

THE THANAGRAM

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Official Publication of the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

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Greetings TFDA Professionals!

It was so great to see everyone who attended the district meetings across the state. We had great attendance at all 3 meetings and can't thank Robin Bozarth with Genesis Legacy, and Craig Markland with Tennessee Donor Services enough for their presentations as a part of 3 hour continuing education seminars. The TFDA district meetings are a great opportunity to receive 5 in-person hours of the 10 required for license renewal, all in one afternoon and evening. We look forward to seeing everyone at the 120th Annual TFDA Convention in Franklin, starting on Sunday, June 25 and concluding on Tuesday, June 27.

TFSI is pleased to announce a new TFDA endorsed pre-need partner, Security National Life Insurance Company, based in Salt Lake City, UT. A familiar face to Tennessee Funeral Directors, Jay Slatton serves as the Tennessee Agent for Security National. This news was announced at the District Meetings, and according to Jay, he is excited to travel the state and see how the SNL Family of Companies can assist your funeral homes.

The Tennessee Legislature in full swing, and once again, we want to recognize Jay Bucy with Capital and 5th Public Strategies for his hard work keeping the TFDA Membership updated with legislation and policies as it pertains to our industry. If you are not receiving the weekly legislative updates from C5 Public Strategies, please reach out to the TFDA Office and Dawn will add your email address to receive that valuable information.

This will be my last Presidents Letter to be published in the Thanagram, and I would like to wholeheartedly thank the TFDA Executive Board and TFDA Board of Directors for their guidance and support for this past year. I would also like to thank TFDA Executive Assistant, Dawn Elliott for her unwavering support and dedication to the TFDA in every capacity.

To TFDA Executive Director Bob Batson: Thank you for your friendship over these past few years. Your knowledge of our industry and the respect that you have from your colleagues in other states is extremely evident. I wholeheartedly support your leadership of the day-to-day business of the TFDA.

Once again, we stand in yet another dark time in the history of our state. With the unspeakable tragedies that has taken place at Covenant School in Nashville, Funeral Service Professionals are again in the forefront, serving these families in such a difficult time. I have said this so many times in the past, but daily we have such a wonderful opportunity to show love and support to the families of those who are hurting. To our fellow professionals who are serving these families, a job well done.

In closing, it has been the highlight of my professional career to serve as your TFDA President. The personal and professional friendships that I have made while traveling the state, I will treasure forever. The goal that I had when taking office in June was to be transparent in the operations of the TFDA, and I truly believe we have tried our best to do just that.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Respectfully,
Brent T. McNeeley

President's Message

Brent McNeeley, TFDA President



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ASSOCIATION

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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2023 Tennessee Funeral Directors Association 120th Annual Convention Sunday, June 25, 2023

Memorial Service Embassy Suites Hotel, Franklin, TN

What a great honor for our association to participate in celebrating the lives of our deceased loved ones who have left us this past year.

Please contact the TFDA office if there is a loved one not listed that should be included.

Phone (615) 321-8792 • Email: Rosemary Harrison, Memorial Service Chairperson, rosemary.mc@gmail.com

Loved ones we will be honoring at this year's convention.

Pamela "Pam" Farrar
Ellis Condor Galyon, Jr.
Nelson Randolph "Randy" Short
Kim Vencion Ray
John Roy Cason
Carolyn Jean Stinson
Janice Agee Anderson
Charles Wilburn Capehart
John Russell Gilley
Robert Edward Batson
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Eric Carpenter, Auction Committee Chairman Live and Silent Auction

The TFDA Government Affairs and Convention Committees are once again hosting a Silent and Live Auction at the TFDA Convention in Franklin. Like in the past, this is a wonderful way for you to support the TFDA PAC.

Our legislative efforts are critical to our continuing to serve the families of Tennessee in the most professional manner and with the most benefits possible... and this is one of the reasons why having a strong PAC fund is so important to our Association. We need the ability to strongly voice our concerns at the General Assembly – so we need your help in 2023!

Please help us make the auction worthwhile and FUN again this year. In previous years, we have noted that themed baskets, sports items, gift certificates, framed prints, tools, funeral related collectables, and electronic items have been very popular in our silent auction. We need these again... but don't forget big-ticket items! We need larger donations are for the Live Auction to bring in even more money for this cause. Be creative! Tickets for sporting events, concerts, vacations, airline tickets, or time shares are GREAT ideas.

And remember... we need items for the funeral director... the ladies... the kids... our pets... EVERYONE!

We want this year's auction to be bigger and better; so **PLEASE** go see / call those places of business in your town that you know support you – and ask them to do it once more... because the support for this PAC absolutely supports every funeral director in the State!

This is the main fundraiser for our PAC Fund. Please help TFDA to be able to help us all by participating and making this year's auction even a larger success than last year!

Feel free to contact me at 423-736-3473
or eric.carpenter@musfiber.com – or any of the Auction Committee members – if you have any questions or an item to donate.

Thank you very much for your support... and I'll see you in Franklin!

S. Eric Carpenter, CFSP, CCO
Auction Committee
East District

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2023 Tennessee Funeral Directors Association 120th Annual Convention

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YOU WILL NEED TO SHOW YOUR TFDA MEMBERSHIP CARD WHEN ATTENDING THE CONVENTION**



Sunday, June 25, 2023

10:30 am – 11:30 am Interfaith Service with Rev. Zack Lloyd, TENNESSEE DONOR SERVICES SPONSOR

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Seminar: Valerie Wages, "Perception by Your Community is Everything in Determining if You Will Be Selected or Not", HERITAGE FAMILY SERVICES SPONSOR (Pending approval of 2 CEU's)

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm Seminar: Terry Cain "Best Practices for Recruitment and Retention While Achieving Your Goals" (Pending approval of 1 CEU)

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm Seminar: Rev. Zach Lloyd (Pending approval of 1 CEU) TENNESSEE DONOR SERVICES SPONSOR

4:30 pm Family Gathers for TFDA Memorial Service

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm TFDA Memorial Service, MESSENGER SPONSORING CANDLES, TUKIO'S SPONSORING THE MEMORIAL SERVICE VIDEO

6:00 pm – 8:30 pm Exhibit Hall Grand Opening (Pending approval of 1 CEU)

Monday, June 26, 2023

9:00 am – 11:00 am TFDA Business Meeting, honoring 50 Years of Service plaques (Pending approval of 2 CEU's)

11:00 am – 1:00 pm TFDA Joint Luncheon: Special Speaker Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor (Pending approval of 1 CEU)

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Exhibit Hall Open (Pending approval of 1 CEU)

5:00 pm – 8:00 pm Monday Night Event with Auctioneer Randy Nash

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

8:00 am TFDA Golf Tournament - WILBERT VAULTS OF TN SPONSORS LUNCHEON

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Seminar: "Cremation: The New Embalming", Brad Kuchnicki, Executive Director, and Christi Moon Robbins, The Independent Funeral Group (requesting approval of 3 CEU's)

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Past President's Reception

6:00 pm – 10:00 pm Grand Banquet: "Honoring One of Our Own", Dancing with DJ Darren B with Photo Booth Sponsored by ATLANTIC COAST LIFE

50 YEARS OF SERVICE

If you have 50 Years of Funeral Service, the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association would like to honor you at the 2023 TFDA 120th Annual Convention, Monday, June 26, 2023 at the Embassy Suites Hotel at the TFDA Business Meeting. Please contact the TFDA Office so that we can honor you.

By phone (615) 321-8792 or by email Dawn@tnfda.org.



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Obituaries



Jeff (Stephane) and Steve Murphy's mother, former owners of Music City Mortuary Service, Nashville, TN.

Helen Yvonne Fuller Murphy, age 80 of Parsons, TN passed away February 16, 2023 at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville surrounded by her family.

She was the daughter of the late Raymond E. Fuller and Cora Mae Faulkner Fuller.

Helen worked as a Customer Service Manager at Wal-Mart in Milan for many years. She was a member of the Parsons Church of Christ.

She was preceded in death by her husband of nearly 50 years Grady L. Murphy, and her brother Joe E. Fuller,

She leaves her sons Jeff and Steve Murphy, and her daughter Stephane (who was not her daughter in law) Her Granddaughter Hannah Long and her husband Jon, and her great-grandchildren Maley and Justin Long, Bella and Charlotte Claire Petty, Maddox and Maverick Petty, Annyston Green. She also leaves behind her special friend and companion Ronald "Spoon" Pulley.

She also leaves behind her very special grand dogs Harley and Broady.

Memorials may be directed to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Autism Tennessee.



CHRIS CHRISTIAN ANNOUNCING HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE POSITION OF NFDA SECRETARY

Chris Christian is the co-owner of Christian-Sells Funeral Home in Rogersville, Tennessee. Chris has served as TFDA President and remains active in our State Association.

Over the past several years, Chris has been extremely involved with NFDA. Chris has served as the Tennessee representative to the NFDA Policy Board, served as a member of the NFDA Budget Task Force, the NFDA Spokesperson Team, and the NFDA Audit Task Force. Chris currently holds the position of At-Large Representative on the NFDA Board of Directors. Chris has selflessly resolved to donate all the knowledge accumulated from his years of practice, TFDA and NFDA experience, by announcing his candidacy for the position of NFDA Secretary.

TFDA is proud to share this development with all TFDA members. TFDA also encourages all NFDA members to support Chris by casting your vote for Chris Christian as NFDA Secretary in the 2023 election. The election will be held for NFDA members during an electronic election July 25 through August 7, 2023. Please go to the NFDA website for details regarding the voting procedure.

JASON D. JOHNSTON, CFSP, CCO, MBIE

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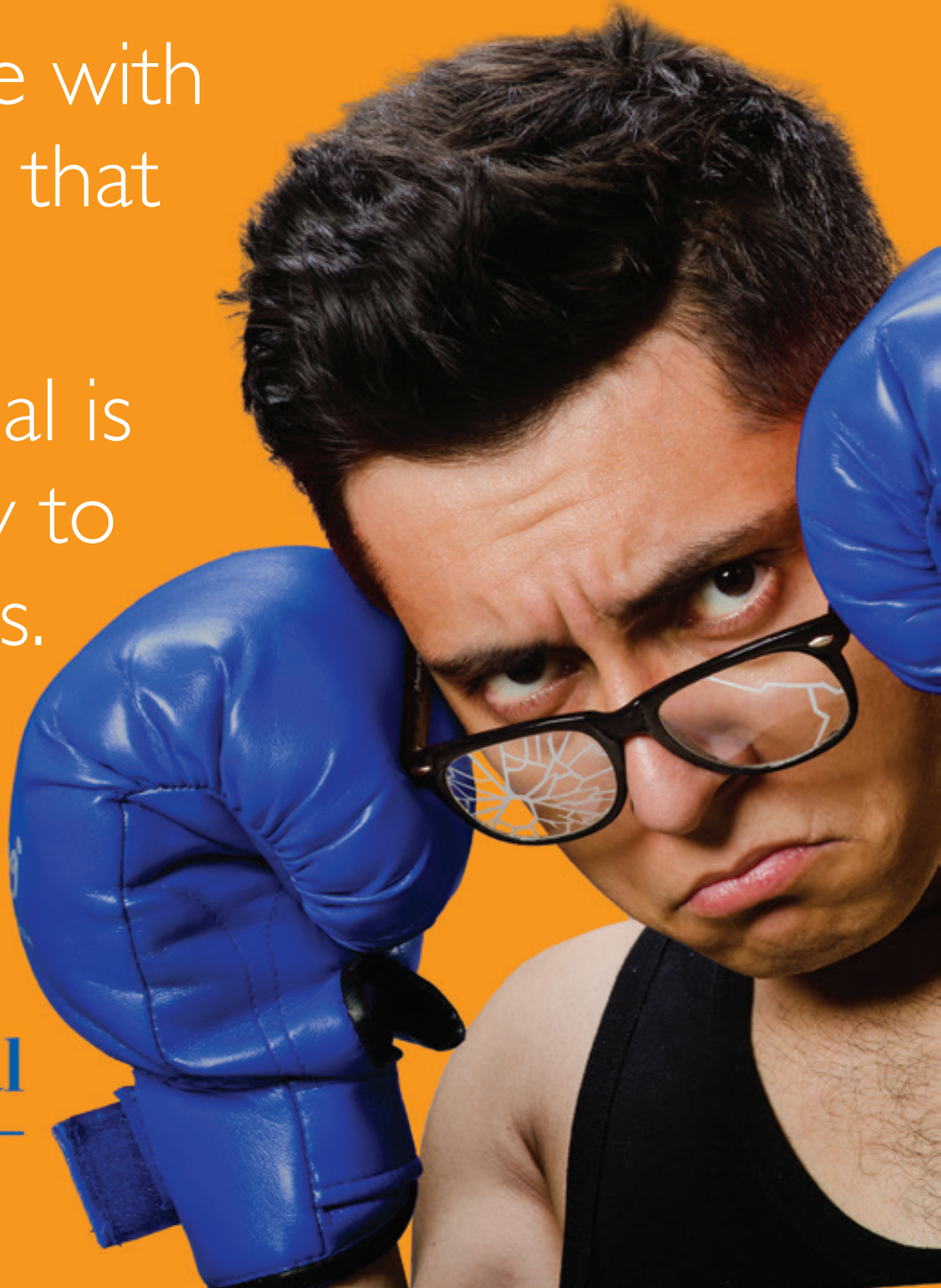
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"I'm excited about our endorsement opportunity with the great funeral professionals in Tennessee! We are equally as excited about the ability to partner with the TFDA to continue to provide unparalleled insurance funded prepaid funeral products and marketing support solutions to fit each potential funeral home's wants and needs."

- Guy V. Winstead, VP of Sales, Security National Life Insurance Company.

The benefits of this new partnership include.

- Preneed products and services tailored for TFDA Membership
- Customized marketing solutions for partner funeral homes
- Exclusive C&J Financial funding rate

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- Jamie Meredith, Executive Vice President, C&J Financial

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Jay Slatton is the Area Sales Manager for Tennessee. Jay lives in Gordonsville, Tennessee with his wife, Leann, and two daughters, Ally Beth, and Ava Grace. Jay is a funeral director, embalmer, and licensed insurance producer. He has been very active in the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association and a Past President of the Upper Cumberland Funeral Directors Association. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Tennessee Funeral Sales and Supply Club. Jay is active in his community through youth sports with his daughters and has served on the City Council for 6 years. He is a member of the Carthage Masonic Lodge #14 and attends Grant Missionary Baptist Church. Jay and his family are avid Vanderbilt Commodore fans and enjoy camping in their free time.

The Tennessee Funeral Directors Association is a nonprofit organization that seeks to provide Funeral Professionals advocacy through communication, education, and legislation; thereby empowering the licensed funeral professional the ability to serve at the highest level.

For more information, please contact Jay Slatton by email JayS@snlprenneed.com or by calling (615) 418-6276

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2008 Superior Cadillac Limo
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ONE SOLUTION IN FINDING QUALITY STAFF

By Bob Arrington

Journey to Serve is a unique marketing campaign that launched in 2021 by the Funeral Service Foundation and the ICCFA Educational Foundation. This collaborative effort between these two organizations aims to engage, recruit, and hire more military veterans to careers in the funeral service profession – including meaningful work in funeral homes, cemeteries, crematories, funeral vendors, finance companies, insurance partners, and all levels of support roles. When the owners of funeral homes across the country were asked to name their top business challenges, they ranked finding strong employees at the top of the list.

This campaign is an especially urgent call to action during times of crisis, such as a pandemic, when the “service” part of the funeral profession really shines. Caring, competent, mission-driven employees are needed now more than ever.

Members of the U.S. Military are trained to embody loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and courage. Each soldier is part of a team working to achieve a goal. These qualities are forever ingrained in the soldier, even long after military service.

Every year 200,000+ military members leave the service and start the search for a new career. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, about 55% of veterans in transition want to do something totally different than what they did in the military.

Many times when veterans do find work, the position does not take full advantage of their true talents and military ethos of “service before self.” Hmmm....Service Before Self! Where have we heard that before?

We all recognize that the very values revered by the military compliment is the cornerstone of funeral service. That cornerstone was the driving force that began the collaboration between the Funeral Service Foundation and the ICCFA Educational Foundation in creating this historic project.

Now, this untapped resource may hold the key to solving one of the most pressing issues in funeral service. According to recent NFDA Funeral Directors Expec-



tations survey, 74% say finding good employees is one of their top challenges. Especially when looking for skills such as:

- Ethical, honest, trustworthy
- Strong work ethic
- Professional appearance/demeanor
- Work collaboration as team member
- Strong communication skills

Veterans check all these boxes and share a complimentary skill set - resilience, discipline, organizational skills, desire for achievement, team building and the ability to thrive in extreme/stressful situations. Veterans take great pride in their work.

These points help to solidify what we should look for and hire people not positions!

Journey to Serve has created and made available to all funeral homes a marketing and support tool kit. Group presentations, TV, radio, and print ads that can all be customized with funeral home logos and contact information. All is in place. Use it. Take advantage of the work and monies invested by both of these organizations. They are listed at the bottom of this article.

At Arrington Funeral Directors we have used these resources. We used the videos, the print ads, and placed resource materials in VFW Posts. We now have 2 full-time and 2 part-time veterans on staff. I wish we had more. The funeral homes that have been successful hiring veterans have never regretted that decision in any way.

Journeytoserve.com

Journey To Serve video via YouTube

Bob Arrington is a former president of TFDA and the only Tennessean to serve as president of the NFDA. He is the past chair of the Funeral Service Foundation Board of Trustees. He owns Arrington Funeral Directors & Crematory in Jackson, TN.



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