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Wilbert
updater
News, stories, and ideas for funeral professionals

To our Friends in Funeral Service:

For many years Wilbert Funeral Services published an industry newsletter called the “*Updater*.” Unfortunately, the printing and postage costs to distribute the great information it contained eventually made it cost prohibitive and we were forced to discontinue publication. With advancements in technology we are now able to produce and distribute the “*Updater*” more efficiently and can utilize email to get it to you.

So here is our reintroduction of our long revered publication. In this issue you will find:

- A story on how funeral professionals come together to help First Responders
- An article on how the Funeral Professionals graduating today are diversified
- Insights on how to inject for best results
- A puzzle to stretch you mind! Complete it and be in a drawing for a really great prize

In the past, we always had a special contribution from Jerry Brown of Brown-Wilbert, and fortunately this issue is no exception. Jerry reminds us all that the need to pay homage is a Universal Ethic. Take a moment to read his article and reflect on the important service you provide every day in your community to assist families in their time of need.

We would appreciate your thoughts on how we can add content to make the next issues of the “*Updater*” even more informative please email us at mklingenberger@wilbert.com. 🌀

Sincerely,

Mark Klingenberger

Wilbert Funeral Services, Vice President of Sales and Marketing



Wilbert Launches WilbertDirect – Ecommerce for Funeral Professionals

For many years, Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. has enjoyed helping Funeral Professionals with a variety of cremation products for the families they serve. Many Licensees offer same day delivery, engraving and other features to provide the ultimate in service.

For those who like to shop online, Wilbert is proud to introduce WilbertDirect.com – an online site designed to simplify the selection and purchasing of Wilbert cremation products. WilbertDirect helps funeral professionals operate more efficiently and profitably while providing attractive cremation products to families. With 24/7 access, WilbertDirect takes convenience and service to a higher level. Now funeral professionals can help families make cremation selections and fulfill orders directly over the Internet.

*It's as easy as 1-2-3 to receive
all the benefits of fast,
simple online ordering.*

“Every choice is just a click away,” states Mike Devaney, WFSI Cremation Merchandising Manager. “It’s all here – from top selling urns to unique memorialization jewelry, all searchable and handsomely displayed. The large selection is constantly updated to showcase the best, most popular products available at the best pricing.”

And the best part – it’s easy as 1-2-3 to receive all the benefits of fast, simple online ordering. Simply go online to register. You

will promptly receive your customer number and password. Once you have your sign-on information you can activate your account, and you are ready to order!

One more great part about WilbertDirect is it features a “public” view – without pricing. This enables families to select and review items in the comfort of their own home or together with you. If you want to give them a price list of the products on the site, you are just a click away and a price list will be immediately emailed to you with an auto-fill column for you to enter your retail mark-up. All the family will see is your specific retail prices when printed.

Easy, fast, simple – WilbertDirect is a new way to buy cremation products. 🌀



Memories of West, Texas

By Jennifer Rountree-Braun

The town of West is a typical rural, Texas, small town with a population of 2,700 and a long, rich Czech history, known for its bakery and sausage shops. There, first responders proudly volunteer their services that for many, tragically, ended on April 17th with an explosion at the West Fertilizer Co. plant. The blast rocked the town, leaving a 22-foot deep crater, devastating the surrounding area. Losses are expected to top \$100 million.



When news aired the explosion on late night television, Wilbert of North Texas owner Sherry Rountree called her friends Larry and Robert Aderhold of Aderhold Funeral Home to make sure they were safe. Robert is a volunteer firefighter who miraculously survived the blast. Aderhold Funeral Home would provide most of the services for the town.

The next morning, we were in contact with Terry Whitlock, Executive Vice President at Wilbert Funeral Services in Broadview, Illinois. Terry heads up the company's First Responder Program, which donates a customized Wilbert Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault or urn vault to the family of a first responder who has died in the line of duty. The graveside service is also provided by the program. Terry quickly offered his assistance.

Needless to say, our emotions were taxed, but faced with the enormity of the tragedy we pushed down our sadness and assisted the community. Nearly one-third of the town's volunteer firefighters and EMT force were lost. Three fire trucks and an ambulance were all destroyed by the blast. Neighboring communities now fill the void at the West firehouse.

Texas Rangers remove and fold an American flag from a casket of one of the 11 firefighters killed during the West, Texas explosion.

Over the course of two weeks, Wilbert of North Texas provided Triune vaults and one Triune urn vault for nine of the first responders. (The service for another first responder, from Illinois, was provided by American Wilbert of Bridgeview, IL.) The First Responder Legacy prints, which were customized by artist Marty Cox, were more than inspiring to the families. Many waited in long lines to photograph their loved one's image on the carapace. In a time of incredible sadness, we were able to provide a small amount of joy to the family members. Being able to see that moment of happiness on a young face and grieving parents was priceless.

In the middle of the West services, a memorial was held on April 25th in Waco, TX, at the Baylor Farrell Center. In a nationally-televised event, President Barack Obama, the First Lady Michelle Obama, Texas Governor Rick Perry and Texas Senator John Cornyn were among the estimated 10,000 in attendance. The general public camped out for a spot the night before.

At the memorial service, hundreds of firefighters and service groups from across the nation joined the grieving families in an impressive show of support. More than 100 bagpipe players, some from as far away as Canada, provided a touching tribute. The service concluded with a roll call, followed by one toll from a bell. At the foot of each of the 12 red caskets on loan from Batesville Casket Co., an officer saluted. It was moving and inspiring to see how many groups can come together to honor and show respect to our fallen service members.

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The Wilbert Stainless Steel Triune vault donated by the Commemorating First Responder Program for West, Texas volunteer firefighter Joey Pustejovsky, 29.

continued from page 3

We would like to thank Terry Whitlock and the entire team at Wilbert Funeral Services for their continued support. It makes our company proud to have an instrumental and touching program that allows us to reach out within our communities and generously support our first responders. 🌀

Jennifer Rountree-Braun is Vice President of Business Development for Wilbert of North Texas, in Grapevine.



A Wilbert Stainless Steel Triune urn vault for West, Texas volunteer firefighter Morris Bridges, Jr., 41, is included as part of a memorial table at his funeral service.

What Does the Future Funeral Professional Look Like?

By James Shoemake

Recent statistics released by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) for calendar year 2012 indicate that in all likelihood the future funeral professional will be female, Caucasian, between 26-30 years of age, and have had between one and two years of college upon enrollment at an ABFSE accredited funeral service program.

Enrollment statistics show that, of the 2885 new students enrolled, 1740 (61.7%) are women. The year 2000 statistics was the first year the number of women enrolling in funeral service education exceeded the number of men enrolling. This trend has continued to increase over the past twelve years to the current level of almost 62 percent. This is the highest percentage of women since the ABFSE has kept these statistics.

The ethnicity of the new enrollees is consistent along gender lines with Caucasian making up the largest number (65.3%), African-American the second largest group (23.3%), Hispanic American making up the third largest group (7.7%), and the remainder: Native American, Asian American, and others making up less than 4% of the total. Over the past forty years we have seen the percentage of Caucasian students drop from 85 percent to the present level of 65 percent, the percentage of African American students increase from 13 percent to 23 percent and the percentage of Hispanic, Asian, Native American and others has increased from 2 percent to an astounding 12 percent.

The age of new enrollees has remained relatively constant over the years with the largest percentage under the age of 25 (48.1%). The second largest group is those over the age of 36 (23.5%). This indicates that many enter the field as a second or

third career. Rounding out the numbers are those in the range of 25-30 at 17.5 percent and 31-35 at 10.9 percent.

Preparation prior to funeral service education continues to show more education as 71.4 percent of all enrollees last year had at least some college.

Funeral service education has progressed immensely over the past sixty years.

The minimum requirement of completion of an associate degree in funeral service to be a graduate of an accredited funeral service institution may be the cause of the increased educational background as they seek to reduce their time in mortuary school.

Graduation statistics vary based on each demographic reflecting the rigors of the program and all related issues for the students.

Women make up 849 (53.4%) of the 1589 graduates in funeral service this past year. 2007 was the first year there were more female graduates than male.

Ethnicity of graduates has the largest number as Caucasian (76.0%), with African American making up the second largest group (15.8%), followed by Hispanic American (5.5%), and then Asian, Native American and others making up the remainder (2.8%). Twenty-six years ago, Caucasian students made up 80 percent of the graduates, African American students (17.0%) and Hispanic, Asian, Native American and others made up only 3.0 percent of graduates.

The age of the average graduate is somewhere in the 26-30 age group. The less than 25 age group makes up 42.9% of graduates. The 26-30 age group makes up 19.8 percent of the graduates. The over 30 age group makes up 37.3 percent of all graduates.

Academic preparation prior to funeral service education does make a difference as 78.9 percent of all graduates had at least some college before mortuary school.

There are 58 accredited funeral service education programs scattered across the United States. There are programs located in 32 states and the District of Columbia with several new programs seeking candidacy from other states as well.

Funeral service education has progressed immensely over the past sixty years; evolving from seminars to short term residency programs of three months to programs of at least one-year and now with the requirement for an Associate's Degree as the minimum requirement for graduation. Some schools offer a Bachelor's Degree in Funeral Service. At one time half of all graduates completed their schooling at private schools of funeral service education, today most programs are affiliated with community colleges and universities across the country.



James Shoemake is President and Instructor at the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. He has been an instructor and administrator for

almost 33 years and licensed as a Funeral Director/Embalmer for 37 years.

The Need to Pay Homage... A Universal Ethic

By Jerry J. Brown

The FUNERAL EXPERIENCE is a kaleidoscopic pattern of feelings, attitudes, ceremony, traditions, ethnicity, religiosity, socioeconomic climate, familial persuasion and fame and fortune vs. simplicity and conservatism.

However, regardless of the human niche, societal factors and economies of scale, mourning and tribute almost inevitably reign supreme.

Let us therefore take a moment to observe the funeral of a rich and renowned American icon and reference those of the average American strata and realize that the Funeral Experience for all of us is indeed, a monumental milestone.



JOHN F. KENNEDY – born 1917, died November 22, 1963. He served as President of the United States prior to his untimely death, by assassin Lee Harvey Oswald; served with gallantry in World War II; was a U.S. Senator and was one of America's most revered leaders of the 20th century. Upon his death, his funeral embodied...

- President Lyndon Johnson issued a proclamation declaring a Monday pursuant to the assassination to be a “national day of mourning”
- Kennedy's casket remained in repose in the White House for twenty-four hours while music was performed by the U.S. Navy Choir and Orchestra including the Navy Hymn and Eternal Father.
- The cortege; over 300,000 people lined the sidewalks as the horse-drawn caisson carried the body of JFK led by a riderless horse, named Black Jack with empty saddle and boots turned backwards in the stirrups.
- Visiting world-wide dignitaries attended the funeral and later, NBC correspondent, Hugh Downs, called it “THE GREATEST AND MOST SOLEM WAKE IN HISTORY”.
- Jersey Joe Walcott, world heavyweight boxer, passed by the bier at 2:30 a.m. and said of Kennedy “he was a great man!”

Note: Jessica Mitford, notable political campaigner, activist and author, gained national attention for her 1963 book, “The American Way of Death.” The book was a critical, if not scathing account of the American Funeral Profession.

Merely seven months after her book was published, the tragic death and funeral of President John F. Kennedy quietly and accurately contradicted and refuted most of her anti-funeral diatribe.

Throughout the ensuing decades, the funerals of former presidents, political luminaries, film celebrities and famous athletes embodied – notwithstanding the high visibility state, corporate and private funding and involvement – traditional ceremonies with all of the facets and accoutrements of what society has embraced for generations i.e., casket, visitations, ceremony, and graveside services and burial.

As a testament to the human need to recognize, embrace and honor those who have dedicated and sacrificed their lives to guard and protect others, we have recently witnessed the extraordinary courage of 19 Arizona firefighters who gave their lives fighting a massive wildfire in the state of Arizona.

Responding to their amazing bravery and sacrifice, a cortege of 19 separate hearses travelled in unison for over 100 miles to bring home the bodies of these phenomenal heroes.

The Funeral Experience is humanities' great equalizer... the rich and famous and the conservative and ordinary.

Then as now, the Funeral Experience prevails as a solemn, honorable and essential element of life. 🙏🙏

Jerry J. Brown is a former President of Brown-Wilbert in Roseville, MN.

Injecting the Radial is Worth the Effort

By Lance Ray

Today it is as important as ever to deliver embalming fluid to all parts of the body to ensure thorough tissue preservation and a positive viewing experience for the family. The medications used today are increasing the number of cases that require the use of multiple injection points and additional chemicals to counteract the medications to achieve this goal.

While it is true that a case requiring the use of multiple injection points involves more work on the part of the embalmer, it is essential to inject every viable vessel in an effort to achieve tissue preservation.

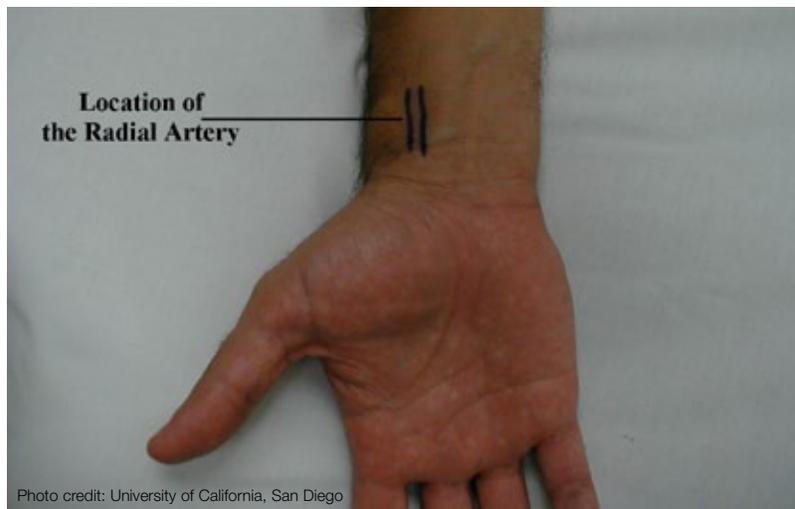
At times, vascular occlusions or blockages in the vessels prevent the normal flow of arterial fluid to the hands. In addition, blood thinners and refrigeration tends to speed up postmortem settling of the blood in dependent parts of the body. The results will leave visible congested blood in the hands and fingertips. If the embalmer neglects to inject the hands by way of the radial artery, there will be further discoloring in the hands and fingertips within a couple of days. This could prove quite discomfoting to the family members of the deceased.

To raise the radial artery, the embalmer can make an incision at any point along the course of the vessel. However, some points are more sensible than others. The incision point requires thoughtful consideration to prevent the incision site from being exposed while the deceased is positioned in the casket for viewing. With practice the embalmer can make the incision small enough to be closed with a multiclosure device. This eliminates putting more punctures in tissue compromised by edema.

Once the radial artery has been located by the use of the anatomical guides, a small incision should be made just lateral to the tendon of the flexor carpi radialis muscle, about one inch above the base of the thumb.

I suggest injecting the hands through the radial artery with a mild solution of Care 25 with two-four ounces of Restoratone to help reduce tissue dehydration.

Injecting the radial artery can also be used to reduce localized edema in the hands and upper forearms by injecting the area through the radial artery with 8 ounces of TraumaCare or Powertone and 8 ounces of Edema Eliminator. Very little water is required (if any) as the fluid will dilute with the excessive moisture in the tissue.



Many embalmers often attempt to reduce a case of localized edema in the hands and arms by injecting the entire body through a single point carotid arterial injection. The results are poor diffusion in the hands and arms, with the remaining tissue being over embalmed, which will soon show the classic signs of dehydration, graying of the skin color.

After the hands have been injected and the tissue has received proper preservation, the vessels should be tightly tied off. The next step is to dry the incision site out with cotton and fill the incision site with Pierceal incision powder.

By taking these extra steps now, the embalmer will prevent leakage. The incision site should be sutured tight and form a neat closure. The use of external glue may be used as an added line of protection against leakage. I do not recommend applying a strip of cotton along with the glue as it only draws attention to the incision site and serves no true purpose if the incision site has been properly treated and sutured tightly. With a few extra steps in the preparation room, the unsightly effect of discoloration and edema in the arms can be eliminated while increasing the overall restorative results. 🙏🙏



Lance Ray is Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Pierce Chemical.

New Website, New Tools, New Funeral Home Locator!

Earlier this year, we launched a brand new website with enhanced resources to help you in your business. Here are some highlights:

Short and sweet and easy to link!

We've shortened our website address to Wilbert.com. Any links you may have to our old web URL (wilbertonline) will redirect to the new site, but when you get a chance you might want to update the links...

...which you can now do easily! [Click here to grab a link button](#) and use on any of your website pages where you want to link to Wilbert.com.

Do you want to bring more families to your funeral home?

Be sure your business is listed on our free online funeral home directory, Find a Funeral Home. With over 40% of traffic to Wilbert.com being consumers, this is a great additional place where they can find you! [Check here to see if you're on the Find a Funeral Home directory](#). If you're not, go to the bottom of the page and fill out the form to be added. It's that simple.

What tools are available to help educate families on burial vaults?

Interactive monitors with digital presentations and videos onboard... educational (non-selling) videos on burial vaults and product comparisons, plus

With over 40% of traffic to Wilbert.com being consumers, this is a great place where they can find you!

the importance of graveside service... traditional printed material – *all can be found in this section for Funeral Professionals*.

Cremation: Service Options



Cremation continues to trend upwards...check out these tools to help you grow that segment!

Interactive monitors and videos with information specific to cremation options families must consider, including final placement and service options, puts the focus on **your** value-added services – *available here*.

Build customized cremation packages and personalized Commemorations booklets to present to families – [click here](#).

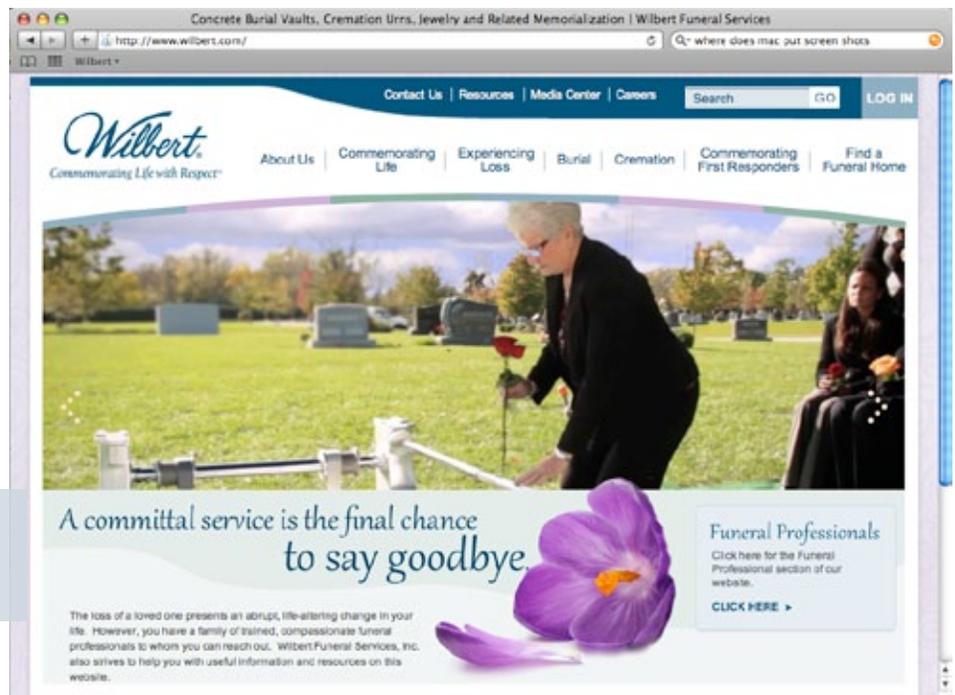
Also, if you sign up (or are already registered) on our cremation e-commerce website WilbertDirect.com, you can toggle between Wilbert.com and see your pricing on cremation products. Just hit "Log In" in the upper right of the website and enter your credentials!

One-stop-shop for industry resources!

And for when you need to access industry trade groups, *simply bookmark this resource page*.

Want more?

[Email us here and let us know](#).



YouTube Video

What's New at Wilbert

At this year's ICCFA convention, the cameras followed Wilbert president Dennis Welzenbach through our booth as he talked about some of our major new initiatives – from our ecommerce website to the Pierce Chemical and Pierce Mortuary Colleges acquisitions and what they mean.

Check out the brief video on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/wilbertburialvaults.



FAX This Page! | Print! Solve! FAX!

Welcome to the *Updater* Puzzle Contest

Solve the puzzle for a chance at a \$25 American Express® Gift Card.

Print out your puzzle, complete and fax to: 708-865-1646. The first person to correctly solve the puzzle and fax the solution will win. The 100th correct FAX will receive a \$25 AMEX Gift Card, too! And, to make it even more interesting, we will draw a FAX from all those sent to receive a THIRD \$25 AMEX Gift Card. The winners will be announced in our next edition of the *Updater*. Good luck!

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All Wilbert employees, Licensees, and their families are ineligible to enter the *Updater* Puzzle Contest.