



eNews

A monthly news update for the Wilbert Licensee Network

December 2022

Wilbert House



NFDA Recap and iPad Winners Announced
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Licensee Surveys
See page 6



Wilbert Memorials
See page 6

Any Personnel Changes for the Directory or eNews Subscription?

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



upcoming events

January 11-13, 2023
ICCFA Dead Talks
Las Vegas, NV

February 6-9, 2023
WFSI Sales Seminar
Palm Harbor, FL

February 8-10, 2023
CANA Symposium
Las Vegas, NV

April 16-18, 2023
WMA Mid-term Meeting
St. Petersburg, FL

May 16-19, 2023
ICCFA
Kansas City, MO

what's news

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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.



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

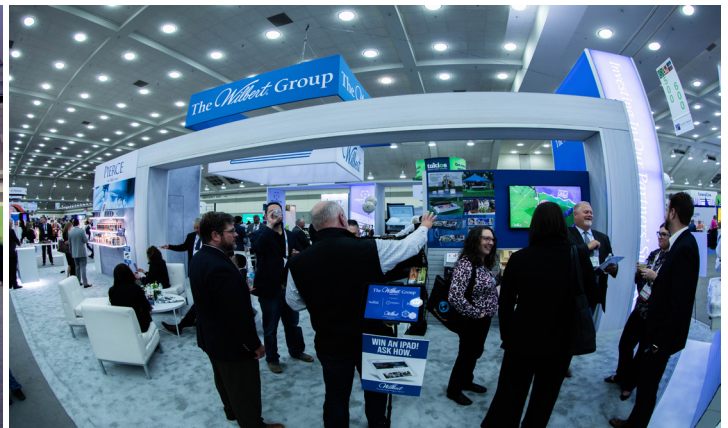
NFDA Recap and iPad Winners Announced

At the NFDA convention in Baltimore, The Wilbert® Group and our brands, Wilbert Funeral Services, Astral, Memorial Monuments, and Pierce were represented in a new and expanded 50x50 booth where we also debuted our new tag line: *Investing In Our Partners' Success*®. Almost 50 Licensee Partners and Wilbert Employee Partners attended to form a cohesive group of professionals attending to the needs and questions of visitors.

This year's marketing effort featured poker chips that captured new leads and offered potential customers a chance to win one of four Apple iPads. As visitors walked the booth, they were handed a poker chip by one of our Partners. By exploring each brand, visitors were entered into the iPad drawing. In all, almost 300 funeral professionals visited the booth with over 400 areas of interest.

Reactions from booth visitors was overwhelmingly positive and comments and conversations indicated a deep understanding of the blending of all brands under The Wilbert Group. Funeral directors expressed their appreciation for new direction of the company as it was clear that Wilbert continues to invest and innovate in the funeral industry space. Many visitors marveled at the new booth expressing their approval and awe of the design, color scheme, imagery, layout, and size. We made quite an impression at NFDA and we are very proud to have elevated the Wilbert brands at the national convention.

Connecting Directors was on hand to interview President & CEO Mark Bates. Watch that interview [here](#).



Wilbert Funeral Services

The Wilbert booth area featured Burial Vaults, Treasured Tributes™, WilbertEDU®, The Wilbert Foundation®, Cremation Choices®, and our newest innovation, a video with 3D animation illustrating the impact of water on an unlined outer burial container vs. a lined burial vault.

The urn wall showcased a mixture of 15 new and existing urn styles, along with mementos and jewelry. Cremation Choices catalogs were available and offered as takeaways.



Pierce Chemical

Pierce Chemical booth area displayed products on shelving with a table and kiosk for taking orders and giving product demonstrations. Pierce featured their newest product: Royal 33 cavity fluid.



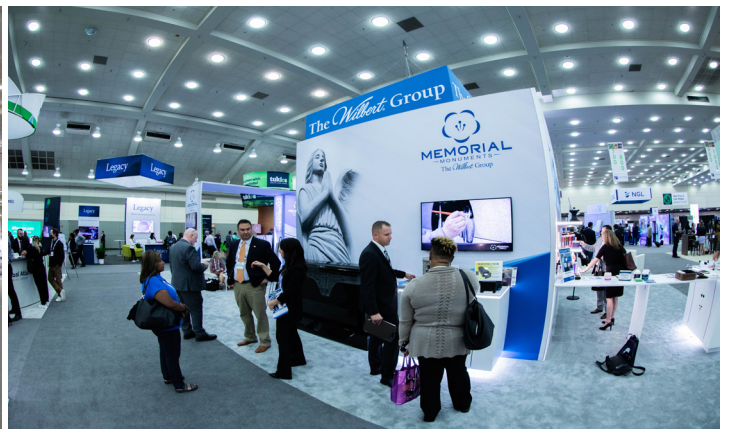
Astral

The Astral booth area featured eight caskets, plus another under a rotating digital monitor celebrating the 50th anniversary of the company. Astral's featured casket, the Ultra Met Blue/White new bed design was displayed sitting on a church truck and salt bags demonstrating the weight. As a special bonus, Astral offered champagne to customers, celebrating its anniversary.



Memorial Monuments

Memorial Monuments booth area featured three monuments for display, and three monitors showing other impressive digital product images. On display were miniature monuments and a new miniature columbarium.



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Apple iPad Drawing

Congratulations to the winners of the iPad drawing:

JT Handley, Handley Funeral Home (Danville, WV)
Wilbert Licensee Tri-State Wilbert

Megan Thulien, Zacherl Funeral Home (Fond du Lac, WI)
Wilbert Licensee Fond du Lac Wilbert

Carlos Riddick, Paradise House of Funerals (Plymouth, NC)

Olivia Arnold, Kaczorowski Funeral Home (Baltimore, MD)



Wilbert® Foundation Holiday Donations



As the holidays approach, you may be looking for a holiday gift for your customers. This year, why not consider a donation in their name to the Wilbert Foundation! It is a convenient way to show you care while helping to fund the Foundation's Children's Chaplaincy Programs. In return for your donation, we are happy to print and provide you thank you cards acknowledging

this thoughtful gift which can be sent to each of your customers. The verbiage used in this year's card is:

The Wilbert Foundation continues the mission that was started 20 years ago to help children. We continue to provide pediatric chaplains with the tools they need to comfort patients and their families along with our Bertie Bear Kits that give children comfort in their time of

need. In the spirit of the holiday giving season, we are pleased to inform you that {Company Name} has made a donation to the Wilbert Foundation in honor of you, your staff, and your company.

The Wilbert Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 2002 with a mission of providing resources to help children cope with the trauma of grief and death. The foundation, in partnership with the Pediatric Chaplains Network, continues to develop tools benefiting children and their families during difficult times.

Through donations and support such as this holiday gift, the Wilbert Foundation can continue its heartfelt mission of helping children. On behalf of the Foundation, especially the many children and families touched by our program, we wish you a happy and safe holiday season.

Holiday Hours and Inventory Dates

With the holidays and year-end physical inventory fast approaching, we want you to be aware of the following schedule so that you can plan your orders and deliveries accordingly. Please be sure to have your liner load scheduled with the following dates in mind so you have the material necessary to meet your production needs.

Locations	Inventory Tuesday Dec. 6th	Inventory Wednesday Dec. 7th	Inventory Thursday Dec. 8th Until 10am	Christmas Observed Monday Dec. 26th	New Year's Day Observed Monday Jan. 2nd
Broadview	Open	Closed	Open at 10	Closed	Closed
Charlotte	Closed	Open	Open	Closed	Closed

For Christmas and New Year's weeks, we strongly suggest that you plan to have deliveries made by the previous Thursday rather than the day before the Holiday to ensure receipt of products. If you have any questions related to the delivery schedule as outlined above, please contact Eileen Murray, Inside Sales Manager, or Terry Whitlock, SVP Licensee Products & Services.

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 23,000 attendees since we began in November, 2020. We continued to have informative industry experts in November and look forward to more successful webinars in 2022 and 2023.

WilbertEDU Upcoming Sessions

On December 1st, Angela Berwald and Kahlen Knapik of National Mortuary Shipping and Cremation will take the stage to discuss The ABCs of Shipping Human Remains. This session will look at what you need to know about shipping human remains both within the United States and internationally. NMS has been the funeral industries' trusted source when a death occurs away from home for over 40 years; providing funeral homes with a source for out-of-town removals, embalming, cremations, and any need, anywhere in the world. Angela, "Angie" Berwald leads the National Mortuary Shipping and Cremation (NMS) team as their CEO and President and ensures they maintain their mission and philosophy to serve funeral director's needs every day. She began her career with NMS over 30 years ago and has served in many capacities, always being instrumental in the company's growth as a world leader in mortuary shipping.

Kahlen Knapik is a licensed funeral director and embalmer and serves as part of National Mortuary Shipping and Cremations leadership team as Vice President. He has been with NMS for over 20 years and has worked in every segment of the company. He has a diverse background in engineering, business management, marketing, and a passion for funeral service and has been instrumental in the development of NMS's proprietary software system, various marketing campaigns, and employee development to help propel NMS to the world's largest and most respected mortuary shipping and trade service.

Register today to see how the team at NMS provides funeral service professionals the greatest customer service experience possible and assist with out-of-town removals, embalming, cremations, or any need, anywhere in the world. You will learn about domestic and international shipping of remains beginning with the 1st call, paperwork, preparation, and proper packaging of the remains, tendering of remains regarding liabilities and then the receiving of the remains. They will also review this process for the domestic shipping of cremated remains.

On December 15 we welcome Poul Lemasters back to the WilbertEDU stage to discuss how the funeral profession is convinced that the big risk in getting sued revolves around cremation. And rightfully so! There are more and more cremations and more and more lawsuits following right along. But the funeral profession is filled with risks. One commonly overlooked risk of liability is embalming. The truth is that funeral homes continue to have embalming liability claims all the time. From wrongful embalming to negligent embalming – the potential lawsuit is always there. And with so many providers focusing on their cremation practices – they are failing to keep up the right standards with their embalming procedures. This seminar provides insight to real, current lawsuits affecting the entire deathcare profession today. The focus is on the "common" problems causing lawsuits and the prevention measures needed to mitigate liability. Overall, the presentation will discuss several common embalming lawsuits that affect everyone, explain, and identify the cause of the lawsuit, and provide solutions to prevent and reduce the risk of lawsuits.

As always, Poul's presentation will educate the audience and provide steps they can implement to help protect them from liability.

Kicking off the 2023 WilbertEDU webinar series will be Duane Hills, President of the Joseph Gawler's Sons in Washington DC., the Funeral Home of the Presidents, from its start-up in 1850 until present day, 172 years later. Duane entered funeral service in 1978 after graduating from the Simmons School of Mortuary Science in Syracuse, New York. Over the years, he worked at and then owned funeral homes in Big Flats and Corning, New York, until he sold them to the Loewen Group in 1995. Over the years Duane remained active in New York and in 2008 transferred with SCI to a group of funeral homes in Texas. In 2012 he transferred to become Gawler's Assistant Manager, and four months later, became the President at Joseph Gawler's Sons. He will discuss the four generations of Gawler's and their roles in the development of funeral

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service especially when servicing their first presidential funeral for Woodrow Wilson followed by seven more presidential services over their 172-year history. Duane will talk about what goes on behind the scenes when serving these high-profile individuals, especially what goes into the planning and execution in pulling it off. Other items he will touch on is taking the original funeral home and the modernization of the facility in Washington, DC to keep up with current trends in funeral service, and how they have developed the Founder's Room Museum at the funeral home to showcase the history and services of this historical building. He will enlighten the audience on the importance of funeral service professionals taking a bow and understanding their positions in a community, while embracing the changes in funeral service demanded by the people we serve. Several lucky webinar attendees will win Duane's newly released book entitled, "One Block West of the White House."

Hope to see you on December 1 and December 15! Register for upcoming sessions at www.wilbert.com/wilbertedu.

WilbertEDU® November Recap

Our WilbertEDU webinar on November 10, gave us the opportunity to hear Curtis Funk, founder, and CEO of Tukios, talk about simple actions to take control of your website. Curtis, recognized for being a thought-leader in the funeral industry, has built an impeccable reputation and has acquired thousands of customers worldwide. He has been an entrepreneur his entire adult life and has founded multiple companies but has spent the last 15 years providing products and services exclusively to funeral homes. Tukios is a software company that provides websites and tribute video platforms for funeral homes. He shared specific statistics from their customer base as to what people are looking for when they visit a website in search of information. Curtis talked about the experience someone may have when visiting a website, and that they usually have a question in mind. Whether or not the website can answer that question will determine the customer's next steps. He explained the types of different funeral home website visitors, what they are searching for, and how to make simple changes to meet their needs. Curtis also discussed some of the trends to be aware of especially when it comes to ADA compliance and its friendliness to visitors who may have a disability such as color blindness or hearing loss. This webinar was quite an eye opener for many! Our WilbertEDU webinar

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Wilbert Memorials

Mike Forbes shared that Wilbert Memorials had the honor of providing the pedestal for the new statue of President Truman which was recently placed in the rotunda in Washington, D.C.

The team in Parsons, Kansas, is responsible for the engineered granite pedestal, which is engraved and gold leafed.



Licensee Surveys

Our Licensee Surveys are off to a great start, with the completion of the Sales Survey, and the Monument Survey in Licensee hands at the time of this writing. As promised, we are releasing results of the surveys to the Licensee Network via blast emails and the eNews.

The responses from the Sales Survey are steering the agenda for the upcoming Sales Meeting to be held in February. One of the common responses was 'don't have the sales meeting in Chicago in February!' Mark Evans and his team have done a great job in securing the Innisbrook Golf Resort in Palm Harbor, Florida.

If you are not receiving the surveys or the analysis in your email, please check your spam folder or reach out to Royden Wood to make sure your email address is included in the Licensee mailing list.

2022 WFSI Sales Survey – Key Insights

Our 2022 WFSI Sales Survey was a success, with 39 respondents from the Licensee Network. Only Independent Licensees were polled. The following is an analysis of the results, with commentary. Please note that information that could be used to identify a Licensee has been redacted.

Questions 3 through 6 – Sales Representative Questions

64% of respondents currently have a dedicated Burial Vault Sales Representative. Of respondents who do not currently have a representative, 86% will consider one going forward, and overall, 64% of respondents would like assistance in training new sales representatives.

2023 Convention Calendar

ICCFA Dead Talks

January 11-13, at Bally's Hotel in Las Vegas

[DEAD Talks - ICCFA](#)

WFSI Sales Seminar

February 6-9, 2023, Innisbrook Resort, Palm Harbor, FL.

Contact [Royden Wood](#), Vice President of Licensee Development.

CANA Symposium

February 8-10, at the LINQ Hotel

[Cremation Association of North America \(CANA\)](#)

WMA Mid-term Meeting

April 16-18, The Don Cesar Hotel St. Pete's Beach, Florida

[MIDTERM MEETING | WMA](#)

ICCFA

May 16- 19, at Loews Kansas City Hotel and Kansas City Convention Center Kansas City, MO

[Annual Convention & Exposition - ICCFA](#)

Commemorating First Responder Firefighter Gerardo Rincon

Salmon, Idaho - Salmon-Challis National Forest. During the early morning hours of Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022, while assigned to the Moose Fire near Salmon, ID, Crew Boss Gerardo Rincon suffered a medical emergency and passed away.

Rincon had been a wildland firefighter since 1994, and over his 28-year career, he was a Type 2 firefighter, engine captain, and crew boss.

Services were entrusted to the care of Jones and Casey Funeral Home, Salmon, ID.

Wilbert Funeral Services, Clackamas, OR was honored to provide the family a Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault with a Treasured Tribute image, along with a graveside service.



Commemorating First Responder Investigator Myiesha Stewart

Greenville, MS – Investigator Myiesha Breanna Stewart was shot and killed near the intersection of Reed Road and Rebecca Street during a vehicle pursuit. Myiesha passed away Tuesday, October 11, 2022. She was 30 years old.

Greenville officers and deputies with the Washington County Sheriff's Office were pursuing a subject who had fled after shooting his girlfriend.

The subject was taken into custody following the pursuit.

Investigator Stewart is survived by her three-year-old son and parents.

Services were entrusted to the care of Byas Funeral Home, Greenville, MS.

Jackson MS Wilbert Burial Vault Co. in Jackson, MS was honored to provide the family a Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault with a Treasured Tribute image and a graveside service.



Commemorating First Responder Sergeant Alex Hamzy

Bristol, CT– Sergeant Alex Hamzy was shot and killed in an ambush at about 11:00 pm on Wednesday, October 12, 2022. He was 34 years old.

Officers had responded to a business earlier in the evening in response to complaints about a disorderly patron. Officers who responded to the call issued the man a summons and released him. The man then went home, armed himself with an AR-15 rifle, and made a fake 911 call reporting a disturbance at his home. As officers arrived at the scene, the man opened fire on them from the front yard.

The subject was found dead with a gunshot wound inside the home.

Sergeant Hamzy had served with the Bristol Police Department for eight years. He is survived by his wife, parents, and two sisters.

Services were entrusted to the care of Scott Funeral Home, Terryville, CT.

Wilbert Funeral Services in Oakville, CT, was honored to provide the family a Stainless Steel Triune® urn vault with a Treasured Tribute image and a graveside service.

