

Nassuff Newsletter

Summer | 2025



The 5th NSFDA Symposium and Networking Event



Members of the NSFDA Board gathered along with 80 funeral directors, 15 vendors and 10 mortuary science students for the *5th Annual NSFDA Symposium and Networking Event* on May 13th at The Larkfield. The day consisted of a two-credit law class entitled: “Keeping your Funeral Home Safe: Relevant Laws & Best Practices” presented by Nancy Schick, Esq. Other seminars included, Case Studies in Traumatic Death Restoration Presented by: Dominick J. Astorino, LFD & Educator as well as Managing Compression Fatigue & Online Obituaries Presented by: Matthew P. Binkewicz, MA, FT.

Many thanks and appreciation to Acrisure for being the Event Sponsor and to Mark Mannix from Cooperative Funeral Fund who is the donor of the NSFDA John M. Lieblang Annual Scholarship Awards as well as the donor of the practice tests for the mortuary science students who attend Nassau Community College Mortuary Science Program.

Congratulations to Jessica Travis and T. Dixon Clark who were both recipients of the NSFDA John M. Lieblang Scholarship Award. This award is presented annually to two mortuary science students and funded by Mark Mannix from Cooperative Funeral Fund. Mark also funds the practice tests to Nassau Community College for the students. Thank you Mark for all your support and generosity to the NSFDA.





**The NSFDA would like to extend a special
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A Message From The President

Kenneth Lysak, Jr.

It's hard to believe how quickly my term as President has flown by. It feels like yesterday that I stepped into this role, and now I find myself reflecting on my time as President. I have been honored to serve our association and our profession.

I keep feeling reminded of my first President's message where I talked about the difference in the perception of the passage of



time between myself as a child and now as an adult. What used to seem like an eternity now passes by in the blink of an eye. I realize that 2 years have passed but it certainly does not feel like that long at all. If only we could find a way to slow down the hands of time.

I would like to express my gratitude to the executive board, committee members and our executive director Holly O'Brien for all of their hard work and assistance during my tenure as president. Having a strong team behind me has made a huge difference and actually made my job quite easy. Being your president was far easier than my former role as treasurer; nod to Rich D'Andrea. We were able to accomplish a few goals, such as

simplifying the embalming affidavit for mausoleum entombments for Catholic Cemeteries. We held a successful symposium this year offering 6 CEU credits as well as our annual Vincent and Toni Romeo golf outing. We also continued in our tradition of offering free webinar credits as a member benefit.

One thing that I have come to realize over the last 2 years is that our industry is evolving rapidly. I further believe that over the next few years we are likely to see even more changes ahead. We are facing an ever increasing cremation rate along with possible licensing changes and further regulatory issues. As property values outpace funeral home valuations I cannot believe the number of funeral homes I see being converted to condos.

Looking forward:

I am happy when I see new blood coming into our association, especially in the form of new members but more importantly in the role of leadership. NSFDA is a true funeral directors association. It is not an owners club and has always recognized all members equally and over the years we have had our fair share of non-owners taking top leadership roles. I am excited to welcome our new President Melissa Schmidt to her position. Melissa has been an active member of the board for many years. She also has her finger on the pulse of social media and I firmly hope that she will encourage more young funeral directors to get involved through new more youthful ideas.

Although I will no longer be the association president I will remain active as immediate past president. As always I pledge my ongoing support and commitment to the NSFDA. Although the future is likely filled with change I believe that by working together we will be able to accomplish great things. In closing I also want to thank you, the members, because without members there would be no association. It has been my honor to serve as your President.

Looking forward to the future and what lies ahead.

Ken



2025 Vincent & Toni Romeo Memorial Golf Outing

Come and join us for a fun filled day of golf and enjoy a delicious dinner with your colleagues at The Annual Vincent & Toni Romeo Memorial Golf Outing. The outing will take place on Monday, September 29, 2025, at the beautiful Stonebridge Country Club & Golf Links in Smithtown. Reservations are necessary for all golfers and dinner guests.

Registration is completed using a credit card or debit card.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS: SEPTEMBER 20, 2025

For more information on the day and to register click on the button below.

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Winners will be drawn on September 29, 2025, at the Toni & Vincent Romeo Memorial Golf Outing at The Stonebridge Country Club and Golf Links.

Winners need not be present.

For more information or to purchase tickets contact Holly at 631-765-3737 or Hollynsfda@yahoo.com

Maximum of 250 tickets to be sold. Drawing takes place upon a minimum of 150 donations being received. In the event that less than

150 tickets are sold, the winnings shall be determined based on the percentage of tickets sold or the raffle may be cancelled at the sole discretion of the Nassau Suffolk Funeral Directors Association and all donations refunded.

 **Mark Your Calendar**

IMPORTANT NSFDA DATES:

NYSFDA 2025 Annual Convention

August 17-20, 2025

Saratoga Hilton & City Center, Saratoga NY
honoring
President-Elect Michael J. Gorton Jr.

September 9, 2025

Board Meeting & General Membership Meeting with CEU's

November 11, 2025

Board Meeting & General Membership Meeting with CEU's

A Message from the Executive Director



I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended the *NSFDA Symposium and Networking Event*, which was held on May 13, 2025 at The Larkfield in East Northport. It was a great event and very well attended by funeral directors, vendors and students. A special thank you to our Event Sponsor, Acrisure and the Gold Sponsors, Abigail Press Inc., After Goodbye, Cooperative Funeral Fund Inc., Dignity Memorial, Fricke Memorials, Funeralwebcam.com, Janice Redmond & Associates CPA, Long Island Cremation Company, Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions, Specialty Vehicles, Taglia, Lysak & Co., and Victoriaville & Co. USA Inc. Student Sponsor, Jeff Burnett/Messenger & H.S. Eckels and

Pre Plan Funeral Trust. Everyone enjoyed the presentations, food and networking with the vendors and the mortuary science students from Nassau Community College.

Congratulations to T. Dixon Clark & Jessica Travis who were both recipients of the NSFDA John M. Lieblang Scholarship Award.

A special thank you to Mark Mannix from Cooperative Funeral Fund for funding the scholarships and for all his support of the NSFDA throughout the years.

The Toni and Vincent Romeo Memorial Golf Outing is being held on Monday, September 29, 2025, at the Stonebridge Country Club and Golf Links in Smithtown. Registration information is available on the website at [Vincent & Toni Romeo Memorial Golf Outing - NSFDA](#).

The next General Membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. Information will be emailed but please visit our website at [nsfda.org](https://www.nsfda.org) for additional information on all the upcoming meetings and events.

A big thank you to Ken Lysak, who has been our President the past 2 years. It has been a pleasure working with Ken during his time as treasurer and president of the NSFDA. I look forward to working with our new leader, Melissa Schmidt who will be our new president effective July 1, 2025.

Thank you and wishing you all a great summer.

Holly

NYSFDA State Report

Peter D'Arienzo - Region 9 Representative



Greetings,

There are some hot topics across New York State regarding the registered transporter issue and exploring a path to a split licensure option. Historically; new laws or policies come about in either one of two methods – regulatory & legislative. In 2025 the NYSFDA pursued the regulatory method to try and adopt the registered transporter (non-licensed staff performing removals). A survey was sent to all NYSFDA members and the results were slightly in favor of the proposal but the comments included told a different story with more across the board support. Tom Fuller and the Bureau of Funeral Directing originally supported the concept and it then went to the “Funeral Advisory Board” where it met some resistance and Mr. Fuller pulled his support as did NYSFDA and the regulatory option failed. In the September 2025

NYSFDA board meeting our Government Affairs agenda for 2025 will be established and there continues to be support for the registered transporter statewide and this time it will be pursued by drafting a bill, having State Senators sponsor it and scheduled for a vote to approve the legislative change.

As for the split licensure issue – in the beginning of 2025 – there were only 8 states in the country that did not offer this option. At the end of 2025 – that number will be reduced to 6 as our colleagues in New Jersey (whom also have had the registered transporter issue for a long time) passed it into law. The split licensure is on the table for the following reasons; less students attending mortuary schools, longer times to graduate, harder to pass the national boards, compensation, on-call coverages and working weekends has lead to a shortage of qualified potential funeral directors. The split licensure will allow those who just pass one side of the national boards to begin their residency along with their path to licensure while earning compensation. NYSFDA is in the process of hiring a third-party consulting firm to address these issues and come back with suggestions on the best route to address the staffing issues that are evident throughout all 9 regions of NYSFDA.

We just had our softball game (Dignity Memorial vs park Funeral Home) and it was proposed to include all firms in NSFDA if anyone is interested in playing in early September or next June. The game is almost as entertaining as the barbeque, entertainment and money raised for various charities (this year close to \$2,000). NSFDA is sponsoring a silent auction basket for our incoming President, Mike Gorton and so far we have; Long Island wine (Doug), NY Islanders gear (Ken), a Long Island shaped charcuterie board (Melissa) and Long Island vodka & beer (Peter) – if you want to contribute anything please get it to me by early August. Last but not least we have our annual walk/run/ride event for Diabetes Research Institute on September 13th @ Cedar Creek Park in Wantagh. Let me know if you would like to participate or donate – enjoy the summer!

Peter N. D'Arienzo



It is with deep sadness we announce the passing of:

COLE PATRICK De PAOLIS

Cole is the son of NSFDA member Derrick DePaolis of the Charles G. Schmitt Funeral Home.

To honor Cole's love for animals, the family is requesting donations to Bideawee, 3300 Beltagh Ave., Wantagh, NY 11793 or at bidawee.org

Please be sure to check both of the following boxes:

Yes, this is an honor or memorial gift" and "Yes, I would like to send an e-card" in order to have the donation given specifically in memory of Cole. Please remember to fill out the e-card information online below the 2 checked boxes and please use **schmittfuneralhome@verizon.net** as the email contact address.

Please keep his families in your thoughts and prayers.

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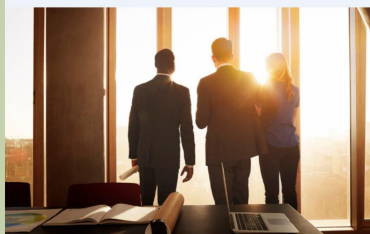


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