Get Ready.
Get Set …

Go!

Regardless of your age and station in life, it’s time to get ready for the 131st Annual AFDA Convention June 18–21, 2017 Marriott’s Grand Hotel Point Clear, Alabama There, we can all

Play, Learn and Grow... Together!

Hope to see YOU in Point Clear!
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Wow! It is so hard to believe my year as your President is rapidly coming to an end; it actually makes me kind of sad. Time really has flown by, and now I'm looking forward to serving this coming year as your Immediate Past President.

There are so many people I must thank for being there for me during this exciting year.

I want to start by thanking my husband for taking care of our family during the times I have had to be away while serving the AFDA (Alabama Funeral Directors Association), and my children for understanding I can't always be there; my parents for always encouraging me and looking out for my best interests; my work family (Daddy, Daron and Brad) for covering for me while away on AFDA business; and my friend and colleague Doug Williams for being the best Immediate Past President I could have asked for. Doug, I thank you for all your help and guidance; I will always value your opinion. You are my friend!

Then there's everyone else: those awesome AFDA board members I have had the privilege of serving alongside these past few years; our committee members who stepped up to serve; our wonderful sponsors/friends who never fail us with their support and generosity; Geoff Halbrooks for serving as our NFDA Policy Board Representative, and most importantly his work as Chairman of the AFDA Preneed Management Trust Board; the investment group that keeps a close eye on our preneed trust and have it growing for the better; Charles Perine, Denise Grogan, and the board members of the Alabama Board of Funeral Service for their hard work in keeping funeral service in Alabama top-notch; Jennifer Haskell and everyone at the ALDOI for all of their help with preneed management & regulation; our attorney Mitch Boles, lobbyist Ragan Ingram and The Windham Group; Martha Till for the work she does for the AFDA; Sally Belanger for the work she puts into The Undertakings; Dr. Counce for his education expertise; and last, but certainly not least, the membership of the AFDA.

I want to give a special thank you to Don Daniels for believing in me enough to ask me to serve as his AFDA Secretary years ago. Don has offered so much help to me over the past few years and been a true friend. He's someone I always knew I could call on for help and advice. In a way, he was my travel partner when traveling alone. You see, he would always call to make sure I had arrived at my destination and made it to my room at the end of the day. Thank you so much, Don, for allowing me to experience this. As you may know, Don hasn't been in the best health for a few months and I just ask that you continue to remember him in your prayers.

I know everyone is thinking "she forgot about Denise"!!! Well, there is no way I could EVER forget Denise. She does so much more than anyone knows. Until you have served on this board there is just no way you could know. I had no clue until now. She is my go to person; the one I call when I have a question; the one who always gives a reminder when something needs to be done; the one who makes sure it all gets done; a hard worker in the office, at home and on business trips for the AFDA; my know-it-all person; and much, much more. Thank you so much Denise for what you have done for me and continue to do for the Alabama Funeral Directors Association. I will forever be grateful to you and I love you!

I look forward to seeing what all our incoming President, Mike Morrison, has in store for the AFDA. Mike is a great person, and I know he will do nothing but what's best for this great association. Mike, just know I'm here for you anytime you need me.

In closing, I just want to thank you all one more time, from the bottom of my heart, for allowing me to serve you in this capacity. It's been an exciting year and I've made many friendships during my time on the AFDA board! And just because my time as your President is coming to an end, please know I don't plan on disappearing anytime soon. I plan on staying actively involved in this association for many years to come, and watch remarkable things continue to happen for the AFDA.

Respectfully yours,

Carrel Ann Spears
AFDA President 2016-2017
It’s Time To Roll Out The AFDA Welcome Mat For Our Newest AFDA Members

Jeff Cook, Manager
Bluffton Funeral Services
Lanett, Alabama

Bill Hawn
American Benefit Life Insurance Co
1605 LBJ Freeway # 710
Dallas, TX 601-527-7285
Email: Kristin.meredith@ablife.com

Remember, it has been said time and time again over the years, “Participate in your Association, know your fellow members, share with them at social events, business meetings, and workshops and you will never ask this question, “What is this association doing for me?” Because the more you put in, the more you will get out! Always remember, this is your association. Let it work for you!”

Welcome!

Little Miss Zoey Jo Craddock
February 24, 2017
Weighing in at 8 lbs., 1 oz.

Mom and Dad Kasey and Nelson Craddock are elated and wondering what the next 20 years hold in store for them. As for the Grands, Regina and Mark Craddock and Vicki and Lewis Bomar are doing what Grands do best ... getting ready to spoil Little Miss Zoey! Gotta luv Grands!
Denise’s Soapbox …

Frantic is probably the best word to describe the state of being most execs are in just before things start to roll. However, blue skies are in sight. You see, once into the program, I’m here to tell you there is a source of renewed energy that we all draw upon and it’s source is through the friendships that have developed over the years. I keep thinking of the times Sally and I have said to one another, convention is like a family reunion for us. You know, something or someone you can’t live with and something you can’t live without!

It has been said many times that it is easier to ask for forgiveness than to ask permission so I’m going out on the limb here and asking for your forgiveness before we roll into Point Clear. If I seem short tempered, am quite not up to my sassy, happy-go-lucky self, and appear that I would be happier hold up in a prison cell, please understand that I am just tired.

Give me a little space and a couple quiet hours and I’ll be fine, ready to kick up my heels and be a part of the vibrant organization known as the Alabama Funeral Directors Association.

Truth be known, I thank my lucky stars each day for the opportunity to serve you. If you don’t already know it, you are among some of the finest funeral service practitioners in the nation! And as my crazy, outspoken sidekick Sally B always reminds me, association management is much like funeral service, it’s not a job, but rather a way of life. The only difference is that the dearly departed are the issues before us and you are the grieving family! As I said last year, “thank you for allowing me to have such an interesting life!” I’d like to echo that same sentiment again this year.

Now let’s look to the future. Amazing! There’s a clean slate ready for many exciting postings. In a few short days, a new administration will be at the helm. Each year I’m in awe of the many talents each officer and board member brings to the table. Admittedly, their interests are diversified, but their overall goal is the betterment of the Alabama Funeral Directors Association. What more can we ask for? We are so blessed that most folks truly want to serve funeral service and give something back to the organization and profession that has been so good to them. Few if any come on board for self-serving or egotistical reasons. We’ve seen this happen in other states and it’s not pretty, nor does it serve the association well.

Soon your AFDA officers will be heading off to NFDA’s Leadership Meeting where there is always something to learn that will keep the association out of trouble or help us to achieve more. All we have to do is embrace some of these ideas although they may seem foreign at the time. Truly, we do get by with the help of our colleagues! That said, let’s encourage our leaders to go with open minds … If there is something that we can’t live with, lets form a positive coalition of responses and rebuttals and help others understand our position, not just sit back and gripe. I know that you can make a difference.

Since I’ve spent a good bit of time chatting about association life, I’d like to share a quote that actually made me chuckle and pretty much sums up life in most association offices …

“If you are coasting, you’re either losing momentum or else you’re headed down downhill.”

My challenge to you is to Keep Reaching for the Stars!

As a last minute reminder, if you haven’t already forwarded your convention registration to the association office, please take a moment now to do so now. Martha and I would really appreciate it. From a planning standpoint, having an accurate count of participants is one of the most important parts of convention planning.

Continued On Page 7
# 2016—2017 AFDA Board of Directors

## AFDA Executive Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrel-Ann Wyatt Spears</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Wyatt Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;Post Office Box 875&lt;br&gt;Opp, AL 36467&lt;br&gt;334-493-2506&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:carrelann@gmail.com">carrelann@gmail.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Ferrell Spears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael A. Morrison, CFSP, CCO</td>
<td>President-Elect</td>
<td>Morrison Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;Post Office Box 513&lt;br&gt;Tuscumbia, AL 35674&lt;br&gt;256-383-7311&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:morrisonfuneral@bellsouth.net">morrisonfuneral@bellsouth.net</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Holley Morrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Bowen</td>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>John Ridout's Funeral Parlors&lt;br&gt;2116 University Boulevard&lt;br&gt;Birmingham, AL 35233&lt;br&gt;205-251-5254&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:heath.bowen@dignitymemorial.com">heath.bowen@dignitymemorial.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Jo Anne Bowen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Yates, CFSP</td>
<td>Secretary-Treasurer</td>
<td>Ridout’s Gardendale Chapel&lt;br&gt;Post Office Box 498&lt;br&gt;Gardendale, AL 35071&lt;br&gt;205-631-6252&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:mike.yates@dignitymemorial.com">mike.yates@dignitymemorial.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Amy Yates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Douglas Williams</td>
<td>Immediate Past President</td>
<td>Cullman Heritage Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;255 County Road 1435&lt;br&gt;Cullman, AL 35056&lt;br&gt;256-734-0208&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:dougw1@bellsouth.net">dougw1@bellsouth.net</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Ann Williams, CFSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoff L. Halbrooks, CFSP</td>
<td>Policy Board Representative</td>
<td>Peck Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;1600 Highway 31 Southwest&lt;br&gt;Hartselle, Alabama 35640&lt;br&gt;256-773-2541&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:geoff@peckfuneralhome.com">geoff@peckfuneralhome.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Lisa Halbrooks</td>
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## District Directors & AFDA Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luther D. Watts</td>
<td>Director - District 1</td>
<td>Bell Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;510 Main Street&lt;br&gt;Post Office Box 1239&lt;br&gt;Sumiton, AL 35148&lt;br&gt;205-648-6611&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:bbellumiton@aol.com">bbellumiton@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy R. Stewart</td>
<td>Director - District 2</td>
<td>Lemley Funeral Home &amp; Crematory&lt;br&gt;6878 Second Avenue, West / Post Office Box 700&lt;br&gt;Oneonta, AL 35121&lt;br&gt;205-274-2323&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:jstewart@longfamilyfuneralhomes.com">jstewart@longfamilyfuneralhomes.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Mitsy Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffy Johnston</td>
<td>Director - District 3</td>
<td>Mobile Memorial Gardens&lt;br&gt;6040 Three Notch Road&lt;br&gt;Mobile, AL 36619&lt;br&gt;251-661-7700&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:bjohnston@legacyfuneralgroup.com">bjohnston@legacyfuneralgroup.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Fiancé: Steve Lyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Kendall Glover</td>
<td>Director - District 4</td>
<td>Glover Funeral Home&lt;br&gt;1468 Hartford Highway&lt;br&gt;Dothan, AL 36301&lt;br&gt;334-699-3888&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:kendall@gloverfuneral.com">kendall@gloverfuneral.com</a>&lt;br&gt;Spouse: Caroline Glover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise Edmisten, CCO</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Alabama Funeral Directors Association&lt;br&gt;Postal Mail Box 380 / 7956 Vaughn Road&lt;br&gt;Physical Address / 7 Clayton Street&lt;br&gt;Montgomery, AL 36116&lt;br&gt;334-956-8000 - Office / 334-322-3428 - Cell&lt;br&gt;334-956-8001 - FAX&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:dedmisten@alabamafda.org">dedmisten@alabamafda.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha Till</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Alabama Funeral Directors Association&lt;br&gt;Postal Mail Box 380 / 7956 Vaughn Road&lt;br&gt;Physical Address / 7 Clayton Street&lt;br&gt;Montgomery, AL 36116&lt;br&gt;334-956-8000 - Office / 334-354-0593 - Cell&lt;br&gt;E-Mail: <a href="mailto:mtill@alabamafda.org">mtill@alabamafda.org</a></td>
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</table>
June 18 - 21, 2017  
AFDA Convention  
Marriott Grand Hotel  
Point Clear, AL

July 4, 2017  
Fourth of July  
AFDA Office Closed

July 16 - 19, 2017  
2017 NFDA Leadership Conference  
Coeur d’Alene Golf And Spa Resort  
Coeur d’Alene, ID

Labor Day  
September 4, 2017  
AFDA Office Closed

October 29 - November 1, 2017  
NFDA Convention & Expo  
Boston, MA

November 10, 2017  
Veterans Day  
AFDA Office Closed

November 23, 2017  
Thanksgiving Day  
AFDA Office Closed

December 13-17, 2017  
Dodge Wreaths across America Tour  
Metropolitan Washington, DC; Arlington, VA; Dover, DE And More

December 24, 2017  
Christmas Eve  
AFDA Office Closed

December 25, 2017  
Christmas Day  
AFDA Office Closed

Denise’s Soapbox - Continued From Page 5

As I head back to my trusty computer to work on a few more convention materials, let me be one of the first to remind you to be thankful for our many freedoms, be proud of our flag and also to wish you a safe, happy and fun-filled Fourth of July just in case you are unable to join us for convention.

Convention Count Down Has Begun!

I can’t wait to see YOU in Point Clear at the Grand!

Denise Hemmiston
In Memoriam

Celebrating The Lives of Our AFDA Members, Family Members & Friends

Mary T. Yates
Grandmother of AFDA Secretary/Treasurer
Mike Yates, CFSP
Ridout’s Gardendale Chapel
April 26, 2017

Norman Duggan Holman, Sr.
Holman Headland Mortuary
Father Of Norman D. Holman, Jr. and David C. Holman
Brother Of W. Russell Holman, Jr. and John R. Holman
May 1, 2017

Should family and friends so desire, expressions of sympathy may be made to the association’s scholarship fund, the J. Whitlfield Miles, CFSP Scholarship Fund
C/O Alabama Funeral Directors Association
Postal Mail Box 380
7956 Vaughn Road
Montgomery, AL 36116

Please be certain to indicate to whom acknowledgements should be sent and include the appropriate address.

AFDA J. Whitfield Miles Scholastic Scholarship Awarded!

Congratulations go out to Amanda Moon, the most recent recipient of the J. Whitfield Miles Scholarship.

Amanda is employed at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home, Cullman, Alabama and attends Jefferson State Community College where she is enrolled in the school’s Mortuary Science Program.

Amanda’s essay that was reviewed by the AFDA Scholarship Committee read in part, “I have never felt so compelled to succeed in such an esteemed business. I am driven to accomplish my goals by hard work, compassion and knowledge. I am interested in learning every facet of the position of funeral director/embalmer, from handling, embalming and caring for the deceased, to the fulfilling the needs of families by supporting them emotionally and professionally, ensuring that all of the details will be handled.”

Amanda!

For more information on scholarship availabilities and application forms please visit the AFDA website: Alabamafd.org
The 2017 Hall W. Thompson Hero for Sight Award

Jeff Haddox, President/CEO of Sight Savers America and Doyce Williams President/CEO of the Alabama Eye Bank. Doyce Williams, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Alabama Eye Bank (AEB), has been named the 2017 recipient of the Hall W. Thompson Hero for Sight Award. The award was presented on March 8, 2017, at Regions Field in Birmingham, Alabama, by Sight Savers America Chairman of the Board, William Burrus.

The Sight Savers America Hall W. Thompson Hero for Sight Award is presented each year in honor of Hall Thompson’s legacy of supporting children’s eye care in Alabama.

“Doyce has been a good friend and important supporter of SSA and Alabama’s eye care community for decades,” said Jeff Haddox, President of Sight Savers America. “He played a significant role in helping Sight Savers America with in-kind gifts and advice in its formative years.”

Williams became AEB’s executive director in 1980 when the eye bank was in its infancy. During his tenure, the AEB has expanded its reach, providing tissue to 54 countries around the world and 49 states within the United States. Additionally, during Williams’ time with AEB, the organization has been ranked in the top 10 eye banks in the world for more than 33 years in tissue placed for transplant and has maintained a superlative record of quality and service.

“The mission of Sight Savers America is a worthy and noble one,” Williams said, “and being a part of their history is a privilege. My core motivation during my career has been the joy and fulfillment of helping others to see again. To receive an award for something that has brought me such satisfaction is an honor indeed.”

Dennis Russell, member of the Alabama Funeral Directors Association, has been a longtime friend and supporter of the Alabama Eye Bank. “We are grateful for the partnership between funeral directors and the AEB. Eye donation has brought comfort to many families by knowing their loved one was able to restore sight for someone suffering in darkness. Under the leadership of Doyce Williams, the AEB has thrived and become a valuable partner to the Alabama Funeral Directors Association.”

The Hall W. Thompson Hero for Sight Award is permanently displayed on the 25-foot tribute wall in the first-floor lobby of the Callahan Eye Hospital in Birmingham, AL. A unique part of the space is the original work of art that is commissioned on an annual basis. This year’s painting is entitled “Butterfly Dreams” by George Mendoza. George suffered from a rare, incurable, degenerative eye disease at the age of 15. His paintings spring from the loss of his eyesight and a very special vision that took its place.

AEB works with funeral directors throughout the state to ensure valuable tissue is recovered in a timely manner, giving it the greatest chance of saving the sight of someone else. Through AEB’s partnership with funeral directors, we have been able to offer a second chance at sight for thousands of Alabamians. The Alabama Eye Bank has provided more than 75,000 corneas used for sight saving transplant since 1980. Tissue has also been provided to advance research in ophthalmology relating to glaucoma and age related macular degeneration.

The economic benefit of a person receiving a cornea transplant was examined in 2013 by the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA). According to their estimate, AEB has generated over 6 billion dollars to the economies of vision clinics, surgery centers, hospitals, vision scientists, surgeons, and researchers and ophthalmology practices, and ancillary vision care providers since 1980.

The AEB is a 501c3 Non-profit organization in the State of Alabama. It maintains offices in Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery.

Reprinted With The Permission Of The Alabama Eye Bank
Congratulations Go Out
To Buffy Johnson, The Association’s Newest CFSP

It’s always good when an association has bragging rights when it comes to the Academy of Funeral Service Practice and those who have achieved the status of a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner, you know — a CFSP! In this case, not only is it good for the individual practitioner, but good for the entire Alabama Funeral Directors Association (AFDA) as well.

Certification by the Academy of Funeral Service Practice speaks well for the caliber of funeral service practitioners; individuals who are committed to ongoing learning; not because they are required to do so to satisfy state board licensing requirements, but more importantly because they WANT to learn. They want to be equipped with information that will help them better serve their client families. And so it is with Buffy Johnston, Director of AFDA District 3.

At the urging of Mark Craddock, Mike Yates and Denise Edmisten, Buffy first started her quest for CFSP status in February 2017 and emphatically states that once she got the “hang of things,” it really didn’t take a lot of effort as she was already participating in many educational opportunities, both in the funeral home, in her regional association and in her community outreach efforts.

Tuesday, June 20, 2017, during the AFDA Convention Meeting, as AFDA Buffy’s peers look on, Mike Yates, CFSP, will have the distinct honor and pleasure of recognizing Buffy as the association’s newest CFSP and will present Buffy with her Academy Pin! As Sally B says, “Wear it proudly Buffy as it is a symbol of your commitment to life-long learning and professionalism.” Your AFDA colleagues are all proud of your accomplishment. You see, they know that Academy participation is a voluntary endeavor and requires 180 hours of continuing education credit to be certified as a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP)! Yes, 180 hours.

If other AFDA members are interested in learning more about the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice, feel free to reach out any one of the Academy’s Ambassadors or one of your colleagues who has earned recognition as a CFSP! And so you know, your options are many as there are already 54 AFDA members who have achieved CFSP status. All are to be commended and applauded for their commitment to professionalism.
What Would You Do In The Event Of An Emergency In YOUR Funeral Home?

Would Your Staff Know What Is Expected Of Them?

DOES YOUR FUNERAL HOME HAVE AN EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN?

By

T. Scott Gilligan, NFDA General Counsel

An electrical fire breaks out in a second floor utility room at the funeral home during a visitation. An estranged family member barges into a private funeral ceremony brandishing a pistol. A railcar carrying styrene overheats and a vapor cloud of poison gas starts drifting toward the funeral home. A grieving widower drops over during a funeral service suffering from an apparent heart attack. Would the funeral home staff know how to immediately and effectively react to each of these emergencies?

These four examples and countless other contingencies that can arise in day-to-day life are the reason a funeral home must have an Emergency Action Plan in place. The Emergency Action Plan or “EAP” must be known to all employees and should be used as the basis for funeral home staff training and safety drills.

According to OSHA regulations, if a business has a fire extinguisher or is required to have a fire extinguisher on the premises, it must have an EAP. In addition, if the business has ten or more employees, OSHA requires that the EAP must be in written form. While many funeral homes may fall under the ten-employee limit which requires a written EAP, it makes sense from a safety standpoint to have a written EAP that employees can use as a quick reference tool when an emergency arises.

If your funeral home does not have an EAP or wishes to improve its existing EAP, NFDA has recently developed a comprehensive EAP template with implementation instructions. The sample EAP is available to any NFDA member funeral home as a free membership benefit. The EAP template and the implementation instructions that accompany the template will allow any funeral home to put together a comprehensive protection plan to deal with emergencies.

What does a comprehensive EAP contain? It should provide anyone who consults it with readily available information on who should be contacted in case of a particular emergency and what steps should be followed. For example, the first section of the EAP developed by NFDA has the funeral home list contact information for the police, fire department, hospitals, poison control centers, gas, electrical and water utilities, and other first responders. It also identifies the location of emergency equipment and first aid kits in the funeral home and indicates which employees have been trained to provide assistance. The emergency contact information for each employee is also provided in the EAP.

The EAP then lists the step-by-step procedures that funeral home employees should take for a variety of emergencies. The EAP covers medical emergencies, fire, tornado, earthquake, flood, hurricane, blizzard, chemical spills, angry visitors, robbery, and the active shooter scenario. The final section of the EAP spells out steps for an efficient and safe evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown procedures.

It is NFDA’s strong recommendation that every funeral home facility have an EAP that is tailored for that particular building and surrounding area. While NFDA has attempted to make the sample EAP as comprehensive as possible, it is only a template. Each funeral home will need to tailor and customize the plan for each of its facilities.

To assist member funeral homes in customizing the EAP, NFDA has also developed implementation instructions for the EAP template. One of the most important tasks under the implementation instructions is to develop evacuation routes for every floor and room in the funeral home. The funeral home needs to designate and show in the EAP primary and secondary evacuation routes for each floor. The routes should be well lit, clearly marked, able to accommodate the number of potential evacuees, and lead to a designated assembly area. Charts showing the evacuation procedures should be posted in the EAP and throughout the funeral home facility.

Another important step in putting in place an effective EAP is to appoint primary and secondary emergency coordinators. The emergency coordinator should be a person who can take charge in an emergency and have sufficient authority over the staff. A back-up or secondary emergency coordinator should also be appointed. Their primary responsibility is to know the EAP backwards and forwards so that they are also able to immediately respond to any emergency.

The implementation instructions also provide information on which states allow private businesses to create a gun-free location. Information is also provided on Good Samaritan laws that provide immunity to those assisting in medical emergencies. As detailed by the implementation instructions, an EAP is worthless if employees are not familiar with it. Periodic employee training and drills are an essential part of an EAP.

The NFDA EAP template and implementation instructions may be downloaded by NFDA member firms from the NFDA website.

Furthermore, plans are underway to include additional disaster preparedness information in the upcoming issue of the AFDA Resource Manual.
Greetings and good news from the Funeral Trust of Alabama!

I am so glad to announce that the new Member Benefit Trust is up and running. By now you should have received your new trust contracts and the application pages to participate in the new program. As most are aware and well remember, in December of 2015, we lost our ability to guarantee a return on Trust investments. All contracts written after December 31, 2015 receive marker value only at fulfillment. This new Member Benefit Trust puts us back in business for shoring up the downside of the markets. Please read your paperwork closely and if you have questions, give myself or Paul vonSchoeler a call. I look forward to the great success of this new product. It’s been a long tough road getting it going, but we finally made it.

The Funeral Trust is doing great and performing very well. Our current Trust value has exceeded 34 million dollars and still doing well. I don't know of a pre-need product anywhere that is even remotely close to us on ease of use and returns on the investment. For me, it's been great!

I would remind you that our Trust benefits our association and you do not have to have an insurance license to write the product. Additionally, all records are kept very well by ASI who send needed report documents to the Alabama Department of Insurance (ALDOI) for you. That said, I respectfully ask that you consider using the Funeral Trust of Alabama to fund your pre-need funerals.

With out reservation, please know that I look forward to seeing everyone at the Grand Hotel for our Annual Convention and having a great time together.

Until then,

Blessings!

Geoff

Geoff Halbrooks
Chairman of the Board
Funeral Trust of Alabama
~ AFDA Associate Members & Preferred Providers ~
Indispensable Teammates On A Winning Team

- Administration Systems, Inc.
- Alabama Eye Bank
- American Benefit Life Insurance Company
- Astral Industries, Inc.
- AnswerTel of Athens, Inc.
- Atlantic Coast Life Insurance
- Bass-Mollett Publishers
- Brown-Service Funeral Homes, Inc.
- Comfort Touch Transportation
- Cost Secregation Services
- Covington Casket
- **Federated Insurance**
- **Funeral Services, Inc.**
- **Funeral Trust of Alabama**
- **Heritage Memorial Funding**
- **Jefferson State Community College**
- **Matthews / Aurora Funeral Solutions**
- **Messenger**
- **Music City Mortuary**
- **Perkins Financial, LLC**
- **Service Casket Company**
- **Shields Southeast Sales**
- **The 770 Group at UBS**
- **Truitt Insurance & Bonding Company**

* Bold / Indicates Preferred Provider
* / Indicates AFDA Associate Member

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Always Remember ...
Respect is earned!
Honesty is appreciated.
Trust is gained.

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**Police Lives Do Matter As Evidenced By**
The Following Casket from Nashville Casket Sales

Posted on Facebook 05/23/2017
February 21, 2017 marked a historic day at Covington Casket Company, located in Andalusia Alabama.

“Today was the proudest day I’ve ever experienced at Covington Casket since I started to work here in 1986,” stated Alan Williamson, who serves as Vice President of his family-owned company. Williamson is referring to the company’s new powder coating system that occupies part of an existing 8,000 square foot building. He added, “Our business continues to grow. This is a testament to what can be achieved with a team of focused and dedicated individuals throughout the company.”

The company has plenty of room to do what needs to be done on the casket end, but will also look into the future to expand its services by opening the doors to the ever-increasing need of powder coating for the public and, possibly, the military. Williamson noted, “We are fortunate to be just over an hour’s drive from three military bases. We are the only powder coating facility within 75 miles of Andalusia. With a system as large as we have, the sky’s the limit.”

Williamson stated that the company will still produce the custom caskets for which they are known, but this new system will increase productivity greatly. “We’ve been running our custom units on the same line as our standard units since I’ve been here. That just kills our production. With our new powder coating system, we can run six caskets through every 15 minutes and free up our custom line. We will be able to increase productivity and efficiency,” Williamson said.

Covington Casket has been family-owned since 1924. Its manufacturing facility is located in Andalusia, Alabama, and they currently have warehouses in Jackson, Mississippi, Hammond, Louisiana, and Albany, Georgia. You can visit the company’s website at www.covingtoncasket.com.
As you know, the Alabama Funeral Directors Association initiated a new member service a while back, one we feel you will come to appreciate over time. Admittedly, you may not need to avail yourself of our placement service at this time, but should the need arise in the future, remember us.

Specifically, AFDA member firms in need of a funeral professional or support staff should e-mail their position information to Denise at dedmisten@alabamafda.org. Likewise, licensees or support staff need only to forward their respective resumes to Denise.

Of importance is the fact that all information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Information will be submitted to potential employers only upon your written authorization.

Files will be kept on file for 90 days, but the time limit may be extended as appropriate. Should a position be filled or employment achieved, the association office should be notified accordingly; not only as a courtesy, but also so that Denise will not assume that the position is still open or an potential employee is available.

Want to spend eternity in a counterculture symbol of the 1960s? Mark and Jeff Musgrove have a final resting place for you.

Musgrove Family Mortuaries has restored a Volkswagen bus and converted it to a columbarium for cremated remains.

“This is iconic,” Mark Musgrove said on Friday. “This is Eugene. [Oregon].”

For $995, a person can have an urn with their ashes permanently placed inside the colorfully decorated vehicle at Musgrove-owned Lane Memorial Gardens off West 11th Avenue.

The back window of the bus will be opened during committal ceremonies. Ash-filled urns will be placed on a fabric-covered platform with a tie-dyed painted peace symbol hanging on a purple backdrop.

After the ceremony, urns will be placed inside the passenger compartment of the bus and locked. The bus will hold about 100 urns.

Cremated remains have been inurned in unusual places, including in a reef along the Florida coast, or in satellites or orbiting the earth, the Musgrove brothers said.
Lobbyists For A Day Or Two …
AFDA Executive Officers Take On Capitol Hill

Suffice it to say, you would be proud of your AFDA Executive Officers as they trudged through the hallways of the House Office Buildings and the Senate Office Buildings to meet with members of Alabama’s Congressional Delegation and their respective staffers. You see, your AFDA Officers were determined to help Alabama’s legislators better understand two very important pieces of legislation:

- **H.R. 1212—The Brave Act (Burial Rights for America’s Veterans’ Efforts of 2017).**
  Representative Duncan Hunter introduced H.R. 1911 in the 114th Congress to increase the funeral and burial benefit for eligible veterans. The bill received bipartisan support, but its high CBO (Congressional Budget Office) score proved to be an impediment to passage.
  
  The bill was subsequently amended and introduced in the 115th Congress as H.R. 1212—The Brave Act of 2017 with modifications to address the CBO score and address the disparity between non-service connected deaths.

  Due to a lack of uniform regulation and standards of tissue banks across the country, the public is susceptible to public health hazards presented by the transportation of possibly contaminated human tissue specimens. Representatives Paul Goosar and Trent Franks introduced H.R. 5318 The LATTS Act of 2014, to enact public health safety measures with respect to the labeling and transportation of human tissue specimens in interstate commerce.
  
  H.R. 2022, the LATTS Act of 2017 expands on that bill and contains provisions defining the differences between a donor and an agent, as well as what constitutes a human tissue specimen.
Special thanks go out to all of the AFDA executive officers and Denise for taking time away from their already hectic schedules and personal family time to help insure that Alabama’s issues and concerns be heard on the national level. Lobbying is hard work!

Thank You!
Muschgrove Mortuaries & Cemeteries owns cemeteries in Eugene and Springfield and funeral homes in Eugene, Springfield, Creswell and Junction City.

The Musgrove’s West Lawn Memorial Park on South Danbeo Avenue has an outdoor area under tall Douglas fir trees called “Whispering Waters” that is reserved for inurnment of cremated remains.

The bus utilizes an artistic vinyl wrap that will stand up to the elements.

But the idea of making a columbarium out of an old VW bus arose last year when the brothers were talking about their business, and how fewer people are buying burial plots or reserving permanent spaces in “urn gardens.”

Conventional resting places seem to be falling out of favor in Eugene, especially among people who “don’t see value in a more traditional kind of way,” Mark Musgrove said.

“People are scattering remains or keeping them at home,” Jeff Musgrove said. “They have intentions to scatter ashes, but they never get around to it.”

“It’s too bad that we couldn’t (inurn ashes) at Kesey Square,” he recalled saying to his brother last year.
Continued From Page 19 - The Coolest Throwback ...

“And then Mark said, ‘Why don’t we get a VW van and paint it up and have it here? This cemetery is on the way to Country Fair.’”

The Musgroves asked company mechanic Cody Rushing to find an old Volkswagen bus that could be made into a columbarium.

He found a 1972 bus rusting in a farm field in southern Washington. While it was in poor condition, “we pretty much stole it for $1,100,” Rushing said. “These are difficult to find.”

He spent as much time as he could over six months restoring the bus, including finding missing mirrors and other parts, replacing broken windows and doing body work.

The Musgroves collaborated with John Chapman and an artist at Sign Pro to develop the colorful art, including flowers and peace symbols, which cover most of the bus in a vinyl wrap. The word peace is displayed on one side and the word love on the other.

The engineless bus is parked on a concrete pad under a metal roof supported by six Douglas fir posts. The vehicle is anchored to the concrete pad to prevent theft.

Plaques with the names, and birth and death dates of the inurned in the bus will be attached to the wood posts.

The Musgroves estimate they spent “tens of thousands of dollars” to find and restore the bus, and to build the concrete pad and roof.

They call the area the “Peace Garden.”

The public is invited to an unveiling of the bus at Lane Memorial Gardens at 1 p.m. Wednesday.

Solar panels attached to the roof will charge the battery that powers lights on the bus, including the headlights that will be illuminated during the day and night.

The bus is set back away from West 11th Avenue, with its front facing the busy street.

“The lights will be on fairly dim,” Rushing said. “We didn’t want the headlights shining out to the road. At night, it will look like a car with a battery going dead.”

“Like a typical Volkswagen,” Mark Musgrove said.

“Gotta Luv’ Those Musgrove Boys!”

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Originally Posted on The Register Guard
Briotech Inc. Announces Distribution Agreement with Dodge to Tackle Deadly Prions

WOODINVILLE, Wash., May 3, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Briotech Inc. is proud to announce that it has entered into an exclusive distribution agreement for the mortuary market with The Dodge Company, Billerica, MA to distribute their Briotech HOCl, disinfection product BrioHOCL™ PrP.

Briotech’s CEO, Dan Terry noted, “Partnering with a company of Dodge’s reputation builds on Briotech’s strategy to scale our innovative products through strategic distribution partnerships worldwide that provide immediate access to large addressable markets. We are proud to add our BrioHOCL™ PrP Formula (Hypochlorous Acid for Prions) to Dodge’s highly-recognized family of brands that have been at the forefront of technological innovation.”

Timothy Collison, Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Dodge added, “Prion diseases such as CJD have long been an issue of concern for funeral service and embalmers. BrioHOCL™ PrP Formula is a welcome addition to the line of products Dodge offers to keep embalmers safe.”

Briotech announced in September, 2016 a study published in PLOS Pathogens that proves Briotech's unique formulation of pure hypochlorous acid (HOCl) inactivates infectious proteins, known as prions that cause chronic brain diseases in humans and animals.

Investigators at the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID/NIH-RML) Rocky Mountain Laboratories, made the discovery in collaboration with researchers at the University of Washington (UW) Bothell, UW Seattle, the University of Verona (Italy), and Briotech Inc. Their findings demonstrate that Briotech's patent-pending solution (BrioHOCLTM) quickly and safely destroys prions, the most resistant infectious agents known to medical science.

"We've been able to synthesize the identical substance in pure form that the body creates to defend itself as a new weapon in the fight against infectious disease, and it's a game changer for human health," said Dan Terry, founder, and CEO of Briotech. "With broad adoption of BrioHOCLTM, we can help stop the spread of many infectious diseases, even those caused by the most highly resistant agents ever discovered -- prions and use the product to save lives and improve the health of entire communities around the world. We're excited to have this research published in PLOS Pathogens, and look forward to our continued collaboration with the NIH on the effects of BrioHOCL™ on emerging infectious pathogens that threaten global health and safety."

Destroying Prions

Prions are abnormal, misfolded body proteins that go out of control and begin to multiply themselves, spreading throughout the body and invading the brain. Prions are most commonly transmitted orally, but can also contaminate medical and surgical instruments, transplanted tissues, and equipment used in food processing. A new, fast, convenient and safe method that could have an important place for medical instruments, surfaces, and tissues—by simple immersion in an aqueous solution of BrioHOCL™ PrP Formula can overcome a critically important deficiency in infection control today.

Prion diseases are most widely known as the cause of Mad Cow Disease (BSE). Prions also cause Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) in humans, a fatal dementia with a long incubation period. Recently, research has shown that most other chronic degenerative diseases that lead to dementia, including Alzheimer's, result from prions. Currently untreatable, and inevitably fatal, controversy swirls around their possible transmissibility as referenced in Nature:

(http://www.nature.com/news/the-red-hot-debate-about-transmissible-alzheimer-s-1.19554)

Prions are uniquely resistant to the disinfection and sterilization procedures in common use in healthcare practice today. Extreme measures are needed. Current prion decontamination protocols are hazardous to people, damaging to instruments and surfaces, and therefore impractical for transmission control.

"Briotech has developed an enabling technology, one that offers for the first time a practical and safe way of destroying infectious prions, the disease agents at the very top of the food chain when it comes to resistance to disinfection measures," said Jeff Williams, Ph.D., B.V.Sc., Chief Science Officer at Briotech Inc. “We believe we've just exposed the tip of the iceberg when it comes to revealing the full potential of Briotech’s pure HOCl in controlling and preventing many transmissible diseases. That's so important today when rampant antibiotic resistance is challenging established approaches to infectious disease management all over the world. The discovery reported in PLOS Pathogens has opened new avenues for researchers to explore in understanding the relationship between the HOCl made in the brain, its possible involvement in prion inactivation there, and the disease processes that lead to dementia. Understanding those processes is one of the most urgent priorities facing biomedical science at this time."

How it Works

BrioHOCLTM is easy to handle, safe for both users and treated surfaces and is environmentally safe. Briotech’s pure HOCl, used in the PLOS Pathogens report, is reliably stable in its formulation and powerfully effective against a wide range of conventional microbial disease agents. The solution can be applied directly to skin and mucous membranes, hard surfaces, instruments, or safely aerosolized to decontaminate entire rooms.

About the Research Study

The research study titled Inactivation of Prions and Amyloid seeds with Hypochlorous Acid, appears in the current issue of PLOS Pathogens here: http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1005914.
BrioHOCL™ treatment led to a high level of inactivation after short exposure times for transmissible prions of CJD, BSE, and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), but also for self-replicating proteins found in Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other dementias. Infectivity of Brio-HOCL™-treated scrapie prions in mice was also highly significantly reduced.

About Briotech, Inc.
Briotech is a disruptive therapeutic and disinfection technology start-up based in the Seattle area, that manufacturers the first Hypochlorous Acid (HOCl) product with purity and long term stability without buffers for use in a wide variety of applications globally.

About Dodge
Dodge is the world’s largest manufacturer and supplier of embalming chemicals, instruments, supplies and more.

Related Links
www.dodgeco.com
www.briotechusa.com

It’s Time To Mend A Fence …
Every now and then the need arises to mend fences and so it is at this time. While certainly not intentional, the name of Donald Benefield of Quattlebaum Funeral Home, Roanoke, Alabama was inadvertently omitted from the listing of 50 year pin recipients in the 2017-2018 AFDA Membership Directory.

Denise is hanging her head over this faux pas and has been trying to figure out how this happened, but the bottom line is that it did happen and she wants to extend a personal apology for the oversight.

Additionally, the name of Steve Chenault was omitted from page 37 as a recipient of his 50 year pin. Get out another nail so we can put another plank in our fence mending efforts.

As Denise has said, “Both men need to be recognized for this achievement, as well as their long-time devotion to funeral service and the Alabama Funeral Directors Association.”

Members of the Alabama Funeral Directors Association—VERY GOOD NEWS!
After nearly a year in development, we have succeeded in bringing back the Fixed Crediting Rate to the Funeral Trust of Alabama. It has a new name and a little different approach; but, the end result is the same. Preneed contracts written in the Funeral Trust of Alabama for firms voluntarily electing to participate in our new Member Benefit Program will be valued at Market Value and at the new Member Benefit Value. When a preneed contract is fulfilled, the claim will be paid at the greater of the Market Value or the Member Benefit Value. This Program is intended to protect the funeral home from downturns in the investment market and allow them to reap the benefit from periods when the investment markets perform well.

This will require the signing of a new Participation Agreement which should promptly be returned to the AFDA office.

If you have questions regarding the Member Benefit Program or any of the information contained in the email attachments, please direct your inquiry to Paul von Schoeler, President/CEO of Administrative Systems, Inc.

Paul may be reached at (480) 650-6201

The Member Benefit Program has been reviewed and approved by the Alabama Department of Insurance (ALDOI).

Sincerely,

Carrel Ann Spears
President,
Alabama Funeral Directors Association

Geoff Halbrooks, CFSP
Chairman AFDAPMC
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A mistake repeated more than once is a decision!
AFDA Birthdays

We still haven't been able to formulate a complete listing of the birthdays of all our AFDA members at this writing, but with your help will be able to do so in the very near future. We even tried some tricky maneuvers at the recent AFDA Mid-Winter Meeting to capture birthday info.

That said, if you haven't already done so, we're hoping that you will take a moment to e-mail your birthday to the AFDA office. We'll keep trying to gather this information, but until we are able to do so, we'd like to be the first to encourage those members and friends with birthdays occurring between now and the next edition of “The Undertakings,” to share that information with either Denise or Martha. They will be quick to pass it on to Sally so she may make certain all members are recognized on their special day!

May your birthday bring you all the colors of life filled with fun, joy and happiness.

Wishing you a colorful birthday!

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<tr>
<td>Damon Kirkland</td>
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<td>Hope Etherton</td>
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<td>Sarah Chappell</td>
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<td>Iris McIlwain</td>
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<td>Donny Atkinson</td>
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<td>Tommy Bowen</td>
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<td>Martha Till</td>
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<td>Joey Baker</td>
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<td>Mike Perry</td>
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<td>J. Douglas Williams</td>
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<td>Austin Bowden</td>
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<td>Steve Smith</td>
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<td>Charlie Creel</td>
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<td>Mark Bement</td>
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<td>Preston Sweatman</td>
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<td>Bill Lindley</td>
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<td>Aubrey Bushelon</td>
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<td>Beth Clark</td>
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<td>Angela Rhodes</td>
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<td>Keary Chandler</td>
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<td>Carrel Ann Spears</td>
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Your finances. Your future. Our focus.

For over 30 years, The 770 Group has helped families and business owners with everything from financial planning to corporate retirement plans, helping them meet the future with confidence. We take pride in our ability to listen and in our commitment to understand the issues most important to you.

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- Corporate retirement plans

We invite you to have a conversation with us.

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UBS
Thorough Estate Planning Includes Non-Financial Matters

Estate planning is important for reasons other than financial. Typical planning involves a will, a revocable trust, coordinated titling of assets, naming beneficiaries, financial powers of attorney, and health care directives. Failure to include any of these things can lead to unintended results.

Intestacy – If you don’t have a will, any assets that don’t transfer automatically (through certain types of ownership or beneficiary designation) need to go to someone. With a will, you direct who that will be. With no will (intestate), the state where you reside at your death will decide. All states have intestacy laws which dictate who will receive a decedent’s assets. This is usually some combination of a spouse and children and varies from state to state. With no will, you cannot:

- decide who will care for your minor children nor who will handle their money
- decide at what age your children will get their money
- leave money to a charity, friends, or other relatives

Many people think they can simply pull a form from the Internet, fill in a few blanks, and they’re done. This might work, but before you do that, consider these potential pitfalls: what if you use the wrong form, fill it out incorrectly, aren’t aware of potential income tax consequences, or don’t think through all the possibilities? If it’s done incorrectly, it’s too late to change anything once you die. Attorneys who specialize in estate planning can help you sort through the options and make sure you’re using the appropriate form. If they do something wrong, your heirs have recourse against the attorney’s Errors and Omissions insurance.

Ownership of property – Real estate and other assets can be owned in ways that, when an owner dies, the property will pass automatically to someone else. An example would be a home owned by both spouses “as joint tenants with rights of survivorship.” When one spouse dies, the other automatically becomes owner (proof of death will have to be recorded in the real estate records). Another example would be a joint bank or investment account. Also, it is typical to be able to make a “payable on death” designation on most accounts, which is essentially the same as naming a beneficiary. Many states allow you to file a payable on death deed for real estate. As a cautionary measure, make sure ownership is properly coordinated with your estate plan, or it could lead to unintended consequences.

Life insurance – Who and how the policy owner designates a beneficiary could totally defeat the purpose of the insurance policy if the following aren’t considered:

1. Who should get the death benefit and when? (For personal insurance, it is common to name the insured’s spouse.) Should there be any restrictions on using the funds? What happens if the spouse remarries or has children from a prior relationship? If these questions are a concern, you should consider setting up a trust to be the beneficiary.
2. If the spouse predeceases the insured, who should get the benefit? (It is common for the insured’s children to be named as the contingent beneficiaries.)

End of life decisions – Most people would like to have some say in how they leave this world. Doctors, on the other hand, have an ethical obligation to keep people alive at all costs, no matter the quality of life. All states have some form available that allows people to indicate their wishes for what measures are taken to preserve their life. It helps provide guidance to family members, and allows doctors to terminate treatment without risking a malpractice lawsuit. These documents may also allow a person to indicate what should happen to their remains.

Medical decisions – Different from end of life decisions, these involve making medical decisions in the event the patient is unable to, but is not necessarily in a life threatening or terminal condition (e.g., being unconscious). The Medical Power of Attorney or Health Care Directive allows a person to name an agent or proxy to make decisions on what treatments are authorized.

With some simple planning, you have some control over the end of your life and what happens to your assets. You also have the ability to make things easier for your loved ones if they know your wishes. An attorney who specializes in estate planning can help you make these very important decisions.
Endorsed by the Alabama Funeral Directors Association, the Funeral Trust of Alabama is the largest and oldest investment funded pre-need trust in the State of Alabama. Join the Funeral Trust of Alabama for exceptional investment growth.

Each team member oversees the other in a system of checks and balances.

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