Cassaday-Turkle-Christian Funeral Home Alliance, OH Contact Name: Christine Brown

For many people, the thought of making funeral arrangements is overwhelming and intimidating. Stories shared by others about their experiences or just the unknown, make this a very difficult experience for many.

At Cassaday-Turkle-Christian Funeral Home, we wanted to change the perception of making arrangements. From the moment a person pulls into our entrance, we want them to feel absolutely at home. Driving under our recently added portico, families are able to go from their car into the building without having to be exposed to Ohio's ever changing weather. From there, a staff member would park their car and bring the keys inside to them. Once inside the building, introductions are made and then the funeral director or staff member escorts the family upstairs. Our hospitality room is located on the third floor, away from the main lobby and entrance where privacy is easily obtained. An elevator is available for those unable to take the stairs.

Upon entering the third floor mezzanine, the aroma of freshly baked cookies welcomes you. Walking down the hallway, families get a sense of our history, with portraits of the previous owners on the wall. As you enter the hospitality room, the calming blue color on the walls leads you into the arrangement room. The warm cookies are on the table, and beverages are offered to all as they are seated. Selections include iced tea, flavored coffees and teas (individually brewed by the cup), soda, bottled water and hot chocolate (seasonal). Arrangements are made around an oval hardwood table with comfortable chairs. As the family memories are being shared, the director begins to enter information into the Family Advisor computer program. On the wall in the corner is a plasma screen,

which the family can see as the director enters all the information into the computer. Caskets and merchandise can also be shown on the computer. An adjoining room holds a slat wall display with vaults, memorial packages, urns, clothing, and prayer candles, for those families that like to see the merchandise. Also in this room are some examples of personalization techniques for families to assist them with where to begin to plan their loved one's services. One example is a veteran's casket with the American Flag and a service flag on either end of the casket; it also has a personalized back panel and a uniform hanging beside the casket. This helps families to see where they can go with personalization.

Our arrangement area is calm and lightly colored which makes it very inviting. It is also an area where military or veteran's groups assemble, where beverages and food can be provided. To introduce our new area, an open house was held September 25th, 2005 and the community was invited. It was interesting to hear the comments made about the new room and the changes we are making.

Making funeral arrangements doesn't have to be a dreadful experience. Families can be made to feel at home by appealing to their senses. The calmness of the room, the aroma of cookies and the peaceful environment, all make this a unique experience for our families.