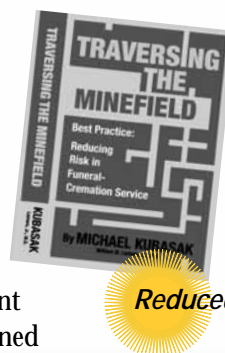
## When We Remember: Inspiration & Integrity for a Meaningful Funeral

This unique and highly acclaimed guide to funeral planning by Melissa Abraham addresses pre-need, at-need and after-care, covering such topics as: reasonable expectations of a funeral home; service arrangement considerations; sacred texts; considerations for after the funeral; financial/legal considerations; thank you's; grief resources; and answers to common bereavement questions. The book includes many of the world's best-loved poetry and readings, over 100 song titles from many decades, a professional music CD, and stunning inspirational photographs. . . . . \$29.95 ea. (plus shipping and handling)



## Traversing the Minefield

Start off the year with a beneficial book for both you and your business. Mike Kubasak's *Traversing the Minefield — Best Practice: Reducing Risk in Funeral-Cremation Service* offers advice on how to avoid lawsuits and costly settlements, reduce risk on burial and cremation calls, and improve service to client families. Golden Rule firms receive a signed copy of this new book for just \$75 ea. (\$30 off retail — and it's autographed).





# 2010 Annual Conference Registration Form

April 22-24, 2010 • Colorado Springs, Colorado

(Please type or print clearly.)

First Registrant: \_\_\_\_\_ Badge Name: \_\_\_\_\_

FH/EMB License: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Add'l Registrant: \_\_\_\_\_ Badge Name: \_\_\_\_\_

FH/EMB License: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

## Conference Packages

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Non-Members</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Full - 1st Registrant (includes all events except Dutch Treat Dinner) .....	\$749	\$849
<input type="checkbox"/> Full - Add'l Registrant (includes all events except Dutch Treat Dinner) .....	\$689	\$789
<input type="checkbox"/> Guest (includes all events except general, educational sessions, and Dutch Treat Dinner) .....	\$449	\$549
<input type="checkbox"/> One-Day (includes all events except Dutch Treat Dinner and Annual Banquet) .....	\$349	\$399
<input type="checkbox"/> Student* (includes all events except Dutch Treat Dinner and Annual Banquet) .....	\$249	\$349
*Student Photo I.D. required		
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Annual Banquet tickets .....	.Qty: _____	x\$175 each
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Welcome Reception tickets .....	.Qty: _____	x\$95 each

Check all that apply to your firm, and note name(s)

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- First-time attendee \_\_\_\_\_
- New member \_\_\_\_\_
- Regional Chair \_\_\_\_\_
- Past President \_\_\_\_\_
- Owner \_\_\_\_\_
- Manager \_\_\_\_\_
- Employee \_\_\_\_\_
- Prospective member referred by \_\_\_\_\_

### Registration & Cancellation Policy:

Full payment must accompany registration. If you are unable to attend, another staff member may attend in your place. If you must cancel, notify OGR in writing no later than 10 days prior to the conference. Refunds will be processed minus a \$75 administrative fee, and no refunds will be made if notified less than 10 days before the event or for no-shows.

### Method of Payment:

My check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (payable to OGR in USD).  
 Charge to my:  Amex  Discover  MasterCard  VISA

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

\* The small 4-digit number on the front of American Express cards or the 3-digit number on the back of other cards.

Mail form with payment to: OGR, 3520 Executive Center Drive, Suite 300, Austin, TX 78731, or fax to: (512) 334-5514.