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July 2022 • Issue 7

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Bridging the Gap

Phillip Hart
OKFDA President

Greetings from Walters, OK. By the time you read this article our OKFDA Summer Workshop for board members will have already come and gone. So, I will be giving you a rundown on what was discussed and accomplished at the workshop in the following issue. That being said, I offer my apologies for being a no show with my Facebook Live appearances. Hopefully by the time you read this, we will have worked out an issue with our Facebook account, and I plan to have even shared a bit during our workshop.

I have been talking in previous issues about the struggles of funeral service in these times. Brainstorming, I came up with 45-plus types of professionals, businesses and other entities that we as funeral directors are in constant communication with, if not daily or weekly,

then monthly. I'm sure if I slept another night, I would come up with more than this to add to the list, and if I gave you guys an opportunity to chime in the list would no doubt grow.

How many other types of companies deal with this scenario? Not that many. I would love to present that list, but it is exhaustive, and you know anyway. These are our industry partners. My concern would lie with those entities where miscommunication and even a differing mission could be the culprit causing a divide. We want to bridge that gap.

Though our missions may be different, our association desires to have a friendly working relationship with all concerned, such as: the Medical Examiner's Office, the Health Department, the State Funeral Board, LifeShare, funeral service schools and so on. Did you

know that OKFDA has a mission statement? We have been attempting to do better at making it known. It simply states, "The Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association enhances and cultivates the Funeral Service Profession by advocating for its members through educational development, legislative representation, and resource guidance. We are the voice of Oklahoma Funeral Service Professionals – challenging members to serve their communities with excellence and integrity."

Our board believes in this mission statement, and we continue to focus our efforts on carrying it out. We would love to build our membership and are working on ways to do so; however, if all we do is add to our numbers, we have not succeeded. We want to be the greatest industry resource you have and are just an email or phone call away. We want to both advocate for you, but also challenge you to be just what your communities need during their darkest hour. Sure, times are different, traditions seem to be fleeting, but we are undertakers and should be old hands at diversifying to survive and thrive.

Attend Death Webinar; Earn CE Credit

Timely filing of death certificates is important for a family's emotional and financial closure. Timely, complete, and accurate filing is critical to health providers and the government for planning, surveillance, research, and the distribution of resources. Statistical data derived from death certificates can be no more accurate than the information on the certificate; therefore, it is important that everyone involved with the registration of Oklahoma deaths strives for complete, accurate and prompt reporting of these events. The information is used for insurance benefits, settlement of pension claims, and transfer of title or real and personal property.

Funeral directors play a key role in this process, ensuring the start of a death certificate by entering the personal facts about a decedent and then electronically send that record for medical certification to the Medical Certifier. Based on newly enacted legislation, the medical certifier group will be expanded to Physician's Assistants (PAs) effective November 1, 2022. This legislation allows Physician's Assistants (PAs) to medically certify death records for the state of Oklahoma and broadens the availability of medical certifiers to certify death records.

To learn more about this and other pertinent updates, as well as receive online training and ROVER system information, Funeral Directors and assistants are encouraged to attend quarterly Death Webinars hosted by the Field Services staff of the Vital Records Division. Funeral Directors will now be able to receive one (1) continuing education credit per year for attending. Please mark your calendars for the upcoming 2022 webinar dates:

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

Thursday, September 8, 2022

Check your ROVER News Message box daily for updates and webinar times. You contact the ROVER Help Desk at askrover@health.ok.gov for assistance or if you have any questions.



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Thank You Night at the Ballpark Sponsors!

Dustin Pierce
OKFDA Executive Director

I hope you all had a wonderful 4th of July! Time marches on, it seems, and it's hard to believe we are almost through the middle of July. At the beginning of June, we had an OKFDA Night at the Ballpark, and it was a great time! If you didn't get to make it out, be on the lookout for more outings like it in the future. I want to personally thank Randy Emmert with Pierce Chemicals, Sheryl Zuker with Zuker Group Consulting, Homesteaders Life Company, Larry McCracken with Express Funeral Funding, and Kris Gray and Kara Ludlum with Osiris Software for sponsoring the OKFDA Night at the Ballpark, making it completely free for OKFDA Members.

In June the association knew that Mr. J Cooper from Tecumseh, Okla., would be leaving his seat on the Oklahoma Funeral Board. It is required by the Funeral Service Licensing Act, Title 59, Section 396 that the Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association submit 5 (five) names to the governor of qualified individuals to fill the vacant seat on the Oklahoma Funeral Board. We selected our five and sent them to the Appointment Secretary. Darin Corbett, from Corbett Funeral & Cremation was appointed by the governor to be on the Oklahoma Funeral Board. Darin's brother is the Secretary of Health and Mental Health. We look forward to working with Darin in the future and have all the confidence that he will be a respected member of the board. OKFDA would like to Congratulate Mr. J Cooper for faithfully serving this state and our professional industry well. We are thankful for your longtime membership in our association but most of all your friendship.

The OKFDA board just finished our annual summer workshop in Medicine Park, Okla. Our summer workshop is where the board plans all the activities and steers the association in the upcoming year and where new board members receive training. We had a great time together and look forward to the exciting things we have planned in the future for this association.

I hope you will utilize the Journey to Serve

toolkit. I really believe this is a great program and I do think it will help us find new people to serve in our noble profession. If you have any questions regarding Journey to Serve, please let me know. Remember this program is completely free and the toolkit can be branded to your funeral home. Branded materials can be placed in your local VFW, American Legion, Elks Lodge, Masonic Temples, and even your church. You can find your toolkit at journeytoserve.com.

Once again, we are all in this together and it will take all of us to make this industry stronger than it has ever been. If there is anything I can do for you, please call, text or email me and I'll do my best to help in any way I can.

Take care,

ANNOUNCEMENT

Dates for our Fall District Meetings have been decided. We have not yet nailed down the places but we wanted you to have the dates. Be on the look out in the next edition of the Oklahoma Director for the places our meetings will be held.

District I-September 20th

District II-September 22nd

Districts III & IV -September 27th

Districts V & VI- September 29th

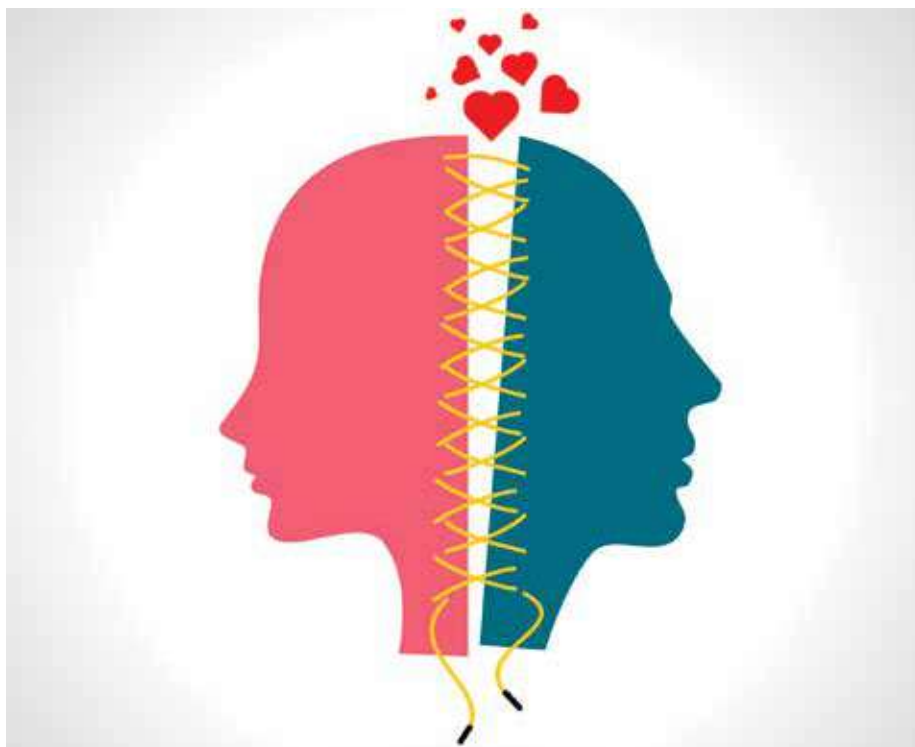
OKFDA Night at the Ballpark

We had a blast at the OKFDA Night at the Ballpark. If you weren't able to join us be on the lookout for other activities like this in the near future. Once again, we want to thank Randy Emmert, Express Funeral Funding, Zuker Group Consulting, Homesteaders Life Company and Osiris Software for making this event completely free for OKFDA Members! We had a ball!



A Positive Experience: Managing Conflict During the Funeral Process

By Ann Heinz, JD, CDEI



A loved one's death is undoubtedly one of the most emotional and stressful events an individual can experience in life. Funeral directors work in an environment charged with raw emotions as clients learn to cope during the weeks leading up to death, planning the memorial service, and living after the death of a loved one. Although most families find a way to support one another during grief, conflicts can and do arise.

Conflicts can arise for several reasons and funeral directors must be prepared to address the emotional extremes that can fuel conflict. Respecting personal family matters while trying to minimize conflicts can be a balancing act, but it can be achieved when you understand how conflicts arise and which tools you can use to facilitate communication.

Why Do Conflicts Arise?

Conflicts can arise when a relationship experiences imbalances over such matters as money,

decision-making power, perceived secrets, or the withholding of information. It can occur when people do not agree over beliefs, ideas, goals, or motivations, and conflict often arises when a person does not feel respected, valued, or safe. Conflict may also arise from:

- communication problems
- personality differences
- imbalances in responsibility and authority
- lack of cooperation
- ideological and philosophical differences

When a death in the family occurs, there can be many triggers for conflict. Emotions run high and feelings are raw following the death of a loved one. When decisions about arrangements must be made, family members may be stressed and vulnerable. Feelings may resurface such as unresolved hurts from the past, sibling rivalries, and old family divisions that have been causing tension and strain.

Miscommunication is a common example of

how conflicts may arise. Oftentimes, a person's comments may be misinterpreted. This might occur if a person's nonverbal cues like facial expression, tone of voice, or body language, sends a message contrary to the spoken message. Another example of miscommunication is leaving room for assumptions, like not communicating enough information to all parties involved. For example, a person might say, "I'm busy right now and can't meet to discuss funeral arrangements." The other party might take this to mean, "I don't care enough about our loved one to make memorializing him a priority." However, the family member may have simply needed to address another issue, such as time off from work, before he or she could give undivided attention to the funeral arrangements.

It's important to remember everyone filters what they say and hear through their own life experiences and personality styles. People communicate in a variety of different ways, and sometimes these varied communication styles do not work well together. For example, one family member might be a direct, to-the-point type of person who states an opinion matter-of-factly regarding what needs to be done for the funeral. Others might perceive this person to be bossy and insensitive. The direct family member, on the other hand, might find a family member who discusses every funeral option in detail, going back and forth between the different alternatives, to be completely unfocused, indecisive, and scattered. When emotions are high, different personality styles can cause tension and conflict.

Every family is different when it comes to communication style and conflict will only magnify current habits. Some families may have a history of excessive arguing, harsh criticism, blaming others, and passive-aggressive responses to conflict that will take center stage when planning a funeral. Other families may be conflict-avoidant and try to please everyone around them without stating their own needs. Because disputes and communication styles will differ from family to family, it is important funeral directors try to

understand the family dynamic.

Replacing conflict-generating dysfunctional communication styles with healthy and productive learned behaviors is possible. However, individuals must be willing to acknowledge their faulty communication patterns and be open to learning new methods of communicating.

How Can Funeral Directors Resolve Conflict?

As you know, funeral directors shouldn't approach conflict resolution like a movie theater manager and immediately throw out anyone arguing. As we've acknowledged, during an emotionally traumatic experience like the death of a family member or friend, emotions are raw and sometimes conflict is unavoidable.

What can funeral directors do to help resolve the resulting impasse if family members are fighting or if a conflict begins to escalate? In the sections below, we provide tips and strategies to help funeral professionals manage conflict during either the funeral process or the funeral itself. These techniques include defining the problem, emotional awareness and active listening, using de-escalation strategies, maintaining neutrality, direct communication techniques, and redirecting conversations.

Involving yourself in a family's personal conflict can be awkward and intimidating but remember that ultimately the funeral home is your business, and therefore any conflict taking place does involve you, and your voice here is valid.

Defining the Problem

Once the parties have presented their views, the funeral director can help further define the problem. State what you have heard each side say. Clarify what the family is really fighting about and explore the parties' views on what is really going on. Use words and phrases that can help diffuse the tension, such as:

- "I wonder if..."
- "Let's try..."
- "It seems like..."
- "Maybe we can..."

Next, funeral directors should help family members brainstorm for possible solutions. For example, if one side of the family insists on burying a loved one in a family plot a thousand miles away while the other side wants a funeral in the local community, what options are available? Are family members agreeable to cremation? If so, could the deceased be memorialized in both places? Are some family members who live out of town feeling left out of the planning process? Can one family member spearhead the

task of assigning each party a role? Can out-of-town family members choose a reading, story, or song that will be used at the funeral? The funeral director can bring conflicting parties together by emphasizing that everyone has the same end goal: to memorialize a loved one in an appropriate and caring manner.

All the suggested solutions should then be analyzed. What are the advantages and disadvantages of implementing each solution? Would it be too expensive and inconvenient to hold a memorial service out of state, where few family members live? Is a lavish reception following the funeral necessary, or will a simpler tribute suffice? Together, family members should be encouraged to decide which solution is most realistic and acceptable.

Emotional Awareness and Active Listening

Emotional awareness is an important conflict resolution skill. Funeral directors must try to discern what is troubling family members and to communicate this information in a neutral, reflective manner. This involves really paying attention to the feelings that others are expressing as well as what they are saying.

Funeral directors must also use active listening skills. This requires focusing on the conversation without personal bias or trying to predetermine the intent of the message. It also means that no one should interrupt the person speaking. Active listening helps reduce anxieties when parties nod to signify their agreement or understanding of what is being said. Paraphrasing or repeating what was just stated encourages clarification and will ensure that the message is not misunderstood.

It is also important to respond with targeted questions to try to get to the heart of the matter. Funeral directors can also ask the person to explain his or her reasoning and then confirm the rationale behind their position by repeating back to the client what he or she understood them to say. When all parties feel that they are being heard, anger will likely diminish.

De-escalation Strategies

The goal when conflict arises is to diffuse the situation, find common ground, and ultimately help the family find a solution. It is important to encourage family members to see the situation from another person's point of view as well as from their own perspectives, and to be willing to compromise. There may be gains and losses for each conflicting party, but the goal is to ensure that the needs of all family members are

met to some extent. Successful conflict resolution involves finding a compromise both sides can live with.

De-escalating the situation is necessary to reach a mutually satisfying compromise. Funeral directors can help conflicted family members by sending appropriate nonverbal messages that indicate they are willing to help. For example, funeral directors can:

- maintain an open posture with arms uncrossed
- avoid invading others' physical space, which could unwittingly indicate aggression
- use a calm and quiet voice
- avoid smiling too much, which can be misinterpreted as insensitivity
- avoid becoming emotionally engaged in the situation or arguing with third parties
- never become defensive, even if negative comments are directed at you
- avoid showing frustration or irritation
- treat everyone with respect, taking their opinions and complaints seriously
- touch or console a grieving family member in a funeral setting but avoid such actions when talking to angry individuals because the actions could be misinterpreted as hostile or threatening
- watch for signs that individuals are becoming less stressed (such as quieter voices, changes in face color, more regular breathing)

Maintaining Neutrality

Diffusing emotionally charged situations also requires funeral directors to remain neutral, which can be difficult. Tips for keeping neutrality include:

- Remind yourself that you are not the source of the extreme emotions
- Maintain a calm demeanor and use a quiet and soothing voice
- Give the person your undivided attention by making eye contact and using body language that is open, relaxed, and nonthreatening
- Stay on a level visual field with customers. Do not rise above or below their line of sight to either dominate or submit to the situation and their anger
- Empathize with another person's feelings even if you disagree with the behavior and acknowledge their concerns
- Do not point, make fists, or shake your finger or hands, which can appear threatening and aggressive to third parties

Direct Communication Techniques

Encourage each side to present the core issues that concern them. Conflicted family members

should use direct communication techniques during discussions, framing their message as “I” messages rather than “you” messages. For example, consider the differences between the two types of messages:

- ♦ “I feel that conducting the funeral in this way will honor our father’s last wishes” versus “You don’t care about our father’s last wishes.”

- ♦ “I am concerned about how much the funeral will cost” versus “You aren’t concerned at all about whether we have enough money to pay for the funeral.”

- ♦ “I am upset that you threw away Dad’s books without talking to me first; I was really attached to them” versus “I can’t believe you threw away Dad’s books—you are so thoughtless and self-centered!”

As these examples show, “you” statements often feel accusatory, judgmental, and blaming. The speaker is telling the other person what he or she did was wrong or that he or she shouldn’t be engaging in certain types of behavior. These types of statements often shut down communication and put the other person on the defensive.

“I” statements, on the other hand, convey how the speaker feels about the situation without blaming or accusing the other party. These types of statements are not threatening or accusatory; instead, the speaker is merely stating his or her beliefs and feelings. Understanding this technique may help you in the planning room. If a client tells a family member, “You don’t care . . .,” perhaps you could say, “John, I am sure Monica cares, so maybe you could tell her how you feel it should be done to see if she agrees with you.”

Redirecting Conversations

Funeral directors may find that family members may stray off topic and bring up unrelated, painful events from the past. However, this will only cloud the immediate issue and make it more difficult to resolve the current problem. If this occurs, a funeral director can redirect the conversation to ensure that family members stay focused on the issue at hand. The following are some of the things a funeral director can do to gently take control and redirect the conversation:

- ♦ Ask a question. Suggesting everyone look at the flower arrangement selections is a very effective way to refocus attention.

- ♦ Make a comment. Telling a story about another family you served and how they were able to overcome differences in opinion sometimes gives families with poor communication skills an example to follow.

- ♦ Leave the room. Sometimes just standing up and announcing to the family that you are going to give them a few minutes to settle down is enough to bring everyone back to the memorialization. You can even say, “I understand every family has unresolved matters, and there is a time and place for that. You need to address that. But today is about your mother/father/sister, etc., and it might be good to just focus on her/him right now.”

Turn Conflict into a Positive Funeral Experience

It is important to remember that there is no single technique or phrase that will work every time when trying to de-escalate a conflict-filled situation. This is because each situation and family is unique, with varied histories and needs. A strategy that a funeral director uses

once to successfully resolve a conflict may not work the next time. Instead, the funeral director should be ready to adapt his or her responses to the specific situation and individuals involved.

By practicing conflict resolution techniques, funeral directors can leave every family member feeling included and heard. This can transform conflict into a positive funeral experience for everyone involved.

Ann Heinz is an attorney and product line manager for funeral continuing education at WebCE, Inc. She manages WebCE’s state-approved continuing education course catalog for funeral professionals nationwide. To connect with Ann, you can contact her by email at ann.heinz@webce.com or phone at 972.616.1079. You may also learn more about WebCE’s online funeral continuing education courses by visiting www.WebCE.com/funeral-ce.

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Get to Know Your District Chairs

The Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association is successful and impactful because funeral service professionals give their time and expertise to guide the association. Their efforts benefit ALL funeral service professionals in the state. Here we introduce you to the 2022-2023 District Chairs.



DISTRICT 1
Kyra Geil

Barnes Friederich Funeral Home in
Midwest City

Kyra Michelle Resavy Geil was born and raised in Chandler, Arizona and then moved to Oklahoma in 2014. She began her journey in funeral service in 2015 by attending the University of Central Oklahoma, where she received her bachelor's degree and then her funeral director and embalmers license in 2020. She resides in Yukon and works at Barnes Friederich Funeral Home in Midwest City, which is like her family. She has a true passion for funeral services and strives to help families with personalizing a service for their loved one and helping them through a difficult journey.

During her down time, you can find Kyra spending time at home with her two yorkies, Clementine and Stevie Nicks, working outside in the flower beds or relaxing; and spending time with her boyfriend, Danny, enjoying each

other's company, drinking coffee and watching documentaries. She also enjoys spending time with her mom, Caryla, helping her around the house and sharing memories; and spending time with her brother, Zachary, who has Fragile X Syndrome, calling each other Dorothy and Blanche from The Golden Girls, which is a show they both enjoy watching together, and taking him shopping at Goodwill and Ross. She loves her family and would not trade them for anything in the world.

Kyra is very excited to be the District I Chairperson for the Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association, and hopes to make a positive impact in the funeral industry.



DISTRICT II
Tim Shaw

Moore Funeral Home
Southlawn Chapel

Tim is a long-time resident of the Tulsa metro area. He graduated from Broken Arrow High School and attended Tulsa Community College, Lincoln Christian University, and eventually graduated from the Mortuary Science program at the University of Central Oklahoma.

Tim's first career was in the industrial and construction supply industry, where he spent 17+ years in various forms of sales, management, and supply chain logistics. After an unfortunate layoff in 2016, he decided to fol-

low in his wife's footsteps and serve the community as a funeral director. They have been very fortunate to both be part of the team with Moore Funeral Homes, which is one of the finest family owned funeral homes in the country. "I come from a long line of community servants, and working in the funeral industry has afforded me the opportunity to help serve my friends, family, loved ones, and community as a whole."

Tim has been married for 20 years to Carolyn (District II Governor), and they live in the country southeast of Tulsa with two adorable black cats, Wednesday and Veronica. In his off time, Tim enjoys traveling, spending time with friends and family, cooking all thing BBQ, movies, board games, martial arts, and just enjoying life.



DISTRICT III
Traci Williams

Marshall Funeral Home, Alva

Traci Williams has been a licensed funeral director/embalmer for 18 years at Marshall Funeral Home in Alva and Waynoka and Wentworth Mortuary in Carmen. She was raised in the panhandle before moving to Alva in 1981. She was a hairstylist for 20+ years before becoming a funeral director.

She is mother to three children and their spouses, and Nana to 16 grandchildren. Traci and her fiancé, Terry, enjoy traveling, the theatre, and spending time with their kids and grandkids.



DISTRICT V **John David Griffin**

Laurel Funeral Home, Healdton

John began his career in funeral service in 1982 when he went to work for Stout Funeral Home in Wewoka, Oklahoma with his step-father, Jim Fleming. In 1985, he moved to Tulsa and worked for Ninde Funeral Directors and attended Tulsa Junior College. In the fall of 1987, he began at the Dallas Institute of Funeral Science, and was the Recipient of the J. Paul Norwood Scholarship from OKFDA, graduating in August 1988.

The afternoon following graduation, John moved to Marietta, Oklahoma to work for John Kennedy at Anderson-Kennedy Funeral Home. He worked there for eight years and then moved on to Stumpff Funeral Home in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Once the Stumpffs sold their firms to the Sentry Group, his whirlwind life with corporate funeral homes. He worked in the corporate world for several years, managing many locations, which led John to Texas for 10 years, still with the corporate funeral homes began in Beaumont and Lake Jackson, Texas.

John managed to find his way back north to the Dallas area until he left the corporate life and returned to the family-owned businesses and met Dennis Jeter, and his family, at Jeter and Son Funeral Home. "While it was a little fast paced, it was a family atmosphere and it allowed me to regain my love for truly caring for families."

"Then destiny struck and a longtime friend and fellow funeral director came back into my life and convinced me that I needed to 'come

back home,' to which I did." In November of 2017, John's future wife, Laura Black, purchased the former Spivey-Reser funeral home building in Healdton, Oklahoma. They began a long process of remodeling and updating the building to open Laurel Funeral Home in June of 2018. In between the remodel and opening, on December 31, 2017, Laura and John got married. "Absolutely the best thing to ever happen to me in my life! Nothing compares to being able to work along someone who shares the same idea of taking care of families."

"I specifically mention three men who were mentors to me throughout my career: Jim Fleming, John Kennedy and Dennis Jeter. Each of them taught me different things and each of them have had a hand in molding me into the funeral director I am today. I am forever grateful to them all for their tutelage and guidance as they were mentors to me both personally and professionally."

DISTRICT VI **Stephen Shain**

Shain Family Funeral Service, Hugo

Stephen grew up in the funeral business and learned from an early age how to serve grieving families. This eventually led to getting his own FD/EM license in 2008. Since then, he has gained experience in and out of the business as a manager, houseparent, youth/assistant pastor, and now serves as the Vice President of Shain Family Funeral Service.



Stephen is passionate about connecting people and fostering lifelong relationships, so when he discovered Vital Smarts and their training on Crucial Conversations, he knew it was a perfect fit for the business world. He is now certified as a trainer and frequently travels to all Shain Family locations to create a healthy culture of discussing "almost anything with anyone."

Stephen is the husband of Sarah Shain, father of Boaz, Havah and Nathan, and son to Brent and Mary Shain. With family as a core value and motivating force, Stephen desires to model a daily face-to-face relationship with his heavenly Father.

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LifeShare Makes U.S. History with Use of Perfusion Technology

Oklahoma Organ Procurement Organization Successfully Places Liver for Transplant Following Preservation by In-House Perfusion Team



LifeShare of Oklahoma, the organization in the state responsible for the recovery of organs and tissue for transplant, has made

national history by being the first organ procurement organization (OPO) in the U.S. to successfully own, operate and place a liver

for transplant following preservation on the OrganOx metra.

This represents the first time a liver has been clinically transplanted in the U.S. after being preserved on the metra by an OPO-based preservation team. Prior to this, all U.S. transplants involving the device have either been conducted by transplant center teams as part of the clinical trial or following Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval.

LifeShare has their own in-house team of specially trained technicians who operate the perfusion device. The Oklahoma OPO originally started using this new perfusion technology to conduct clinical research before the device was approved by the FDA for use in transplants.

Perfusion and preservation of organs has become a heavily explored area of medical advancement in hopes of providing more organs for transplant to decrease the national waiting list. Over the years, LifeShare has grown their use of perfusion technology to improve both the number and quality of organs available for transplant with a focus on kidney and liver preservation.

“When we started down this path to grow our liver preservation efforts last November, the vision was to bring this important, new lifesaving technology to LifeShare to further our mission of saving more lives,” shared Jeffrey Orlowski, President and Chief Executive Officer of LifeShare. “We are pleased to announce our vision has become a reality with our preservation team placing a liver for transplant after it was perfused with the metra.”

This history making announcement comes on the heels of LifeShare opening a new Clinical Innovation Center in April, which houses the organizations tissue recovery and organ preservation efforts. The Clinical Innovation Center is a new 19,000 square foot state of the art clinical



facility built to support LifeShare's core purpose of saving and healing lives, along with medical advancement in donation and transplantation.

"The work LifeShare is doing is a major step forward in liver preservation," said Orłowski. "Our work is proof that an OPO-based liver perfusion system can be successfully implemented, thereby broadening efforts to save more lives across the nation."

LifeShare is a nonprofit, federally designated organ procurement organization (OPO) dedicated to the recovery of organs and tissue for transplant purposes. We work closely with three transplant centers and

145 healthcare organizations in the state of Oklahoma to facilitate donation. Additionally, we strive to raise awareness for organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation through public education.

OrganOx metra Information

Conventional cold preservation (for potential organs to transplant) involves storage of the liver at 4 °C and aims to minimize liver degradation. The metra, however, recreates a near physiological environment by continuously perfusing the liver at near physiological pressures and flows with oxygen-carrying red blood cells at 37 °C. The liver remains functional during preservation, producing bile, metabolizing glucose and maintaining pH, allowing the objective assessment of organ performance prior to transplant.

OrganOx was founded in 2008 as a spin-out from the University of Oxford to advance the normothermic perfusion technology invented by Professor Peter Friend and colleagues, and further developed by Professor Constantin Coussios.

Its first product the metra®, received CE mark approval in 2016. Since then, the metra has supported over 500 transplants around the world, transforming the way donor livers are preserved and assessed, and helping to ensure more livers are available for transplantation.

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Funeral Service Foundation Offers Free Guide

When a Child Dies: Planning Acts of Love & Legacy

The Funeral Service Foundation, in partnership with the Collaborative of National Pediatric Palliative Care Coalitions, recently created a resource entitled *When a Child Dies: Planning Acts of Love & Legacy* for bereaved families. The booklet offers guidance and inspiration to help these families who experience the death of their child say goodbye in a way that is meaningful and important to their path forward.

A copy of the resource is polybagged with the June issue of *The Director Magazine*. "The Foundation planned to share this piece with the funeral service, and healthcare and bereavement communities in the coming weeks," said Allan Cole, 2021-22 Foundation Chair. "However, in the wake of

the devastating events in Uvalde, Texas, which took the lives of 19 children and two adults, we knew that now was the time to share this important resource, which will help funeral service professionals strengthen the bonds they share with families and communities when the unimaginable happens."

Research for the booklet began in 2018 with a multi-year grant to the Collaborative of National Pediatric Palliative Care Coalitions.

"We recognized a need in the grief space to help families plan a meaningful and healing goodbye when a child dies, which led us to apply for funding from the Funeral Service Foundation," said Kristin James and Betsy Hawley, executive directors of the Greater

Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition and the Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition, respectively. "Our work with the Funeral Service Foundation over the last five years has culminated in a resource that will help families understand that they are not alone as they begin to face a world in which their child is no longer living."

Dozens of bereaved parents, along with healthcare and bereavement professionals, offered their expertise in creating this piece, which is available at FuneralServiceFoundation.org at no charge to all who those who walk alongside grieving families.

The resource offers guidance for families, including why funerals and memorialization are important steps in moving forward; entrusting their child's body to the care of a funeral director; what to expect when meeting with a funeral director; determining a final resting place; connecting with family and community; talking to children about death and dying; and preparing families for funeral attendance. The guide also offers memorialization ideas from bereaved parents, and those who walk alongside grieving families, and gives suggestions for building acts of legacy and love in the days, weeks, months, and years after a child's funeral.

"There is no magic wand to take away a parent's heartache when a child dies," said Hawley and James. "We are hopeful that this resource will bring some comfort to families and let them know that they are not alone."

The resource is the latest community care resource offered by the Funeral Service Foundation. The resource joins the award-winning *Youth & Funerals: Helping Families Understand the Important Role of Funerals and Memorialization in the Lives of Youth*; *Grieving Alone & Together: Responding to the Loss of Your Loved One During the Covid-19 Pandemic*; and *Caring for Families & Caring for Yourself: A Self-Care Handbook for Funeral Service Professionals*.

All resources are available through the Foundation's user-friendly resource store, which is sponsored by Batesville. Those interested simply pay shipping. An e-book version that funeral homes and organizations can embed on websites and share on social media platforms is also available.



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