



Marblehead Lighthouse, Lakeside-Marblehead, Ohio, 1819

OACS&O, OACF in historic merger

— W.A. Russell, editor

As of January 1, 2011, The Ohio Association of Cemetery Superintendents and Officials ended its more than one century of service to Ohio cemeteries and ceterierians, and enters a new phase of existence as the Ohio Cemetery Association.

In an historic move, the OACS&O membership voted to merge with the Ohio Association of Cemeteries and Funeral Homes. Dan Applegate, former president of the OACS&O and a member of the merger committee, recently reviewed the process that led to the vote, held at the 2010 annual convention:

- **Starting in October**, 2009, a merger committee made up of current and past officers of both organizations met several times to discuss a possible merger, to work out details, and to create a proposal mutually acceptable and beneficial to both groups. The merger committee met approximately 10 times from October, 2009 to June, 2010.
- **In October, 2009**, the merger committee agreed on 4 checkpoints during the following year at which to meet for the purpose of candid conversation and consensus-building.
- **The February, 2010** issue of the *Beam* published all of the merger information and documents, and invited comments and discussion from the general membership.
- **A presentation entitled** "Merger: Burning Questions"

with a roundtable discussion following took place at the 2010 Mid-Year Conference.

- **A letter including** all of the merger documents and information was mailed to each OACS&O member on July 15, 2010.
- **A written-ballot** vote by the general membership of the OACS&O was taken at the 2010 Annual Convention. This ballot, combined with several votes sent by mail, was counted and certified by the officers of the OACS&O and found to be for the affirmative. The OACF, having also voted in the positive, the merger was approved.

"**This is an** actual merging of the two organizations," stated Applegate. "We see the new organization as providing energy and enthusiasm to begin a move forward for the good of the cemeteries of Ohio."

Dave Shanteau, President of the OACF, attended the merger vote. He, along with several other OACF officers, were part of the merger committee. "Our cemeteries are here forever—we are here for only a short time," Shanteau remarked to the membership after the vote, "What you have done today is good for Ohio cemeteries."

Applegate also commented, "We all feel bad for the old organization, but this is an idea whose time has come. We need to get past the fear and think pragmatically for the future. This will be the best for the cemeteries and ceterierians of Ohio."



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ALL OACF & OACS&O MEMBERS ASKED TO MEMBER UP WITH NEW OCA!

If you have survived all of the alliteration and acronyms, you now know everything you need to know.

With the January 1 merger of our two great organizations, all returning individual and cemetery members will need to register with the Ohio Cemetery Association (cleverly acronym-ized as the OCA).

Many cemeteries have already signed up. Thanks so much!

If you haven't joined yet, please complete and mail the form on the facing page.

Tell all your friends and neighbors, because new members are always welcome!

BEAM announces rename-the-newsletter competition

— W.A. Russell, editor

With the start of the new OCA, we really need a new name for our newsletter. I never knew, nor could I find anyone who knew, what the *Beam* referred to, anyway.

So, I'm announcing a competition to rename the *Beam*. Hopefully it'll be something symbolic or indicative of what the OCA is all about.

So, all of you with creativity, please suggest possible new names. All will be impartially judged on merit, applicability, etc., by, what else? A committee!

SEND YOUR IDEAS
TO THIS LADY!



Note: The committee already rejected my suggestions, among which were "Tombstone Times" and "Graveyard Gazette," so don't even think about it...

DID WE FORGET TO MENTION? OHIO CEMETERY ASSOCIATION REGISTRATION FORM IS ON PAGE 3!

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

NAME																											
TITLE																											
CEMETERY/ COMPANY																											
ADDRESS																											
CITY/STATE/ZIP																											
BUSINESS PHONE				-				-				MOBILE PHONE				-				FAX				-			
EMAIL																											

Please photocopy and complete separate forms for each additional Voting or Associate Member

DUES STRUCTURE FOR 01-01-11 — 12-31-11

<i># Of Interments Per Year (Circle appropriate category)</i>	<i># voting members w/o additional cost</i>	<i>Annual Dues</i>
Less than 100	One (1) Voting Member	\$ 95.00
100–199	One (1) Voting Member	\$125.00
200–299	One (1) Voting Member	\$250.00
300–449	One (1) Voting Member & One (1) Associate Member	\$365.00
450–599	One (1) Voting Member & One (1) Associate Member	\$505.00
600–799	One (1) Voting Member & Two (2) Associate Members	\$655.00
800 or more	One (1) Voting Member & Three (3) Associate Members	\$880.00
Each additional Associate Member		\$ 50.00
Supplier Member		\$150.00

**Return completed form & payment to
Jan Burrowes, Treasurer
Ohio Cemetery Association
219 Webbshaw Drive, Centerville, OH 45458-4622**

Questions?

Jan Burrowes, Treasurer
OCA • Centerville
937-885-0283
937-604-0709 (mobile)

Elaine Russell, Secretary
OCA • Worthington
614-885-5933

After the winds of several hurricanes and our very dry summer, cemeteries have many more trees than usual that are in decline and some that may be dangerous.

During the 2010 Fall Maintenance Seminar, Rick Hanna of Davey Tree Company shared ways to evaluate trees that may be declining or dangerous. He said that cemeterians should consider any of the following danger signs for their trees, and quickly take steps to remedy the symptoms or situations indicated.

1 Stagheads (dead branches) in the tops of trees, as well as thinning foliage in the tops. Dead branches lower down are normal. While they should be removed for the health of the tree and to prevent danger from falling, they are not indicators of poor tree health.

2 V-shaped crotches indicate a weak point. as the major limbs on both sides of such a notch get heavier, one or the other limb is bound to break free. U-shaped crotches are strong and healthy.

3 Open cavities that are not healing. Cavities occur when branches break free, from pruning, etc. A healthy cavity is one that has a bark callus growing all around it. For a tree to survive, the callus must close over the wound before rot sets in.

4 Conch Fungus is the large, platter-shaped fungus growing on a tree and results from an internal fungal disease.

5 Tree Borers. There are several native borers which pose no threat to our native trees. Emerald Ash Borers, however, are well-known to all cemeterians and are now found in all 88 Ohio counties. They are treatable, but costs of continued treatment requires most cemeteries to make hard choices to treat only prize trees and to remove others. Another major pest just gaining a foothold in the US is the Asian Longhorned Beetle. It attacks trees in a similar way as the Emerald Ash Borer, but is indiscriminate as to the tree species it attacks. For more information, see the November, 2009 issue of the *Beam*, or go to <http://www.uvm.edu/albeetle>.

Please see "Dangerous" on page 5



6 A healthy root flare is one that surrounds the tree uniformly. A root flare on one side only may indicate a girdling root is constricting the root system of the tree.

7 Overfill around the tree can occur from construction, additions and changes to areas surrounding the tree, or simple overmulching. Fred Hower, the Ohio Nurseryman, refers to this as "volcano mulching." Any of these overfills can cause soil compaction, shallow, girdling roots, and rot to the root flare due to extra moisture retention. If mushrooms grow around the base of a tree, this is

an indicator of too much moisture.

8 Raised soil on one side of the root flare indicates the tree may be losing contact with the ground and is in danger of falling in the direction opposite the raised area.

If any of these characteristics are observed, immediate steps should be taken to save the tree. Some can be performed by qualified cemeteryans, while others may need the attentions of a certified arborist. When in doubt, always call your arborist, both for safety and for his/her expertise.

Ohio Cemetery Association Officers and Board

With the merger of the OACS&O and OACF, forming the new Ohio Cemetery Association, officers from both of the former organizations will serve for varied term lengths.

Officers

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YOU ARE INVITED

You are invited to the

**OHIO CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
MID YEAR CONFERENCE
&
AWARDS SPECTACULAR**

**February 17–19, 2011
Embassy Suites Hotel
Columbus, Ohio**

*Be part of history! Attend the first event sponsored by the new
OHIO CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
The tremendous Mid-Year Conference and the awesome
Awards Spectacular will be combined, offering bigger
and better programming for cemetierians and sales personnel.
See page 9 for registration form
See page 7 for schedule of events*

YOU ARE INVITED

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

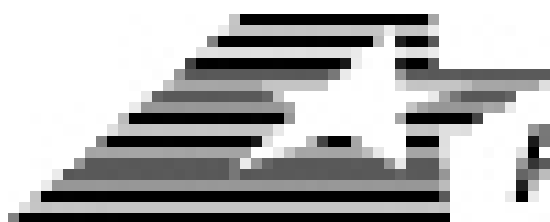
7:00 9:00 p.m. Reception

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

7:30 - 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast and Registration	
8:45 9:00 a.m.	Opening Comments	Jim Wright, President
9:00 9:45 a.m.	Planning for Cemetery Expansion	Dave Ward, Grever & Ward
9:45 10:30 a.m.	Starting and Running a Safety Program	Gary Peacock, BWC
10:30 11:00 a.m.	Break with Suppliers	
11:00 11:45 a.m.	Turf Issues 2011	Denny Baker
11:45 12:45 p.m.	Lunch with Suppliers	
12:45 1:30 p.m.	Plants & Trees to Beautify Your Property	Scott Buerlein, Cincinnati Zoo
1:30 1:50 p.m.	Legislative Updates	Tim Long, Association Lobbyist
1:50 2:15 p.m.	Break with Suppliers	
2:15 3:00 p.m.	"The Prudent Fiduciary & Cemetery Trusts"	Chip Wagner, Tim Long
3:00 3:30 p.m.	Association Business Meeting	
6:00 P.M.	Reception and Dinner Entertainment	

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

8:00 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast	
9:00 -10:00 a.m.	Interment Verification/Wrongful Burial Training	Greg Villwock, General Manager Forest Lawn Memorial Park Columbus, OH
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Break	
10:30-11:30 a.m.	'45 Great Ideas for your Cemetery in 40 Minutes	John Ohnstad, Matthews Intl.
11:45-1:00 p.m.	Lunch	
1:00 2:00 p.m.	Round Table Sessions	Greg Roberts, Facilitator Partner, LifeSteps Wooster, OH
	"Art of Closing/Sharing Techniques & processes of closing Pre Need Sales"	Vickie Williams, Sales Director Sunset Memorial Park North Olmsted, OH
	"Future Cemetery Sales - Follow-ups"	Barb Forsythe, Sales Advisor Catholic Cemeteries of Columbus
	"Referrals"	Bob Moses, President Crown Hill Burial Park, Vienna, OH Evergreen Memory Gardens, Lexington, KY
2:00 2:30 p.m.	Break	
2:30 3:30 p.m.	Continuation of Round Table Sessions	
3:30 -	Round Table Wrap Up	
5:30 p.m.	Reception	
6:30 p.m. -	Banquet Awards Spectacular Entertainment: Steve Campbell, Caricature Art & More!	



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MID—YEAR CONFERENCE & AWARDS SPECTACULAR

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Please photocopy and complete separate form for each individual registering

Name

Cemetery/Company

Address

City/State/ZIP

Telephone - Fax -

Email

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Mid-Year Conference and Awards Spectacular

(Includes Thursday-Saturday evening banquet)

\$200.00 (Please circle if attending)

Registration for Mid-Year Conference

(Includes Thursday evening and all day Friday)

\$125.00 (Please circle if attending)

Registration for Awards Spectacular

(Includes Friday evening through Saturday evening banquet)

\$125.00 (Please circle if attending)

Saturday Banquet for Spouse/Guest

\$ 60.00 (Please circle if attending)

Sponsorship is always welcomed and appreciated

\$.

Total Registration and Sponsorship

\$.

Do you plan to reserve a room at the Embassy Suites? If yes, read this:

HOTEL RESERVATIONS INFORMATION

Rooms have been set-aside at a special discount rate of **\$117.00**.

You must reserve your room at the Embassy Suites no later than

January 27, 2010 by phoning **1-800-EMBASSY**

CODE: Ohio Cemetery Association

Act quickly to guarantee this rate!

Please indicate dietary considerations: _____

**Return completed form to
Ohio Cemetery Association**

**219 Webbshaw Drive, Centerville, OH 45458
Questions? Call Elaine Russell • 614-885-5933**

The Beam page 9

Rules & Regulations for the 2010 AWARDS PROGRAM

1. EMPLOYEE AWARD:

Is there is an employee at your cemetery that deserves a special award for outstanding performance? This is your opportunity to present that individual(s) with an award of appreciation. Ideas might include outstanding performance by an office manager, secretary, administrative staff, grounds personnel, etc.

SEE PAGE 12 FOR EMPLOYEE AWARD REGISTRATION FORM

2. SALES MINIMUM PRODUCTION FOR FAMILY SERVICE PROFESSIONALS **\$225,000**

THE PRODUCTS INCLUDED AS PART OF A SALE ARE:

Mausoleums, Lawn Crypts, Spaces, Vaults, Markers/Monuments, Chapel Vaults, Opening & closings, Caskets and Funeral services.

At-Need merchandise will also count toward minimum production.

CATEGORIES ARE BASED UPON AVERAGE SALE

CATEGORY #1 Average Sale \$1.00 - \$2,500

CATEGORY #2 Average Sale \$2,501 & UP

CATEGORY #3 Average Sales Volume includes 25% or more of At-Need Sales

**CATEGORY #4 Average Sales Volume includes 25% or more of funeral services
and/or funeral merchandise sales**

SEE PAGE 11 FOR FAMILY SERVICE PROFESSIONALS AWARD REGISTRATION FORM

3. ROOKIE AWARD

The "Rookie" awards have been a success and it's important to recognize these individuals.

"Rookies" are those family service professionals who have less than one year experience and have done an outstanding job serving families and have produced an impressive amount of sales in a short period of time.

SEE PAGE 12 FOR ROOKIE AWARD REGISTRATION FORM

**AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED ON FEBRUARY 19, 2011 AS PART OF
THE MID-YEAR CONFERENCE AND AWARDS SPECTACULAR**



MID—YEAR CONFERENCE & AWARDS SPECTACULAR

Family Service Professional Award Registration Form

Cemetery _____ City _____
 (Print information and be sure to include Category)

NAME	CATEGORY #	TOTAL VOLUME	AVERAGE SALE
1. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
2. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
3. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
4. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
5. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
6. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
7. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
8. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
9. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
10. _____		\$ _____	\$ _____

Return completed form to
 Ohio Cemetery Association
 219 Webbshaw Drive, Centerville, OH 45458
 Phone (937) 885-0283 • Fax (937) 885-4512
 Note: If form is faxed, please also mail original

DEADLINE: MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2011
 AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED ON FEBRUARY 19, 2011 AS PART OF
 THE MID-YEAR CONFERENCE AND AWARDS SPECTACULAR

Special Employee or Rookie Award Registration Form

Our February AWARDS SPECTACULAR also includes an opportunity for you to recognize your *Special Employees or Rookies* for the year 2010.

These are individuals that have done an outstanding job for your cemetery or funeral home during the past year. Make sure you submit the name of the person you want to recognize.

A Rookie is an employee that has been with your cemetery/funeral home less than 12 months and who is doing an outstanding job selling.

A Special Employee is an individual employed by your cemetery – such as a secretary or grounds maintenance person – who has performed their duties over and above the expected.

These people are very important parts of our organizations

They deserve to be recognized!

Special Employee / Rookie's Name: _____

Cemetery: _____

I would like to recognize the above because.....

Please include a separate sheet describing the individual you wish to be recognized.

Submitted by: _____ Email: _____

Return completed form to
Ohio Cemetery Association
219 Webbshaw Drive, Centerville, OH 45458
Phone (937) 885-0283 • Fax (937) 885-4512
Note: If form is faxed, please also mail original

DEADLINE: MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2011
AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED ON FEBRUARY 19, 2011 AS PART OF
THE MID-YEAR CONFERENCE AND AWARDS SPECTACULAR

Hitting from the sweet spot: A focus on new opportunities

— Dan Applegate

It was only after watching new tennis phenom Rafael Nadal race around Wimbledon's hallowed Centre Court this past July, in quest of his second All England Club Championship, that it occurred to me why Nadal has emerged as the top player in the world. On Wimbledon's fabled grass, the courts are subjected to a "fortnight," or two week's worth of competitive abuse, resulting in a playing surface that is often rutted, pocked and sometimes laid bare of actual turf. As a result, bad bounces are legendary, frequently resulting in grossly mishit ground strokes by the most highly skilled tennis players in the world. And yet, Nadal, originally a clay court specialist, now seems to have also mastered the vastly faster speed and inconsistencies of the grass courts of Wimbledon as he blasts one winning shot after another.

In analyzing Nadal's command of Wimbledon it is tempting to focus on his obvious assets: Youth, strength, speed, quickness and conditioning. Yes, those are important to his success; yet there is another factor that is only infrequently mentioned but has contributed greatly to his rise to the top of his profession: His superior hand eye coordination. It's that particularly nuanced, but finely honed, motor skill that enables him to instantaneously focus on the ball and consistently make contact precisely on the "sweet spot" of his racquet resulting in a deadly combination of raw power and accuracy, qualities that were so evidently on display at Wimbledon where, in tennis parlance, Nadal "spanked" the ball.

The "sweet spot" is a term most commonly associated with sports and is defined as that singularly unique area on a tennis racquet or golf club, for instance, which when striking a ball, produces the greatest speed, energy and power. Having been a tennis playing fanatic at one time, I can attest to the qualitative difference between hitting on the "sweet spot" as opposed to some other place on the racquet. And, following a round of golf, recreational golfers often talk about those one or two rare shots during the round that were hit "just right." In fact, it's often the seductive appeal of those infrequent moments that keep the weekend warriors coming back for more even though the overwhelming mass

of their shots are scattered hither and yon.

While the "sweet spot" is a familiar concept in sports of all sorts, applying it as a descriptive term has crossed over to other, non-athletic endeavors. For instance, in an amusing twist, I have a friend who blithely boasts that there is a specific "acoustical sweet spot" within his house that enhances his stereo sound system. More seriously however, "sweet spots" are now frequently referred to in architectural structures, electronics, and telecommunications. And, as I suggest below, we can even employ the term in our own profession.

For example, I have witnessed something of a phenomenon over the years in our marketing efforts at Arlington that I now commonly refer to as a "cyclical sweet spot." That is to say, from time to time our sales team seems to be operating in a nirvana of sorts where its results rise to the level of extraordinary. This so called "cyclical sweet spot" is differentiated from a mere "hot streak" both quantitatively and qualitatively by virtue of its sheer high volume combined with sustainability — lasting for several months at a time. In contrast, I would argue, a "hot streak" has the potential to produce extraordinary results indeed, but only in short bursts that otherwise lack the durability of the more enduring "cyclical sweet spot."

However, while this specific use of the term certainly serves my purposes in adequately describing our sales team's remarkable results, its rather loose and generic application is, I admit, perhaps not much more meaningful than the "acoustical sweet spot" mentioned earlier. There is, however, a much more useful application that, when graphically illustrated, sheds important insights into how we can all improve our opportunities as service providers.

Suppose, for example, that your market can be segmented into the following three dimensions: 1) Services that you offer; (2) Services your competitor(s) offer(s); and, (3) Services your customers desire and/or demand. If we define the "service sweet spot" as **"those unique, exclusive and desired services that**

Please see "Sweet spot" on page 14

are unmatched by your competition,” then Figure 1 is useful in revealing a visual illustration of the “service sweet spot.” And, it is here, within the “service sweet spot” that the potential for opportunity resides. However, Figure 1 is useful in also revealing something else: the “service sweet spot’s” limited size which tends to starve opportunity.

Therefore, in order to unleash the true power of a “service sweet spot,” to cultivate and maximize its enormous potential, you must inflate its size by expanding the number of unique services you provide. While that may not be as easily accomplished as it sounds, it is quite possible to do so through creative thinking and subsequent efforts.

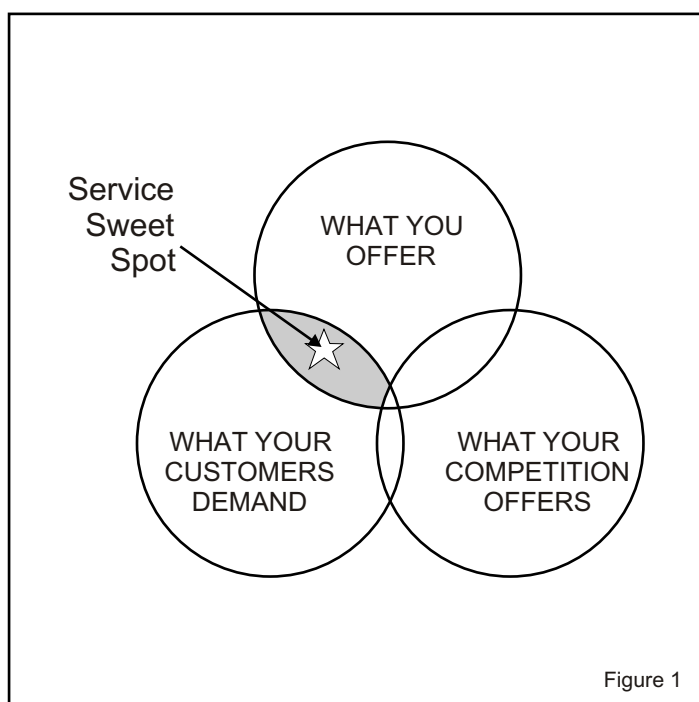


Figure 1

For example, you may develop a method to provide unique cremation services which, as we all know, are currently impacting our markets and are likely to drive them in the future. Holding sway in the cremation market would obviously place your cemetery, any cemetery for that matter, in a very strong strategic position.

Figure 2 illustrates the end result of successful efforts to expand services. Note that the services circle (“What You Offer”) has been expanded and the “service sweet spot” has been inflated as a direct result. A certain synergy is then released as an inflated “service sweet spot” produces new opportunities which in turn produce new business. This new

business, in many cases, could spell the difference between profitability and loss.

A few cautionary notes are necessary.

This is a fairly simplistic explanation of a fairly complex process. As mentioned above, identifying and then expanding your “service sweet spot” is not simple or easy at all; it’s hard work.

Second, there is no single key of an idea that can unlock all of the tumblers to your “service sweet spot” in order to optimize opportunities; it may in fact take the implementation of multiple unique services to produce the desired result of an inflated “service sweet spot.”

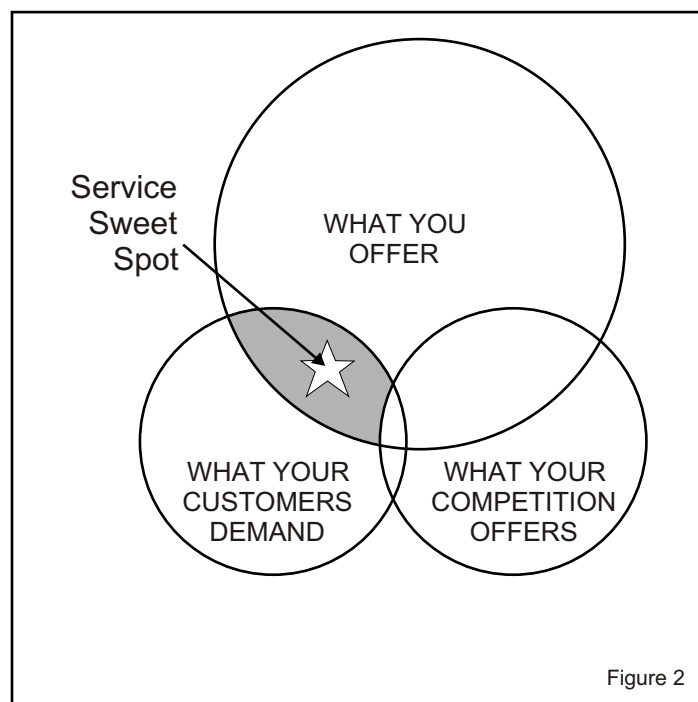


Figure 2

Third, and this is obviously self-evident in today’s environment: The economy will likely mitigate some of the new opportunities that may come as a result of an expanded “service sweet spot.”

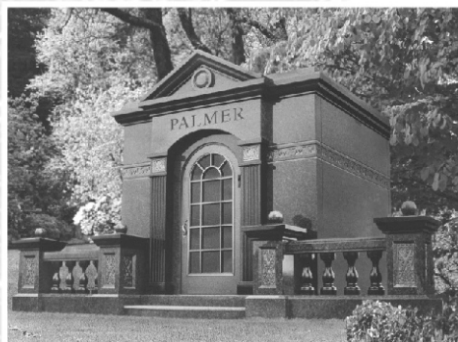
Lastly, given these yellow flags of caution, it might be tempting, and it would most certainly be easier, to settle for the status quo. However, in doing so, you would be robbing your cemetery of powerful new opportunities and yourself of the exhilaration that comes from “hitting from the sweet spot.”

Dan Applegate is a Past President of the OACS&O and is President of Arlington Memorial Gardens, Cincinnati, Ohio

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SAVE THE DATE

Ohio Cemetery
Association
Mid-Year Conference
& Awards Spectacular
February 17-19, 2011
Embassy Suites Hotel
Columbus, Ohio

Ohio Cemetery
Association
First Annual
State Convention
August 1-3, 2011