



# eNews

A monthly news update for the Wilbert® Licensee Network

December 2024

## upcoming events

**February 3-6, 2025**  
*Wilbert National Sales Meeting*  
Miami Beach, Florida

**February 4-6, 2025**  
*ICCFA Dead Talks*  
Las Vegas, Nevada

**February 26-28, 2025**  
*CANA Symposium*  
Las Vegas, Nevada

## what's news

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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](mailto: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 Susan Barry at [sbarry@wilbert.com](mailto:sbarry@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.

## NFDA 2024 Recap

This year's NFDA convention at the New Orleans Convention Center was a huge success for us, with our booth buzzing with excitement and engagement. The "Unlock Our Vaults" promotion offered attendees a fun, hands-on experience across all our divisions. Using iPads, cell phones and QR codes, participants entered their contact information in exchange for a unique four-digit code, unlocking prizes and sparking conversations as they explored each area. This interactive setup not only made our booth a fun stop but also generated high-quality leads with valuable insights, setting us up for effective post-event outreach.

Please click the following link to view a quick video recap of our booth presentation: [2024 NFDA Booth Video Recap](#)

### Attendance Numbers Provided by NFDA

The total attendance for the 2024 NFDA Convention in New Orleans was 5,519 attendees—a notable 5.35% increase over last year (3,504 attendees and 2,015 exhibitor representatives). The Expo Hall featured 395 exhibiting companies (same as 2023), filling more than 87,500 square feet of exhibit space (a 6.2% space decrease from last year).

### Memorial Monuments' Exceptional Detail

At the Wilbert Group's booth, Memorial Monuments continued to impress attendees with their dedication to detail and artistry, unveiling three distinct monuments. Each monument demonstrated the company's commitment to honoring loved ones through exceptional craftsmanship and personalization, reflecting an enduring tribute to individuals' lives.

### Astral Caskets

At the NFDA convention, Astral Caskets impressed attendees with a thoughtfully curated display of nine premium caskets, showcasing both classic and modern designs. The stainless-steel Golden Fawn garnered significant attention, while the newly introduced Treemont in Ruby Red was warmly received, sparking interest among customers and licensees alike. Visitors eagerly inquired about the upcoming Treemont colors—Emerald Green, Ruby Red, and Purple—demonstrating strong anticipation for our expanding range. Astral's display underscored our dedication to craftsmanship and quality, appealing to diverse preferences and reaffirming our commitment to excellence in funeral services.



*Memorial Monuments booth at NFDA.*



*Astral Industries booth at NFDA.*

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### Explore Pierce Chemicals' Product Line

At the convention, Pierce Chemicals showcased a comprehensive lineup of products, including embalming fluids, cosmetics, and essential preservation tools, solidifying its reputation as a leading name in funeral care. The team highlighted their commitment to innovation, sharing the latest advancements and expert insights with attendees. A key attraction was the return of their classic Formula 496, which, alongside the prominently displayed Duotronic, captured considerable interest.



The Pierce booth saw a high number of attendees, leading to a record-breaking number of exceptional show sales and strong social media engagement. This increased visibility and engagement underscored Pierce's continued impact and relevance within the industry.

### Wilbert's Innovative Offerings

Wilbert showcased its latest innovations in burial vaults, cremation urns, and related products. A major attraction was the WAVE burial vault video (Wilbert Animated Vault Education), which illustrated the advantages of a lined Wilbert burial vault versus an unlined outer container. This visual presentation provided funeral directors with an effective tool to help families make informed burial decisions. Additionally, Wilbert featured a wide range of cremation urns to suit diverse styles and preferences. Miniature vault displays offered a close-up look at Wilbert's commitment to quality in every detail.



### CereneAir™

We were thrilled to welcome CereneAir to our booth this year, adding an exciting new dimension to our offerings. Known for their cutting-edge air purification systems, CereneAir brought innovative solutions tailored to the funeral care industry, enhancing our booth's appeal and providing valuable resources for attendees. Their presence sparked considerable interest, drawing attendees eager to learn more about maintaining clean, safe environments. CereneAir's partnership underscored our commitment to comprehensive care solutions, making a notable impact on our booth experience.

We're excited to see everyone next year at NFDA in Chicago!



## Meet our talented team at Wilbert in Broadview, IL, where craftsmanship and creativity come together.

In a sense, the urn is a symbol of beauty. Our earthly remains will be concealed and preserved, represented by the timeless elegance of the urn's design.

Material Selection: Urns can be made from an array of materials, each offering unique aesthetic and functional qualities. Common materials include Ceramic, Metal, Wood, Glass, Stone, Cloisonné, cultured marble, synthetic, and eco-biodegradable.

### Our Team of Dedicated Wilbert Engravers

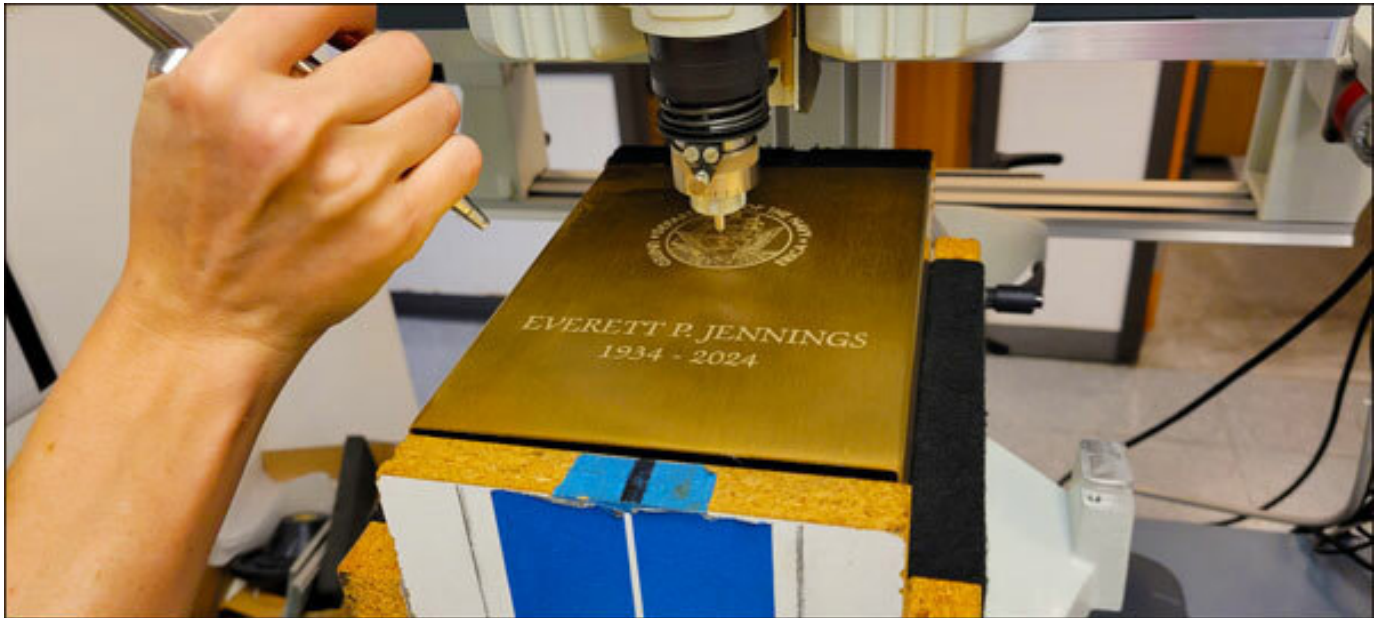


*From left to right:* Vance Aune, our Master Engraver and a valued partner for 12 years stands confidently on the left. With a robust background in the print industry, he possesses exceptional skills in layout and typography. Vance's keen eye for detail ensures that every project meets the highest standards of quality.

On the right, we have Elvis Luna, another skilled Engraver, proudly holding one of our exquisite urns. With 11 years at Wilbert, Elvis thrives in teamwork, bringing a collaborative spirit to every design challenge. His expertise in urn design and software applications elevates our offerings.

Seated in front of the computer is Carrie Woldman, our innovative Engraver and the newest member of the team. With a strong command of computer applications and design software, Carrie combines creativity with technical skills. Her extensive experience makes her an invaluable asset to our team, ensuring that client needs are always met with excellence.

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Before the engraving process begins, our team implements a detailed quality control procedure that ensures each urn stands out in beauty, durability, and functionality. We meticulously inspect each urn for imperfections, polishing and cleaning it to perfection in preparation for engraving.

Our engraving team works closely together, combining artistic flair with precision. They take immense pride in their craft, ensuring every engraving is flawless and accurate spelling of the family member's name and birth date. If there are any uncertainties, they promptly consult with our sales department, guaranteeing that families receive exactly what they envisioned for their loved ones. Should the team believe a different font or color would enhance the tribute, they thoughtfully share their expert recommendations, ensuring a truly personalized touch.

**Vance engraved a wood urn and inspected the results on one of our laser engravers.**

The final touch is the culmination of this process is the careful packaging of each urn, protecting it for transport.

Crafting an urn is not merely a task; it's a heartfelt journey that requires meticulous attention to detail. Each urn becomes a unique work of art, thoughtfully designed with profound respect for its purpose. Simple or elaborate, every urn narrates a story, honoring and celebrating the memory of a loved one with dignity and grace.



## Cimarron, Kansas Columbarium Niche Project

Bill Wolgamott, a skilled craftsman from the Parsons, Kansas Memorial Monuments' plant, recently completed the installation of an elegant STIN gray columbarium, accentuated by striking black shutters and designed to accommodate 48 niches. This impressive structure is a key feature of the newly constructed committal pavilion in Cimarron, Kansas.

Representing the first phase of a thoughtfully planned garden development, this project aims to provide a serene and beautiful resting place for loved ones. Local city officials have expressed their satisfaction with the overall appearance, noting the meticulous attention to detail in the construction, which includes durable double shutters and luxurious polished granite niches. The high-quality materials and craftsmanship reflect a commitment to excellence, ensuring this garden will be a dignified and peaceful haven for the community.



## The Gift of Giving from Broadview, IL Partners

The dedicated employees at Wilbert Funeral Services in Broadview, IL, proudly participate in the Toys for Tots initiative this holiday season. Cindy Venckus, our Accounting Analyst in the Broadview office, leads this initiative each year alongside her dear friend Geno, a member of the American Warriors organization. Together, we collect new, unwrapped toys to donate to children who might not otherwise receive gifts.

By working together, we can spread joy and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need, ensuring every child experiences the magic of the holidays!



## Simplicity Urn Vault Lowering Device

- Lowering table
- Blue or green drape
- Urn vault platform
- Lowering straps
- **\$2,046.30**



## Sneak Preview of New Urns!

Take a look at the new urns for the upcoming Cremation Choices Catalog Vol 11.

Included are beautiful rich hardwood urns with 3 Dimensional inlays along with various metal urns with unique new designs.

*Marketing materials to introduce these new products to your customers will be available soon.*



**See the New Wood Dimensional™ Urns**

Soaring Eagle  
P3061

Butterfly  
P3038

P3062

**New Celtic Cross Urns & Mementos**

Celtic Cross Ivory  
P2045

Celtic Cross Green  
P2046

P9105      P9106

**New Metal Urns & Mementos**

Cardinal  
P2043

American Flag  
P2044

Reeds Beach  
P2047

Our Lady of Guadalupe  
P2048

P9098      P9107

## Important: Reminder of Physical Inventory and Holiday Dates

With the holidays and year-end physical inventory fast approaching, we want you to be aware of the following schedule so that you can plan your orders and deliveries accordingly. Please be sure to have your liner load scheduled with the following dates in mind so you have the material necessary to meet your production needs.

Location	Inventory Monday, 12/16 thru Thursday, 12/19	Christmas Wednesday, December 25, 2024	New Year's Day Wednesday, January 1, 2025
Broadview	Closed	Closed	Closed

For Christmas and New Year's weeks, we strongly suggest that you plan to have deliveries made by the previous Monday rather than the day before the Holiday to ensure receipt of products.

If you have any questions related to the delivery schedule as outlined above, please contact Eileen Murray, Inside Sales Manager, or Terry Whitlock, SVP Licensee Products & Services.

## Jacob's Mom

Dear Wilbert,

I received your heartfelt letter today, and I wanted to express my gratitude for the beautiful vault dedicated to my son, Euclid Ohio Officer Jacob Derbin. There's a touching moment captured in a photograph of me kissing my hand and then gently resting it on my son's picture. I share this image as it embodies the bond we shared.

Thank you once again for your kindness during this excruciating time.

With the pieces of my shattered heart,

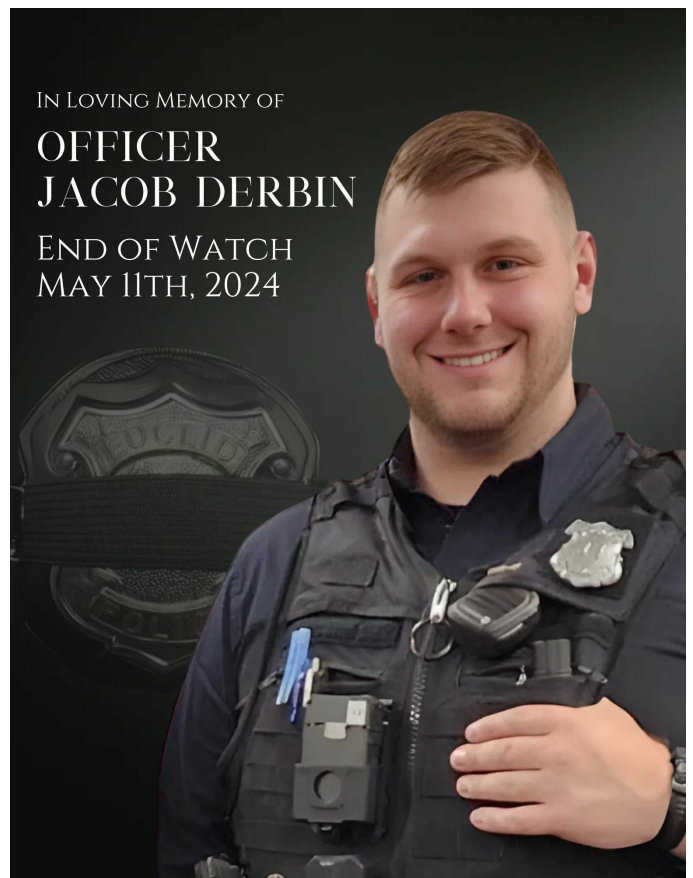
Dawn Derbin

Dawn's son, Police Officer Jacob Derbin, was tragically shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call. At just 23 years old, he lost his life. He was ambushed as he arrived at the scene by a convicted felon who was evading his community supervision obligations. Officer Derbin proudly served in the United States Army National Guard before joining the Euclid Police Department, where he dedicated 10 months of his life. He is mourned by his loving mother, father, three brothers, and a sister.



Following the memorial services for our brave fallen heroes, the Wilbert office in Broadview, IL takes the thoughtful step of sending condolence letters to the families and department heads. The image of Jacob's grieving mother that we received is profoundly moving. Amid the immense pain and loss her family is enduring, she still found the strength to express her gratitude for our support during her darkest hours.

Ohio Vault Works, Inc. in Valley View, OH, deserves a shout-out and a sincere thank you. They provided an SST Triune® burial vault with a Treasured Tribute and a graveside service. Wilbert Funeral Services and Ohio Vault Works were privileged to assist Jacob's Mom.





## CLD Transporter with Pedestal

Begin the year being safe; the CLD Transporter makes it easier transporting the CLD to the graveside. Reduce back injuries and workworkers' compensation claims.

**\$995**

**Item # L7929KIT**

- Includes two aluminum CLD pedestals stands, two aluminum pedestals with locking casters and two custom cut WilbertWay flanges.
- Pedestal height- 16"
- Pedestal stand weight- 4lbs./ea.
- Pedestal with casters weight- 12lbs. / ea.
- Please note, attach the two custom-cut WilbertWay flanges to the CLD heads on the powerhead end of the device, and leave the two regular round WilbertWay flanges on the tail end.
- Call Inside Sales today to place your order!!!



## CereneAir™ Launching Q1 2025

Anticipation is growing for the launch of CereneAir, the game-changing air purification solution, following its exciting mention during the November 14th WilbertEDU webinar. Mark Bates shared the buzz-worthy news with attendees, highlighting the product's impressive performance during extensive testing across Wilbert's markets.

The results? Outstanding feedback! Users rave about CereneAir's ability to:

- Eliminate unpleasant odors
- Address mold issues
- Provide cleaner, healthier air, even in high-demand prep rooms during embalming.

Not only does CereneAir prioritize the health and safety of staff, but it also enhances the overall environment for visitors—a true game-changer for funeral homes striving to deliver excellence.

Mark your calendars: CereneAir is set to launch in the first quarter of 2025!

Want to stay ahead of the curve? Visit [CereneAir's product page](#) to:

- Learn more about this innovative solution
- Sign up for updates
- Download the product information sheet to share with your network

Get ready to transform the air in your funeral home with CereneAir—a breath of fresh air is on the way!



## Wilbert Sales & Marketing Collaboration

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In August, Matt Ingersoll, Chief Commercial Officer of The Wilbert Group, introduced monthly sales and marketing collaboration meetings for Licensees. Each month, Matt leads online sessions with presenters from The Wilbert Group as well as licensee contributors including Beth Cooper, Brett Henery, Bruce Tart and others.

Highlights of the November 21st Meeting

- Safety Update – Stone Junod with electrical safety tips
- Royden Wood shared information on back ordered liners and Wilbert's focus on marketing initiatives including wall graphics, BV 101, and bringing licensees together to share ideas
- Memorial Monuments update on total approved orders by Licensee
- Astral update including a Coffee & Caskets segment with Mike Kozak and Todd Dean

**The next meeting is scheduled for December 19th at 9AM Central.**

If you're not currently receiving invitations to these meetings, visit [Wilbert.com > Licensees > Marketing > Sales & Marketing Collaboration](#) to sign up.

**Past meeting recordings are also available on this page.**

## WilbertEDU® November Recap

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On November 11, Leslie Witter, MPA, CAE, and Sr. VP of Advocacy for the NFDA, presented, "An Update on the EPA Formaldehyde Review and What It Means for Your Firm and the Profession", providing an in-depth exploration of the EPA's recent formaldehyde risk assessment and its potential impact on the funeral service industry. Leslie delved into the proposed formaldehyde exposure limits and their implications for businesses within the profession. Attendees gained a comprehensive understanding of the EPA's formaldehyde risk assessment, including the key findings and methodologies underpinning the agency's review.

The discussion also covered anticipated regulatory changes and compliance requirements that firms may need to implement to adhere to the new guidelines. Practical insights were shared to help businesses navigate the evolving regulatory landscape while maintaining operational efficiency. Additionally, the webinar highlighted the health and safety considerations tied to formaldehyde exposure, emphasizing the importance of protecting workers and ensuring a safe environment for all.

Leslie shared results from a recent supplier survey, discussed resources for best practices, and shared insights into how the election and the incoming Trump administration could impact the process going forward.

By the end of the program, participants were equipped with the knowledge to understand the EPA's review, prepare for potential regulatory adjustments, and assess the broader health and safety implications for their firms and the funeral service profession.

At the request of the speaker, this webinar recording is not available to rewatch.

## WilbertEDU® Upcoming Sessions

### 12.05.2024 | Michigan's SMMART team: Providing Assistance to Law Enforcement Agencies Following a Line of Duty Death with Daniel Foley

An in-depth look at the Michigan SMMART Team (Sheriffs & Municipal Memorial Assistance Response Team), exploring its origins, representation, and the criteria for activation.

### 12.19.2024 | Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Presentation with Danielle Wilk and Jennifer Jacobs

This presentation provides a comprehensive overview of how the military honors and prepares the remains of fallen heroes, offering valuable insights into the practice of ensuring care, respect, and professionalism for the deceased.

### 01.23.2025 | Facial Reconstruction 101 with Michelle Johnston

Gain confidence in the embalming room in this special two-hour technical webinar focusing on major trauma cases to prepare remains for open casket viewing.

### 02.06.2025 | Spot the Con: A Train the Trainer Presentation for the Funeral Industry with Jessica Hamlin

The webinar offers a deep dive into common fraudulent schemes targeting the funeral industry, practical strategies to prevent exploitation, and techniques for educating clients. By equipping professionals with these tools, "Spot the Con" aims to safeguard families from financial and emotional harm.

### 02.20.2025 | Families Gone Wild: Diffusing Conflict in the Arrangement Room with Jason Troyer

This webinar explores the rising conflicts among families and funeral directors over service options, costs, and more. Dr. Troyer shares real-life examples, examines psychological roots of family behaviors, and offers practical, therapy-based strategies to quickly defuse conflicts during arrangement conferences.

### 03.06.2025 | How to Get More Calls in 2025 with Welton Hong

Learn how to thrive in the evolving deathcare industry with expert tips from Welton Hong. Discover how to boost calls through effective digital marketing, dominate local search, generate five-star reviews, and attract more preneed business. Gain actionable insights to stay ahead of the competition.

### 03.20.2025 | Innovating Tradition: AI Applications in the Funeral and Death Care Industry with Antonio Green

Antonio Green returns to the WilbertEDU stage to share how AI can save time and resources for funeral homes while offering families unmatched convenience. The future of funeral service is evolving before our eyes, and Antonio is here to help make sure you don't get left behind!

Download this handy flier to share with your customers!

*WilbertEDU Sessions First Quarter 2025*

**WilbertEDU**  
e-learning for today's funeral professionals

**WilbertEDU Sessions: First Quarter 2025**

<p><b>January 23</b> <b>Facial Reconstruction 101 (2 hours)</b></p> <p>Michelle Johnston returns to the WilbertEDU stage for a special two-hour technical webinar focusing on major trauma cases to prepare remains for open casket viewing.</p>	<p><b>February 20</b> <b>Families Gone Wild: Diffusing Conflict in the Arrangement Room</b></p> <p>Jason Troyer explores the psychological roots of family behaviors, sharing real-life examples and providing practical, therapy-based strategies to defuse conflicts during arrangement conferences.</p>	<p><b>March 20</b> <b>Innovating Tradition: AI Applications in the Funeral and Death Care Industry</b></p> <p>Antonio Green returns to the WilbertEDU stage to share how AI can save time and resources for funeral homes while offering families unmatched convenience. The future of funeral service is evolving, and Antonio is here to help ensure you don't get left behind!</p>
<p><b>February 6</b> <b>Spot the Con: A Train-the-Trainer Presentation for the Funeral Industry</b></p> <p>Jessica Hamlin takes a deep dive into common fraudulent schemes targeting the funeral industry and shares practical strategies to prevent exploitation.</p>	<p><b>March 6</b> <b>How to Get More Calls in 2025</b></p> <p>Learn how to thrive in the evolving deathcare industry with expert tips from Welton Hong. Discover how to boost calls through effective digital marketing, dominate local search, generate five-star reviews, and attract more preneed business.</p>	

**SCAN ME**

WilbertEDU Upcoming Sessions Jan-Mar 2025-2

## The Wilbert Foundation Introduces New Logo and Terry Whitlock Pediatric Chaplaincy Endowment

This year at the WMA Annual meeting the Wilbert Foundation introduced a new logo and mission statement. The foundation also introduced the Terry Whitlock Pediatric Chaplaincy Endowment.



As a founding member of the Wilbert Foundation, Terry led the effort to provide Foundation funds for pediatric chaplaincy...

helping the Wilbert Foundation to become the leading funder of pediatric chaplaincy programs in the USA and Canada. This fund will honor Terry's service and dedication, providing grants every year.



### Pledge Card

#### Terry Whitlock Pediatric Chaplaincy Endowment

**Name of Donor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Donor:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_



As a founding member of the Wilbert Foundation, Terry led the effort to provide Foundation funds for pediatric chaplaincy ... helping the Wilbert Foundation to become the leading funder of pediatric chaplaincy programs in the USA and Canada. This fund will honor Terry's service and dedication, providing grants every year.

**Make a Gift in Person or Online**



#### Giving Levels

- Wilbert Bronze: \$25,000 +
- Copper Triune: \$10,000
- Stainless Steel Triune: \$5,000
- Venetian: \$2,500
- Monticello: \$1,000
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

My gift was made online via the QR code. In the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to pledge a one time gift. In the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check  Bill Me

I would like my gift to be a tribute....

- in honor of \_\_\_\_\_
- in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this card to the designated member of the Wilbert Foundation Board, upon completion.

**Thank You!**

If you would like to donate to this endowment, please scan the QR Code on the pledge card or you can mail a check to PO Box 226, Hagerstown, MD 21741.

## Commemorating First Responder Deputy Sheriff Brandon Tyler Cunningham



Dallas, GA– Deputy Cunningham and his partner arrived at a home and were ambushed with a hail of gunfire as soon as they exited their vehicle. Responding officers were also met with a stream of gunfire. When a female attempted to leave the home, she was shot.

Deputy Cunningham was transported to a local hospital where he died from his wounds. He was 30 years old and passed away on August 17, 2024.

Deputy Cunningham had served with the Paulding County Sheriff's Office for over four years. He is survived by his son, daughter, mother, three brothers, grandfather, and aunt.

The suspect was found with a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Services were entrusted to the care of Clark Funeral Home, Hiram, GA.

Piedmont Precast, Atlanta GA, 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 Police Officer Darron Lee Burks



Dallas, TX– Officers responded to an officer in-distress call. When they arrived at the location, they approached a man standing near the squad car. The subject opened fire, shooting one officer three times and another officer in the face. Responding officers found Officer Burks in his patrol vehicle suffering from a gunshot wound.

As soon as the suspect fled, a pursuit ensued. When the suspect stopped, he exited his vehicle with a long gun and was shot and killed.

Officer Burks succumbed to his wounds. He was 46 years old. Officer Burks had served with the Dallas Police Department for eight months. He is survived by his parents.

Services were entrusted to the care of Restland Funeral Home, Dallas, TX.

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

