



From the MFDA Board

There are moments that remind us exactly why this association exists.

The recent outcome of LD 562 was not what we had worked toward. But the process behind it made one thing clear: when funeral professionals across Maine speak together, our voice carries weight.

Legislators heard from you. They heard about the realities of providing 24/7 service, the strain of outdated reimbursement rates, and the role funeral professionals play in Maine's death response system. That does not happen without an organized, unified effort.

That is the role of the Maine Funeral Directors Association.

Much of the work of an association is not always visible. It happens in committee rooms, in conversations with regulators, in tracking legislation, and in ensuring that when issues arise, our profession is represented clearly and responsibly. It is steady, consistent work, and it only works when it is supported by a strong membership.

Your support (both financial and through your engagement) makes this work possible. We encourage you to reach out to fellow funeral professionals who are not members and urge them to join and support the MFDA. The strength of this association is directly tied to the number of professionals willing to stand behind it.

Funeral service in Maine has always been built on professionalism, responsibility, and a commitment to doing things the right way. The MFDA exists to protect and carry that forward.

— *The MFDA Board of Directors*

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Legislative Update - State Level

Your MFDA Board and Legislative Committee have been actively advocating on behalf of Maine funeral professionals. Keith Herrick, Joe Kiley, and Erik Tiner met directly with legislators to explain the impact of this bill on the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and funeral homes across the state.

MFDA members backed that effort by making calls, sending emails, and reaching out to Appropriations Committee members right up to the final vote.

The bill did not pass at the full \$50,000 request. However, it did not die on the Appropriations table. The committee approved \$12,000 in funding, movement on an issue that has gone unaddressed for years.

That did not happen by accident.

Legislators heard directly from funeral professionals. Because of that outreach, there is now a clearer understanding of:

- The role funeral homes play in Maine's death response system
- The financial strain of outdated reimbursement rates
- The risk of continuing without adjustment

This is how progress happens, step by step, built on consistent advocacy and a unified voice.

Your involvement made the difference. Thank you for standing with the Association and supporting this work!

The Governor has signed the bill into law (PL 742), effective 90 days after final adjournment (*sine die*) of the legislative session. Updated reimbursement rates through the OCME are as follows:

- First 25 miles: \$135
- Next 25 miles: \$2.20 per mile (transporting a body)
- Over 50 miles: \$2.00 per mile (transporting a body)
- Required wait time at the OCME due to official processes will be reimbursed at the rate established under Title 26, section 664, subsection 1 (currently \$15.10 per hour).

Keith Herrick will present on Advocacy and Legislation at the Annual Fall Fest Convention, offering a closer look at how Maine's legislative process works and how members can stay involved.

Without a unified association, this issue would not have moved at all!

Legislative Update - National Level from the NFDA

NFDA Members Showed Up for the Funeral Service Profession and Stood Up for Those They Serve.

Funeral professionals advocate for families, honor the deceased and advance funeral service at NFDA's 2026 Advocacy Summit.

For Immediate Release: April 23, 2026

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) once again demonstrated why it is the leading voice of funeral service in the United States and around the world, bringing an unmatched show of strength, credibility and purpose to Washington, D.C., for the 2026 Advocacy Summit.

“Funeral service professionals have a powerful story to tell, and our members brought that story directly to Capitol Hill in a meaningful way,” said NFDA President Dan Ford, CFSP, CCSP. “They’re not speaking in generalities. They’re sharing real experiences from the families and communities they serve every day and that really resonated with lawmakers. What truly sets NFDA apart is that our advocacy doesn’t stop when the Summit ends. Because we have a full-time lobbyist in Washington, D.C., we are advancing the profession’s priorities every day. This event amplifies that work in a highly visible and impactful way.”

Elevating the Voice of Funeral Service

During their meetings with members of Congress and their staff, NFDA members advocated for key legislative priorities affecting funeral homes, grieving families and communities nationwide, including:

Consensual Donation and Research Integrity Act (S.1270 / H.R.2589) – NFDA members confronted the reality of unethical body brokers by demanding dignity, transparency and accountability because the deceased deserve respect, not exploitation.

Funeral Coverage Act (H.R. 2436) – Association members stood up for grieving families by supporting legislation that expands the use of tax free HSA funds to help pay for funeral and burial expenses.

Death Tax Repeal Act (S.587 / H.R.1301) – NFDA fought for tax reform that will protect family owned funeral businesses so they can remain pillars of their communities and continue caring for families with compassion and stability.

Multiple bills to improve funeral and burial benefits for veterans – NFDA members honored those who served by advocating for veterans’ funerals and burial benefits that reflect our nation’s gratitude.

No IRIS Act (S.623 / H.R.1415) – NFDA pushed for sound science to be used by the EPA as the assess formaldehyde.

More than 160 NFDA members representing 36 states and Washington, D.C., conducted 205 meetings with federal lawmakers, delivering a clear message: funeral service is essential, grieving families must be protected and the funeral profession will be heard. Meetings took place across both chambers of Congress, including 69 Senate meetings and 136 House meetings, ensuring broad engagement with lawmakers and their staff on issues impacting funeral service and the families they serve. This level of access and engagement reflects NFDA’s leadership in advocacy. NFDA is the only national funeral service association with a full-time lobbyist in Washington, D.C., ensuring the profession maintains a consistent, credible voice where policy decisions are made.

With comprehensive issue briefings, talking points and on-the-ground support from NFDA staff, participants were well-prepared to engage in substantive, solutions-focused conversations with policymakers.

“One of the most effective ways to educate policymakers is by connecting them directly with the professionals doing the work,” said Lesley Witter, NFDA senior vice president of advocacy and federal lobbyist. “Our members bring credibility, compassion and firsthand insight to every conversation. NFDA’s strength is our consistent presence in Washington. We are actively engaged year-round in the

legislative and regulatory process, building relationships and ensuring funeral service is understood and making sure the voice of funeral service is heard where decisions are made. That consistency drives real results.”

More Than Meetings, a Lasting Impact

Beyond the numbers, the Advocacy Summit created meaningful opportunities for funeral service professionals to build relationships with elected officials and serve as trusted resources on issues affecting their communities. For many attendees, the experience was both impactful and inspiring.

“It’s a little overwhelming at first, but [NFDA] give[s] you all the tools you need to succeed,” said Kelly Walker of Anderson’s Tribute Center in Hood River, Oregon. “It makes you feel like your voice is important. It’s been an empowering experience that I would recommend to anybody.”

“This is how our nation works – how we make change, how we advocate for ourselves,” said Logan Bryant of Smith Funeral & Cremation Service in Maryville, Tennessee. “It’s an incredible chance to participate in our nation’s democracy and represent the families we serve.”

A Year-Round Commitment to Advocacy

While the Advocacy Summit is a cornerstone event, NFDA’s work in Washington, D.C., continues every day. With a dedicated full-time lobbyist, NFDA ensures that funeral service remains visible, respected and well-represented at the federal level.

At a time when legislative and regulatory decisions increasingly impact small businesses and the families they serve, that sustained presence is critical.

Looking Ahead

NFDA will continue to build on the momentum generated at this year’s Summit, strengthening relationships with policymakers and advancing priorities that support funeral service professionals and the grieving families they serve nationwide.

The 2027 NFDA Advocacy Summit will take place April 28 through 30, 2027, at The Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., and is open to any member who wants to make a difference in their profession and for the families they serve.

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving 20,000 individual members who represent nearly 11,000 funeral homes in the United States and 49 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. NFDA is the association of choice because it offers funeral professionals comprehensive educational resources, tools to manage successful businesses, guidance to become pillars in their communities and the expertise to foster future generations of funeral professionals. NFDA is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis., and has an office in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit NFDA.org.

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You Are Cordially Invited To Attend



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Funeral Service

Graduate Pinning Ceremony & Pi Sigma Eta Induction

Class Of 2026

Wednesday 13th of May 2026

Pi Sigma Eta Induction

12:00-12:30

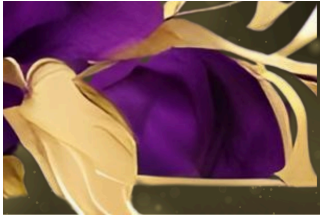
Graduate Pinning

Please arrive by 1:00 p.m.

Pre-Ceremony Starts 1:15 p.m.



Scan the QR code to kindly
RSVP by May 6th



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Grand Opening

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An advertisement for Superior Parks Sales. At the top, it says 'INSPIRATION BEGINS HERE' in a large, stylized font, followed by 'New & Pre-Owned Hearses, Limousines, First Call Vehicles, Flower Cars'. To the right, it says '4 Generations of Serving Maine' and 'Michael C Nathan Parks'. The main image shows four hearses parked in front of a building. A QR code is in the bottom left corner with the word 'inventory' below it. At the bottom, it says 'Call Today 1-800-229-5008 - www.parkssuperior.com' and includes social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. The Superior Parks Sales logo is also visible in the top right of the ad.



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Welcome Kerry Libby

Please join us in welcoming MFDA Sponsor Kerry Libby of Valor Technical Cleaning! You can meet Kerry at the MFDA Fall Fest Convention. Her contact info is listed below.

Introduction From Kerry:

I am a 24-year veteran of law enforcement, with much of my career spent as a detective handling complex and sensitive cases. I hold a bachelor's degree from the University of Maine and have earned certifications in homicide investigation, evidence technology, and hostage negotiation—building a strong foundation in managing critical incidents and death scenes with precision and professionalism.

Throughout my career, I have developed extensive experience working death investigations, gaining a deep understanding of both the technical demands and the human side of these situations. Death scene work has long been an area of professional focus for me, shaping the respect, discretion, and attention to detail I bring to every environment.

Today, I am part of Valor Technical Cleaning, which is a specialized after-death biohazard remediation service, partnering closely with funeral homes to provide reliable, compliant, and compassionate cleanup services. My mission is simple, I want to partner with funeral homes to help restore homes safely and respectfully, so that families can move on after traumatic events.

I look forward to working with you all!

Kerry Libby

Market Leader | A.D. Valor Technical Cleaning

****24/7 on all biohazard related cleanups is (855) 476-4911****

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Why Funeral Professionals Partner With Valor

- We align with your level of care & professionalism
- We protect the family experience you've worked hard to build
- We communicate clearly so families are not confused or overwhelmed

How We Support You

You carry families through one of the most emotional processes of their lives.

We complement your role by:

- Handling the environment so families can focus on memorialization
- Preventing additional stress or unexpected issues
- Reinforcing a seamless, support experience

Our Commitment to Families

- Gentle, respectful communication
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Did you know that **75% of families say personalization is essential—**
yet only 53% of directors prioritize it.*

**Batesville Consumer Journey Market Research, Burke, Inc., Oct. 2024*

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Did you Know?

Funeral homes are designated as public accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All funeral homes must take steps to make facilities accessible to members of the public with disabilities. The public accommodation provisions of the ADA require businesses to make reasonable attempts to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy the same level of service provided to individuals without disabilities.

Auxiliary aids and services (such as a sign language interpreter) must be provided by the funeral home unless such actions would result in an undue burden, defined as significant difficulty or expense.

The cost of an interpreter is generally not considered an undue burden.

As long as a qualified interpreter is provided, it does not have to be the individual selected by the person needing the accommodation.9963

Below are some Interpreters that our members have used:

[Mary Jane Grant](#)

[Pine Tree Society](#)

Do you have a question that you would like to ask or information that you would like to share with your fellow colleagues? Email carolgay@mainefuneraldirectors.org

Thank you to our Bronze Sponsors:



NFDA Educational Events

Strengthen Your Arrangement Skills From Anywhere

Arrangements are at the heart of meaningful funeral services, and NFDA's Virtual Arrangement Solutions Academy is designed to help you approach them with greater confidence, clarity and connection. Join us for one of two upcoming live, interactive training sessions in March and April. Led by NFDA trainer Lanae Strovers, the Academy brings together funeral professionals in a small-group setting to explore real-world strategies you can apply immediately. [Learn more and sign up today.](#)

Upcoming Events

Missed a recent NFDA Webinar? Check out recordings of select events [here.](#)

- Webinar: Sowing Trust: Harvesting the Benefits of Authentic Consumer Engagement, May 20, 2026 01:00 PM
- Webinar: Annual FTC Funeral Rule Review, June 17, 2026 01:00 PM

Conferences & Events

- May 4-6, Embalming & Restorative Art Seminar, Pittsburgh, PA
- May 6-8, Embalming & Restorative Art Seminar, Pittsburgh, PA
- May 6-9, Professional Women's Conference, St. Pete Beach, FL
- August 2-5, Leadership Conference, Louisville, KY
- October 25-28, NFDA International Convention & Expo, Charlotte, NC – registration opens June 2

Level Up Webinar Series – free for NFDA members and \$79 for nonmembers

- May 20, Sowing Trust: Harvesting the Benefits of Authentic Consumer Engagement
- June 17, Annual FTC Funeral Rule Review

NFDA Cremation Certification Program

- May 20, Detroit, MI

Find additional dates near you!

Earn cremation certification from the comfort of your home or office with our [online certification option](#).

NFDA Arranger Training

- May 4, Wichita, KS

InSight Institute's Certified Celebrant Training

- June 24 through 26 at NFDA Headquarters in Brookfield, Wisconsin

NFDA Certified Preplanning Consultant Program

Earn your CPC designation from the comfort of your workplace or home with our self-study option.

Other NFDA Events

Visit our events calendar, [NFDA.org/Events](https://www.nfda.org/Events)



Save the Date: 2026 MFDA Fall Fest

October 13–14, 2026

In 2026, the MFDA Fall Fest moves to the beautiful **Harraseeket Inn in Freeport** — a classic Maine setting that offers the perfect blend of education, connection, and a little well-earned relaxation.

Expect the same strong CEU programming, meaningful networking, and Scholarship Fund support you value — with a fresh backdrop and a few new touches we can't wait to share.

Freeport in October speaks for itself — crisp air, coastal views, and plenty to explore between sessions.

Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, October 13

- MFDA Scholarship Fundraiser – Val Halla Golf Course (11:30am–6:30pm)
- MFDA Meet & Greet – Harraseeket Inn (7:00pm–11:00pm)

Wednesday, October 14

- MFDA Fall Fest Convention – Harraseeket Inn (7:30am–4:30pm)
- 6 CEUs
- Annual Member Meeting
- Networking, great food, raffles, and time with colleagues from across Maine

This event continues to strengthen our profession while supporting the students preparing to join it.

More details — including programming and registration — will be coming soon.

For now, mark your calendar.

You won't want to miss this one!

Make your reservations at the charming [Harraseeket Inn](#).

The group rate is \$209 plus tax. You can either call the Inn directly at 207-865-9377, press option 2 to speak with a Guest Service Representative OR use the link below:

[Harraseeket Inn Reservations: MFDA Fall Fest, October 12-14, 2026](#)

Lodging Cutoff Date is Monday, 9/14/2026