Special Memorial Service - Lady In Red

One of our Funeral Directors, Kelly Roberts was serving a family of a 93 year old woman. The woman had been in Memory Care for the last couple of years and her husband had passed away 10 years prior, so the family was fairly accepting of their loss. One of the daughters however seemed to be taking the loss very hard, and during arrangements Kelly heard the daughter telling her sister about a dream she had while her mother was still alive, where her father came to her and told her to tell her mother that "I am waiting for her at the dance and I want her to wear her red dress."

The woman had prearranged cremation and had already picked out a square copper urn. When Kelly heard the story of the red dress, she went and got the red urn we had in the display case and suggested to the family that they might want to use that one instead. The family agreed wholeheartedly and from there Kelly expanded her efforts to truly personalize the service for this family.

The family had opted to use a lot of black and white photos from their mother's early years, so Kelly blew them up into 8x10's and went on the internet and ordered red clothes pins and string. She then took down the pictures on one of the walls of the funeral chapel and put up the red string along the wall. Kelly then hung all of the 8x10's with the red clothes pins on the red clothesline. In one of the black and white pictures, Kelly used a picture editing program and changed the woman's dress to red. The family had ordered gardenia for their mother which went perfectly with all of the red touches.

When the family arrived they could not have been more pleased with the result. The daughter, who had been so distraught, was very comforted in knowing that although her mother did not have a traditional funeral where she could have indeed worn a red dress, that the concept was followed throughout the service. She told Kelly that she was sure her mother was dancing with her father in a red dress in Heaven.



Dersonalized Reflections)M

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE CRITERIA

I. Basic Requirements:

H. Essay:

Baird Funeral Home strives to provide the optimum in service to the families we serve on a daily basis. As our firm's position statement indicates, 'Personalized Reflections' to help honor and remember loved ones in a uniquely special way we believe in personalizing all services to each family.

One of the most unique services this past year would recognize the personalized reflections in the family's heritage. We had the privilege of serving a family of the Polish and Ukrainian decent with an inactive religious affiliation. In order to respect the cultural and religious stance of the family we held a non-denominational visitation and service in our facility. The personalized reflections were captured from the particular selections of ethnic clothing, flowers, music, room décor, and funeral service elements. The family along with our staff reconfigured our chapel from the furniture and fixtures to the artwork. Ukrainian artwork designed and handcrafted by the family was used in place of ours which specifically depicted personal chapters of the deceased and the family's life. Other family fixtures and memorabilia added to the personalization as well.



Personalized Reflections M

Due to the flexibility of our facilities and staff we were able to accommodate the special needs and requests of the family members. The overall nontraditional arrangements to our service area forced our staff to step back from the control of details and allow the family and friends within the two cultures to express themselves in their own way. Though the circumstances created somewhat of a challenge for the family and staff the desired outcome was achieved for the sake of the family. This example displays not only our firm's commitment to 'personalized reflections' but also the need and goal to look outside our traditional structured heritage to meet the ultimate needs of the families we serve.

Signed June 2012 by:

Tamara Baird, President/Owner

Baird Funeral Home



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Disinterment of Remains to Ship to Greece

In early April of 2012, the Davis Funeral Home was contacted by the superintendent of a local city cemetery to answer a few questions in regards to disinterring human remains for the sole purpose of shipping the remains back to Greece.

The deceased had died in August of 1944 and had been buried in an unmarked grave. The family had decided, after all these years, that they would like to bring their loved one home to place his remains in the family tomb, at the family cemetery in Kozani, Greece, with all the other deceased family members. The family explained to the Davis Funeral Home representative that there custom is to gather the bones of their loved one, seven years after death and place the bones of the deceased in the back of the tomb to make room for the next deceased family member.

The family was skeptical that 68 years after death, there would be any remains left to transport back to Greece. The funeral home representative assured the family that the remains would be there and they would be able to disinter and ship them back to Greece for placement in the family tomb.

After filing the necessary disinterment/reinterment permit with the NH Department of Vital Records and waiting the necessary ten days, authorization was given for the disinterment. It was in late April that the remains were disinterred. Because the deceased had not been embalmed and was placed in a cloth covered casket apparently with no outer burial container, the superintendent decided it best for the funeral home representative to remove the individual bones from the grave. The remaining bones were exhumed and all were placed in a pouch.

The pouched remains were placed in the funeral home cooler until preparing them for transport. For shipping purposes, it was decided that the remains would be treated lightly with Action Powder as well as Dis-Spray. It was further decided to not use an overabundance of chemicals as the family was going to be handling the remains when they arrived in Greece while placing the remains in the family tomb.

After obtaining all necessary paperwork and apostilles, the only other requirements would be that the remains be in a casket with no restrictions on type, a screw down steel liner and outer wood box. It was determined by the Consulate to Greece that a metalized, heat sealed pouch would not be sufficient in place of the steel liner, so the funeral home contracted with a local welder to have a container built to seal the remains for transportation.

A meeting was set with the Consulate to Greece, in mid May, to bring the necessary documents that contained the apostilles for the consulates final authorization. Upon meeting with







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the consulate, it was immediately determined that they would not authorize the documents because the name of the deceased was not translated from Greek to English properly when it was placed on the certified copy of death in 1944. Because of the error, a letter had to be drafted and sent overnight to the family in another state and the family had to obtain a notarization and apostille.

The final process was booking the flight. The family had originally wanted to fly with the remains to Greece. After several discussions with several airline cargo companies, consulates and embassies, it was determined that would not be possible. The best option for them was to keep their original flight and the funeral home would book a flight for the remains to coincide with their arrangements. We were able to find a flight that the family and the remains would arrive within six hours of each other.

It was also important to the family that they would be able to receive the remains at cargo in Greece. The cargo company that was to receive the remains in Greece was so professional and knowledgeable; we were able to inform the family that they would be able to receive the remains in Greece the following morning after their arrival. They will need to go to cargo and customs, pay the necessary fees and received the remains. The remains were shipped to Greece on June 20, 2012.

When we first received the phone call from the cemetery, we thought it would be a simple disinterment and shipment. The process took about two months of numerous emails, phone calls, ordering special containers and paperwork, but the family is satisfied knowing their loved one's remains will be with the rest of their family in Greece.





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PATRICK LYNCH PADDY LYNCH GENE ANDRUS

EDWARD J. LYNCH 1924-1992

On August 10, 2011, we received a call late in the morning from the bereavement nurse working at the major hospital located the next town over from our funeral home. She explained that a 7 year-old boy, Ryan James Miller, had just died after a yearlong battle with cancer. Known for our established policy not to charge a family who has lost a child, we have become accustomed to this kind of call.

Upon meeting Ryan's parents, Kristen and Bob, we learned that Ryan was a very special boy indeed and that his courageous battle with cancer had been well-followed and supported by a vast community of family and friends. Whatever kind of service we planned, it would be attended by hundreds of people, especially Ryan's fellow youth.

Initially, Kristen and Bob weren't sure if they wanted Ryan's body present at the service. We explained all of the reasons why, theologically and psychologically, his being at his own funeral made sense. Kristen and Bob agreed Ryan should be there, but they wanted a way for the children who would come to actively participate in the funeral process. Sensitive to the needs of all the children who were also struggling with Ryan's death, they wanted to incorporate them in a special, meaningful way.

We agreed and knew what to do. We ordered a white metal casket from Superior Casket Company located just a few towns over. After we placed Ryan in his casket, we pulled it away from its conventional location against the chapel wall and placed it in the middle of the room. Then we went to the store and bought a box of Sharpie markers in every color imaginable.

Before the main public visitation began, we designated a special children's hour, in which hundreds of Ryan's fellow youth had the opportunity to come into our funeral home, encircle Ryan, and personally inscribe a message on his casket. By the end of the day, the white casket had become more than a simple box. Covered in various colors and longhand, it became a sacred testament to the power of friendship, life, hope, and love.

A Family Tradition Of Dignified Service

H. Essay: Innovative Program, Service or Ongoing Activity

Respect, Reverence, Reticence: Wesley Rice

Milford, a small village of southeastern Michigan, is often recognized for the permanence of old-fashion values. Milfordians are recognized as middle-working-class, caucasian, conservative, and Christian. What we lack in ethnic and cultural diversity, we compensate for with history. Milford is a place of deep roots in its traditions and deep faith in its people.

On October 30, 2011, Milford bid farewell to a man who lived his life in perfect example of our community values. Mr. Wesley F. Rice, a forty year resident of Milford, a U.S. Navy veteran, and dedicated embalmer and funeral director, passed away at home in the care of his family. Though preceded by many trials, (a fall at home led to a fractured neck which brought him to critical care followed by a bout of pneumonia, and the eventual return journey to hospice care and his family), Mr. Rice had "the good death"--in his own home, in the embrace of his family, and in the safeguard of prayer. More important than those end times, Mr. Rice lived the "good life" by decades of dedicated service to his community as a licensed funeral director and mentor to the generations who now survive him. In the caring hands of those who loved him and the knowing hands which he himself trained, we gave him the "good funeral."

For two evenings, Mr. Rice laid instate then was brought to church the next morning where the funeral service was held amongst his fellow Methodists. With proper ministry and fitting eulogy, the service concluded. His grandchildren carried his casket to the hearse; his children escorted his widow to the awaiting car; his family and friends processed the full distance to the cemetery several towns over. Those of us who had served our apprenticeships with Mr. Rice, served as his pallbearers to the gravesite; together we lowered his casket by hand with ropes into the earth while his family witnessed and his minister offered committal prayers. After helping the family to their vehicles, they returned to the church where a hot meal had been prepared for them by their friends. As funeral directors, colleagues, and proteges, we stayed behind to fill his grave, shovel-full by shovel-full, until what we had come to do was finished.

Every detail of the way in which Mr. Rice was waked was done purposefully, not because it was old-fashion or in-fashion, but because it is the right thing to do--it is the way we had been taught--it is the way Wes taught.

Mr. Rice's funeral, much like his life, served as a lesson to our community about the way in which funerals are done. It exemplified fully the traditions in our community, the faith in our families, and the importance of respect, reticence, and reverence.

A bronze plaque has been created in honor of Mr. Rice and in memory of all that he has taught us. It is displayed above the door of his office, and reads:

Wesley F. Rice Memorial Preparation Room Respect, Reverence, Reticence