



eNews

A monthly news update for the Wilbert® Licensee Network

April 2024

upcoming events

April 10-13, 2024

ICCFA
Tampa, FL

April 14-17, 2024

WMA Midterm Meeting
Greenville, SC

August 3-7, 2024

NFDMA
National Harbor, MD

September 11-13, 2024

CANA Annual Convention
Chicago, IL

September 15-18, 2024

WMA Annual Meeting
Amelia Island, FL

October 20-24, 2024

NFDA
New Orleans, LA

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Any Personnel Changes for the Directory or eNews Subscription?

Kindly report any changes in your Licensee information to Susan Barry at sbarry@wilbert.com or call Susan at 708-865-1600 at your first opportunity when changes occur. Thank you!



We'd Like to Hear from YOU!

What have you found that works in your experience? Anything poignant or tastefully funny that you would like to share? Old photos of Wilbert products or employees from days gone by that would be interesting? Please email your stories to Ken Moore at kmoore@wilbert.com. If you're not comfortable writing, don't worry – he will be happy to help.



We encourage you to circulate this issue of eNews to others in your organization.

Rhode Island Columbarium Project

The New England Team completed the final phase of the columbaria project for the Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island. The stunning Starburst-shaped unit, as pictured, houses 312 niches and is in the prestigious St. Colomba Cemetery in Middletown, RI. This project is a testament to the team's expertise and commitment to delivering exceptional client results. Hats off to The New England Team. Outstanding!



New Venetian® Liners are Shipping

In April 2022, we introduced the idea of changing our Venetian Marbelon™ liners by replacing the film overlay with ink printed directly onto the substrate material. We also stated we would add texture to the inside of the base and cover liners, making them easier to wipe clean. We recommend using liner cleaner or mineral spirits to clean the printed liners; do not use CLR.

We are happy to announce we have begun shipping the new printed and textured white & silver Venetian liners from both the Broadview and Charlotte warehouses. You can use the new liners with your existing supply of laminated Venetian liners. Soon, we will ship the new solid white textured Venetian base and cover liners.

For those Licensees using the cream & gold Venetian base and cover, or the solid cream base and cover, we are exhausting our current supply and anticipate having the new printed and textured liners in approximately six months. As you begin receiving the new liners, please use them with your existing stock of similar colored Venetian bases or covers.

Mini-Meetings Are Back!

Royden and Dale will be taking the show on the road in the next few months, revitalizing the mini-meetings that were a popular gathering of local licensees and salespeople to share information on what was going on in their markets. They are looking for people who might be interested in offering their training rooms for a day or two so they can host these meetings. It will be a gathering to learn about new offerings, have a dialogue about what you may be needing from WFSI, and, most importantly, the opportunity to network with your neighboring licensees. If you are interested in hosting one of these events, please contact Royden (rwood@wilbert.com) or Dale (dcameron@wilbert.com). Watch this corner for more information!

Wilbert® is on Facebook!

Don't miss out on the latest products and services the Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. licensee network offers. Follow us on our Facebook page to stay updated and in the know. You won't regret it! And while you're at it, click the "Like" button to help spread the word at: <https://www.facebook.com/wilbertfuneralservice>

Randolph County, IN Hit by Strongest Tornado in 38 Years

On Thursday, March 14, 2024, two storm fronts converged and moved through Indiana, resulting in an EF3 tornado that was the strongest to hit Randolph County in 38 years. Specifically, Selma, IN, and Winchester, IN, were the worst hit by this tornado. This storm left in its wake damaged homes and businesses and thousands of residents without any power. This tornado is the strongest tornado by wind speed to hit the U.S. in 2024.

Six Astral employee partners suffered damage to their homes, but thankfully, no one was seriously injured.

Regional Sales Manager Randy Emmert from Pierce, Astral Maintenance Superintendent Tim Naylor, and other partners from Astral Casket Co. sprang into action. They aided those affected by cutting-up downed or damaged trees, provided yard cleanup, and helped with community service through the Indiana/Illinois Baptist Disaster Team.

Randy and Tim went above and beyond by helping one of Tim's church members clean out and dispose of their food from a refrigerator that had lost power for several days.

Samaritan Purse is still present to help Selma and Winchester while the Indiana disaster team has headed home.

We want to mention the Astral partners by name to recognize their tireless efforts in the cleanup process.

Tim Naylor, Tony Lutz, Jeff Edwards, Mike Cox, Eric Grubs, Dave Lawson, and Randy Emmert.



Mausoleum Trays

Don't forget those mausoleum trays for your cemetery customers. This is great item to have on hand.

Standard Mausoleum Tray

P255R

\$39.20



Quality Control School Returns This October!

Royden Wood and the team are setting the stage for the return of QC School this year in Atlanta, Georgia, from October 6-9. This year's school will cover essential points concerning manufacturing, concrete, and aggregate, batching onsite or ready mix, chemical additives, seal application, vibrating, stippling, Unidex, and butyl tape, to name a few. Throw in how to properly maintain your forms, proper lowering device maintenance, good housekeeping practices, and more to round out the school. Hotel arrangements have been made with the Embassy Suites by Hilton Atlanta Galleria Hotel, 2815 Akers Mill Road SE Atlanta, GA 30339 (770.984.9300). The nightly rooming rate is \$169.00, including a full breakfast buffet and daily nightly reception. It is exciting for the team to bring back QC School in 2024 because there is so much to share and learn. Watch this corner for exciting news about the school and registration information!

Book your room now:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=ATLGLES&groupCode=CES91G&arrivaldate=2024-10-04&departuredate=2024-10-09&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

Wilbert® Offers Exceptional Value with the Highest Quality Handcrafted Wood Urns

Check out the Davis-Whitehall and Mabrey urns line in the Cremation Choices® Catalog. Give families what they deserve with beautiful three-dimensional wood inlays, sculpted lasered carved urns, and the new colored textured printing designs.

The 2024 NPCA Precast Show Recap by Royden Wood

For those of you who are not familiar, the National Precast Concrete Association (NPCA) is an international organization that provides training and resources to precasters. Their mission statement states “NPCA provides industry leadership by promoting quality precast concrete products across all markets, addressing industry challenges and developing opportunities for our members’ success.”

Many of us were exposed to the NPCA when VA Cemeteries started to require NPCA certification to fulfill grave liner contracts. Although plant certification is part of what the NPCA does, it’s by far not the only thing they do, and even if you aren’t interested in plant certification you should take a look at what NPCA offers.

Master Precaster

The NPCA Master Precaster program consists of six “Production & Quality School (PQS) courses, and provides an excellent education on precast concrete. It consists of in-person sessions at The Precast Show, as well as webinars. Many of you have been asking about Type 1L cement, and the Master Precaster program is where I learned about it. Not just that it exists, but what it is, and how it can affect your mix designs. Some of the topics covered in the Master Precaster program include batching and mixing, reinforcement, quality control, safety (students must earn an OSHA 10-hour card and OSHA 30-hour Construction Safety card to graduate), Lean Manufacturing, concrete repair and patching, lifting, and leadership. For more information, visit Master Precaster | NPCA. Like many of you, I’ve been making burial vaults since I was a kid, and I was surprised by how much I’ve learned at these courses.

Webinars

Vault plants are busy, and maybe it’s difficult to send an employee for training in February. NPCA has a startling number of webinars available. Some are free, while others cost \$89 each. However, for \$275, you gain access to all of the NPCA webinars, minus the online PQS courses – nearly 200 hours of education. Is it worth \$275 to make better concrete, improve your quality control, develop a culture of safety, learn new ways to market your precast products, add new product lines with minimal disruption, and do a better job of finishing concrete? There are three Lean webinars that will no doubt save enough overtime in a year to more than cover the cost of the Webinars. There are six Mix Design-specific courses, 11 Sales and Marketing courses, you get the idea – this is a tremendous value, and it doesn’t require you to be a NPCA certified plant to participate.

The Precast Show

This year’s precast show was in Denver, Colorado, and had 120,000 square feet of trade show floor dedicated to vendors in many different categories. While I was there, I sought out exhibitors who have solutions for our industry, but also found opportunities in other product lines. Here are a couple of vendors of note:

Beton Block - <https://betonblockusa.com/>

Beton Block makes high-quality molds that have a fresh take on bin blocks. First, when compared to your typical bin block mold, you can tell Beton Block molds are designed to make a great precast product, rather than a convenient way to sell waste concrete. You can purchase accessories for their forms enabling you to cast stairs directly into the block. They also have accessories to make bull nose blocks, and even a concrete bench.



Continued from the previous page.

EZG Manufacturing - <https://ezgmfg.com/>

Do you have a product with unique concrete placing needs? If they don't already have a solution that works for you, they can custom build it. My first exposure to EZG was using their Uphill Grout Hog to produce a small concrete product. In this application, the Uphill Grout Hog, which is a hopper with an auger that rises at an angle from the bottom of the hopper, was controlled by a scale, and was accurately dosing 53 pounds of concrete into a small plastic mold. Because the auger was tilted up, you could run SCC concrete without fear of the concrete leaking the way it might when a horizontal auger starts to wear. It was easy to clean and maintain as well. If you're looking to get into smaller block products and want a way to accurately dose concrete, in a package that is easy to move with a forklift (if you don't want to connect it to a scale, a forklift with auxiliary hydraulics can take the concrete where you need it and discharge it into the form).



RoMix Back-Set: Back Set by RoMix Chemical & Brush 800-331-2243

Let's face it, during the pandemic our forms saw an abnormal amount of use, and unfortunately a lot of forms have some excess concrete building up. Back-Set by RoMix dissolves the cement, leaving wet mud that can be brushed and rinsed off of the form. Back-Set is available via Inside Sales, and samples are available.

Hawiflex Polyurethane Mixing Paddles - Polyurethane mixing tools against wear, noise and corrosion (habermann-materials.com)

It can be difficult to find parts for older mixers, and that includes paddles. Habermann Materials produces polyurethane paddles for mixers, and they have the ability to custom manufacture paddles according to your needs. They also carry paddles for newer mixers, and claim benefits of weight savings, as well as patented guide ribs that move concrete away from wear surfaces. They also carry 'arm guards' that protect your paddle arms. Need to re-line your bins? They have polyurethane liners as well, including rounded corners to help material flow better.

Conclusion

NPCA has a lot to offer every Licensee. For a small investment, the education provided can improve your business, and I would absolutely recommend every Licensee who is not currently involved in NPCA to at least take a look at their webinars. And if you are planning on visiting The Precast Show next year in Indianapolis, Indiana from February 5-7, let's get together.

WilbertEDU® Upcoming Sessions



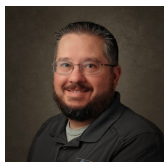
April 4 | Focus on the OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard with Paul Conrad

Discussion will focus on five main diseases, job classifications, exposure mitigation, pre-exposure vaccines, and post-exposure procedures, with clear communication, mandatory training, and meticulous record-keeping as key components.



April 18 | A Business Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Your Workplace with Darrell Kendall

This webinar discusses unconscious bias in the workplace and how to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for all employees.



May 2 | Teamwork Through Crisis with Charlie Hunter

This webinar discusses mass fatality planning and responding, examining past events, including natural disasters and pandemics, with an emphasis on the importance of self-care for the funeral professional.



May 16 | The Information Race: Who's Fastest? Us or the Consumer? with Doug Gober

This webinar will discuss survey of consumer attitudes and how those results are shaping the future of funeral service.

To register for upcoming webinars, visit www.wilbert.com/wilbertedu

WilbertEDU March Recap

On March 7th, Danielle Burmeister, VP of Marketing at Homesteaders, presented "How to Compete on Service in a Price Sensitive Market." Danielle's presentation discussed how consumers make decisions, the pitfalls of price wars, the psychology of price, how to talk about price with families, and how to lead with service. She provided tips on how families think about pricing and how funeral homes can show their value, explaining that 75% of families are not choosing cremation due to cost. She provided some perspective on interacting with families, being a better listener, using different wording with families, adding a personal touch to arrangements, and the different types of rational consumers use when making pricing decisions.

On March 21st, Conor Dawley, Senior Grief & Clinical Services Specialist with Highmark Caring Place (Erie, PA), presented "Tender Hearts: Nurturing Children and Families Through Grief." Conor's presentation focused on creating a safe place for grieving, discussing how our cultures and identities affect how we talk about grief, how we support grieving, how we allow ourselves to grieve, and what we need to move through grief. He shared facts about how children grieve, the behaviors they may exhibit at the funeral home, how grief is a lifelong journey for those kids, and how funeral homes can support children by creating a designated space in their funeral home. Conor discussed the need for funeral professionals to recognize and respect diverse cultural and religious perspectives and adapt funeral practices to accommodate various beliefs. After his presentation, Conor provided practical grief resources for funeral professionals.

Commemorating First Responder Deputy Sheriff Greg McCowan



Maryville, TN – Deputy Sheriff McCowan was shot and killed while initiating a traffic stop. He passed away on Thursday, February 8, 2024. He was 43 years old.

Around 9:00 p.m., Deputy McCowan and his partner pulled over a vehicle for erratic driving. The driver would not cooperate and shot Deputy McCowan and the other deputy in the leg. She returned fire, but the subject fled on foot.

Deputy McCowan was taken to Blount Memorial Hospital, where he succumbed to his wounds. The other deputy was treated at the hospital and released.

The subject, who is a convicted felon, was apprehended five days later. The felon's brother and girlfriend were arrested and charged with aiding the defendant after the commission of the homicide.

Deputy McCowan served with the Blount County Sheriff's Office for four years. He is survived by two children, a granddaughter, parents, and fiancée.

Wilbert Burial Vaults, Inc., Knoxville, TN, was honored to provide the family with a Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault, a Treasured Tribute image, and a graveside service.



Commemorating First Responder Deputy Sheriff Rondald Bates



Houston, TX– Deputy Sheriff Rondald Bates was killed in a vehicle crash while en route to the Harris County jail on Saturday, February 10, 2024. He was 62 years old.

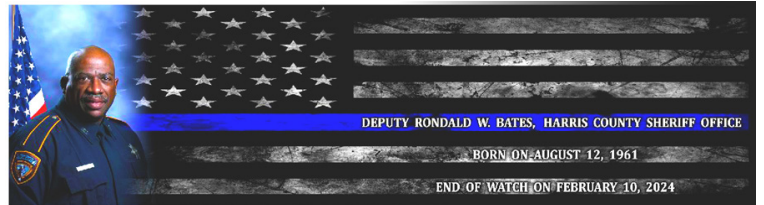
After finishing an overtime assignment, Deputy Bates was traveling on Travis Street when he lost control of his vehicle and struck a tree near Richmond Avenue in Houston. He was transported to the Ben Taub Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

Deputy Bates had served with the Harris County Sheriff's Office for 31 years. He is survived by his wife and two children.



Services were entrusted to the care of Klein Funeral Home, Tomball, TX.

Wilbert Vaults of Houston, Houston, TX. was honored to provide the family with a Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault with a Treasured Tribute image and a graveside service.



Commemorating First Responder Sergeant Thomas A. Sanfratello



Batavia, NY– Sergeant Thomas Sanfratello died after being attacked after responding to a dispute between two patrons at a casino bar. He passed away on Sunday, March 10, 2024. He was 54 years old.

One of the patrons was arrested and was being escorted from the establishment by Sergeant Sanfratello and security when the second patron attacked him. A violent struggle ensued, during which Sergeant Sanfratello attempted to use his taser on the subject. Sergeant Sanfratello became unresponsive and died despite security personnel and bystanders administering CPR.

One subject was charged with first-degree aggravated manslaughter, aggravated assault upon a police officer, and second-degree burglary. The second subject was charged with second-degree burglary and attempted second-degree assault.

Sergeant Sanfratello had served with the Genesee County Sheriff's Office for 32 years and was twice recognized as Officer of the Year. He is survived by his son, two daughters, mother, two sisters, nieces, and nephews.

Services were entrusted to the care of Gilmartin Funeral Home & Cremation, Batavia, NY.

Wilbert Funeral Services, Fairport, NY, was honored to provide the family with a Stainless Steel Triune® burial vault with a Treasured Tribute image and a graveside service.

