

Nassuff Newsletter

Summer | 2023



From left to right: NSFDA Past President Bea Lewanduski, Past President Doug Brueggemann, Past President Andy Powell, Immediate Past President Michael Gorton, President Kenneth Lysak, Jr.

NYSFDA 2023 Convention Report by Michael Gorton

On August 21, 2023, funeral directors from around the state began to arrive in Saratoga Springs for the Annual NYSFDA convention. During the 3 days in Saratoga Springs, we would network, connect, learn and catch up with many of our friends, colleagues, vendors and young professionals who seek to better themselves for the families and communities they serve. This was accomplished through the educational CEU opportunities and the many products that our favorite vendors would showcase.

The spotlight of the convention is the annual meeting when leadership changes. Bob Hogan, who has served this association this past year as president, passed the gavel to John O. D'Arienzo of Brooklyn.

Supporting John this year will be President Elect, Scott Hendrix of Illion, NY, Treasurer, Michael Gorton, Jr. of Medford, NY – NSFDA's Immediate past President, and newly elected to the executive board, NSFDA's own Mark Nolan from Northport, NY. Bob Hogan will remain on and support John as Immediate Past President.

Over the 3 days, there were opportunities for funeral directors to earn up to 12 CEU's. The speakers ranged from Aden Naka from the NY OCME, Justin Zabor, Bill Johnson, Megan Lopez, Chuck Gallagher, Dominick Astorino, Leli McMurrough, Thomas Fuller and Jennifer Muldowney. All of them are excellent in their own area. Some highlights were Leili discussing the next generation of funeral service, Chuck Gallagher showing us how ChatGPT can assist us in the funeral home for advertising, Dominick Astorino teaching us excellent tips and techniques on embalming and Megan Lopez giving us tools and advice on how to bring children and teens into the funeral home for services.

In a peer to peer open forum, Mark Nolan presented a non CEU that was well attended. He discussed a workforce topic that many of us struggle with – retaining employees. Insightful conversation and questions that filled the room with energy and enthusiasm and made us all hungry to further the conversation.

The annual Banquet at Prime at Saratoga National Golf Club gave us all an opportunity to celebrate John D'Arienzo. It allowed us to have a nice meal together, laugh about the incoming president, thank and wish Bob well for his time and service to the board as president and more importantly, dance! It gave us a cache to forget our CEU's and have a great time.

The tradeshow floor brought some new faces and new products but was filled with familiar faces from our everyday trade. There was a SCANvneger hunt with trivia based fun celebrating the 80's. Plenty of food and drink and in the afternoon Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream.

The silent Auction brought many good gifts that folks were bidding on till the very last minute. It was fun and exciting, especially to the winners! The annual Tribute Raffle saw 3 winners, two were in attendance or had family there.

If you missed the convention, there is always next year. NSYFDA convention will be at Turning Stone in Verona, NY from August 19 - 21, 2024.



Scott Hendrix NYSFDA President Elect, Robert Hogan Immediate Past President, John J. Kelly Past President, John D'Arienzo President, Michael J. Gorton Jr. Treasurer, Mark Nolan Secretary and Mike Lanotte Executive Director



NYSFDA Past Presidents: John Kelly, Andy Powell, Timothy Doyle, Robert Hogan, Bea Lewanduski, Walter Kent, Richard Sullivan, Douglas Brueggemann, Jeffrey Jennings and Robert Enos

**Want to see more fun photos from the convention?
Click on the button below to view the full album.**

[Convention Photos](#)



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT Kenneth Lysak, Jr.

"Dare to make a difference.

Once you take the first step, the rest is easy."

Hello fellow members!

If you had told me a few years ago that I'd be penning down a "President's Message", I would have told you that you were crazy. I had firmly resolved never to step into this role, quite content in my snug corner as the Treasurer – affectionately termed by many as the 'treasurer for life'. The weight of the president's role, with its vast responsibilities and commitments, seemed daunting.

However, as time unfolded, I realized we were navigating challenging waters. We encountered times when the energy and vigor in our association waned. Though occasionally sparked by a new enthusiastic member, it often felt insufficient. It was this realization that jolted me. I too was shying away from greater responsibilities, preferring the comfort of familiar shores. And that's when I knew – it was time to rise, to shoulder this responsibility, and to champion the call: "Stand up and make a difference!"

We stand at a juncture where fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and enthusiastic spirits are deeply yearned for. By just attending our association meetings, you can initiate your journey. It's here that I, as a young funeral director, began to forge connections. These bonds and insights eventually propelled me to ownership, leading to the acquisition of not just one, but multiple businesses.

While I can't guarantee that everyone will follow the exact same path, I can assertively say this – inaction guarantees stagnation. Our association meetings aren't just about discussions; they are opportunities. In this digital age, there's immense power in making a physical presence. It can be the game-changer you've been waiting for.

I recently attended the NY State Funeral Directors Association annual convention, and I was happy to see the enthusiasm of young members. It wasn't just about the continuing education credits I earned, but meeting new people and reinforcing old friendships.

I am filled with gratitude as I acknowledge the officers and board members of NSFDA. Following in the footsteps of exemplary leaders is a challenge that I welcome. A special nod to Michael Gorton for his commendable tenure and a big thank you to our Executive Director Holly O'Brien, the force that keeps our wheels turning smoothly.

As your president, know this – my door is always open. If ever a thought of contributing more crosses your mind, don't hesitate. Make the leap.

Dare to make a difference. Once you take the first step, the rest is easy.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Board Meeting, Tuesday September 19th and our Annual Golf Outing on October 2, 2023.

Warm regards,

Ken

JOIN US

THE TONI & VINCENT ROMEO MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING



MONDAY - OCTOBER 2, 2023

STONE BRIDGE GOLF LINKS & COUNTRY CLUB

Register by 9.22.23

Swing into a day of camaraderie and remembrance at the Toni and Vincent Memorial Golf Outing! Join us on the greens of Stonebridge Golf Links and Country Club on Monday, October 2nd. Register now to secure your spot and be a part of this meaningful event.

REGISTER FOR GOLF

A Message from the Executive Director



I hope everyone enjoyed their summer with family and friends and you are all looking forward to the fall and the cooler months ahead. This past summer the board of directors and myself have been busy organizing the NSFDA Toni & Vincent Romeo Memorial Golf Outing. This year's golf outing will be held at the beautiful Stonebridge County Club and Golf Links in Smithtown on Monday October 2, 2023. All registrations for golf which includes a brunch and dinner and dinner only for those who do not golf, is to be completed using the NSFDA website link,

[NSFDA.ORG/GOLF](https://www.nsfda.org/golf) Registration ends on September 22, 2023.

As you may have noticed, we are now using the new and improved NSFDA website for all registrations including the golf outing, the general membership meetings which includes continuing education

presentations and communication with the board of directors. This website would not have been possible without NSFDA Secretary Michael Hoddinott. Michael brings a wealth of knowledge of computer development and software and has made the site user friendly for all of us. Please visit the website and see all the hard work that has been put into it. Michael, Region 9 Director Rich O'Shea Jr., and Nassau Representative Joe Bernaudo worked tirelessly to get this website up and running to benefit the members of the NSFDA. Thank you to Mike, Rich and Joe.

If you have not set up your individual portal through the new website, please use this link to set it up, **[NSFDA.ORG/REGISTER](https://www.nsfda.org/register)**. Once you set up your username and password, you will receive a confirmation email within 10 days letting you know that your portal is active. Your portal is where all your CEU certificates will be placed for 2023 and going forward. Please make note of your username and password.

The Board of Directors is happy to announce that the NSFDA Holiday Social is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at The Larkfield in East Northport. This event will include a cocktail hour, appetizers, salads, buffet dinner including hot chafing dishes, dessert, OPEN BAR & DJ. Come celebrate the upcoming holidays with the NSFDA. Members, spouses, support staff, guests, and vendors, all are welcome. Information about when registration will open will be emailed in the next few weeks.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the upcoming membership meetings, the golf outing and holiday social.

Holly

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

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.

Region 9 Director Report - by Rich O'Shea

LOCAL LANDSCAPING COMPANY SOLD – NEW OWNERS INCREASE FEES TO CEMETERIES

Stang Landscaping of Sayville NY which services 37 small cemeteries across central Suffolk County was recently sold. The new owners have, in some cases, doubled their service fees resulting in significant increases to families. The dramatic rise in costs has local cemetery boards scrambling to address the issue with either a collective bargaining agreement or attempting to find new service providers. Part of the problem is that the previous owners did not raise their prices over time. In speaking with cemetery personnel, the price increases are understandable when adjusted for inflation. However, the NYS Cemetery Board has capped cemetery price increases this year to 5%, leaving cemeteries in a bind as they cannot raise their prices to reflect the true operating costs of the cemetery.

USPS CRACKING DOWN ON FLAG APPLICATIONS

Local Post Offices have received directives to renew compliance with Interment Flag applications. The directive reminds postal service workers that they should not dispense flags without the appropriate discharge papers accompanying the application.

MEMORIAL BENCH FLOATS ACROSS LONG ISLAND SOUND

A missing memorial bench honoring a Connecticut couple who passed away was found in

Setauket, Long Island. The bench apparently spent months floating across the Long Island Sound following a storm and eventually washed up 17 miles away. The bench has since been returned to family members in Connecticut.

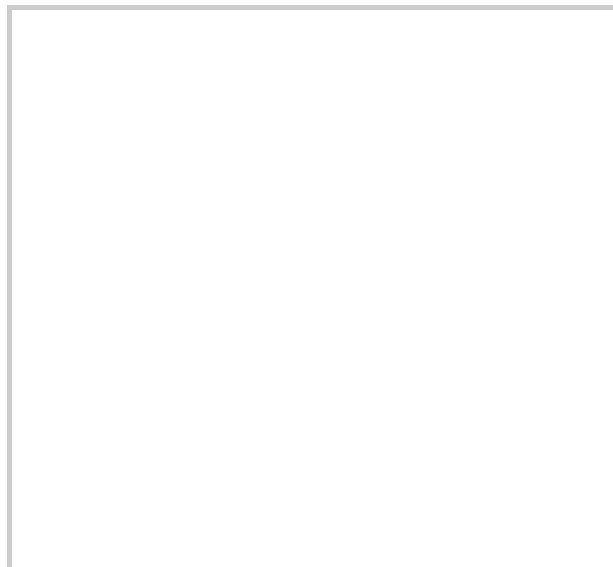


GOOD BYE SUMMER HELLO BACK TO SCHOOL!

Thank you for sharing your cherished summer moments and your memorable back to school snapshots!



Mary Kampfer (nee McDonald) John Paul & Teddy





Kenneth Lysak, Jr. with his son Ken Lysak and his niece Courtney Ciardullo.



Logan and Hunter Dost



Ella and Kevin Walsh



Gabe Gorton, Conor Lorey, Madelynn Lorey



Gabe Gorton



Logan Sakowski



Mike Nolan and Michael Gorton



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SAVE THE
Date

NSFDA HOLIDAY SOCIAL
DECEMBER 13, 2023
THE LARKFIELD
COCKTAIL HOUR 6PM-7PM
DINNER & DANCING 7PM-10PM
MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW



In Memoriam

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

Regina M. Robinson

loving wife of Doug Robinson,
Licensed Funeral Director at
Nolan Funeral Home, Inc.



*Requesting for your kind thoughts and prayers
at this difficult time.*



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