

*Business Spotlight***THE FUNERAL ADVOCATES**

“The impact of losing a loved one is a unifying element of the human experience. Yet, when it actually happens to you, you can feel more alone than ever...I know because I did,”

my family and I had something to help guide us out of the confusion that comes with decision making in the wake of such sadness. That something was Funeral Advocates who came to my grandparents home to help us navigate the chaotic experience of burying a loved one.”

President and Founder of Funeral Advocates, Brian M. O’Laughlin states, “The services of Funeral Advocates are unique in that we are NOT a funeral home. We are truly ADVOCATES who stand with a sword and shield between families and the funeral industry. We meet with families, away from the sales environment of a funeral home, where we gently educate and coach them through the funeral and cemetery planning process. Once we have discovered their “Wishes and Desires” we then go and negotiate with these providers to obtain goods and services at the lowest possible cost. Our program allows the families to be removed from the emotional and stress filled process associated with funeral planning, thus allowing them to spend more time with their loved one.”

Pointer continues, “Brian and Bud offered us guidance as to what was fair financially and coached us through the decision making process resulting in the actual engagement of a funeral service provider. They mentored us with ease and cost-friendly alternatives as to how to personalize the visitation and funeral service. They helped simplify what can best be described as an overwhelming process.”

“Our process is **TOTALLY** transparent,” emphasizes O’Laughlin, “We charge a flat fee for our services and all of the negotiated savings from the funeral industry

recalls Kathleen Pointer when her grandmother passed away one rainy Monday afternoon. She continues, “But

is documented and passed through to the family.” As a by-product of their representation, Funeral Advocates has been saving their clients an average of over \$5,000 per service, over and above their fee. “It is the family’s money, not the funeral homes,” states Bud Burris, Managing Partner of Funeral Advocates. He continues, “Families tell us there is no way to place a value on the emotional burden relief and stress-transference that our assistance provides.”

The Funeral Advocate concept began with O’Laughlin’s father died suddenly and he went to the funeral home with his mother. “I felt vulnerable and now know we could have made better decisions if we were coached through the process instead of being required to make hasty decisions,” said O’Laughlin. Subsequently, he began advocating for his clients over 13 years ago and formalized the business through the help of the Kauffman Foundation’s FastTrac program.

The Director of Hospice Relations for Funeral Advocates, Jeanne Enna, BSN, RN, has another view of their services. She says, “As a former hospice nurse, I see Funeral Advocates as the entity that completes an ‘end of life’ circle of care. To honor the family members death just as they honored their life.” Enna continues, “We help the families save the little energy they have left after their loved one passes from a long illness and direct that energy toward the tribute to a life well lived. In the event of a sudden death, the family is ‘in shock’ so we hold their hand and lead them through a process of objective decision making allowing them to channel their energies to emotionally support their families.

Kathleen Pointer concludes, “The funeral industry has become a power-house fueled by necessity and high emotion, consequently, it has the ability to control a specific agenda to extract money out of people. Funeral Advocates offered the support my family needed to make sure we were treated with respect and honesty that sometimes gets lost.”

**Unsolicited testimonials from
Funeral Advocates, LLC clients include:**

"Thank you for leading my family and me through the darkness, as you and Bud have lately. We had the wind knocked out of us when my mother died so suddenly. It helped to know that you were there to catch us when we were all falling to our knees."

-Elaine C. January 2012

"There are no words to express the comfort you brought to us as a family at a time we were the most vulnerable. Thank you for taking us by the hand and showing us the way. You were Guardian Angels sent to guide us and make the final journey for Jesse, both amazing and bearable. We are forever grateful. God bless you and your ministry."

-Beatrice G. March 2012

"Thank you for working with me and my family after the passing of my dad. The funeral arrangements were perfect. Your guidance during such a difficult time made it so much easier for my family. I'm so appreciative of you for the service you provided."

-Stan R. Jr. April 2012

"I have used the services of Funeral Advocates for my patients as well as a family member. Each family I have referred to them has come back to me thanking me profusely. They are compassionate, caring and handle situations when families are the most vulnerable. I wish someone would have come up with this concept when I first started working with hospice 13 years ago. Their services save families so much time, money, and stress. I think they are amazing and invaluable!"

-Mary Schowengerdt, RN Continua Hospice

Funeral Advocates provided such a valuable service to us when our son Connor passed away after battling brain cancer. Brian and his team were at our house immediately and calmly guided us through all the decisions that needed to be made. They knew just what questions to ask to determine exactly what type of service we wanted



Brian M. O'Laughlin, Founder of Funeral Advocates, LLC, at The National Cemetery, Leavenworth, KS.

and then teamed up with a funeral service provider and St. James Academy High School and executed the plan flawlessly. With over two thousand people attending the visitation and funeral over a two-day period, it was such a blessing to know that all the details were worked out ahead of time. Many lives were touched at those beautiful services and it was all made possible by the coordinating efforts and organization that Funeral Advocates provided to all the wonderful people helping behind the scenes. Because of their familiarity with the pricing of various funeral services, they were able to help us find the most affordable arrangements thus saving us thousands of dollars. We are so grateful that a friend introduced us to Funeral Advocates and we highly recommend them to other families as well...

-Jim and Leslie Mc. May 2012

For additional information, please watch the interview with Maria Antonio, of KMBC News video under the "in the news" tab of: www.FuneralAdvocates.com.

Funeral  **Advocates**
compassion · competence · clarity

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