

## **A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors, Troy, MI**

*A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors - Vasu, Rodgers & Connell Chapel, Royal Oak, MI;  
A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors – Price Chapel, Troy, MI*

How to celebrate the life of an artist?

The family paints the casket and sets up a gallery walk in the visitation space.

The deceased was a teacher, an artist and a world traveler. The family wanted to celebrate their mother and grandmother in ways that were authentic to her and to them. During the arrangement conference, they talked often of the importance of family, of creativity and her hands-on approach to life. They shared that she often interacted with her young grandchildren through various creative projects. With her grandchildren, she baked, she crafted and she painted. It was important to the family to create memories during the funeral services that the grandchildren would cherish going forward as they also came to understand more about their grandmother.

As the family met with the funeral director, the funeral director listened. In particular, they came back to her creativity and activities she did with her grandchildren. After retiring from her teaching career, the deceased became much more serious about painting, becoming skilled and prolific. Her house was decorated with her paintings and her family had numerous paintings, many with subjects from her travels. The deceased shared the paintings and the travel stories with anyone who showed interest.

Eventually, the funeral director offered two suggestions to the family. The family wanted to do both.

First, before the visitation began, the family painted the casket. The funeral director and staff moved the chapel furniture to the side of the room and covered the furniture with plastic sheets. The floor was covered with plastic sheets, the casket was set up and a table with poster paints was placed in the center of the room. The pine casket became a multi-sided canvas for about one dozen family members to paint scenes and designs with lots of bright colors as they laughed, cried and created together. This engaged and private time was very personal and meaningful to all who participated.

Second, the family set up and displayed their loved one's artwork to share with visitors during the visitation. The family chose about a dozen works of art and displayed the paintings on easels, arranging them to be a gallery walk spread out throughout the visitation chapel. This enabled family and friends to see her artwork and reminisce about her world travels and all her stories. The family felt great comfort having the artwork present during the visitation, visitors especially liked the invitation to walk through the gallery and many found it beneficial to share the travel and creation stories behind each painting. The gallery walk gave the young grandchildren a space to wander and they too heard the stories.

The family greatly valued both activities. Through painting the casket, the younger children and their older relatives participated in the preparation of the casket before the visitation began. Doing this together created a unique bonding experience for each of them. Later, walking through the gallery provided another way to celebrate their loved one and her talents. The paintings prompted travel buddies to share their stories, stories they likely would not have heard otherwise.

**Jennings-Calvey Funeral and Cremation Services, Inc., Clarks Summit, PA**  
*Scranton Area Cremation Care, Clarks Summit, PA*

**Honoring Wayne Hiller: A Tribute by Jennings-Calvey Funeral and Cremation Services, Inc.**

Wayne Hiller, the esteemed Manager of the Electric City Trolley Museum, left an indelible mark on his community and the staff at Jennings-Calvey Funeral and Cremation Services, Inc. Wayne, an avid outdoorsman and golfer, often enjoyed these activities with the Jennings-Calvey staff, who frequently volunteered alongside him for community projects. He was also a cherished guest at the funeral home's table during the annual black-tie Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick event.

Recognizing the deep bond between Wayne and the Jennings-Calvey staff, they sought to honor Wayne and his family with exceptional care and professionalism during his visitation and funeral services. After the visitation and Mass of Christian Burial, Wayne's casket was brought to the funeral home's onsite crematory as per his wishes. Observing the grief of Wayne's coworkers, the Jennings-Calvey team felt compelled to create a special tribute at his workplace, providing a serene environment for his colleagues to mourn and remember.

**Thoughtful Gestures by Jennings-Calvey:**

- **Floral Tribute:** A specially designed floral arrangement depicted Wayne's love for the outdoors, fishing, golf, and hunting. The tribute included live fish in a simulated pond, capturing the essence of Wayne's favorite activities.
- **Personalized Floral Card:** The floral card was carefully prepared, including the names of all his grieving coworkers, ensuring no one was left out.
- **Workplace Tribute:** The arrangement was placed at Wayne's workplace, where his coworkers contributed to the display by crafting an acrylic pond with artificial fish. Despite initial plans to modify the tribute, it was ultimately displayed in its original format, symbolizing Wayne's well-lived life.
- **Office Memorial:** Wayne's office door was typically kept closed. This presented an unwelcoming feeling.

The Closed-door appearance was transformed by the doorway being adorned with a crepe and his memorial card. The lighting was changed to a soft lamp, creating a welcoming atmosphere. The door now remains open, inviting coworkers to sit, chat, and light a candle in remembrance.

These gestures created an atmosphere of acceptance and comfort as friends and coworkers passed by Wayne Hiller's office, remembering his life and contributions.

The staff at Jennings-Calvey demonstrated exceptional care and respect in honoring Wayne Hiller, creating lasting memories for his family and colleagues and ensuring his legacy lives on.

Wayne Hiller, Director of Electric City Trolley & Museum, passes away  
Lackawanna County Commissioner's Statement on Wayne Hiller's Passing:

The Lackawanna County Commissioners announced the passing of Wayne Hiller, Director of the Electric City Trolley & Museum, early on September 12 after a courageous health battle. Wayne began his career with Lackawanna County in 2003 in the Emergency Management Department, later taking over the Trolley Museum in 2008. His dedication and innovative ideas transformed the museum into a top tourist attraction.

Wayne was known for his professionalism, teamwork, and passion for his job. A 1975 graduate of Scranton Central High School and a Penn State University attendee, Wayne was an avid hunter, guide, golfer, and Yankee fan. He found peace in the great outdoors, especially at his hunting cabin.

Wayne is survived by his wife, Ann, and daughters, Joanna and Andrea.

Obituary Wayne Hiller September 12, 2024

Wayne R. Hiller, 66, died Tuesday at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia after a courageous health fight. He was the husband of Nancy (Burke) Hiller. The couple have been married over 39 years.

Born in Scranton, Wayne was the son of the late James and Mabel (Dommes) Hiller. He graduated from Central High School and furthered his education at Penn State University. Wayne began his professional career having worked at Haddon Craftsmen Book Binding Company, Scranton, where he was a supervisor and oversaw special projects. He was employed by Lackawanna County having begun with the Sewer Authority, Emergency Management Department and most recently as the Electric City Trolley Museum and facility director.

In 2008, Wayne took over supervising the Electric City Trolley Museum and turned it into one of the top tourist attractions in Lackawanna County. Despite his health battle, he still went to work every day and put every ounce of his pride into his job.

Year after year he continued to grow the popularity of the trolley by coming up with innovative ideas to promote tourists at the museum and riders of the trolley. He worked and supported the Electric City Trolley Museum Association.

Active in politics, he was a proud Democrat who served as a committee chair on East Mountain for years. He was a member of the Waldorf German American Federation, the Waldorf Golf League, Waldorf Hunting Club, South Side Bachelor's Club, and was a devoted Yankees fan who enjoyed annual trips to Yankee Stadium with his wife, Nancy. He was an avid golfer who enjoyed his weekly golf league and weekend outings with his golf buddies. He also enjoyed hunting, often acting as a guide at the Blooming Grove Hunting & Fishing Club where he led parties on turkey hunts. Wayne's true passion though, were his girls and Nancy. His daughters were the light of his life, his pride and joy and he would drop anything at a moment's notice for them.

A man with integrity, honesty and friendly manner will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved his gentle smile and great sense of humor.

In addition to his wife Nancy, surviving are two daughters, Joanna, companion, Andrew Scotchlas; and Andrea Hiller; both of Philadelphia; a sister, Wendy and husband, Tohme Tohme, of Los Angeles, Calif. He is also survived by loving in-laws, Don and Kate Burke, Alice Burke Krayner, Noreen Burke, Mary and CJ Hughes; and numerous nieces and nephews.

The funeral will be Saturday with Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. from St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 1403 Jackson St., Scranton, to be celebrated by the Rev. Richard Fox, pastor. Interment will be private at a later date in Abington Hills Cemetery, South Abington Twp. The family will receive relatives and friends Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. at Jennings-Calvey Funeral and Cremation Service Inc., 111 Colburn Ave., Clarks Summit, PA 18411.

In honor and remembrance of Wayne, the family asks that you perform an act of kindness and consider registering to be an organ donor. This gift could save a life, as Wayne awaited his to be saved.

## **Krause Funeral Home, Milwaukee, WI**

*Krause Funeral Home – Brown Deer, Milwaukee, WI; Krause Funeral Home, Brookfield, WI; Krause Funeral Home, New Berlin, WI*

On Sunday, May 19, 2024, Jeannie Davies, Certified Celebrant and Interfaith Minister for Krause Funeral Home, stood at the podium in the chapel of Krause Funeral Home - Brookfield and looked out at the full chapel. She was there to lead the Celebration of Life Ceremony for Keith Streitenberger. At the beginning of the service, Jeannie recalled that only 206 days earlier, Keith stood at the very podium that she now stood at and eulogized his friend, Tim Brass. Keith had received his terminal diagnosis just a short time before Tim's services. But on that October night, Keith put his own needs aside and focused on Tim's life and on providing comfort to Tim's family and friends. That is how Keith lived his life. He put his needs aside and gave to others. Keith was fiercely loyal, dependable, and always willing to lend a helping hand.

After Tim's funeral, Keith told his wife that he wanted the same exact thing for his funeral. Licensed funeral director, Brenda Buchanan, made sure that those wishes were followed, from the playlist... Supertramp but NOT Breakfast in America, John Denver, Marshall Tucker Band, and "My Way" by Frank Sinatra...to the bar choices... Miller Genuine Draft, Sam Adams, Jack Daniels, and George Dickel 15...and, of course, the celebrant, Jeannie Davies.

Keith lived a rich life, and this was certainly on display throughout the funeral home that evening. As you entered, the first thing you noticed (besides the music) was a table full of golf balls. There was a sign encouraging you to take a golf ball that stated, "just FORE you FROM KEITH." A little further on was a table packed with fishing lures and a sign asking you to take one: "I don't know where we're going to fish yet, but we'll find a place somewhere..." – John Gillespie PLEASE TAKE A ONE OF KEITH'S LUCKY LURES!" At the registration table, you'd notice a fishing theme spanning from the guest register book to the memorial cards, to the candle, to the display screen. As most Wisconsinites, Keith didn't only fish, he also hunted. Keith's family displayed a set of elk antlers and a pheasant mount in the foyer. At one time in Keith's life, he tried to learn taxidermy, and did some projects for his friends and family.

As Keith's obituary states, "Keith's first true love (before [his wife,] Cindy) was anything to do with flying....He was a private pilot, corporate pilot,....a charter pilot, flight instructor, etc. He had such a steady and calm hand when flying – even in a wicked cross wind. That love of flying led Keith to become an air traffic controller – until President Ronald Reagan fired him in 1980 (PATCO strike)! Keith always noted his hot air balloon flying was the most rewarding." Many people in attendance that night were a part of his "crew." They recalled wonderful memories of this their time together. This part of his life was displayed in the custom airplane and hot air balloon flower pieces near the fishing-themed urn.

There were many photos of Chi-Chi's restaurant themed hot air balloons, and even a stained-glass Chi-Chi's branded hot air balloon on display. These displays represented Keith's restaurant executive chapter of his life. His family noted in his obituary that "through him we all learned a lot about Hardee's Swiss Mushroom Burgers, how to make a perfect Einstein Bagel, and his Chi Chi burritos were a work of art. But the best were the Chi Chi margaritas (LPRs)! Many of us have enjoyed some crazy times in the Keith Margaritaville world."

During the celebrant service, Jeannie told how over 40 years ago Keith's wife, Cindy, bought two cemetery plots in Dacada, Wisconsin, near the church where they were married. Cindy's father was the caretaker of the cemetery, and many family members were buried there. Cindy's mom called her and told her about a special sale happening at the cemetery that was ending at midnight that night. Without discussing it with Keith, Cindy bought Keith and herself plots when they were still in their 20s, an age when most people are thinking about anything other than final resting places. Keith's earthly remains were laid to rest in one of these graves the next day after the mass of Christian Burial and one day, Cindy's earthly remains will be laid to rest next to him.

The celebrant service ended with the Bob Seger song, "The Famous Final Scene." Some of those lyrics are "Think in terms of bridges burned / Think of seasons that must end / See the rivers rise and fall / They will rise and fall again / Everything must have an end / Like an ocean to a shore / Like a river to a stream / Like a river to a stream / It's the famous final scene." Krause Funeral Home was proud to play a role in the famous final scene of Keith Streitenberger's life and memory.

## **Milward Funeral Directors, Lexington, KY**

*Milward Funeral Directors – Southland, Lexington, KY, Milward Funeral Directors – Man 'O War, Lexington, KY*

Peggy Patrick, 92, a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend, passed away on Monday, April 30, 2024 surrounded by her loving family. Peggy was deeply rooted in her community from a young age. A lifelong member of Parkway Baptist, she dedicated herself passionately to church life, especially the children's ministry. Peggy's commitment was evident in her many years of teaching Vacation Bible School and leading the shoebox ministry for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child program providing more than 6,000 gift boxes for children in need during her time overseeing the program at her church.

The Shoebox Ministry is part of the Operation Christmas Child programs organized by Samaritan's Purse. The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world.

According to Samaritan's Purse website, "In the summer of 1993, Samaritan's Purse President Franklin Graham received a call from a man in England asking if he'd be willing to fill shoeboxes with gifts for children in Eastern Europe. Franklin agreed to help. He asked his friend, the late Pastor Ross Rhoads of Calvary Church of Charlotte to see if he could help with the need. A Sunday shortly afterward, Pastor Rhoads demonstrated for his congregation how to fill a shoebox with simple gifts and encouraged them to include a letter to the child as well. Within weeks, the church had 11,000 shoeboxes lining their hallways. Due to their generosity and additional gifts from Canada, Samaritan's Purse sent 28,000 shoebox gifts to children in the Balkans that Christmas. Through these gifts, we communicated to children and their families what the angel said to the shepherds about Jesus' birth: I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. (Luke 2:10, ESV).

Every year since, Samaritan's Purse has collected shoebox gifts filled with toys, school supplies, and hygiene items for children around the world. Since 1993, more than 220 million children in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. The project delivers not only the joy of what, for many kids, is their first gift ever, but also gives them a tangible expression of God's love."

Tens of thousands of volunteers from local churches like Parkway Baptist Church and around the world partner with Samaritan's Purse to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ at festive outreach events where children are surprised with these shoebox gifts.

As quoted in the bible, "Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Mark 10:14, ESV

Milward Funeral Directors assisted the family in planning a funeral to honor Peggy's work at Parkside Baptist Church collecting donations to help fill the more than 6,000 boxes to spread joy and the word of God across the globe. The focal point was a shoebox display surrounded by miniature Christmas trees and a beautiful floral arrangement in holiday colors. In lieu of flowers, Peggy's family requested that donations be made to the shoebox ministry at Parkway Baptist Church.

Peggy's visitation was hosted at the Milward-Man O' War location, 1509 Trent Blvd. beginning on Sunday, June 9, 2024 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm followed by the funeral ceremony on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 1:30 pm. While the personalization of this service were simple to implement, the act of adding these touches to Peggy's funeral went a long way in building awareness about Shoebox Ministries amongst the Milward staff and all of the family and friends who attended the visitation and service.

## Posey Funeral Directors, North Augusta, SC

### Customer Service Excellence: Creating the Funeral Experience

In an ever-changing economic climate and world, where the customer experience and customer service are deteriorating at a rapid pace, the team at Posey Funeral Directors continues to expand, not only their market share, but also their ability to think outside the box offering innovative and unique service experiences for our families. We have provided numerous innovative, highly personalized and unique services for numerous families throughout the course of the past year; however, one stands out above the rest.

The checkered flag waved in the early morning hours of June 8, 2024, for Mr. "K", his final laps on earth were complete. Mr. "K" was a well-known and respected figure in the racing community throughout the Southeastern United States, if he wasn't working, he was racing. Racing himself for 32 years and owning his own race team for over 15 years. Mr. "K" was someone who worked hard but played harder with his family motto being, "Families that race together stay together."

As we met with the family to make final arrangements, it quickly became apparent that a traditional church or chapel service was not what would best serve the "K" family. Doing what outstanding funeral service professionals do, our funeral director listened to the family and suggested some options that might be of interest to the family given the deceased's (Mr. "K") interest and lifestyle. Over the course of the next six days our team creating an incredible experience for the "K" family and their guests. We secured the location of an outdoor lakeside property suitable for Mr. "K"'s love of the lake and the outdoors encouraged the family to provide us with one of Mr. "K"'s race cars and several of his racing memorabilia for us to create a display at the service.

In the early morning hours of Friday, June 14 our team, which included our funeral director, several funeral director assistants among others began preparing the site. With checkered flags marking the entrance to the property guests arrived at the panoramic lakeside site to find tents with additional checkered flags blowing in the wind, Mr. "K"'s #42 racecar sheltering his cremated remains with a large photo of him and a checkered flag draped over the hood of the race car. Verbiage had been included in the obituary to encourage guests to wear race gear or his favorite color blue; our team obliged and followed suit.

Mr. "K"'s days of green flag racing are complete. The team at Posey Funeral Directors celebrated who he truly was and in the eyes of the family and several of those in attendance our team are winners!

**Radney Funeral Home, Alexander City, AL**  
*Langley Funeral Home, Camp Hill, AL*

Thinking Outside the Box and Setting The Stage

David L. Florine, a beloved resident of Lake Martin in Alexander City, Alabama, passed away on February 24, 2024. Known for his talent as a bass player in a popular party band, David was a well-known figure in the community. His family requested a unique memorial display for his visitation at Radney Funeral Home, which captured his essence as a musician and performer.

David's passion for music was evident in every note he played on his well-worn Fender Precision bass guitar. He spent countless nights entertaining crowds with his lively performances and knack for reciting song lyrics flawlessly. His love for the stage and connecting with audiences made him a standout in the local music scene.

The memorial display at Radney Funeral Home transformed the stateroom into a bar room setting reminiscent of where David spent many years playing with his band. The stage was set with David's personal bass guitar and stand, stool, amplifier, microphone and stand, along with photos of David, drinking glasses, party snacks, and his favorite sunglasses. This setup allowed family and friends to remember David in a way that honored his life and talents.

Radney Funeral Home took great care to assist David's family in creating this memorable tribute to their loved one. The community's reaction to the display was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing awe at the attention to detail and thoughtfulness put into honoring David's memory. Word spread quickly through the visitation line about this special tribute that allowed attendees to see beyond the traditional funeral experience.

The memorial display served as an opportunity for those who knew David to celebrate his life and legacy as both a musician and good friend. It provided a space for reflection on cherished memories shared with him while also highlighting the impact he had on those around him through his musical talents.

Through this unique tribute at Radney Funeral Home, attendees were able to connect with their own emotions surrounding loss while also celebrating the joy that David brought into their lives through music. The memorialization of David as more than just an individual who had passed away but as someone who left behind lasting impressions on all who knew him resonated deeply within those who paid their respects.

In conclusion, the memorial display for David L. Florine served as a powerful reminder of how we can honor loved ones by embracing their passions and unique qualities even after they have passed away. By creating a space that reflected David's love for music and performance, Radney Funeral Home allowed family members and friends to come together in remembrance of someone who had touched their lives deeply.