

THE OHIO CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
**2012 Winter Conference, Sales Spectacular
& Awards Banquet**

February 23, 24 & 25, 2012
Embassy Suites, Dublin, Ohio

AGENDA

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2012

1:00 pm **Ohio Cemetery Association
Board of Directors Meeting**

3:00 pm - 6:00 pm **Supplier Set-Up**

7:30 pm **Opening Reception with
Suppliers**
(Cocktails & Hors d'Oeuvres)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012

7:30 am – 8:30 am **Registration & Breakfast**
8:30 am – 9:00 am **Welcoming Comments &
Supplier Introductions**
Jack Lee-Harris, President

9:00 am – 9:30 am **What's Your Story (and Who's
Telling It)?**
Mike Hays, Co-Owner of
LifeSteps, LLC

9:30 am – 10:30 am **Panel Discussion**
A panel-driven discussion
format together with audience
input and interaction

10:30 am – 11:00 am **Break With Suppliers**
11:00 am – 11:45 pm **Breakthrough: Landscape
Designs Can Define Your
Cemetery**
Craig Brown, HWH Architects,
Engineers & Planners

11:45 am – 12:30 pm **Grave Legal Mistakes...and
How You Can Avoid Them**
Tim Long, Attorney-At-Law

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm **Lunch With Suppliers**
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm **The Emergence of a New
Normal**
Alan Creedy, Death Care
Strategist

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm **Break with Suppliers**

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm **Legislative Update &
Association Open Forum**

6:00 pm **Social Hour – Dinner -
Entertainment**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2012

8:00 am – 9:00 pm **Registration & Breakfast**
9:00 am – 10:00 am **If I Owned A Small Cem-
etery...Here's What I'd Do**
Alan Creedy, Death Care
Strategist

10:00 am – 10:30 am **15 Fantastic Ideas...
In 30 Minutes**
Brad Palmer, Director of
Cemetery Planning Services,
Spring Grove Cemetery

10:30 am – 11:00 am **Break with Suppliers**
11:00 am – 12:00 pm **Cultivating Your Sales
Culture**
Mike Hays, Co-Owner of
LifeSteps, LLC

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **Lunch With Suppliers**
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm **Round Table Discussions A
"round table" forum where
various sales concepts, is-
sues and trouble spots will
be broken-down and analyzed
with the help and expertise of
a topic facilitator**

6:00 pm **Reception, Dinner, Awards &
Entertainment**

Looking forward to seeing you "Before The Thaw."

Daniel Applegate
Chairman, OCA Winter Conference
(513) 521-7003 • dan@amgardens.org

For more information
please go to ohiocemeteryassociation.com
and click on Upcoming Events.



219 Webbshaw Drive
Centerville, Ohio 45458-4622

T H E O H I O C E M E T E R Y A S S O C I A T I O N

"BEFORE THE THAW"

2012 Winter Conference, Sales Spectacular and Awards Banquet

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2012

**"To shorten winter,
borrow some money due in spring."**

~W.J. Vogel

Or instead...let us suggest that you immediately set aside February 23 – 25, 2012 in order to attend the **Ohio Cemetery Association's "Before The Thaw" Winter Conference** in Dublin, Ohio. This conference will be chock-full of fresh and remarkably thought provoking information that will simultaneously inspire, challenge and motivate. And, all that you need to bring is... an open mind. This conference really consists of two components: the General Conference on Friday, February 24th which focuses on "operational functions" and the Sales Spectacular on Saturday, February 25th that zeroes in on the "sales side" of cemeteries. Because both are so critical to a highly effective, not to mention profitable, cemetery organization, we are offering you the opportunity to attend both – in fact, we encourage that. But, you can certainly attend one of the other. Either way, begin planning now to shorten your winter by attending **"Before The Thaw."**

T H E E M B A S S Y S U I T E S • D U B L I N , O H

A SNEAK PEEK... AT THE CONFERENCE

Friday's General Conference Featuring:

MIKE HAYS

What's Your Story (and Who's Telling It)?

We all have a story to tell about our cemeteries – or at least we should. Some cemeteries have bigger stories to tell while others are a bit more challenging; yet, big or small the key is for us to control the narrative. And that will be our focus as we kick-off the conference. **Mike Hays** is a funeral director holding his license in the state of Kentucky who is a frequent platform speaker at death care conferences and conventions and is a certified CEO Focus™ consultant and co-owner of LifeSteps Services, LLC., a preneed sales and marketing company working with cemeteries and funeral homes nationwide He has a 25 year career in the profession and has been responsible for building, managing and improving at-need operations and preneed sales systems and for creating and implementing strategic marketing plans for cemeteries and funeral homes in 40 different states as well as Canada.

ALAN CREEDY

The Emergence of a New Normal

The means of doing business in the death care profession are rapidly changing based, in no small measure, on the aging of the “boomer” generation. Now, and for the next 20 years, 10,000 baby boomers will turn 65 every day. In addition to forming a large part of the 48 million caregivers in today's society, they are undergoing an average of 9 concurrent life events: job dislocation, retraining and reeducation, serving as caregivers, losing parents, becoming grandparents (or even parents, etc.). All of these factors come together to create unique marketing challenges but equally dynamic opportunities. The question is how do you respond? **Alan Creedy** is uniquely qualified to help us wrestle with that question. He has a 30 year career in the death care profession including his leadership of OGR Service Corporation (the for-profit arm of The Order of The Golden Rule); president of Brown-Wynne Funeral Homes & Cemeteries; owner of J.J. Fallon Company (the 28th largest retail florist in the FTD network); and, as the president of Trust 100, one of the largest preneed marketing companies in the U.S. He is a frequent contributor to death care trade journals, a frequent speaker at conferences and conventions and just the right person to stimulate our thinking on this tectonic shift in our market.

TIM LONG

Grave Legal Mistakes... and How You Can Avoid Them

Operating your cemetery in today's environment is sometimes akin to walking a tightrope without a net; one misstep and you come face-to-face with the figurative pavement: a lawsuit or some other costly legal

action. While it's impossible to become absolutely risk-free, during this presentation, you will learn that it is possible to avoid the most likely and/or the most common – with just a nominal amount of due diligence. **Tim Long** is a Columbus, Ohio attorney who has 17 years of experience in advising cemetery clients and cemetery associations (formerly the legal counsel for the OACS&O and currently serving a counsel for the Ohio Cemetery Association) as well as serving as Ohio's principal cemetery legislative advocate. He has drafted many of Ohio's most important cemetery laws and is the author of the handbook, “A Guide To Ohio Cemetery Law.”

CRAIG BROWN

Breakthrough: Landscape Designs Can Define Your Cemetery

It's often been said that an organization's most important resource is its human resource: its employees... and that's certainly true enough of any cemetery organization. However, a cemetery couldn't exist without its other “most important” resource: its natural resource – its land. Maximizing the use of land today is not as easy as merely growing turf and setting lot markers. There are a host of other considerations that one needs to contemplate, not the least being governmental regulations. But there are also the newer issues including the development of sustainable landscapes – generally considered landscapes that are environmentally friendly, an important focus for future cemetery landscape designs. **Craig Brown** is a registered landscape architect and vice president of HWH Architects, Engineers and Planners of Cleveland, Ohio. He has extensive experience in design, layout, grading, earthwork, preparation of construction documents, specifications, and field observation for site and landscape architectural projects. He has been involved in a wide variety of projects throughout the country and has worked on land development for Lake View Cemetery of Cleveland and Arlington Memorial Gardens of Cincinnati, among others. He has been a member of the City of Cleveland's Design Review Committee for the past 10 years, has written several nationally published articles on landscaping, waterfront development and streetscapes and has received design awards from the Ohio chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

PANEL DISCUSSION

This panel-driven and opinion format will provide an opportunity for thoughtful discussion and analysis of some of the more relevant topics and issues confronting today's cemetery operations. Drawing on the expertise of the panelists, this free-flowing discussion will also incorporate feedback and opinions from the audience. Come to this session prepared with the willingness to give and take on a series of issues.

Saturday's Sales Spectacular Featuring:

ALAN CREEDY

If I Owned A Small Cemetery... Here's What I'd Do

It's not unusual for small cemetery operators to believe that they are severely limited in, or even restricted from, marketing their cemeteries to the consumer. While the larger cemeteries possess the resources to employ a sales organization, that may be impractical for the smaller cemetery operator, particularly if the cemetery is a governmental subdivision entity (such as a township or municipal cemetery). While there may well be significant challenges for smaller cemeteries, there may also be some significant opportunities, perhaps even some advantages, for the entrepreneurial-minded small cemetery operator. **Alan Creedy** has a 30 year career in the death care profession including his leadership of OGR Service Corporation (the for-profit arm of The Order of The Golden Rule); president of Brown-Wynne Funeral Homes & Cemeteries; owner of J.J. Fallon Company (the 28th largest retail florist in the FTD network); and, as the president of Trust 100, one of the largest preneed marketing companies in the U.S. He is a frequent contributor to death care trade journals, a frequent speaker at conferences and conventions and someone who has, while going around the block a time or two, observed and formed some distinct philosophies including ideas and concepts of what will work in cemeteries of all types and/or sizes.

BRAD PALMER

15 Fantastic Ideas...In 30 Minutes

It's axiomatic that you can trip upon fantastic ideas anywhere and at almost any time. Some of these fantastic ideas come from our own profession while others might be found elsewhere, in other professions and with completely different applications. A fantastic idea put into practice is often a thing of beauty and when witnessed from the outside, it feels like a work of art. If it's true that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then this session is perfect because you'll be exposed to 15 Fantastic Ideas that oftentimes can be mimicked at a nominal cost. Most of these ideas have a “marketing or sales” quality to them but...aren't we all in the business of marketing and selling? **Brad Palmer** is the Director of Cemetery Planning Services for the Spring Grove Family of Companies in Cincinnati which includes the Historic Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum, Oak Hill Cemetery and the Gwen Mooney Funeral Home. He has over 27 years of experience in the death care profession including 23 years in sales and sales management. In addition to managing the sales functions for Spring Grove, he also serves as Chairman of Strategic Planning for marketing and branding.

MIKE HAYS

Cultivating Your Sales Culture

Like it or not, things change. Yet, many businesses fail to recognize those changes and sometimes, recognition is the least of the problem. The more serious problem is the active resistance to change. Of course, there is resistance to change everywhere, but this is especially true in our own profession. How many cemeteries refuse to make changes to grapple with the obvious growth of cremation or in the trend towards personalized memorialization? How many cemeteries continue to practice sales strategies that are clearly ineffective? Or worse, how many refuse to engage in active sales efforts at all? All of this usually points to an active unwillingness to change or to grow your sales IQ and your sales culture. **Mike Hays** will walk us through what it takes to recognize the need for a new sales culture; how to overcome resistance and cultivate a new culture, and provide some effective strategies for getting started. Mike is a funeral director holding his license in the state of Kentucky who is a frequent platform speaker at death care conferences and conventions and is a certified CEO Focus™ consultant and co-owner of LifeSteps Services, LLC., a preneed sales and marketing company working with cemeteries and funeral homes nationwide He has a 25 year career in the profession and has been responsible for building, managing and improving at-need operations and preneed sales systems and for creating and implementing strategic marketing plans for cemeteries and funeral homes in 40 different states as well as Canada.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Round Table Forums are an exceptionally practical method to refresh, review, exchange ideas and learn new and/or alternative methods, approaches or strategies in order to ply the fine art (yes, it's an art!) of selling. Each “round table” (yes, the tables will be “round”) will have a different sales topic of interest and together, with the guidance of a table facilitator, trouble spots will be identified, analyzed, broken-down and thoroughly discussed with the ultimate goal of strengthening your skill sets to produce improved results when you return home.

