FROM THE GFDA PRESIDENT

Dear GFDA Members,

It is hard to believe that 2018 will quickly be coming to an end! We would like to take a moment and say THANK YOU to all our members and funeral service friends for their support and participation in GFDA throughout this year. While we plan for the association, we know how important our members are and are always thinking of you and your business.

We are looking forward to 2019 with great anticipation and look forward to seeing you in the new year. We have planned events which will help further your business and professional development. Our first event will be in January. If you need certification as a Crematory Operator, we look forward to seeing you. Our next event will be in February and our Mid-Winter will have timely programs from first class speakers. Be sure to join us Sunday evening for a dinner and hospitality. June will bring our Annual Convention and we know everyone always has a great time at the beach.

As the year comes to a close we also thought about our vendors and created new opportunities for GFDA and vendors to partner in 2019. Each have been designed to give back to the vendors while offering our members and the association benefits only they can provide. We encourage you to review them and act quickly to take advantage maximum promotion of your company.

We would like to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May God Bless You and Your Family,

Your GFDA Executive Committee
MARKETING ALLIANCE PARTNERS

Our Marketing Alliance Program Partners offer GFDA Members incentive programs or rebates to GFDA Members who purchase from them and revenue to GFDA based on company sales to our membership during the period of Agreement.

Visit HERE to view more information about each partner.

Cincinnati Equitable Life Insurance Company
Federated Insurance
Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions

To enjoy all the benefits of membership with GFDA including our Marketing Alliance Program, inclusion in our directories, & access to our private Member Page & private app your dues must be current.

GFDA HAS A JOB BOARD

The GFDA Job Alert is provided as a service to members. It has helped place a number of professionals around the state.

Listings can be "open" with full detail and contact information or "closed" with information forwarded. The service also provides information, if requested, on individuals seeking positions. Send your job alert request to staff@gfda.org.

Do you have news you would like to share with GFDA Members or a Job Posting? Let GFDA help you!

Submit your press releases, articles, Best Practices, funeral home news, or job posting to the GFDA office for future publications and GFDA Alerts.

GFDA Advertising is a GREAT Value!

Ads with GFDA are quarterly and are included in our monthly StraightTalk newsletter and on our website here. Visit HERE for more information.
Top 10 Reasons
Cincinnati Equitable
Is Your Total
Preneed Solution

1) Easy On-Line Processing
2) Fast and Simple Claim Processing
3) Friendly, Familiar Customer Service
4) Industry Leading Early Payoff Option
5) On-Line Marketing System
6) Effective Group Presentation Kit to Enhance Local Networking
7) Various Agent Positions Available
   Independent vs. Employee
8) Product Solutions
   • Couple’s Choice
   • Whole Life
   • Youth Builder
   • Annuity
9) At-Need Insurance Assignment Advanced
   Funding Program
10) Annual Incentive Trips with Attainable
    Production Level

www.cineqlife.com
2019 Crematory Operator’s Certification Program (COCP)
January 17, 2019
Macon Marriott City Center &
Edgar H. Wilson Convention Center / Centreplex in Macon, GA

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION FORM

This form should be completed in its entirety. Please print clearly for your certificate and badge.

Name of Company

Attendee Name(s)

Address

City __________ State __________ ZIP __________

Telephone __________ Fax __________ Email __________

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 28, 2018
$250.00 per person

Discounted Rate for this GFDA Cremation Certification
Includes All Class Materials, Certificate of Completion (Valid for 5 years), Continental Breakfast, Lunch and Breaks

Total $ ___________ # of Attendees x $250 per person

_______ CHECK ENCLOSED OR _______ PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD (complete below)

ALL CARD INFO MUST BE COMPLETE AND EASILY READABLE TO BE PROCESSED

Credit Card # ____________________________

Type of Card __________ Exp. Date __________ Card Code ___________

(4 digits, front of card for AmEx, 3 digits, back of card for Visa/MC)

Card Billing Address ____________________________

Card Billing ZIP ___________ Receipt Email ____________________________

Signature for Approval ____________________________

Send your fully completed form to GFDA by email to staff@gfda.org, fax to 770-592-3686, or mail to GFDA, P.O. Box 1865, Roswell, GA 30077. Registration will close Friday, December 28, 2018.
NOTE: No refunds after January 4, 2019, due to guarantees with the venue and course provider.
Ensure Your Compliance with Georgia Regulations
Attend Our Crematory Operator’s Certification Program

January 17, 2019
Edgar H. Wilson Convention Center in Macon, GA

GFDA is offering this program to help funeral directors meet the following rule requirement from the Georgia State Board of Funeral Service regulations, Chapter 250-6 ESTABLISHMENT / CREMATORY LICENSURE AND REGULATIONS (Rule 250-6-.07 Crematory Inspections may be viewed HERE).

We encourage you to review the information carefully to determine your need for certification.

This one day program, from Matthews School of Cremation, will certify you, your staff and/or operators in crematory operation. This program is also appropriate for anyone working with cremation and retorts. Your certification will be valid for 5 years!

NOTE: Your certification expiration date is determined by the training program you participated in. If you attended the GFDA Cremation Certification in February 2014, your certification will expire in 2019. If you participated in another program and are unsure of your certification expiration date, contact your training provider.

REGISTRATION CLOSES FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28!
Our registration form may be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

Our discounted attendee pricing includes class materials, certificate of completion, continental breakfast, lunch and breaks.
This training has been approved by the GA Board of Funeral Service and has been submitted for approval to the AL Board of Funeral Service.

Thank you to our Program Sponsor

Matthews’ Aurora Funeral Solutions

OUR EVENT ROOM BLOCK IS AT THE MACON MARRIOTT CITY CENTER
Make your reservation online HERE or call 800-228-9290 or 478-621-5300
When calling remember to use "Georgia Funeral Directors Association" to receive the room block rate of $121 per night.

GFDA’s Room Block will remain open until December 28 or until it is sold out.

Attendees are responsible for their room reservations.
Rate is subject to state and local taxes & lodging fees/hotel fee per night.
GFDA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President - Nathan Stanley
Stanley Funeral Home & Crematory
1320 North Jefferson Street
Dublin, GA 31021
Phone: 478-272-5855     Fax: 478-275-2807
Email: nathan@stanleyfuneralhome.com

President-elect & Bill Hightower
NFDA Policy Board Member
Hightower Family Funeral Homes
318 Gordon Street
Bremen, GA 30110
Phone: 770-537-2375     Fax: 770-537-4040
Email: BH1196@aol.com

Treasurer - Rob Roberson
Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home
526 Oakwood St
Folkston, GA 31537
Phone: 912-496-7388     Fax: 912-496-4322
Email: shepardrobertsonfuneralhome@yahoo.com

Secretary - Jason Wommack
Lord and Stephens Funeral Homes
4355 Lexington Road
Athens, GA 30605
Phone: 706-546-1587     Fax: 706-548-7984
Email: jwommack@lordandstephens.com

Immediate Past President - David McLeighton
McLeighton Funeral Service
42 S. Collins Street
Reynolds, GA 31076
Phone: 478-847-4181     Fax: 478-862-9540
Email: davidmcleighton@gmail.com
DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR ENHANCED PRODUCT MERCHANDISING

The Matthews Aurora™ Funeral Solutions’ Catalog App allows you to digitally present our product catalog to your families. Browse the entire catalog or merchandise your favorite selections and add your retail prices to create a custom selection room. Simply configure once and deploy on multiple devices.

Help your families move from grieving to remembrance. Download the FREE Catalog App at the App Store® or Google Play® or contact your Matthews Aurora™ Funeral Service Consultant to learn more.

Available for Windows®, iOS, or Android® operating systems.

Matthews Aurora
FUNERAL SOLUTIONS

*PC is required to have Windows® 10 operating system to run Catalog App for Windows®.
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IT WILL SOON BE A NEW YEAR AND WE HAVE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR COMPANY TO BE IN THE GFDA SPOTLIGHT!

Looking for a New Way to Market Your Company to GFDA Members? Let's work together to promote you!

We are proud to announce NEW opportunities to gain FREE sponsorship, attendance, advertising, and more for your company!

Our **Exclusive Marketing Alliance Partners** opportunity offers a full year's worth of benefits including:

- GFDA endorsement of your company as an Exclusive Alliance Partner
- Diamond Platinum Sponsorship at each GFDA meeting in a year
- Up to 4 representatives attendance at no cost to each GFDA meeting in a year (Hotel reservations not included)
- Individual page on GFDA's Website including a hotlink for your company logo
- Unlimited advertising for the year: GFDA’s Website, Alerts, Monthly *StraightTalk* Newsletter
- Advertisement in the event program or a flyer at each meeting
- Opportunity to present programs at GFDA meetings (at no charge to GFDA)
- Opportunity to address attendees at each GFDA meeting in a year

This opportunity is **exclusive to one industry provider per type** (i.e. Answering Service, Automobiles, Burial Clothing, Casket, Chemical, General Liability, Pre-Need, Print Items, Vaults, etc.).

Our **Choice Colleague** opportunities also offer benefits including FREE sponsorship, free attendance, advertising, inclusion on our website, and more. We are offering **four different levels**! These opportunities are non-exclusive and will be open to multiple types of industry providers within the same level.

We encourage you to visit [HERE](#) to review both opportunities!

**Act quickly** - send your proposal to staff@gfda.org.

Questions may be submitted to the GFDA office (staff@gfda.org/770-592-8002) or an **Executive Committee Member**.
Mark Your Calendars! Exciting NFDA Events Planned for 2019

Plan ahead! NFDA’s 2019 calendar is packed with exciting conferences and events, especially planned to help you take your career and your business to the next level. Don’t miss your chance to grow personally and professionally through unique opportunities to learn from some of the best minds in the profession!

Make plans to join us:

February 22-24 – Cremation Conference – St. Pete Beach, FL
www.nfda.org/cremationconference (Registration Now Open!)

February 24-26 – Business Conference – St. Pete Beach, FL
www.nfda.org/businessconference (Registration Now Open!)

March 10-12 – Meet the Mentors – Atlanta, GA
www.nfda.org/mentors (Enter Now!)

April 3-5 – Advocacy Summit – Washington, D.C.
www.nfda.org/advocacysummit (Registration Opens January 14!)

April 12-14 – Professional Women’s Conference – Annapolis, MD
www.nfda.org/pwc

May 16-17 – Embalming & Restorative Art Seminar – Pittsburgh, PA
www.nfda.org/embalmingseminar

July 13-16 – Leadership Conference – San Diego, CA
www.nfda.org/leadership

August 15-16 – Embalming & Restorative Art Seminar – Nashville, TN
www.nfda.org/embalmingseminar

October 27-30 – NFDA International Convention & Expo – Chicago, IL
www.nfda.org/convention

Also, don’t miss NFDA’s exclusive training and certification programs – dates and locations for programs in 2019 will be announced soon:

Arranger Training: www.nfda.org/arrangertraining

Cremation Certification Program, www.nfda.org/cremationcertification

Certified Preplanning Consultant, www.nfda.org/cpc
IMPORTANT REMINDER

Our 2019 Dues Renewal Season is Underway!

Renewal forms have been sent to the address on file. If you need a duplicate form, visit JOIN GFDA or contact staff@gfda.org. Remember:

- It is very important to return a fully completed copy of the renewal form for each location with your payment to help us ensure our records are accurate.

- Employees of GFDA Member Firms are GFDA Associate Members! All employees who wish to receive GFDA Alerts, may be included on your renewal form.

- Your dues must be current to enjoy all the benefits of GFDA Membership, including our Marketing Alliance Program benefits, access to our Member Page, access to the GFDA App, and inclusion in our directories.

- COMING SOON - OUR NEW ONLINE DIRECTORY! This directory will be more user friendly, have a direct link to your firm or company’s website, and be searchable by firm / company name, city, and phone number. It will be public and available to consumers and funeral service industry professionals. Take advantage of this new tool and renew your dues today.

GFDA AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Our hope is all GFDA Members will take advantage of the GFDA app and our Facebook page. Each are valuable tools for interaction with your peers through posts, comments, member news, death notices, industry articles, and more! Our Facebook page is public and the GFDA App is private (for members only).

Remember to also view our GFDA MEMBER PAGE as it is frequently updated.

Remember to tag GFDA by using @GeorgiaFuneralDirectorsAssociation

Search “Georgia Funeral Directors Association” in your app store to find and download our app today!
Sponsorship Registration is **OPEN** for our 2019 Mid-Winter!
Sponsors may register [HERE](#).

**GFDA 2019 Mid-Winter**

February 24 & 25, 2019
The Ritz-Carlton Reynolds, Lake Oconee
1 Lake Oconee Trail, Greensboro, GA

**Sponsorship opportunities are available - Become a Sponsor today!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsorship Level</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Evening Hospitality</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diamond Platinum</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold $1,500</td>
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<td>Bronze $500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Gallagher Program</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Silver $1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporter $250</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sponsorships include pre/post event marketing, event signage, and your pre-printed flyer included in attendee packages.
Sponsorship of Chuck Gallagher includes all of the above, individual signage, and introduction of his program.
Sponsorship of Sunday evening’s hospitality includes all of the above and individual signage.

Join us Sunday evening for dinner and the latest in Legislative News from Charlie Watts, GFDA Lobbyist.
Immediately following dinner, our hospitality cottage will open.
Monday morning we will offer timely programs from first class speakers:
"Be Audacious" with Mary Andres Russell,
Professional Development Manager - East, Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions
"The Distinctive Advantage" with Chuck Gallagher

**Save the Dates - Our event registration & room block will open soon!**

**Thank You to Sponsors** (to date)
Federated Insurance
Matthews Aurora Funeral Solutions
Cyber Security

Data breaches at major corporations may capture the big headlines, but small and mid-sized businesses also face significant financial, operational, and reputational risks from cyberattacks. Unfortunately, many business owners believe a data breach won’t happen to them, either because they think they have adequate protection in place or because they feel the information isn’t worth stealing. In reality, hackers often see these businesses as prime targets. Without the proper safeguards in place, your business could suffer a data breach that exposes sensitive information, disrupts operations and opens the door to an expensive lawsuit.

Why Cyber Security Matters

The majority of data breaches happen to small and mid-sized businesses. Consider the following stats* from a study released in 2017:

- All 50 states have data breach laws and notification requirements
- 53 percent of U.S. businesses have experienced a cyberattack in the past year.
- 68 percent of data breaches were attributed to an employee or contractor mistake.
- 38 percent of hacked businesses spent more than $50,000 to respond.

When a business suffers a data breach, the fallout can be tremendous. A single breach can trigger a variety of financial damages, including lawsuits, repairs, public relations, and expenses related to data breach notification. Here are some daily practices you can implement to help lower the risk of data breaches.

1. **Use strong passwords and change them often.** Teach your employees that the best password is a secure password. Require your employees to create strong passwords that include numbers, symbols, and upper and lowercase letters.

2. **Install virus protection, firewalls and encryption software.** Hackers can enter your computer network through outdated apps with known vulnerabilities. Make sure you install software updates and patches for applications and operating systems as soon as they are available.

3. **Limit access to sensitive information.** Give access to sensitive data only to those team members who absolutely need it. Make sure this access is removed if their position or employment changes.

4. **Invest in cyber liability insurance.** Make sure your business has a full suite of coverage to respond to the ever-changing cyber exposure.

The Internet, data, and all its accompanying risks are not going away any time soon. Do your business, your clients, and your bottom line a favor by preparing for the risks before they cause serious damage.

GFDA DISTRICT CHAIRS

District 1E

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District 5

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Audie Powell, Co-Chairman
Flanders-Morrison Funeral Home
P.O. Box 1560, Pembroke, GA 31321
Phone: 912-653-4531
Email: audie.flandersmorrisonfh@gmail.com
Your GFDA District Chair is a GREAT contact, especially if you have an immediate need in your area. If we can ever be of any assistance, please feel free to contact your District Chair or the GFDA office.
SAVE THE DATES FOR OUR 2019 EVENTS

January 17, 2019
Crematory Operator’s Certification Program (COCP)
Edgar H. Wilson Convention Center/Centreplex
Macon, GA

February 24 & 25, 2019
Midwinter
Ritz-Carlton Reynolds, Lake Oconee
Greensboro, GA

June 9 - 12, 2019
Annual Convention
King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort
St. Simons Island, GA

Do you have a program you would like to be considered for a future event?
Submissions should be sent to staff@gfda.org and include specific details regarding the presentation, including but not limited to, the following information:

- Title and Description of Program
- Length of the Program
- Presenter Name, Title and Biography
- Details regarding fees for presenter, including travel and room accommodations.
- If the program will be sponsored, please be sure to include sponsor information.