

POLICY Board Meeting – October 22, 2016 – PHILADELPHIA

By Steve Palmer

Pennsylvania had the first Funeral Directors Association. America's first funeral home was founded in Germantown during the Battle of Germantown.

*NFDA Budget-Treasurer Ken Cahall and Christine Pepper:

-Arranger Training Program will also include a program for Mortuary students.

-Attendance at five international conferences

-NFDA might be hiring a membership consulting firm to help NFDA and state associations with ideas for recruitment and retention.

*WASHINGTON DC UPDATE

-How a bill is brought to Congress: Some has an issue, they join an association, the association feels enough others feel the same and Congress should hear it. The association finds a sponsor, a legislator. The legislator or a lobbyist will write the bill. Legislative Counsel reviews it to be sure it is constitutional. It is returned to the sponsor and can go back and forth until everyone is happy. The bill gets a number (HR for House Resolution & S for Senate). The Congress member who originated the bill is the "original sponsor". The bill is sent to other likeminded Congressional or Senate offices to attract eventual co-sponsors. Only a member of Congress can physically take a written bill and put into the Speaker's bill "hopper". If the Speaker decides the bill should be heard it goes to the appropriate sub-committee. If passed by the sub-committee then co-sponsors are sought. The House and Senate leadership have to decide to support the bill. If not, bill "dies" there. If bill has passed all of this the lobbyist begin to visit the Congressional and Senate offices to attract or strengthen support. Bill must be "scored" if it costs money. Legislators must find a way to fund it by cuts somewhere else. The Congressional Budget Office provides a non-partisan review of the bill's costs. If the finances balance, the subcommittee will have a hearing on the bill. Sub-committee investigates by testimony and gathered information during hearing. The subcommittee will do a markup of the bill. Once a majority is satisfied, subcommittee votes to accept the bill and pass it to the next step. Then an identical bill has to be introduced in the other House. (congressional bill need one from the senate, etc.). A conference Committee of Senators and Congress members, picked by the Speaker, is appointed to resolve issues and differences between the two Houses. Bill becomes enrolled when both Chambers approve it. It now goes to the President. President has veto power. Regular veto is when the President does not sign, rejecting it. A 2/3 majority can override the veto. A pocket veto is when the President refuses to sign and both Chambers have recessed. The bill cannot be held over the next session. It make the veto absolute.

*SCOTT GILLIGAN, LEGAL REPORT/:

-White Collar Exemption: Effective December 1, 2016. Three duties: Duty test-Are you a professional? The Department of Labor says we are not (due to our industry low education bar). Only two states require four years- post secondary graduation. Salary Test-Must be paid at least \$44,476.00. If not they are hourly employees. A bill to delay implementation date which is unlikely to pass.

FTC-If you seat a family in an arrangements office with casket and vaults displays, they must be presented with a Casket and Outer Burial Container list. NFDA says that is not the language in FTC's regulation. The family must ask about prices or the traditional arrangements meeting begins. Scott Gilligan and Craig Tregillas, FTC staff attorney, are presenting on this subject.

The for profit investigation of Body Donors continues. This is the investigation that includes Arizona, Illinois and Michigan.

VA FORM 40-1088: NFDA has requested the VA redo their form to state that the indigent not only has no next of kin but has no next of kin that is willing to pay for it.

*VOTING FOR NFDA ELECTION: Only 1,032 voted. Michigan had the most votes at 138, Georgia #2 at 79, NY further down at 32, way down CA at 6, MT at 6, ND at 6, the following states had less than 5 votes: AK, AZ, DC, HI, NH, NM, NV, OR, PR, RI, VI, VT, WA, WY. It is a new process for candidates and members. The process works and experience and education with it will increase with each election. The returns were not far off other electronically voting associations. An option was requesting mail in ballot. Two total were requested and neither one was returned.

*INDIGENT FUNERALS: A survey was completed by each policy board member reflecting their state's regulations about funding. Most states go county by county, some have a state option or a county option, some only declare the deceased indigent, some the next of kin also. Some states offer an impressive amount of money, some allow family participation. One county in Minnesota will allow up to \$4500 without documented qualification.

*INTERNATIONAL UPDATE: India and China have more honor kids than we have kids. 100 billion Google searches ever month. 175 Million, around the world, are connected to Facebook every moment. We need to reach out internationally. We are only 4.4% of the world by population. NFDA has members in 49 countries, 958 locations, 45% increase since 2014. Revenue is \$361,065 from international members through dues, international vendor advertising, learning seminars and educational materials. International Professional Achievement Certificate, 21 credits of funeral service education (especially for countries with no educational requirements). It is a certificate program. CCO, Certified Crematory Operator program has been traveling to three countries with great success (one country has only a 7% cremation rate). Keith Belgrove of Trinidad, a member of NFDA since 1976, spoke. He operates five funeral homes, two cemeteries, two crematories, has a preneed insurance company and is an exporter of caskets. 50% of funerals are Christian. Hindus have the traditional cremation pyre. Muslims funerals have specially shaped graves for their return to Allah. Many superstitious traditions. They use the "Talk of a Lifetime" program to encourage pre-needs and a discussion guide at need. Belgrove expects there to be Pursuit of Excellence Internationally.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Encouraging younger or less active members that have potential to serve on committee and run for office. New York has a leadership academy. The academy has a comprehensive two day leadership development program. In 2015 they had eight graduates. A Capstone Project is where they identify forthcoming issues. They research, debate and present ideas. They present them at a state convention. Some topics have included The Power of Connection: The Future of

Funeral Service; Education 101-2 or 4 year?; Recruitment and Retention; Restoring Value; How to Serve Your Generation (knowing what they are looking for).

*CEO's REPORT-Christine Pepper: CCO, Certified Crematory Operator had 62 programs, 1990 individuals certified. CCO training has been offered for less than two years. Cremation retreat discusses why people choose cremation and how to present the many options it offers. Business conference deals with financials, budgets and how this affects your business. Arranger training offering many seminars around the country. October is Family History Month. Talk of a Lifetime is a perfect fit for PR and awareness of their life with family and others. FAMIC.ORG has a new website wit Talk of A Lifetime information for public and funeral directors. 1.35% click rate average. 206,475 web page views.

*STATE UPDATES: Arkansas Funeral Care, the discount firm closed in disgrace with 35 uncared for deceased. They had charges dismissed due to the owner being over 80. The families of these 35 people are going to file a civil lawsuit against the owner and family. Iowa is seeking to make a four year educational requirement.