

Southern Utah Mortuary

Best of the Best Entry

“New logo needed? An innovative approach.”

In Spring 2009, when it was concluded that Southern Utah Mortuary could use a new or revised logo, we took an unorthodox and in the end, hugely rewarding, path.

We understand the value in keeping a constant and enduring logo and/or slogan to capitalize on the effects of long-term branding for any funeral home or mortuary. And Southern Utah Mortuary, having served families in the area for nearly 100 years, was no exception to that principle.

However, even a mortuary or funeral home needs some level of freshness from generation to generation – which if nothing else demonstrates a willingness to re-invent and re-vitalize in an ever changing world. To that end, it was decided that whatever new logo artwork Southern Utah Mortuary adopted, it should remain somewhat similar in look and feel to our old logo, and an insistence on keeping our “dove” squarely in place. As may be expected, the parameters of a logo/slogan for a mortuary or funeral home are somewhat limited – wild neon colors and “flashy” slogans would simply not be in order.

However, rather than follow a traditional method of hiring an outside PR firm or worse still, tinkering with the logo ourselves, Southern Utah Mortuary really went “outside the box” in an effort that culminated in incorporating the community as well as an important education piece in the project.

Headed by Associate Office Manager Russ Kennedy, art and design faculty and students from Cedar City-based Southern Utah University were contacted with a proposal to create a wide spectrum of new logo options for the mortuary.

To our delight, not only was the project accepted as part of a semester-long assignment by an advanced typography class, but all of the 20-plus entries were mounted and on display in SUU’s PushPin Gallery, which coincidentally sits in a hallway leading into the main NCAA-sanctioned athletics arena on campus during basketball season. One can imagine the amount of publicity and conversation generated as part of this unanticipated benefit.

As a part of this process, staff members from Southern Utah Mortuary made both an initial presentation to the class as well as a mid-semester presentation to provide useful and meaningful feedback to the students working on the project. Students were also invited to tour our facility to gain an even more insight into the look and feel of the business.

The benefit of these presentations proved not only to be the creation of the logo, but perhaps more importantly, the opportunity to discuss the nature of the funeral home/mortuary business with such a healthy cross-section of young and non-traditional students, many whose families

reside in our wide service area here in southern Utah. Many self-assessing and interesting questions were posed not just on the nature of the business, but a unique opportunity to inform and provide questions on the ever-present topics of death and dying in our society.

A winning design was selected and a small cash reward was presented to the winner, along with Southern Utah Mortuary providing a free pizza lunch to the students, which was well received. The winner was also provided with an official letter from S.U.M. staff and owners for use in his student and/or professional portfolio.

It may be worth noting, that even in the end, Southern Utah Mortuary remaining rather particular in its quest for perfection in the right logo and branding, did not fully incorporate the winning design, although it was incorporated into the final revision we did select. The process was invaluable and rather enjoyable.