

THE THANA GRAM

SUMMER 2023

Official Publication of the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

IN THIS ISSUE

2023 Annual Convention Highlights

Hello TFDA Members & Friends,

President's Message

Mandi Goodrich



It's hard to believe that Summer is coming to an end already! I hope you all have enjoyed it. This year's convention was one for the books! Thank you to everyone that played a part in making it happen. The McNeeley's were great hosts, and of course Bob, Dawn, Greg, Eric, Rosemary and countless others did not leave any detail unnoticed. I always look forward to seeing everyone, catching up and sharing stories of our amazing profession. The auction was the most successful it has ever been, and I truly appreciate everyone that donated as well as purchased items. This is our biggest fundraising event that plays a key role in keeping our PAC fund strong. The golf tournament was so much fun, and the best part was seeing Ali Ridgeway out drive all the men! I want to congratulate our incoming board members as well as the incoming TFSSC President, Matt Kreidenweis. I look forward to strategizing with you and the other board members to better what is already an amazing association. We have set the dates for our Fall District meetings, and I am looking forward to seeing you there. Middle: Monday, September 25, 2023, Farm Bureau Expo Center, Lebanon, TN. West: Tuesday, September 26, 2023, Jackson Country Club, Jackson, TN. East: Thursday, September 28, 2023, The Chop House, Kodak, TN. The seminar will be presented by Brad Kuchnicki with the Independent Funeral Group. The topic will be "OSHA: Bloodborne Pathogens and Ethics." (TN State approved for 3 CEU's). The district meeting program will be "Legislation Goals 2023 – 2024." (TN State Approved for 2 CEU's). We are so blessed to have Jay Bucy, with Capitol and 5th Public Strategies as our TFDA Lobbyist. He is very educated on what is going on with the ever-changing legislation and policies that can and do affect this great profession. We are often asked, "What can TFDA do for you?" Not only is it the best networking avenue for our profession, but it is also the best way to stay educated on the most current happenings in our profession as well as to know what is going on legislatively. Our Governmental Affairs Committee is very active, and they work very hard to protect this profession as well as the families we serve. I'm looking forward to working alongside them this year. In closing, it was truly an honor to be installed as your incoming President for the 2023-2024 year. Having my mother, Pam Stephens be there to install me will forever go down as one of the best days of my life. To follow in hers and my grandfather, Clyde Stephens footsteps, both former TFDA Presidents is an absolute honor. I know you all feel the same when I say that what we do for a living is not a job, but a blessing to be able to serve others and make a positive impact on people's lives on a daily basis. May God bless each and every one of you. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your TFDA President. See you all very soon!

Respectfully,
Mandi Goodrich, 2023 – 24 TFDA President



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.

1616 Church Street
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Web: www.tnfda.org



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Email: mandi@williamsonmemorial.com



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420 Highway 51 Bypass
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Email: dyersburgfh@gmail.com



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Email: matthewsowell6@yahoo.com



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Email: Decaturfuneralhome@gmail.com



NFDA AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE
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P.O. Box 775
Rogersville, TN 37857
Phone: 423-272-0555
Email: chris@christiansells.com



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Shackelford Funeral
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340B Monroe Avenue
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Phone: (731) 607-0549
Email: joseph.thomas@shackelfordfuneraldirectors.com



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Funeral Home
300 1st Avenue
North West
Winchester, TN 37398
Phone: (931) 967-2222
Email: jim@moorecortner.com



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Dennis Bridges
Bridges Funeral Home
5430 Rutledge Pike
Knoxville, TN 37924
Phone: (865) 523-4999
Email: dbridges@bridgesfuneralhome.com



NFDA AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE
Bobby Steven Spann
Spann Funeral Home
1961 Highway 48 North
Dickson, TN 37055
(615) 446-1123
Email: spann@guptoncollege.edu

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Robert W. (Bob) Batson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ASSISTANT
Dawn Elliott
Tennessee Funeral Directors Association
1616 Church Street, Suite A, Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 321-8792
Bob@tnfda.org • Dawn@tnfda.org
office@tnfda.org

TFDA LOBBYIST
J.A. Bucy
CAPITOL & 5TH PUBLIC STRATEGIES
615-417-3826

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Fax (423) 968-5475
Weaverfh@aol.com

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Fax (731) 989-9213
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Ridgewayfh@gmail.com

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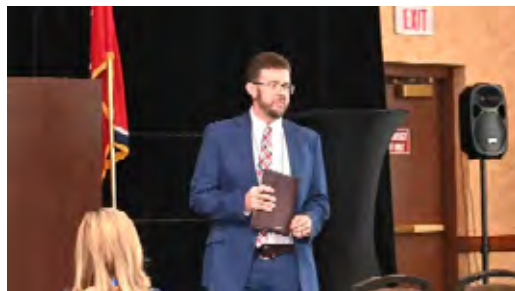
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A Salute to Service

Sunday, June 25, 2023

REVEREND ZACH LLOYD

Interfaith Service with Rev. Zack Lloyd, Sponsored by



Thank you, Reverend Zack Lloyd, for your time in being our 2023 TFDA Convention Chaplain. Rev. Lloyd was such an asset to the TFDA Convention as the Convention Chaplain.

VALERIE WAGES

Valerie Wages, "PERCEPTION BY YOUR COMMUNITY IS EVERYTHING IN DETERMINING IF YOU WILL BE SELECTED OR NOT", HERITAGE FAMILY SERVICES SPONSOR



Valerie Wages was such a benefit last year, we had to have her back. Thank you, Heritage Family, for sponsoring Mrs. Wages.



TERRY CAIN

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REVEREND ZACH LLOYD, CONVENTION CHAPLAIN

Pastor of East LaFollette Baptist Church, LaFollette,
Tennessee Motivational Speaker

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Thank you Tukio's for sponsoring the TFDA Memorial Service video.

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening

2023 Director's Answering Service won the best decorated booth space! Thank you, Cindy Hutchinson, for sponsoring the convention lanyards and wallets! Director's Answering Service earned a free booth space at the TFDA 2024 Annual State Convention. Congratulations Director's Answering Service!



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Monday, June 26, 2023

TFDA Business Meeting, honoring 50 Years of Service plaques.
Congratulations to the recipients of their 50 Years of Service:
Charles Higgins, Higgins Funeral Home, Fayetteville, TN
Daniel Howard Ewton, Sr., Ewton Funeral Home, Dunlap, TN



Jimmy G. Swift, Hunter Funeral Home, Sparta, TN



Keith D. Pettit, Murphy Funeral Home, Martin, TN



Donald S. Haynes, Stevens Mortuary, Knoxville, TN



Charles M. Jenkins, Weatherford Mortuary, Oak Ridge, TN

TFDA Joint Luncheon

Presented by Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor presenting "LIGHTING THE WAY FOR OUR FUTURE."



Mr. Glenn Jacobs, "Kane" did an excellent job with his presentation. His perspective on being a WWE superstar to the Knox County Mayor.

Monday Night Event with Auctioneer, Randy Nash, Sumner Funeral & Cremations, Gallatin, TN. Randy did an excellent job raising money for the TFDA PAC Fund. Eric Carpenter, Auction Chairman, also did a wonderful job bringing in the items and organizing it all. We raised record numbers! Thank you all who donated!



2023 TFDA SILENT AUCTION

Item

Hand Carved Wooden Cross
Hand Carved Kitchen Utensil Basket #1
Hand Carved Kitchen Utensil Basket #2
Craftsman Drill Set
Clifty Farms Country Ham
"Bowls of Fun" Basket
Kitchen Basket
"Cup of Comfort" Basket
Florida Sunshine Basket
Wooden Mini Casket
Wooden Welcome Sign
Holiday Cooler & Drinks
Christmas Table Set
Doggie Basket
"Let's Get Cooking" Basket
Choice of Size - 3 Cosmetic Bulbs
YETI Cooler (White)
Olive Oils & Popcorn Basket
Eagle Statue
Ladies Purse
Ladies Clutch (Brown)
Men's Card Wallet (Black)
Men's Card Wallet (Brown)
"Fun at the Pool" Set
"Tennessee's Best" Goodies Basket
"A Day in the Garden" Package
Soft Cooler / Snacks
\$50 MasterCard Gift
"Don't Lose Your Cool" Package

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Mike Black / Crain Sales
Mike Black / Crain Sales
Mike Black / Crain Sales
Mike Black / Crain Sales
Williamson Memorial FH
Pam Stephens & Tim Kalthoff
Pam Stephens & Tim Kalthoff
Shields
Tukios
Taylor Moore Family

Winner

Danny Hurt
Dale Layne
Terry Cain
Guy Winstead
Sharron Jeffers
Mattie Moore
Mandi Goodrich
Sharon Jeffers
Terry McCreight
James Staton
Lisa Toombs
Emily Layne
Michael Smith
Mattie Moore
Addison Jeffers
Bob Bell
Justin Jeffers
Leslie Yates
Wilson Thomas
Holly Cortner
Wilson Thomas
Lisa Toombs
Lisa Toombs
Bob Bell
Sharon Jeffers
Pam Stephens
Leslie Yates
Langley Marlin
Addison Jeffers

2023 TFDA LIVE AUCTION

Item

One Week Condo Stay - Panama City Beach, FL

Rocking Chair
Side Table
Bat
Wooden Easel
Commodore Hotel & Kayak Package
Matthews Aurora 18ga / Freedom Midnight Blue
50" Television
58" Television
Casket Spray & Flower Urns - #1
Casket Spray & Flower Urns - #2
YETI Cooler (Red)
YETI Cooler (Blue)

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Winner

Marc Sims
Guy Winstead
Justin Jeffers
Paula Womack
Marc Sims
Dale Layne
Bob Bell
Marc Sims
Dale Layne
Fred Adomat
Jim Cortner
Briley Bell
Marc Sims
Tony Sowell

***We would like to thank EVERYONE that participated in this year's auction!
Not only did we have fun, but raised money for the TFDA PAC Fund***

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

Golf Tournament at Towhee Golf Club, Sponsored by:
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The 2023 TFDA Golf Tournament was a great Ali Ridgeway, Brad Ridgeway's daughter, pictured below was a golfer to be reckoned with! She won the Longest Drive! Congratulations Ali!



The annual TFDA Convention Golf Tournament was held at Towhee Golf Club in Spring Hill this year. Over 40 golfers enjoyed a beautiful day thanks to Jay Slatton of Security National and a wonderful lunch afterwards thanks to Danny Hurt of Wilbert Vaults. The team of President Brent McNeely, Eli Ridgeway, Greg Rush, and Jay Bucy shot 13 under par to win the event while Ali Ridgeway won the prize for longest drive on the day. A special thank you to our sponsors and all those that participated this year.



"CREMATION: THE NEW EMBALMING", Brad Kuchnicki, Executive Director, and Christi Moon Robbins, The Independent Funeral Group SPONSORED BY THE INDEPENDENT FUNERAL GROUP

TFDA Grand Banquet
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Jayden Avery, Terry and Patricia McCreight's grandson, helping them move out of the hotel, after a great convention!



Tennessee Funeral Directors Wall of Fame Award **2023**



It has been stated successful funeral professionals unselfishly care for the communities they serve. This type of caring cannot be taught or learned; it is a natural talent with which they were born. Funeral professionals compare as a light in the dark for grief-stricken community members. TFDA considers recognizing members displaying these attributes, a true honor, an honor we have bestowed since 2006. TFDA proudly commemorates those who exhibit the traits of professionalism. Characteristics such as exceptional reliability, accountability, positive attitude, and respect for others, are always qualities to be celebrated.

While there are others with similar skills, this year's recipient has given his time and talents by serving as District Director of the TFDA, TFDA President, has also devoted his time by serving as a board member on the TN Funeral Security, Inc., the for-profit branch of TFDA. This year's recipient also recognizes the importance of the TFDA legislative effort and has been a major contributor for many years. He has also raised his family to understand what it means to be a funeral professional. He went on his first call at 15 years old. His father had just opened his own funeral home and when the new firm received its first call, the new funeral homeowner had not yet hired an employee so his sleeping 15 year old son was his only option for assistance. They worked side by side for the next 56 years.

He is a graduate of John A Gupton College.

He is also a cemetery owner. His first monument sale was too big for him to set, he traded the monument to a recent widow for her husband's septic tank truck.

He is a United States Army veteran.

Later he and his wife bought a 30-acre hay field and started the County's 2nd perpetual care cemetery from scratch.

Like many in this industry, his selflessness to serve his community has been his life's work, always referring to it as his calling. Many years of leaving family vacations early because someone needed him or sitting on the phone for an hour in the middle of the night because a widow couldn't sleep in her suddenly lonely house, walking hand and hand with a mother to view her unidentifiable son that was killed on a Navy Ship, watching his family go off to church without him because he had a Sunday funeral to prepare for, because that is who he is. If you drive his truck around town, you better just go ahead and wave at everyone because they are going to wave at you. A good friend and fellow funeral director who has known and loved our recipient for many years, refers to him as the governor of his home county. Being his town's funeral director is just who his is. Most of his pictures as a young dad are with a white shirt and tie on because he was coming by the game in between visitations or the 5th grade graduation before a morning graveside but he always found a way to be his town's funeral director and still show up for his own family. And now he carries his favorite title of all, Papaw.

The generosity shown for his profession is only surpassed by the kindness shown to his professional colleagues. This year's recipient and his entire family are prime examples of people who care about their neighbor in need. No matter what the condition, always willing to shed any available light on the darkest situation. He and his family support TFDA and are always present at our annual convention. They are TFDA true! Yes, this year's recipient is an extraordinary individual. It is indeed my privilege to present the TFDA 2023 Funeral Professionals Wall of Fame award to Mr. Richard Jeffers, of Jeffers' Funeral Home & Cremation Care of Tennessee, in Greeneville, TN.

Presented by Tony Hysmith and Jack Farrar at the TFDA Annual Convention, June 27, 2023

Tennessee Funeral Directors Wall of Fame Award **2023**



The Tennessee Funeral Supply Sales Club would like to thank TFDA for allowing the TFSSC time to recognize a very special member of our Sales Club. This member we recognize tonight is a Past President of the TFSSC and permanent "Honorary Member" of the TFSSC. This member has been seen by his peers as being a person of high integrity, superior trust and an impeccable standard for being helpful to all those around him. He is a person that has been of great service to those that serve for many, many years. He now joins the Sales Club's ranks as "One of the Best". The Wall of Fame Recipient 2023 is:
Mr. JAMES "JIM" BYRD

Born in 1944, Jim grew up in his home State of Mississippi. He started working in the late 1960s after serving his country in Vietnam. After returning home, Jim started a family and was blessed with 5 Children (Joy Devorn, Pam Olds, Tripp Byrd, Tallie Byrd and Jamie Andrews), 8 grandchildren and to date —5 great grandchildren.

In 1975, Jim went to work for West Point Casket Company as a Manufacturing Manager. % years later - he became a Sales Representative for West Point working the Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Illinois territories. Around 1990, Jim was named President of the Company before it was sold to York Casket Company in 1999. He worked for York as the Regional & National Sales Manager until he left the casket industry to buy a furniture Company in 2002. In 2013, Jim returned as a Sales Rep for Matthews/Aurora

and retired for good in 2017. Jim currently lives in Prairie, Mississippi - next to daughter Jamie and her 2 children. Jim lost his loving wife Lucy to cancer in 2022.

As stated, Mr. Jim Byrd is a Past President of the TFSSC. His son Tripp has followed in his dad's footsteps as not only a Sales Rep for Matthews/Aurora, but also 1 of only 2 members in the TFSSC's history to serve as President following their father's tenure as President years earlier.

Ladies and Gentleman, Thank you again, in allowing us the honor of installing Mr. Jim Bryd as:

Thank You ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Independent Funeral Group, donation of \$10,000

Fred Adomat and Paula Womack, East TN Mortuary, Knoxville, TN, taking and organizing convention pictures.

Linda Yarbrough, Yarbrough Mortuary Service, Jackson, TN, taking and organizing convention pictures.

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Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor, Seminar Motivational Speaker

Rev. Zach Lloyd, 2023 TFDA Annual Convention Chaplain

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Brad Kuchnicki and Christi Moon Robbins Independent Funeral Group Sponsor Seminar Speakers

Wilbert Vaults of Tennessee Sponsor TFDA Golf Tournament Lunch

Eric Carpenter, TFDA Auction Committee Chairman

Rosemary Harrison, TFDA Memorial Service Chairman

Roger Balentine, TFDA Convention Committee

Brad Ridgeway, TFDA Convention Committee

Sims Family their help in the Live Auction and the Convention Committee

Please forgive us if there is anyone left out. You all are appreciated!

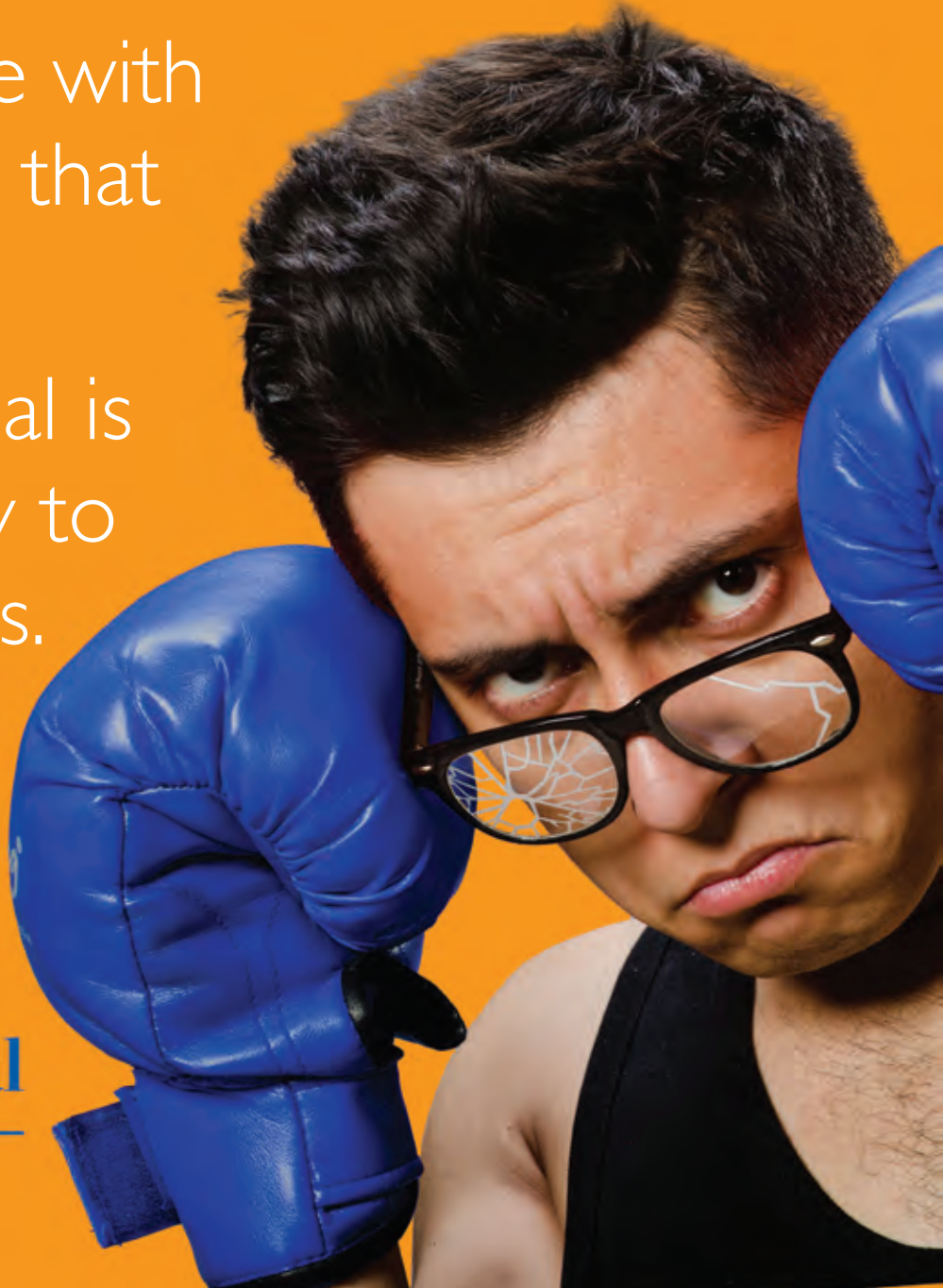




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"I'm excited about our endorsement opportunity with the great funeral professionals in Tennessee! We are equally as excited about the ability to partner with the TFDA to continue to provide unparalleled insurance funded prepaid funeral products and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

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

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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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22,282 miles



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Midsouth Mortuary Service

Music City Mortuary

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Pierce

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Precoa

Security National Life Insurance

Shields Professional Vehicles

The Messenger Co.

The SumTotal

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Tukios, Inc.

Westan Insurance Group

Wilbert Vaults of Tennessee

Yarborough Mortuary Services, Inc.



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Donna K. Vaughn, Vaughn Funeral Home, Spring City, TN, shared this picture of the Tennessee Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association 1906.



Congratulations Woodfin Funeral Chapel, recognized for 130 years of service along with 5 generations.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2023 TFDA FALL SEMINAR AND DISTRICT MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MIDDLE

Monday, September 25, 2023

Farm Bureau Expo Center, Lebanon, TN

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm TFDA Fall Seminar “OSHA Updates: Bloodborne Pathogens & Ethics” (TN State Approved for 3 CEU’s) Presented by Brad Kuchnicki, Executive Director, TN Independent Funeral Group

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm Dinner and TFDA Fall District Meeting, “Legislation Goals 2023 – 24” (TN State Approved for 2 CEU’s) Presented by Jay Bucy, TFDA Lobbyist

WEST

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Jackson Country Club, Jackson, TN

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm TFDA Fall Seminar “OSHA Updates: Bloodborne Pathogens & Ethics” (TN State Approved for 3 CEU’s) Presented by Brad Kuchnicki, Executive Director, TN Independent Funeral Group

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm Dinner and TFDA Fall District Meeting, “Legislation Goals 2023 – 24” (TN State Approved for 2 CEU’s) Presented by Jay Bucy, TFDA Lobbyist

EAST

Thursday, September 28, 2023

The Chop House, Kodak, TN

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm TFDA Fall Seminar “OSHA Updates: Bloodborne Pathogens & Ethics” (TN State Approved for 3 CEU’s) Presented by Brad Kuchnicki, Executive Director, TN Independent Funeral Group

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm Dinner and TFDA Fall District Meeting, “Legislation Goals 2023 – 24” (TN State Approved for 2 CEU’s) Presented by Jay Bucy, TFDA Lobbyist.

To attend the Fall Seminar and District meetings, you will need to bring your TFDA Membership card. Cost per TFDA member for all 5 CEU’s, including dinner is \$50.00.

PLEASE REMEMBER, THIS IS ACTUALLY TWO COURSES.

THE 2023 TFDA FALL SEMINAR IS 3 CEUS, AND YOU MUST SIGN IN TO RECEIVE YOUR EARNED CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS.

THE 2023 TFDA FALL DISTRICT MEETINGS IS 2 CEUS, AND YOU MUST SIGN IN TO RECEIVE YOU EARNED CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS.

SAVE *the* DATE

Mandi Goodrich

TFDA President 2023 - 24

Invites you to the 2024 Tennessee Funeral Directors Association 121st Annual Convention

“Making Waves While Keeping Up with the Change of the Tide”

June 9, 10, 11, 2024

at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs, 700 Cool Springs Blvd, Franklin, TN

