



eNews

A monthly news update for the Wilbert Licensee Network

July 2021



“Taps at the Tower” program
See more on page 2



NFDA is going to be LIVE in Nashville, Tennessee this October!
See more on page 2



WilbertEDU™ Updates
See more on page 2

what's news

- “Taps at the Tower” program page 2
- NFDA is going to be LIVE in Nashville, Tennessee this October! page 2
- WilbertEDU™ Updates page 3
- WilbertEDU™ Sessions page 3
- FEMA Policy Change page 3
- Commemorating First Responder Officer Enmanuel “Manny” Familia page 4
- Commemorating First Responder Police Officer Anastasios Tsakos page 4

ATTENTION PLEASE

Holiday Hours

With Independence Day, July 4th, falling on a Sunday this year, the WFSI Broadview Office and both the Broadview, IL and Charlotte, NC Warehouses will be closed for observance on Monday, July 5th.

UPS will also be closed for deliveries on July 5th.
Please plan your needs accordingly.

We'd Like to Hear from YOU!

What have you found that works in your experience? Anything poignant or tastefully funny that you would like to share? Old photos of Wilbert products or employees from days gone by that would be interesting? Please email your stories to Ken Moore at kmoore@wilbert.com. If you're not comfortable writing, don't worry – he will be happy to help.

upcoming events

August 1-5, 2021
National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association Annual Convention
Grapevine, Texas at the Gaylord Hotel

August 11-13, 2021
CANA's 103rd Annual Cremation Innovation Convention
Seattle, Washington

September 19-24, 2021
Catholic Cemetery Conference Annual Convention
Miami, Florida at the Doral Hotel

September 26-29, 2021
WMA Annual Meeting
Park City, Utah at the St. Regis Deer Valley

October 17-20, 2021
National Funeral Directors Association Annual Convention
Nashville, Tennessee

Any Personnel Changes for the Directory or eNews Subscription?

Kindly report any changes in your Licensee information to Kelly Kubicz at kkubicz@wilbert.com or call Kelly at 708-865-1600 at your first opportunity when changes occur. Thank you!




We encourage you to circulate this issue of eNews to others in your organization.

“Taps at the Tower” program



On June 23, 2021, Michael Nash, Director of Sales and Customer Support for Wilbert Funeral Services, participated in the 2021 “Taps at the Tower” program at the National World War I Museum and Memorial, located in Kansas City, Missouri.

This is the eighth year for the Taps at the Tower program, which started back in 2014, the 100-year anniversary of the beginning of World War I. The program is a week-long event that happens at sunset each evening. The ceremony itself consists of the presentation of colors, laying a wreath at the base of the Liberty Memorial, a recitation of the inscription on the North Frieze on the Memorial, and the playing of “Taps” by a solo bugler. Typically, the event is attended by 500-600 people nightly.

This year’s theme was “Absence,” a tie-in for what all Americans have been through with the COVID-19

pandemic and war losses. For the June 23 service, the museum focused on the death-care industry and front-line workers during the pandemic.



As a licensed funeral director, embalmer, and supplier to funeral homes, the staff of the museum and memorial felt Michael was a great fit to take part in one of the ceremonies this year. Michael was honored to be the wreath bearer, placing the wreath at the base of the Liberty Memorial.

“These have dared bear the torches of sacrifice and service. Their bodies return to dust but their work liveth evermore. Let us strive on to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.” – Inscription on North Frieze, Liberty Memorial, National World War I Museum and Memorial

NFDA is going to be LIVE in Nashville, Tennessee this October!



Yes, at long last we will be able to gather in person at the NFDA convention this October. So, are you planning to visit Nashville for the 2021 NFDA International Convention & Expo?

If your answer is YES, here is some information you will need to plan your trip. The dates of the convention are October 17-20. Exhibits will take place at Music City Center in downtown Nashville with exhibit hours Monday, October 18: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m., Tuesday, October 19: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m. and Wednesday, October 20: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Wilbert has reserved a block of rooms at the Renaissance Hotel (611 Commerce Street). Renaissance Nashville

Hotel is a luxury haven in legendary Nashville, Tennessee. The nightly rooming rate is \$236 plus taxes. This Music City hotel is situated in the heart of downtown, attached to Fifth + Broad and moments from attractions like Bridgestone Arena and Music Row. Recharge in luxurious hotel rooms and suites with plush bedding, expansive workstations, marble bathrooms and striking views of downtown Nashville. No need for transportation to the convention center, it is just a short walk from the hotel. Preview what the hotel has to offer during your stay by clicking Music [Row Nashville TN Hotels | Renaissance Nashville Hotel \(marriott.com\)](#).

If you are planning on attending, please contact Kathleen Berry (kberry@wilbert.com) to be added to the exhibitor badge list. Watch this corner for more information on the convention and the official NFDA reservation link to the Renaissance. We hope to see you in Nashville!

WilbertEDU™ Updates

WilbertEDU continues to be a huge success! Thanks to all of you and your outreach to funeral professionals, we continue to see our webinar attendance rise each session and, to date, have seen over 8,000 attendees since we began in November 2020. We continued to have informative industry experts in June.



Recapping the sessions sponsored in June



On June 3rd, Mark Bartel, Chaplain and Manager of Spiritual Care at the Arnold Palmer Medical Center, addressed the topic “Grief

Work of Children” and led the attendees through a discussion about the emotional reconciliation needs of a grieving child. This session focused on the initial nurturing around the funeral phase by discussing six needs that can be addressed with a good funeral process. Such great information for the families that funeral professionals serve every day.

June 17th, Lance Ray addressed the topic of ethics in his presentation “Good People, Unethical Choices.” He reviewed why ethics are so important to the funeral profession and discussed, in detail, the three parts of bad choices, and why we all must work to keep ethics high in our business. The discussion shared situations and ethical choices funeral professionals have had to make or have heard of others making in and out of the prep room.

Hope you have your channels tuned to WilbertEDU July 1st to listen to Jon O’Hara of Great Lakes Partnership present “Video and Photos, Tell Your Story Your Way.” Your website is now your front door, and everything seems to be migrating from paper to digital and, more specifically, to video. Your kids and grandkids do not watch Saturday morning cartoons. They watch YouTube on phones, tablets, or whatever they can get their hands on. As much time and energy that you have dedicated to ensuring your curb appeal is pristine, it is equally as important to have your digital yard looking great.

High-quality, well-produced video is an easy way to immediately change the experience of your modern-day funeral home visitor. This session will explore many options on how to incorporate meaningful, value-based videography and photography into your funeral home and why it is more important than ever. Humanize your staff, and tell your story in your own words...do not let digital visitors guess.

On July 15th, Barbara Kemmis, Executive Director of CANA, will be sharing “The Answers are in the Numbers.” This presentation reviews the 2020 CANA cremation statistics with emphasis on current trends and market fluctuations. Using straightforward exercises, she will use the statistics to investigate how they impact an existing business. This interactive session will identify strategies to remain profitable in today’s market.

Rounding out July, on the 29th David Kessler visits us to share “When a Child Dies.” No parent expects to bury their child. The natural order of things is for children to outlive their parents. One expects to watch a child grow up, marry, and have children of their own. The death of a child takes away all the dreams and hopes a parent had for that child. No matter the age, a child’s death is an immensely difficult loss and carries with it profound emotions. David will speak to us about many of these feelings along with finding meaning in death.

Watch this corner for additional WilbertEDU webinars, and take advantage of the WilbertEDU Licensee Resources page (www.wilbert.com/wilbertedu-resources) where you can find past presentations and other useful material for promoting WilbertEDU to your customers.

FEMA Policy Change



On June 29, 2021, FEMA amended the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Policy (“Policy”) related to deaths that occurred

in the early months of the pandemic. The original Policy stated a death certificate needed to attribute the death directly or indirectly to COVID-19.

The amended Policy states that for deaths occurring from Jan. 20 to May 16, 2020, any death certificate that does not attribute the cause of death to COVID-19 must be accompanied by a signed statement listing COVID-19 as a cause or contributing cause of death. The signed statement must be provided by the original certifier of the death certificate or the local medical examiner or coroner from the jurisdiction in which the death occurred.

The statement must provide an additional explanation, or causal pathway, linking the cause of death listed on the death certificate with COVID-19.

For deaths that occurred after May 16, 2020, the death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19..

A link that goes into further detail about the new policy change can be found below:

<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

Under the “Who is Eligible?” section is where you will find the policy change.

Commemorating First Responder Officer Enmanuel “Manny” Familia

Officer Enmanuel “Manny” Familia, 38, drowned while attempting to rescue a 14-year-old boy in Worcester, Massachusetts, along with two other teens on June 4, 2021. He served as a police officer for the City of Worcester for five years.

Officer Familia made a huge impact on the community he served; he was a member of the Tactical Patrol Force, the Crisis Intervention Team, a Crisis Negotiator, and a Department Recruitment Officer. Officer Familia was currently training to become a member of the SWAT Team. Prior to becoming a Worcester Police Officer, Manny worked as an officer for the Oakham Police Department, Quinsigamond Community College Police Department and the Clark University Police Department. He had been a Supervising Officer for the Department of Youth Services, Youth Apprehension Division. Off duty, Manny represented the WPD participating in various charities including the Tarantino 5K, WPD Basketball Team, Tarantino Softball Tournament, and the United Way

and Boys and Girls Club Dodgeball Tournament.

Officer Familia is survived by his wife of 22 years (whom he had known since he was 12 and was his high school sweetheart), his son and daughter, his mother and father, two brothers, a sister, many aunts, uncles, and in-laws, and his brothers and sisters of the Worcester Police Department.

He was honored by police, firefighters, and community members who lined the streets as his body was transported from the hospital to the Office of the Medical Examiner on Saturday, June 5. A Mass of Christian Burial was held Thursday, June 10, with interment in Saint John’s Cemetery, Worcester. Mercadante Funeral Home & Chapel assisted the family with arrangements.

Wilbert Funeral Services in Oakville, CT was honored to provide the family a stainless steel triune burial vault with a Treasured Tribute and a graveside service.



Commemorating First Responder Firefighter Ralph DeBlasi



Ralph DeBlasi, 62, of the No. 7 Township Fire & Rescue in Craven County, NC, died June 10, 2021 in a wreck during bad weather while responding to an emergency call. He had served with the No. 7 since

2017 after moving from Stamford, CT where he served the community for 32 years. Ralph was known as an inspiration and mentor among his brothers and sisters at No. 7.

Mr. DeBlasi is survived by his wife, Gina, sons, Michael and David, two siblings, and the community he served.

He was honored during services on Saturday, June 19 after which firefighters formed a procession with lights flashing from the Cotten Funeral Chapel to Greenleaf Cemetery. North Carolina State Highway Patrol escorted DeBlasi's remains in a horse-drawn military wagon. Cotten Funeral Home assisted the family with arrangements.

Arnold Wilbert Corporation in Goldsboro, NC, was honored to provide the family a stainless steel triune urn vault with a Treasured Tribute, along with a graveside service.