

Nassuff Newsletter

Winter | 2022



Ho, Ho, Home for the Holidays!

NSFDA Members Share Their Holiday Photos!



NSFDA President Michael Gorton, his wife Melissa and his son Gabe.



Executive Director, Holly O'Brien's son Joseph Garvey, and her niece, Addison & nephew, Dylan O'Brien.



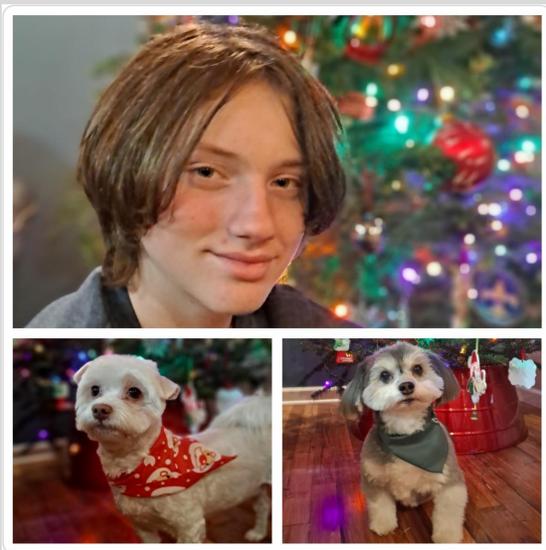
Conor Lorey. Son of Christian Lorey and grandson of Dorothy Comodore & Charles Lorey of McManus-Lorey Funeral Home.



Izabella, Annabelle & Arianna LoBue. Daughters of Dianna-Brueggemann-LoBue and granddaughters of Douglas Brueggemann of Brueggemann Funeral Home of East Northport.



Kristi Schartow, RFD and her daughter Lisa.



Logan Sakowski with Belle & Daisy. Son of Valerie Sakowski of Massapequa Funeral Home.



Jessica Tufano, LFD and her fiancé Steven McDevitt.



A Message from the NSFDA Board President: Michael J. Gorton

Dear Members,

I hope and pray everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season! It went by so quickly and I know many firms were busy. I hope we all had time to relax and enjoy the company of friends and family.

As we said goodbye to 2021 and welcomed 2022, we were in the middle of an Omicron Covid-19 surge. As I write this, it appears that the surge has subsided and there is light at the end of the tunnel. We must still be diligent and take the necessary precautions for our families we serve as well as the families we love.

When we turn the calendar over to a new year that usually means a number of things: remembering to date the checks correctly; getting ready for tax season; winter is in full swing and finally, your NSFDA dues are due. Please remember to pay before you stop receiving the valuable local news and information that NSFDA is known for.

The board, the officers and our Executive Director do so much work behind the scenes to make sure we solve the problems that may arise and make everything run smoothly for our firms and members. I'd like for each and every one of you to consider taking a more active role in your local association. If you ever thought about getting involved in the great local association, now is the time. New faces bring new ideas -- new ideas bring new energy to the board.

Lastly, we're getting ready for the final half of the licensure biennium, make sure you have your credits, especially law. We have some CEU opportunities coming up, please see the newsletter and watch the

emails for more info.

As we still face a few more cold wintery months, I can't stop playing my air guitar to this beautiful, Rolling Stones hidden gem, "Winter" – *"It sure been a hard, hard winter; My feet been draggin' 'cross the ground; And I hope it's gonna be a long, hot summer; And a lotta love will be burnin' bright..."*

Yours truly,

Michael J. Gorton, Jr, CFSP
President, NSFDA

[Click Here for Membership Message from NSFDA President](#)

[Click Here for 2022 Membership Renewal Application](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

NSFDA Symposium & Networking Event sponsored by The Whitmore Group:
Tuesday May 10, 2022 at The Larkfield in East Northport.

Nominations for Board of Directors

If you are interested in being a part of the Nassau Suffolk Funeral Directors

Board of Directors, please contact Holly at

Hollynsfda@yahoo.com or Jeff Davis at Jeff@rockypointfuneralhome.com

A Message from the Executive Director



Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays with family and friends and that some of you were able to take some time off. Even though this year has again been challenging, it is great to see how positive people have been and that everyone is trying to get back to some sort of normal. The NSFDA Board of Directors have been busy planning the 2022 calendar in regards to programs and events. **The Annual Symposium and General Membership Meeting will take place on Tuesday May 10, 2022**, which will include the scholarship presentation to a student who will be graduating from

Nassau Community College Mortuary Science Program. All information will be available to you in the next few weeks.

We have a 1 credit CEU program on Tuesday February 15, 2022, presented by Megan Coville from One Group. This presentation will be held virtually so please see your emails, the NSFDA website as well as the link in this newsletter to register.

The Board of Directors are looking for Funeral Directors to join the board. If you are interested in becoming a chairperson on a committee, or part of the executive board,

please contact any of the board members or myself so we can add your name to the list of nominees. This is a great opportunity to network with you colleagues as well as bringing new ideas and insight to the association. Membership renewals for 2022 are due. You can register online using a credit card using the link in the email or the newsletter, the home page of the website or you can print out the form and mail a check.

Wishing you all health and happiness in 2022.

Thank you & stay safe.

Kelly

HELP WANTED:

Retirements on Team Dignity Long Island have opened LFD positions in Nassau (Great Neck & Hicksville) & Suffolk (Babylon & Miller Place) counties.

Contact peter.dariento@sci-us.com or 917-865-2460 for more information.

Signing bonuses are available.

Compliance Alert: Handling Vendor Surcharges

By Chris Farmer, NFDA General Counsel

As many of you may have read, in response to the soaring inflation that is gripping the country (an increase of 6.8% compared to 12 months ago and its highest level in 39 years), many vendors have begun instituting surcharges on their products. Perhaps you've read about these surcharges or you might have received a letter directly from your vendor. Because the price of their raw materials and supplies has surged due to a worldwide shortage of supplies, companies are favoring a temporary surcharge, as opposed to a general base price increase, which would be instituted to address the inflationary pressures that continue to drive up costs.

The increasing commoditization of funeral goods has resulted in more price sensitivity than in years past. While everyone wants to provide the families they serve with quality products, increasing competition, especially from overseas, has resulted in increased competition in price and quality, forcing vendors to keep their prices in line with ever increasing market pressures.

Tacking on a surcharge, as opposed to increasing the base price, is a way to recover increased costs while conveying the temporary intent of the fee and keeping the base price competitive. How "temporary" these surcharges and the factors that necessitated them are remains to be seen.

How Should Funeral Homes Handle Surcharges?

While some vendors have not commented on how funeral homes should handle the surcharges, a few have advised their funeral home clients to add the surcharge as a line item on the GPL. However, the Federal Trade Commission has previously admonished funeral homes about adding a surcharge as a line item on the GPL since it is a violation of the Funeral Rule.

This came up several years ago when gas prices spiked and some businesses imposed a fuel surcharge on their customers. Several funeral homes wanted to do the same for removal,

hearse and limousine charges, but the FTC Staff stated that they considered such an addition to be a potential Funeral Rule violation since the consumer should be able to look at one price to determine whether he or she wants to purchase a service and not be required to add up various fees for a service the Funeral Rule requires be itemized.

The FTC Staff stated that funeral homes should simply raise prices for these items to cover higher gas prices, rather than separating the fees for the service. The same rationale would apply here. If the funeral home is incurring a commodities surcharge, it should simply raise its casket prices or basic services fee to capture increased costs or surcharges.

If you'd like to increase your nondeclinable basic services fee to include a recovery of overhead, such as surcharges, you may add the phrase "and overhead" after the word "services," on your GPL:

The goods and services shown here are those we can provide to our customers. You may choose only the items you desire. However, any funeral arrangements you select will include a charge for our basic services **and overhead**. If legal or other requirements mean you must buy any items you did not specifically ask for, we will explain the reason in writing on the statement we provide describing the funeral goods and services selected.

This advice also applies to additional fees and costs you may incur to cover additional PPE and sanitation measures needed to protect funeral home staff from COVID-19, as the FTC does not permit surcharges for PPE or other measures. As with vendor surcharges, you may increase your fees on the GPL to cover additional costs to the funeral home, but you cannot impose a surcharge.

This article originally appeared in the January 6, 2022, issue of NFDA'S Memorial Business Journal.

In Need of Cremation Containers?

New England Cremation Supply will be coming down to Long Island on the 3rd Monday of each month. All orders must be made through Jeff Davis at Jeff@rockypointfuneralhome.com. Deadline for orders is the Monday before the scheduled delivery date. Remember that this is a member benefit so please do not contact New England Cremation Supply.

Important News: MASK MANDATE

On January 13, 2022, Governor Hochul has extended the mask mandate. As part of the state's "Winter Surge Plan 2.0", the mandate, which was initially set to expire on January 15, has now been extended for an additional two weeks, through February 10, 2022. It will expire on Feb 10 and at that point the Governor will reassess.

There has been a lot of confusion on this, but the State Supreme court has issued a stay until all arguments have been heard, so for now, the **mask mandate is in fact a mandate**.

To read more about this and the [Winter Surge Plan 2.0](#) please follow the link.

NYSFDA Chapter Model Pilot Program Enters Year Two

Last year NYSFDA embarked on a Chapter Model Pilot Program, designed to enhance collaboration between the state association and local associations. While the first half of 2021 was dedicated to planning, the program hit the ground running with an in-person CE session, Regional Food Bank volunteer day, and a D.C. Lobby Day. The three events were overwhelmingly successful and helped strengthen relationships.

As we kick 2022, NYSFDA looks to build up last year's events and activities, including:

Continuing Education Sessions: NYSFDA will co-host one CE session per quarter with each participating Chapter. Plus, we'll work to offer roundtable discussions and networking events in conjunction with in-person CE sessions.

Legislative Event: While the trip to D.C. last October was worthwhile, a State Lobby Day in Albany will be planned for the Spring of 2022. By doing so, we're hopeful more members will be able to participate.

Volunteer Day: We will again organize a Regional Food Bank volunteer day for Fall of 2022. To maximize experience, participants from 2021 will serve as group captains for first-time volunteers. Stay on the lookout for details on these upcoming events.

Next Steps

Leaders from participating pilot Chapters (NSFDA is a member of the Pilot Program) and NYSFDA leaders and staff will meet regularly to finalize plans for 2022. Similarly, the working group will continue discussions surrounding membership categories, finances, and structure. Members interested in learning more about the Chapter Model Pilot Program should reach out to **Holly O'Brien or NYSFDA headquarters at info@nysfda.org or 800.291.2629.**



The Crush of COVID: Self-Care for Funeral Directors

Join NYSFDA & Pilot Chapters for a virtual CE Session: **The Crush of COVID: Self-Care for Funeral Directors** on **Tuesday, March 22** and earn 1 CEU.

Session Description

With the COVID-19 pandemic entering its third year the physical, emotional, and mental stresses are taking their toll, and self-care has never been more important. This course will lead funeral directors through a psycho-educational presentation on the impact of working with families in the context of the pandemic. During this one-hour presentation we'll review research-based strategies for self-care. At the conclusion, participants will be able to:

- consider the psychological impact of working in funeral and bereavement care in the context of COVID-19.
- recognize vicarious traumatization and compassion fatigue.
- cultivate diverse strategies for engaging in effective self-care.

Presenter: Joanne L. Harpel, MPhil, President and CEO of Rethink The Conversation and President of Coping After Suicide.

Session Details

This live event is **exclusively** available to members, both NYSFDA and local Pilot Chapters.

Date & Time: Tuesday, March 22 | 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. | Approved for 1 CEU

To Register

Click Here to Register or go to my.nysfda.org/MarchChapterWebinar

Once registered, you will receive log-in instructions.

This session is co-hosted by:



MARCH CEU SESSION

**Join NYSFDA & Pilot Chapters
for a virtual CE Session: The
Crush of COVID: Self-Care for
Funeral Directors on
Tuesday, March 22 and earn 1
CEU.**

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**Congratulations to Tom Gunnip from McCourt and
Trudden Funeral Home on his retirement as of
January 10, 2022!**



Tom Gunnip is a First Generation Funeral Director with over 43 years experience as a Funeral Director. Born in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn and raised in Seaford, New York, Tom attended Post Jr. College and joined the Marine Corp Reserves. He attended American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Service and obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Empire State College.

Tom joined the McCourt and Trudden Funeral Home in 1991 and is a member of the New York State Funeral Directors Association, Nassau-Suffolk Funeral Directors Association and the Sunrise Detachment of the Marine Corps League. Tom lives in Bethpage with his wife Christine. He has two daughters and five grandchildren.



From left to right: Bill Trudden, Tom Gunnip, Christine Gunnip.



From left to right Curt Schmitt, Billy Trudden, Bill Wagner, Tom Gunnip, Christine Gunnip and Charlie Schmitt



The Gunnip Family

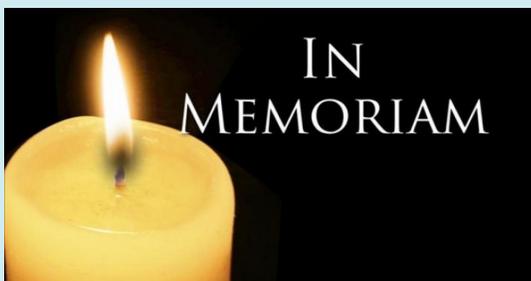
Continuing Education Webinar & General Meeting

"Funeral Homes: Safe Movement & Positioning of the Deceased
Speaker: Megan Coville, MS, OTR/L, ARM,
CSPHP
1 CEU

Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 4pm

Funeral Directors will be able to identify the types of ergonomics risks associated with moving, transferring and positioning the deceased. You will also be able to describe non-mechanical options for moving the deceased and describe mechanical options for the deceased. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Each participant who wishes to receive a CEU must register in advance and use their unique address when registering. Our system will only email one certificate per email address per webinar. This is an effort to prevent fraud.

[Click to Register](#)



*It is with deep sadness that the NSFDA
announces the passing of:*

Consuello Ravello Echevarria,
Mother of NSFDA member Sergio Benites from
Bryant Funeral Home.

James Reed, NSFDA member, and a long-time sales associate in the casket industry.

Kenneth V. Karchinski, Funeral Director for Excalibur Funeral Service, Ltd. and NSFDA member.

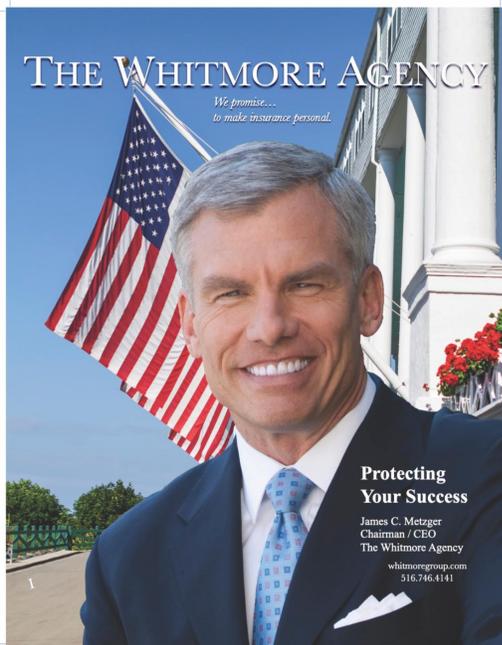
Louis F. Biundo, Licensed Funeral Director and NSFDA member.

Sean Patrick Doyle, son of Funeral Director and NYSFDA Past President, Timothy and Kelly Doyle.

Stephen Thomas Donnelly, Funeral Director and NSFDA member.

William H. Cassidy, NSFDA member and owner of Cassidy Funeral Home, Inc.

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*Not all products qualify. Consult your Batesville representative for details.



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a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous 2022.

We are honored and privileged to be the
NSFDA preneed Administrator.

We appreciate being there for you, so you can be
there for your families.

Call us for your user ID and password and to find
out more about our DocuSign process:

800.336.1102

Catie.Canetti@cffinc.com

AnnMarie.StGeorge@cffinc.com

www.CooperativeFuneralFund.com

NSFDA Board Directory:

President: Michael J. Gorton Jr. 631-732-1112 michael@mcmanuslorey.com

Vice President: Jeff Davis 631-744-9000 jeff@rockypointfuneralhome.com

Immediate Past President: Richard O'Shea, Jr. 631-475-0098 richard_oshea@live.com

Secretary: Linda Hogan-Florenzie 516-621-4545 ashlady53@aol.com

Treasurer/LIFE/Finance: Kenneth Lysak, Jr. 516-599-0041 nbalma@aol.com

Region 9 Director: Rich O'Shea

Nassau Representatives: Michael Cecere Jr. CFSP 516-223-4200 mikemadison278@aol.com

Joe Bernaudo 516-724-4479 josephmbernaudo@live.com

Curtis Schmitt 516-785-3380 schmittfuneralhome@verizon.net

Melissa Schmidt 516-462-0463 mjschmidt23@yahoo.com

Suffolk Representatives: Fred Bryant 631-473-0082 fredbryantfh@gmail.com

Sean Ward 631-664-8289 seanward@gmail.com

Rich D'Andrea 631-589-2345 raynor.dandrea@mac.com

Dianna Brueggemann-LoBue 631-368-1235 ladydi6767@aol.com

Committees Membership: Curtis Schmitt / Rich D'Andrea

Health Care Facilities: Joe Bernaudo / Sean Ward

Medical Examiner: Kenneth Lysak, Jr. / Philip Taglia 516-599-0041 ptagliadirector@aol.com

Cemeteries: Michael Cecere Jr. CFSP

Programs/Continuing Ed: Dianna Brueggemann-LoBue / Melissa Schmidt

Social Services: Linda Hogan-Florenzie

Political Action: Fred Bryant

Hospitality: Valerie Randazzo-Sakowski 516-798-2500 Fnrldrectr@aol.com

Member Events: Bea Lewanduski, CFSP 631-691-5700 Beatrice.Lecesse@dignitymemorial.com

Melissa Schmidt

Finance Committee: Dianna Brueggemann-LoBue

Nomination Committee: Jeff Davis

TFCU/AdHoc Committee: Richard O'Shea Jr.

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Emergency Response: Douglas Brueggemann 631-368-1235 drbrueggemann@msn.com

Scholarship/NCCC Liaison: Joe Bernaudo

Honorary: Michael Mastellone michael.mastellone@ncc.edu

Executive Director: Holly O'Brien 631-765-3737 hollynsfda@yahoo.com

Nassuff Newsbearer Editor: Karen Romanelli 631-901-8111 Karenromeo@gmail.com

