

THE THANA GRAM

Summer 2022

Official Publication of the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

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TFDA/TFSSC
119TH
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President's Message

Brent T. McNeeley • TFDA Board of Directors



Greetings TFDA Professionals!

It was so great to see everyone in Franklin! Renewing old friendships and creating new ones is one of my favorite parts of our TFDA Convention. Our event kicked off on Sunday with phenomenal educational opportunities and honoring those friends, family, and colleagues who have passed away this year, and concluded with a truly elegant grand banquet, with many laughs and fun times at the events in between. Our exhibit floor was jam packed with great vendors and members of the TFSSC. Every detail of the week was perfectly executed by President Marc Sims and his wonderful family, many of which have become lifelong friends to not only me, but many others in the TFDA. President Sims has set an extremely high bar for our association and our convention moving forward. Congratulations to our new board members, and TFSSC President (and longtime family friend), Tim Bond. Welcoming new incoming board members is always an exciting time, and I look forward to hearing the great ideas that will be brought to the table of how to better our already solid association.

A lot of us are asked this question regularly, "What does the TFDA do for me and my business?" The short answer can be summed up pretty quickly: Communication, Education, and Legislation, and attending our annual convention is a great way to see all of these in action. The Governmental Affairs Committee is one of our most active committees, and together with our TFDA Lobbyist, Jay Bucy, with Capitol and 5th Public Strategies, we stay on the forefront of rapidly changing legislation and policies that effect our esteemed profession.

In closing, we all have a great opportunity daily to make a positive impact on our time honored profession. I am extremely grateful for the friendships and opportunities being a member of TFDA and our profession has awarded me. Thank you tremendously for your support and I am so humbled to serve as your President.

Respectfully,
Brent T. McNeeley



The Tennessee Funeral Directors Association Board of Directors and Staff are here for you.

Our Mission:

To be the Tennessee Funeral Professional leadership advocate, through communication, education and legislation, thereby empowering the licensed funeral professional the ability to serve at the highest level.



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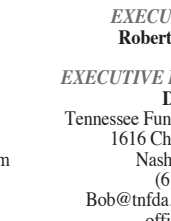
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2022 Tennessee Funeral Directors Association *Wall of Fame Induction Presentation*

In 2006 the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association established the TFDA Wall of Fame. Since 2006 our association has recognized individuals who have gone beyond the call of duty to serve and to lead the association. The TFDA continues to enjoy many of their accomplishments and utilizes many of the programs these individuals set in place.

No doubt these individuals were very successful in their home communities. They belong to civic organizations, serve on many non-profit boards, support every fund raiser in town, and if the truth be known, they belong to two or three churches. But these honorees also choose to share their talents and abilities with our state association, to advance continuing education, establish relationships with state and national leaders, promote legislation for the good of those we serve, and to promote comradery among ourselves.

You can call these individuals legends, you can call them servants, you can call them professionals, you can call some of them characters, but we all call them friends. With them it's more than their day job. These guys build bridges. They walk the walk.

Our honoree this year has a rich heritage in our association and has served faithfully in many areas of the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association. Our honoree is a funeral director's funeral director. It's in his blood. He may bleed orange, but he is TFDA true.

He has spent his entire life in the funeral business. He was actually born into this profession, grew up living in the funeral home and now makes his home close by. He has dedicated his entire life to serving the people of the community in his capacity as funeral director and friend, and has always gone above and beyond what is required.

Our honoree served as a district board member from 1990 to 1992. During that period TFDA's executive director retired and the search for a replacement began. As board members collected and reviewed resumes, the final candidates were approved. Our honoree went the extra mile to physically visit and informally assess candidates before interviews were scheduled. His foresight and unselfish effort spared the TFDA Board hours of strenuous deliberation.

He later went through the executive chairs of our association. During his time as TFDA President in 2006-2007, the Board retained the first full-time lobbyist for TFDA. The addition of a lobbyist has increased TFDA's presence in the Tennessee legislature tremendously. Several TFDA sponsored bills have become law thanks to our honorees foresight and willingness to act. Our honoree continues to be an integral part of our legislative endeavors.

TN Funeral Securities, Inc., TFSI, the pro-profit branch of TFDA, is a major contributor to the financial stability of TFDA. There was a time TFSI was going through many changes regarding retention of board members. There was a period in which no board meetings were held, and TFSI was facing termination. Our honoree recognized the situation and offered to help. He took on the task to recruiting other TFDA members to form a new board, keeping TFSI operational. The financial stability presently enjoyed by TFDA would not be possible had he not recognized the important of TFSI.

Our honoree has been a fixture at annual conventions for many years and has been an avid supporter of the reigning boards. Our honoree's heart is, and has always been, dedicated to serving others with a humble spirit that is simply his nature.

I was leading a funeral precision last Saturday, and was thinking of this very presentation. I passed an elementary school and the marquee out front read, "Don't complain, contribute."

Our honoree is a contributor!

Our 2022 inductee to the TFDA Wall of Fame, Mr. W. Jack Farrar.



Obituaries



Pamela S. "Pam" Farrar, age 73 of Dandridge, TN passed away suddenly Saturday, May 7, 2022. She was born October 5, 1948, to the late Roy E. "Toad" Farrar and Helen "Pinky" Ward Farrar. Pam is survived by her brothers, Rick Farrar and TFDA Past President Jack (Tammie) Farrar; nieces, former TFDA East District Director Laura (Cody) Cantrell and Kelly (Carey) Farrar.

Farrar Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.



Ellis Condor Galyon, Jr., Ellis Galyon, son, Ambulance & Coach Sales, Tennessee Funeral Supply Sales Club member and TFSSC Past President.

Ellis Condor Galyon, Jr., age 59, of Atlanta, Georgia, passed away on Wednesday, June 1, 2022.

He is survived by his four children, Ellis Condor Galyon, III, of Melbourne, Florida,

Winter Reid Galyon of Atlanta, Georgia, Harrison Fodor Galyon, U. S. Air Force, Grand Forks, North Dakota, and daughter, Olivia Grace Carr Galyon, of Atlanta, Georgia. He is also survived by his parents, Ellis Condor Galyon, Sr. and his wife, Chris Galyon of Brentwood, Tennessee; sister and brother-in-law, Lori and David John of Franklin, Tennessee, as well as niece, Danielle John Montesi (Sean) and their children, Elle and Ethan, of Memphis, Tennessee, and nephew, Owen David John, II, of Nashville, Tennessee.

Ellis was predeceased by his mother, Charlsie Lourine Harrison Aiken and stepfather, Fay (Gus) Louis Aiken of Knoxville, Tennessee; maternal grandparents, Charles A. and Donna Lourine Harrison of Sweetwater, Tennessee; paternal grandparents, Ellis Eli and Ruby Elizabeth Wilkins Galyon of Sweetwater, Tennessee; Uncle, Rex Lee Galyon; an aunt and uncle, Jeanette and Calvin Miller and Uncle Sam Underwood.

Ellis attended Farragut High School in Knoxville where he enjoyed his leadership in the marching band, maintained "first chair" in the clarinet section, while also athletically excelling as a long-distance runner for the high school track team. He was a profound lover of music, distinguished by his innate gift of perfect pitch. He was self-taught in guitar, clarinet and piano, instruments he pursued with passion.

With the encouragement of his father, he attended, along with his sister, Lori, the University of Tennessee where he performed with the University of Tennessee Pride of the Southland Band and graduated Magna Cum Laude from what has become The Haslam College of Business in Knoxville. His education afforded him a professional and strategic perspective when he was first hired by a small restaurant in Knoxville, the first of many experiences ranging from frontline service, owner proprietor, to regional management consultant.

Ellis was a loving and thoughtful son and father to his children, as well as a dear and lifelong friend to his sister, Lori.

Friends will remember Ellis for his creative spirit in leading several restaurant enterprises in the South, including L&N Seafood, Outback Steakhouse and Atlanta Bread Company. In recent years, he focused on investing in real estate.

Kyker Funeral Homes, Sweetwater, in charge of arrangements. www.kykerfuneralhomes.com

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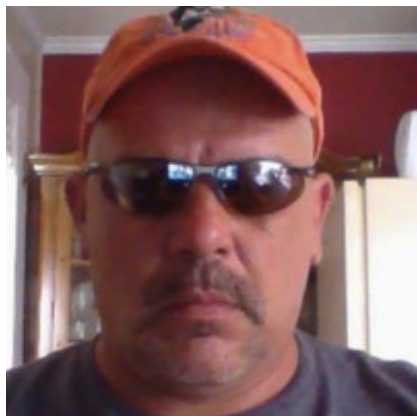
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Brother of Dwayne Cobb- Owner of Akins-Cobb Funerals & Cremations in Copperhill, TN and Akins -Cobb Funerals & Cremations

Stanley David Cobb, age 55, of Mesa, Arizona passed away Sunday, June 12, 2022 at Banner University Medical Center in Phoenix, Arizona. David was born on June 26, 1966

in Detroit, Michigan to the late William Cobb and the late Janice Bishop Golden. Along with his parents, he is preceded in death by his grandparents, Edgar and Carrie Henson.

David was an extraordinarily skilled framing carpenter that had a knack of figuring out how to build just about anything. He was always willing to have a cup of coffee and talk the night away. David enjoyed Mopar cars and trucks and traveling the country. He was a man that truly did life his way.

Survivors include his brother and sister-in-law, Dwayne and Dorinda Cobb; nieces and nephews, Blythe Dawson, Trudy Cobb, Blake Cobb, and Claire Cobb; a great nephew, Dexter Dawson; aunt, Sylvia Bell Beaver; and his special cousins, Linda Steinbrenner, Dale Wilson, and Wayne Wilson.



Nelson Randolph "Randy" Short

Age 63 of Goodlettsville passed away Saturday, June 18, 2022, at The Residence of Alive Hospice. He was born July 17, 1958, in Nashville, TN to Nelson "Hayes" and Delois Jones Short. Randy loved and served the White House community for many years.

He served as Fire Chief for the Volunteer Fire Department, a deputy for the Robertson County Sheriff's Department and served as an EMT for the Sumner County Ambulance Service. He began his career in funeral service as an apprentice for Barber Funeral Home. He worked for many years at Cole & Garrett Funeral Home and served as manager for Phillips Robinson Funeral Home in Hendersonville. He retired as manager of Austin & Bell Funeral Home in White House in 2019, after becoming disabled. He loved serving families and funeral service was his life. Randy enjoyed thrift store shopping and collecting antiques. He is preceded in death by his father, Nelson "Hayes" Short. He is survived by his spouse and best friend, Brian Shreeve, Goodlettsville, TN; mother, Delois Short, Cottontown, TN; brothers, Andy (Donna) Short, Cottontown, TN and Billy (Elisa) Short, Clarksville, TN; sister, Tammy (Kenny) Allen, Portland, TN; several aunts; numerous nieces and nephews.

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Kim Vencion Ray of Waynesboro, TN was born February 4, 1961 in Waynesboro, TN, the daughter of Clara Nell Pope Vencion of Waynesboro, TN, who survives and the late James Edward Vencion. She was united in marriage to Jerry Wayne Ray on April 28, 1989.

Mrs. Ray was the secretary for 39 years at Shackelford Funeral Directors of Wayne County in Waynesboro, TN and was a member of the Waynesboro Church of God in Waynesboro, Tennessee. She was affectionately known as "Mama Kim".

Mrs. Ray departed this life on Friday, June 24, 2022 at St. Thomas Hospital West in Nashville, Tennessee at the age of 61 Years, 4 Months and 20 Days after a brief illness.

Other than her mother, Mrs. Ray is survived by her husband, Jerry Wayne Ray, daughters, Anna Ray Carroll and husband, Macon and Bailey Kilburn, one grandson, Vencion Carroll, her sister, Lisa Vencion Daniel and husband, Anthony all of Waynesboro, TN and aunts, uncles and cousins.

In addition to her father, Mrs. Ray was preceded in death by grandparents, Harvey and Audrey Pope and Leonard and Lorene Vencion.



John Roy Cason was born September 14, 1963 in Jackson County, TN and he passed away on Thursday, July 7, 2022 at his residence at the age of 58.

John was the son of Roy W. Cason and Anna Jo Cherry Cason Cook. He was a graduate of JCHS Class of 1981, Jackson County Commissioner for 24 years, Jackson County Mayor 2010-2014, Farm Bureau Director, Member of the Jackson County Cattlemen's Association and a member of the Gainesboro Church of Christ. John was employed at Anderson Upper Cumberland Funeral Home and was a farmer.

He was preceded in death by his Parents, step-father: Dow Cook and step brother, Charles Cook.

Survivors include his sister, Cherry (Anthony) Ramsey of Whitleyville, aunt, Carol Chapman of Franklin, TN; step brother, Ralph and Elaine Cook of Pleasant Shade, TN; step sister, Judy Tomchey of Nashville; Niece, Rebekah (Troy) Daniels of Hilham, TN; great nieces, Savannah and Susannah Daniels both of Hilham.

Anderson Upper Cumberland Funeral Home in charge of arrangements. 931-268-1550

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TFDA & TFSSC 2022 Convention

The TFDA office would like to say **THANK YOU TO ALL INVOLVED!** The 2022 TFDA/TFSSC 119th Annual Convention was a huge success! There were 94 firms represented, 430 in attendance and 44 exhibitors.

The Embassy Suites Hotel was absolutely beautiful with floral arrangements displayed and arranged by **Michael Sims, Michael Stephen Smith** and **Karen Mitchell**. No one would ever know that the flowers were silk, they were so gorgeous! They decorated the entire hotel! It was one of the most beautiful conventions ever!

We would like to say “Thank you” to our special guest and speakers. **Marc and Angela Sims** invited their pastor, **Bro. John Coleman** and his wife, **Denise** to serve as our Convention Chaplain. We would like to say “Thank You” for your time and spiritual guidance.

Thank you, **Scott Serafin** from **Wealth Management, 770 Group**, for your presentation of “Principles of Investing”. The TFDA

membership benefited from the knowledge of the TFDA Master Trust **Paul VonSchoeler**.

Mrs. Mary Russell always does a wonderful job! She presented “Wow, Them! With Service They’ll Never Forget” and “What Now? The Virtual Reality of Funeral Service”. Thank you, **Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions**, for sponsoring **Mrs. Mary Russell!**

As always, **Rosemary Harrison**, Memorial Service Chairperson, did a great job getting the TFDA Choir together for a heartfelt Memorial Service. Thank you, **Messenger/Bass-Mollett**, for sponsoring the Remembrance Gifts and **Tukio’s** for sponsoring the Memorial Service video. Thank you to those that participated in the choir: **Susie Sowell, Charlotte Williams, Mike Smalley, Marc Sims, Michael Sims, Dale Layne & twins, Roger Balentine, Joe Copolo & Greg Rush**.

It was a packed house with 44 exhibitors. Listed below:

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ASD

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Tournament Lunch Sponsor

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Special guest, **Mike Squires, Southern Calls Magazine**, did an excellent job presenting “A Funeral Directors Perspective”, for the Joint Luncheon, Sponsored by **Tennessee Donors Services**. In Mike’s presentation, he described how childhood and adult tragedies in his life prepared him to publish the “Southern Funeral Director” and to “Always Follow Your Passion”.

The Monday Night Silent and Live Auction along with **Henry Cho** turned out to be fantastic! **Henry Cho** is so refreshing with his comedy. He talked about his life with his family and had everyone literally laughing out loud!

After **Henry Cho**, it was time to get to business with the Silent and Live Auction raising resources for the TFDA PAC Fund. The Silent and Live Auction can get competitive! This year was exceptional! We raised \$12,990, plus during the Golf Tournament, the winners donated their winnings to the PAC also! (listed below)

The total amount raised for the TFDA PAC Fund, with the Silent and Live Auction along with the donation from the winners of the Golf Tournament, \$13,600.00!

A thank you goes out to **Wilbert Vaults of Tennessee** for Sponsoring the Golf Tournament Lunch.

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Sweet Jordan's Basket #2	Ridgeway Funeral Home	Abbie Sims	\$65
Arcade Hover Shot	Karnes & Son FH	Addison Jeffers	\$60
Lake House Cart	Williamson Memorial FH	Addison Jeffers	\$400
Easter Utensils Cooking Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Bob Bell	\$45
Brahmin Brown Card Wallet	Shields Prof. Vehicles	Brad Ridgeway	\$60
Donation		Brad Ridgeway	\$235
"Outdoor Fun"	Dyersburg FH	Brandon Yarbrough	\$150
"Let's Play" Basket & Cake	Music City Mortuary	Chris Christian	\$80
96oz Solid Poplar Bat	Cripple Creek Casket Co	Chris Christian	\$200
"Bless Our Home" Fall Table Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Eric Carpenter	\$85
Pioneer Woman Dinnerware & Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Eric Carpenter	\$80
"The Dad Pak"	Dyersburg FH	Greg Rush	\$80
Eagle Figurine	Jerry Griffie	James Rankin	\$30
Velvatone Lotion	Dodge	Jennifer Tilghman	\$60
Multi-Wood Rocking Chair	Cripple Creek Casket Co	Justin Jeffers	\$550
Stanley FatMax Jumpstarter / Power Box	Investors Heritage	Justin Jeffers	\$300
Coach Long Zip Around Wallet	Tony Hysmith	Karen Conder	\$200
"Time to Relax" Basket	Mid-South Mortuary	Langley Martin	\$110
Donation		Marc Sims	\$400
Roku 58" Television	Wilbert	Marc Sims	\$575
Sweet Jordan's Basket #1	Ridgeway Funeral Home	Mattie Moore	\$60
Michael Kors Crossbody Handbag	Tony Hysmith	Mattie Moore	\$130
Loveless Café Basket	Atlantic Coast Life Insurance	Mattie Moore	\$115
Kentucky Bourbon Collection	Moore-Cortner FH	Michael Tilghman	\$450
Tennessee Whiskey Collection	Moore-Cortner FH	Michael Tilghman	\$375
"Taco Tuesday" Taco Bar & Margarita Package	Karnes & Son FH	Randy Nash	\$100
Brahmin Black Wallet	Shields Prof. Vehicles	Randy Nash	\$60
Nashville Sounds Baseball Package	Williamson Memorial FH	Randy Nash	\$345
Brahmin Purse & Wallet	Shields Prof. Vehicles	Reda Blair	\$250
Univ of TN 'Smokey & Jack' Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Roger McEwen	\$110
Stonehaus Winery Basket	Christian Sells FH	Roger McEwen	\$75
Fall Greetings Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Seth Forrester	\$85
Multi-Wood Glider	Cripple Creek Casket Co	Shannon Kalthoff	\$650
Frederik Poplar Casket	Matthews Aurora	Steve Spann	\$2,400
Bolton 20ga Gasketed Casket	Matthews Aurora	Steve Spann	\$1,750
Donation		Taylor Moore	\$100
10-piece DeWalt Cordless Tool Set	Taylor Moore / Dyersburg FH	Taylor Moore	\$1,100
2-player Electronic Laser Tag	Karnes & Son FH	Terry McCreight	\$70
Woodford Reserve Golf Basket	Karnes & Son FH	Todd Yates	\$80
2-ton Hand Power Puller	A Friend of TFDA	Todd Yates	\$40
"Been a Long Day" Basket	Yarbrough Mortuary Service	Tony Sowell	\$80
Gemini Silver 20ga Non-gasketed Casket	Batesville	Tony Sowell	\$800
		GRAND TOTAL	\$12,990

An aerial photograph of a lush green forest with a river winding through it. The river is dark and reflects the surrounding trees. The sky is visible through the canopy in some areas.

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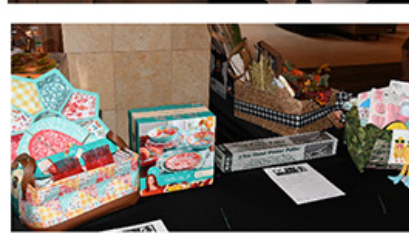
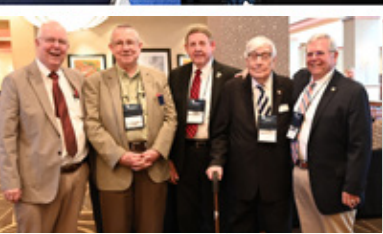
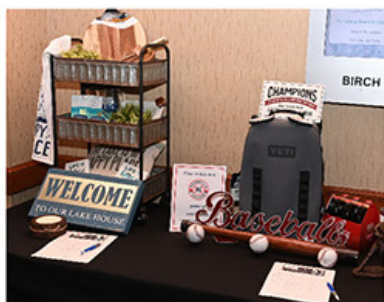
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The Convention Golf Tournament turned out to be a great time for all the golfers! This is a list of winners:

FIRST PLACE WINNERS: **Randy Nash, Brent McNeeley, Eli Ridgeway and Daniel Pierce.**

SECOND PLACE WINNERS: **Jim Taylor, Tim Kalthoff, Ben Upton and John Koelz**

Longest Drive Contest: **Brent McNeeley**

Putting Contest: **Justin Jeffers**

After all the winners won, they donated the winnings to the TFDA PAC Fund which brought the amount up to \$13,600!

Thank you so much for your donation!

We did something different this year, we created corsages for the Formal Grand Banquet! And it was a blast! **Michael Sims, Michael Stephen and Karen Mitchell**, assisted everyone with creating a corsage to match their dress! The Sims family thought of EVERYTHING!

We had the pleasure of **Valerie Wages**, Sponsored by **Heritage Family Services**, to present a seminar with the topic "Perception by Your Community is Everything if You will be Selected or Not". This seminar was beneficial for anyone in the funeral industry. How are you perceived by the community? To top off the Convention was the Grand Banquet with the theme "An Evening of Elegance". **Atlantic Coast Life Insurance Company** Sponsored the DJ, **Brent Elliott**, and the photo booth. Everyone was dressed fit to kill in their formal attire and elegant

hats! There was even a hat contest. For the women's best hat, **Mrs. June Cortner** won; the best men's hat was won by **Garrett Jeffers**; the best family attire was won by **Justin, Jennifer, Addison and Garrett Jeffers**. The best decorated exhibit booth space was won by **Mid-South Mortuary Service**.

SPECIAL THANK YOU
TO THE
**INDEPENDENT
FUNERAL GROUP**
FOR THEIR DONATION
TO THE TFDA PAC FUND
IN THE
AMOUNT OF \$10,000!

Thank you to the Convention
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The TFDA Board of Directors would like to introduce to you the newest Board Members:

Terry McCreight, TFDA Director-West

McCreight Funeral Home, Dyer, TN

Mr. McCreight is the first African American to serve on the TFDA Board of Directors.

McCreight Funeral Home is owned operated by Terry & Patricia McCreight. Terry McCreight a licensed funeral director and has been in the funeral business for over 30 years. Patricia McCreight is the Administrative Assistant of Operations of McCreight Funeral Home. Our funeral home open for business on July 1, 2013, in Dyersburg. Our family started in the funeral business over 50 years ago. We are proud of the legacy that was started by our families, Stewart's, McCright's, Jefferson's and McCreight's.



Joseph Thomas, TFDA Director – West

Shackelford Funeral Directors



Joseph Thomas, CFSP is a fifth-generation funeral director and embalmer currently serving as General Manager of Advance Planning for his family's firms, Shackelford Funeral Directors, in West and Middle Tennessee. He has been in funeral service literally his entire life whether professionally or otherwise and has served TFDA in the past as a member of the Education and Government Affairs Committees.

Joseph received an Associate of Arts in Mortuary Science from John A. Gupton College in Nashville, Tennessee, Bachelor of Arts in English from Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee, Graduate Certificate in Christian Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, and studied humor and satire writing at the Second City Training Center in Chicago, Illinois.

He lives in Bartlett, Tennessee with his lovely wife, Natalie, and their three children, Wilson, Anderson, and Cora and, in his spare time, teaches for the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, writes for various humor publications and the occasional newspaper and absolutely obsesses over the Memphis Grizzlies.

Jim Cortner, TFDA Director Middle

Moore-Cortner Funeral Home, Winchester, TN

Jim Cortner was born and raised in Winchester, Tennessee. Jim graduated Franklin County High School and Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service in Atlanta, Georgia and obtained his degree in funeral service. He is a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer. Jim is a member of the Winchester Masonic Lodge where he is a 32nd degree Master Mason and Shriner. He and his wife, Holly have one son, Robert and they live in Winchester. They are members at the Winchester Cumberland Presbyterian Church.



Dennis Bridges, TFDA Director-East

Bridges Funeral Home, Knoxville, TN



During his decades of funeral service experience, Dennis Bridges has learned what details are important to Tennessee families when it comes time to say goodbye to their loved ones. It has been his lifelong dream to operate his own funeral home, where he could bring all of those details together in one place. Bridges Funeral Home represents the culmination of this dream to serve families at their moment of need through funeral service.

Right after mortuary school, Dennis went to work at McCarty Mortuary. We are proud to still maintain this lifelong affiliation with the McCarty family.

Since 2004, Bridges Funeral Home has been serving the families of Knox, Grainger, Sevier, Union, Anderson, and Blount Counties. From the moment we broke ground, every attention was made to the smallest of details. Every corridor, room, and amenity was built specifically to attend to the needs of grieving families.

The 2022 - 23 Tennessee Funeral Supply Sale Club Officers and Directors

Tim Bond, TFSSC President
Pierce Chemicals/Royal Bond



Matt Kreidenweis, TFSSC First Vice President
Independent Funeral Planning Alliance



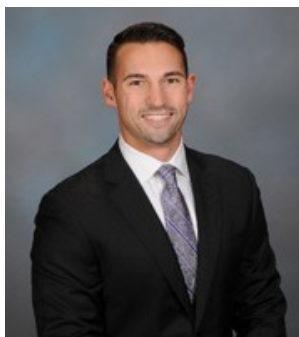
Tommy Spears, TFSSC Second Vice President
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Danny Hurt, TFSSC Secretary/Treasurer
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Jacob Dunnichay, TFSSC First Year Director
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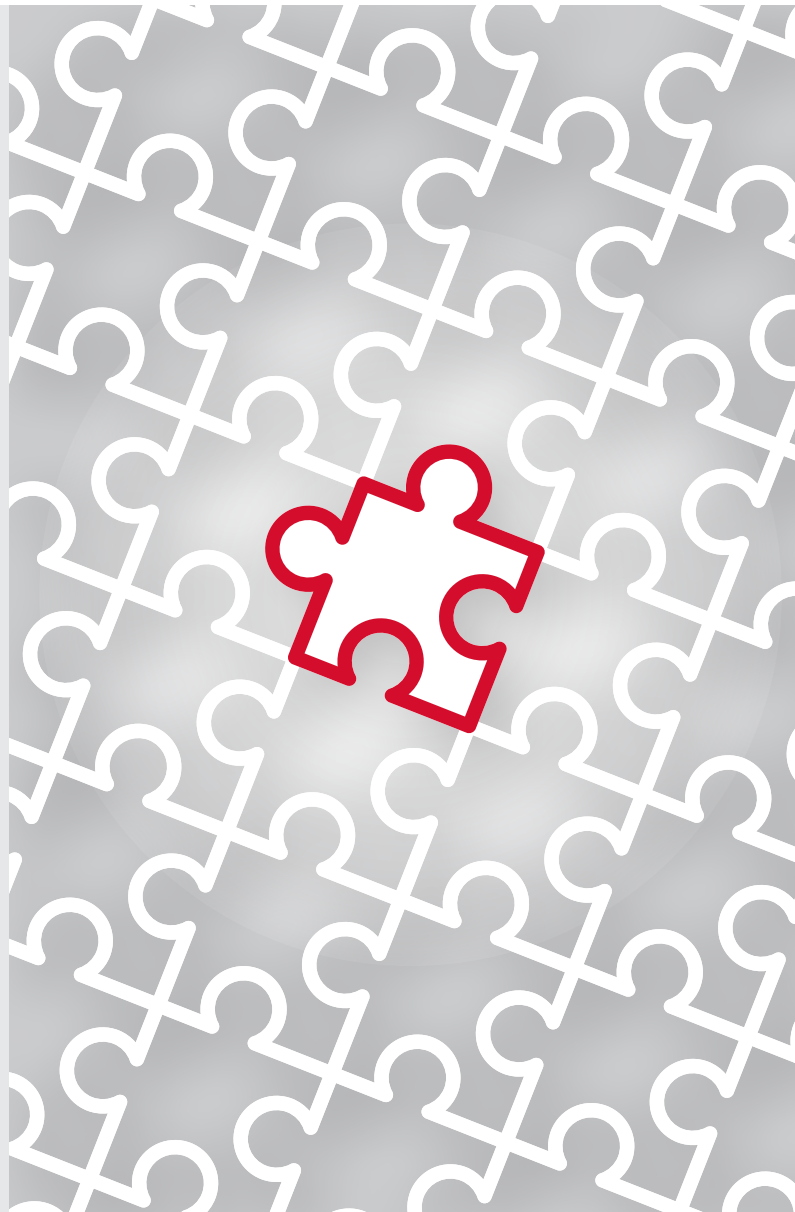


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