



The Conference Report

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The International Conference of
Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc.
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2004-2005 Officers



Officers swearing in ceremony, during the 100th Annual Convention:
(front to back) Secretary/Treasurer Paul C. Brush, Vice-President John D. Runsvold, and

ICFSEB Officers for 2004-2005 were sworn in during the Awards Banquet held at the 100th Annual Convention in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. John J. Michelotti, will lead The Conference as President for the coming year and will host the 101st Annual Convention in Northwest Arkansas in 2005. Mr. Michelotti was elected to the ICFSEB Board of Directors in 2000, representing District 8. Mr. Michelotti and his wife Alison, reside in Billings, Montana where he is President of Michelotti-Sawyers Mortuary & Crematory. Mr. Michelotti served as a Board Member of the National Selected Morticians (NSM) 1995-2000, now Selected Independent Funeral Homes, and served as President for the 1998-1999 term. Mr. Michelotti served the ICFSEB as

Fargo, North Dakota where he is the owner and President of Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home. Mr. Runsvold is active in community affairs, including Past President of Fargo-Moorehead Sertoma Service Club, Past Master of East Gate Masonic Lodge, Past SE District Governor and Past President of the North Dakota Funeral Directors Association. Mr. Runsvold is currently President of the North Dakota State Board of Funeral Service and served the ICFSEB as Secretary/Treasurer during the 2003-2004 term.

Mr. Paul C. Brush, was installed as Secretary/Treasurer for the 2004-2005 term. Mr. Brush was elected to the ICFSEB Board of Directors in 2002, representing District 2. Mr. Brush and his wife Joanne, reside in Toms River, New Jersey. Mr. Brush retired from state employment in March 2003. During his tenure with the state he served as Executive Director for three state boards and continues to serve as the New Jersey State Board of Mortuary Science liaison to The Conference. Active in community affairs, Mr. Brush was elected to the position of Mayor of Toms River,

New Jersey effective January 1,

2004 and continues to work as a CPA practitioner.

2004-2005 Board of Directors: (not pictured - Chet Robbins)
(back row, left to right) James Augustine, Dolores Kenney, Patrick Obarzanek, Lisa Whitney, Jerry Griffin



From the



It is a distinct honor and, most of all, a privilege to serve as the President of ICFSEB. The first occasion that I had a direct involvement with the **National Board** was as a student and candidate to take the examination. I knew that I had to pass the NBE to enter the funeral profession. I knew that I could pass the exam, but as anyone else, when it came time to take it the nerves kicked in. Once I took the exam and passed, everything was great and I never gave another thought to it. As a

student, I thought that the National Board was just an exam. It wasn't until my first board meeting that I learned to what extent The Conference, the American Board of Funeral Service Education and the individual State Boards work in concert to educate, test, and license individuals. I have a greater appreciation for the Conference now than I did as a student and as a funeral service practitioner.

My desire to serve as a funeral director started at an early age as I am a second generation funeral director from Billings, Montana. My father started our firm in 1955, the year that I was born. Being a member of a strong generation, my father took his vocation as a funeral director very seriously, every moment of his life. He had a strong work ethic with an uncompromising set of values, morals and ethics. He taught me that the best way to travel on the road of life was by being honest and always taking the **high road**. For me to spend time with my Dad it meant that I would have to seek that relationship within the confines of the mortuary. By the time I was in second grade, I was ushering funerals and making road trips with my Dad to conduct funerals in the small surrounding communities of Billings. Besides teaching me strong ethical values he also taught me the value of service and to be proud that we have the privilege and honor to serve our community. I was raised with the belief and still believe to this day that we are in the **Funeral Profession**, not the funeral industry. The two most important things I can do for the families that call on me is to provide quality service and serve all faiths with dignity.

Today, a funeral director is more concerned about the different ways to assist families with the memorialization of their loved ones. Today's funeral director isn't the same as the funeral director of the past. Our daily tasks are quite different than those of the past.

This leads me to the Conference's primary objective this year. The board of directors has decided to conduct a Task Analysis Study. The last Task Analysis, that was done in 1997, was an update to the one done in 1995 and this year we endeavor to do a comprehensive analysis.

To start this process, I have selected a strong committee made up of very committed individuals from the ICFSEB, ABFSE, and Funeral Service Practitioners. Their diligent and thorough approach to this study will help our Conference membership evaluate today's funeral service curriculum. The members of the Task Analysis Committee are John Runsvold, J. Terry Woodard, Jerry Griffin, Harvey Leavitt, Joe Larsen, Ed O'Sullivan, Patsy Daniels, Tim Krause, Bill Counce, Jacquelyn Taylor, and Stephanie Kann. I would like to thank all of these dedicated individuals for their time and effort that they have committed to this endeavor.

From the Executive

With a little over six months of computer based testing behind us, it is exciting to say that the transition from paper/pencil to CBT has been a positive experience for the funeral service profession. As of June 2004, the pass rate for the Arts section of the exam is 83% and 76% for the Science section for first time examinees. I would like to thank the mortuary science programs for their support and patience with our office as we worked to make the transition as seamless as possible for everyone involved. The Conference first explored CBT as a possibility for the National Board Examination in the mid 1990's with the hopes that it would protect the integrity of the exam content and allow for more candidate friendly processes. Due to the forethought and dedication of several people, the dream has become a reality and funeral service is better for it. As we look to the future, the task analysis will become a focal point for The

100th Annual Convention Held In St.



Steve Spann, President of John A. Gupton College with his wife Meryl and their daughter,

The 100th Annual Convention of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc. was held in St. Louis, Missouri April 24-25, 2004 at the St. Louis Downtown Marriott Hotel. The convention provided our membership with the opportunity to reflect over the last 100 years of service to the Funeral Service profession and the opportunity to look into shaping The Conference's role in the future of funeral service. The program of events included informative breakout sessions, district meetings and the annual awards banquet where the Past Presidents of The Conference were recognized for their contributions.

Following a luncheon hosted by The Conference, Vice-President John J. Michelotti greeted

delegates from state board offices, regulatory agencies, and educational institutions from across the nation. Mr. Jerry Griffin of the Missouri State Board of Embalmers & Funeral Directors and Mr. Earnest Adams of National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association were on hand to welcome everyone to beautiful St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Mark Musgrove, President of the NFDA presented Vice-President Michelotti with a resolution "honoring the 100th anniversary of The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc. wishing to honor, compliment, and praise the Board and staff of The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards for their outstanding commitment and service to the funeral

service community." Reverend Gary Anderson of the Arkansas State Board of Embalmers & Funeral Directors offered the prayer of remembrance. Mrs. Pam Brinegar, Executive Director of the Council on Licensure Enforcement & Regulation and Mr. Edward "Chip" Walsh of Bradford & Walsh Attorneys at Law delivered educational presentations to the general session. Following the end of general session, district meetings convened where elections were held for Districts 3, 5, 7, and 9.

Saturday evening, members attended the Vice-President's Reception hosted by John J. Michelotti in honor of the 2003-2004 committee members and officers, followed by the President's Banquet in honor of President John J. Kazlauskas. During the Presidential Banquet, Mrs. Dolores K. Kenney of the Mississippi State Board of Funeral Service was sworn in as the District 3 Governor - 2nd Term, Mr. Jerry Griffin of the Missouri State Board of Embalmers & Funeral Directors was sworn in as the District 5

Governor - 1st Term, Mr. Chet Robbins of the Texas Funeral Service Commission was sworn in as interim District 7 Governor to fulfill the remainder of Mr. Louis Muhleisen's term, and Ms. Lisa M. Whitney of the California Cemetery and Funeral Bureau was sworn in as District 9 Governor - 1st Term. The Distinguished Service Award was presented to Past President David J. Benke for his invaluable contributions to The Conference. President John J. Kazlauskas addressed the members and was presented with gifts of appreciation on behalf of The Conference for his service over the past year. The



(pictured left to right) Past President, David Benke, Vice-President John Runsvold, and President John J. Michelotti during the 100th

Confere-
ence



Students Honored for Academic

During the 2003 calendar year two thousand and fifty-five candidates sat for the National Board Examination. Of these candidates, two were honored for Distinguished Academic Achievement in recognition of their high scores on the National Board Examination. The candidates

received commemorative plaques for having obtained the top two scores on the NBE for 2003 at the annual banquet, held on April 24, 2004 at the St.

Louis Downtown Marriott during the 100th

Annual Convention.



Dr. Chris Layton of Commonwealth Institute presents Jane Hemberger with her 2004 Academic

Mrs. Jane Hemberger of Kingwood, Texas is a 2003 graduate of Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service in Houston, Texas. Graduating with Honors & Distinction, Mrs. Hemberger was also the 2003 recipient of the Chairman's Award, the highest honor bestowed on a Commonwealth graduate.



Patty Hutcheson of Gupton Jones College presents David Mendoza with his 2004

Mr. David Mendoza of Wellington, New Zealand is a 2003 graduate of Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service in Decatur, Georgia and was Valedictorian of the February 2003 graduating class.



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