



# NEWSLETTER

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Issue Three



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**Keeping  
Mississippi,  
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# LETTER FROM THE MSCCFA PRESIDENT

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**David Sharp**  
**Greenlawn Gardens Cemetery**

Hello all,


I hope everyone is doing well and ready to have fun in the sun as get ready to celebrate the 2024 Tri-State Convention. MSCCFA will be hosting this year's convention at the Imperial Palace in Biloxi, MS. The IP offers many relaxing and exciting entertainment opportunities for everyone, including children. While in Biloxi, you may want to try your luck to catch the "Big One" on a chartered fishing trip or play a round of golf one afternoon. You can even treat yourself or your loved one to receive the relaxing enjoyment and escape "the everyday" hustle and bustle at Senses Spa and Salon. The Mississippi Gulf Coast offers a wide variety of culinary delicacies that will satisfy all your taste buds.

I encourage all cemeterians and others in the death care industry to join us on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. For over 30 years, The Tri-State convention has been a wonderful opportunity to network, embrace new ideas and make new friends to ensure we are improving our services and helping our industry better serve our customers. This year's convention will have new vendors as well as those we already know. We cannot thank the vendors enough as they are a major part of helping us make the convention successful. I would also like to thank LaDarion and his team at Ten One Strategies. Their continued effort, knowledge, and experience in the role of executive director has been beneficial in the planning and organizing of this convention.

When you join your state's association, as a collective unit, you enable a strong voice to be heard that works to improve legislation for your state. I invite everyone who reads this letter to take time to learn about your state's association and become a member to help bring a unified voice that will be heard. Together we can make a difference. I look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones. Come on down and have some fun in the sun with us.

David C. Sharp  
President  
MSCCFA



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# FTC ANNOUNCES RULE BANNING NONCOMPETES

On April 23, 2024, the Federal Trade Commission issued a final rule to promote competition by banning noncompetes nationwide, protecting the fundamental freedom of workers to change jobs, increasing innovation, and fostering new business formation.

“Noncompete clauses keep wages low, suppress new ideas, and rob the American economy of dynamism, including from the more than 8,500 new startups that would be created a year once noncompetes are banned,” said FTC Chair Lina M. Khan. “The FTC’s final rule to ban noncompetes will ensure Americans have the freedom to pursue a new job, start a new business, or bring a new idea to market.”

## Banning noncompetes:

Good for workers, businesses, and the economy



FEDERAL TRADE  
COMMISSION

### FTC Announces Rule Banning Noncompetes

Today, the Federal Trade Commission issued a final rule to promote competition by banning noncompetes nationwide, protecting the fundamen

[FTC](#) Federal Trade Commission / Apr 29

# FROM THE LCA PRESIDENT

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Greetings from the Louisiana Cemeteries Association. The LCA met in Lafayette in February for our spring meeting. We had a productive gathering and discussed key topics going on within our state. Currently, we are closely following legislation in our state that has to do with the merging of perpetual care trusts. Recently, the LCA has just finished work on many new legislative pieces in the previous year.



**Ryan Chedotal**  
**Restlawn Park Cemetery**

There were bills passed that involved pet burials, Total Return Method, Master Trusts, and the role of the LCB. It was a very busy year, and if you have any questions, feel free to reach out or come to the next meeting. Speaking of the next meeting, we are looking forward to getting together at the Annual Meeting at the IP in August. These meetings are getting bigger and better with the addition of TenOne Strategies. We will be swearing in a new slate of officers to take us into the next year with the 2025 Annual meeting coming back to Louisiana. We look forward to seeing everyone at the IP and continuing in advancing our industry.

*Ryan Chedotal*  
*President*  
*LCA*

## **Louisiana Cemetery Board Meetings:**

**Thursday, May 16, 2024 (If necessary) &**

**Friday, May 17, 2024**

**9:00 A.M.**

**3445 N. Causeway Boulevard, Suite 509**

**Metairie, Louisiana 70002**

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**Thursday, November 7, 2024 (If necessary) &**

**Friday, November 8, 2024**


**9:00 A.M.**

**3445 N. Causeway Boulevard, Suite 509**

**Metairie, Louisiana 70002**

**[WWW.LCB.STATE.LA.US/NEWS.HTML](http://WWW.LCB.STATE.LA.US/NEWS.HTML)**



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# MEMORIAL MAY 2024: REMEMBER AND HONOR OUR FALLEN HEROES

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Memorial Day is a day of remembrance to honor the brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifices of our fallen heroes and to pay tribute to their legacy of courage, dedication and selflessness.

That is why VA's National Cemetery Administration is partnering with Carry The Load this year. Together, the goal is to honor and remember Veterans interred in VA National Cemeteries.

Carry The Load, an organization dedicated to remembering the fallen, will visit 34 VA National Cemeteries traveling 20,000 miles along five separate routes covering all continental 48 states in what is known as the National Relay for Memorial May 2024.

Along the five routes, many marchers will carry signs, banners and flags honoring a fallen service member, Veteran or first responder.

Find out when & where the National Relay will be in a city near you as supporters and volunteers walk through 48 states & hundreds of communities to honor our nation's heroes. The list of national cemeteries, along with the dates and times that they will be visited can be found below, or at Memorial May 2024 – National Cemetery Administration (va.gov). Those wishing to participate in a march are asked to register in advance. No donation is required to participate.

- May 21, 2024, 3:45 – 6:00 p.m. ET: Carry The Load's Memorial May Campaign – Pensacola, FL
- May 22, 2024, 8:15 – 9:15 a.m. CT: Carry The Load's Memorial May Campaign – Biloxi, MS
- May 23, 2024, 4:15 – 5:00 p.m. ET: Carry The Load's Memorial May Campaign – Baton Rouge, LA

VA encourages all Americans to honor a fallen service member by leaving a tribute on the Veteran's personal memorial page at VA's Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM).

For more information please visit: Memorial May 2024 – National Cemetery Administration (va.gov).

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# LETTER FROM THE AAC PRESIDENT

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**Julie Currie**  
**Currie-Jefferson Memorial**  
**Gardens, Hoover**

Hello everybody!

The transition of preneed oversight between the Alabama Department of Insurance to The Alabama Board of Funeral Services has been completed. The funeral board still has a lot of work to do but has completed the major transfer of responsibilities.


The new Preneed committee has met twice this year. We are impressed with the members that were appointed to this committee as these people bring a wealth of experience to the table. In March, the Preneed Division of the Funeral Board held a public hearing on proposed changes to the Preneed regulations. The changes were voted on and were adopted effective May 15, 2024.

**It should be noted that everyone needs to stay updated on what happens in the state regarding our industry.** For information, go to [fsb.alabama.gov](https://fsb.alabama.gov) and read the newsletter from the board and the news section on the website. There are also minutes from the meetings. Minutes are updated after the board approves them in the next quarterly meeting.

We are now preparing for the Tri-State meeting in Biloxi. If you have any concerns or questions that you would like to be brought up, please send me an email so we can discuss them. Also, if you would like to be considered to serve on our Board, please let me know. It is vitally important that we regain our status as a major association in the state of Alabama. To do so we need more members and more participation from our existing members to make a statement to the legislature that we are an influence in our communities. If you have questions regarding the above, please contact me at 205-987-0068. See you in Biloxi!

Julie Currie, AAC President



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# NOTICE TO ALL ENDOWMENT CARE CEMETERY AUTHORITIES

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Please take the time to thoroughly read the contents of this letter for important information regarding endowment care trust activity reporting. Reporting will be submitted a bit differently than before with the Alabama Department of Insurance, but we hope to make the process as simple as possible for you. Since the Alabama Board of Funeral Services began regulating endowment care trusting as it pertains to endowment care cemeteries in October, we have been diligently working to create an easy and efficient online experience for you. Until it is ready, we have prepared a paper form to submit your annual report of trust activity. In this letter you will find detailed information about how and when to submit these reports to ensure you are in compliance with the law.

As you know, each year an annual report of trust activity must be submitted to the Board so that we can ensure consumer funds are properly trusted in accordance with Alabama law. These reports are due on or before April 1st for the previous calendar year. Please understand that this means the reports have to be in our office on or before April 1st. This does not mean the reports must be postmarked by April 1st. Postmarked dates will not be considered.

In order to submit the reports to the Board, please follow these steps: obtain the report form by visiting our website, [www.fsb.alabama.gov](http://www.fsb.alabama.gov) once you have arrived at the home page of the website, navigate to the top of the page, and find the tab called "preneed". Hovering your mouse over this tab will reveal a drop-down menu. Click on the second option in the drop-down menu, called "Preneed Forms". Doing this will open a new page. Navigate to the bottom of this page and find the section named "Reporting". The second form under this section, called "Annual Report of Trust Activity-Endowment Care Cemetery", is the form you will need to fill out, sign, and submit to our office.

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## CERTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FILED WITH THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY EFFECTIVE 5.13.2024



# SHOW AND TELL YOUR STORY: CREATING VIDEOS CUSTOMERS LIKED WATCHING

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*Article by LA Ads*

An industry friend asked that I take a look at a “branding” video from a decent sized funeral home and cemetery operation, and it just got the better of me. So, I have to say something because these types of videos just need to stop being created.

I’m talking about poorly conceived and produced online videos that we find on countless funeral home, cemetery, and B2B websites and social media channels which are completely ineffectual. You know the kind of video I’m talking about: It has a fuzzy look rather than a crisp, clear presentation. The person talking delivers the message in a somber, solemn, and melancholy tone which is just the opposite of what you want. It doesn’t know when the right time is to end. There’s an information overload going on with funeral jargon a plenty. And most importantly, the “WOW factor” of the firm is 100% completely hidden or missing. The viewer leaves the video not sure what to think.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what numerous firms within the funeral profession have haphazardly slapped together in the name of “meaningful content video” or self-promotion.

As we all know, online video content has just exploded over the past few years and it’s going to keep growing by leaps and bounds for the foreseeable future. For example, here’s some impressive data that speaks to the growth of online videos:

- As of October 2022, more than 40% of U.S. users said they watch online videos daily.
- People watch an average of 19 hours of video every week
- Video posts on social media get 48% more views
- 54% of people say they’d be more likely to seek out information about a product or service after seeing it in an online video.

Yet we still have too many companies in the funeral business that create and post videos which current and prospective customers will see that damages the brand positioning of the firm. So, with that as an outcome, why would these firms not place more attention in creating videos that lead to a better immediate or future outcome for themselves. Often, they’re poorly produced, exceedingly amateurish virtual tours of the chapel, display room, mausoleum, or cemetery grounds with the requisite shots of the owners’ families and an endless list of every possible sales point. Oh, and the music couldn’t scream “this is a funeral commercial” any more than it does. And with B2B firms you’ll see things like showing the outside of the manufacturing facility or office building; the machinery that makes the product; folks at their desks; and the requisite delivery truck pulling out of the building. How boring is that!

With that in mind, and so that the next video you develop has a chance to be all that it can be, let’s talk about what good videos have in common:



# SHOW AND TELL YOUR STORY: CREATING VIDEOS CUSTOMERS LIKED WATCHING

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*Article by LA Ads*

## **Good videos were thought through from the start**

Before hitting the record button, start with developing a script. Basically, a detailed outline of what you want to people to know as a result of the video. So, how do you actually go about creating the script? It's pretty easy. First, after deciding what the specific topic idea is about, begin to write down all the supporting points and then after that's done, start with organizing them in an order that makes sense for the audience. I told you it was easy!

## **Good videos are truly interesting from the viewer's perspective**

Internet viewing has created a world of people with ADHD. Viewers will click the second they lose interest, so you have to hold their attention on every frame. Your scripting has to be based entirely on the viewer's wanting to know "what's in it for me?" Nothing you do in your video is more important than this. Nothing. It's that important.

## **Good videos don't drag on and on**

Grabbing and keeping your viewer's attention isn't easy, and when creating a video, you want to be sure you aren't developing content that's too long (or too short). For businesses promoting a product or a service, always keep your video content concise and useful. Keep it between 30 second and 1.5 minutes...depending on what you're trying to accomplish. Lots of firms want to put everything into one video... resist that urge.

Instead, do a video for each benefit. This will serve you much better as a singularly focused idea makes it easier for the viewer to remember. If it's about more than one or even two ideas, the viewer will not remember. Would you remember 3-4 points? Most likely not.

That said, technically, there's no 'right' or 'wrong' video length, but it's good to follow the golden rule for video creation: make your video as long as it needs to be—and not a second longer.

## **Good videos have attention-grabbing titles.**

Create an attention-grabbing, creatively developed title that quickly summarizes the value audiences can get from watching which will help attract more qualified customers. That way, your video views are more likely to move prospects further down the sales funnel and decision-making process.

## **Good videos know who their audience is.**

Determine who you're speaking to with the video. Are these families already in mourning? Are they Boomers? What's their mindset? How much do they know about your product or service already? What do you want them to do next? Etc.

# SHOW AND TELL YOUR STORY: CREATING VIDEOS CUSTOMERS LIKED WATCHING

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Article by LA Ads

## **Good videos have a purpose and know where they'll "live."**

Prior to the video being developed, company and agency folks have decided how they want to share the video given their communication plan and goals. Synergies between different online social media channels (Facebook, YouTube) and other uses (emails, blog posts, landing pages, registration pages and corporate websites) have been determined... as have offline uses. Shooting and editing a video only to then decide what to do with it then creates unnecessary messaging and expense issues.

## **Good videos have high production values and a consistent look/tone/feel.**

Cheap-looking productions imply similarly cheap quality from the company. There is a level of production value that really good videos simply don't dip below. So, we're absolutely clear, I'm not saying that you have to go out and hire a video production firm every time you want to make a video. What I am saying is that viewers can easily spot a poorly done video, and if your video is not well produced, it suggests that you do not value your product/service. Also, a consistency of look and branding in your video to the rest of your marketing efforts is a must.

And I haven't even addressed the importance of good videos needing to be engaging, relevant, and appropriate for the audience along with being leveraged across landing pages, social media, blogs, etc.

So, whether you're creating a testimonial, promotional, "how-to" or other type of video, the idea is to make sure that people find it interesting, worth spending the time to watch and that it leads to the desired next step. As you know, repeated viewings of your video generally indicate a positive overall experience. Repeatedly having your video, or future videos, being ignored or viewed for just a short bit of time, means, well, you also know what that means.

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Rolf Gutknecht is President and CEO of LA ads, a full-service marketing firm specializing in helping success-oriented funeral homes, cemeteries, manufacturers, and service providers create compelling marketing messaging and programs to grow their business. Rolf can be reached at [rolfg@laadsmarketing.com](mailto:rolfg@laadsmarketing.com) or 800-991-0625 ext. 2. Check out the LAads website by visiting [www.laadsmarketing.com](http://www.laadsmarketing.com).



# REGISTRATION OPEN



**AUGUST 11-13, 2024**

**IP RESORT & SPA**



DON'T FORGET YOUR LOST SHAKER OF SALT  
- JIMMY BUFFETT



# 2024 SPONSORSHIPS



## DIAMOND - \$4,000 (1)

- 2 Free Booth Spaces 4 Exhibitor
- Full Pg Color Ad (Back Cover)
- Linked Logo on Website (all registrants will see as they register)
- Logo on Convention Information site
- Largest size Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance
- 4 Registration Tickets & 4 Banquet Tickets

## PLATINUM - \$3000 (2)

- Free Booth Space for 2 Exhibitor
- Full Pg Color Ad (Inside Front Cover OR Inside Back Cover)
- Linked Logo on Website (all registrants will see as they register)
- Logo on Convention Information site
- Larger size Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance
- 2 Registration Tickets & 2 Banquet Tickets

## CORNHOLE (GOLD) - \$2500 (1)

- Free Booth Space for 1 Exhibitor
- Full Pg Ad in Program
- Linked Logo on Website (all registrants will see as they register)
- Logo on Convention Information site
- Largest size Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance
- 1 Registration Ticket & 1 Banquet Ticket

**SOLD OUT**

## GOLD - \$2,000 (4)

- Free Booth Space for 1 Exhibitor
- Free registration for Primary Exhibitor Registrant
- Full Pg Ad in Program
- Linked Logo on Website (all registrants will see as they register)
- Logo on Convention Information site
- Large size Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance
- 1 Registration Ticket & 1 Banquet Ticket

## SILVER - \$1000 (4)

- Half Pg Ad in Program
- Linked Logo on Website (all registrants will see as they register)
- Logo on Convention Information site and Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance.

## HOSPITALITY (BRONZE) - \$750 (3)

- Qtr Pg Ad in Program
- Linked Logo Throughout Website
- You can sponsor one day of the Hospitality Suite.
- Logo on board in the Suite with listing on Sponsor Board at main entrance.
- Day selection based on availability.

## BRONZE - \$500 (5)

- Qtr Pg Ad in Program
- Linked Logo throughout Website & Convention Website
- Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance.

## Business Card Size Ad in Program \$250 (10)

- Linked Logo on Registration Site (all registrants will see as they register) Logo on Convention Information site and Logo on Sponsor Board at main entrance.



# GOLF

4-MAN SCRAMBLE  
• 2024 TRI-STATE TOURNAMENT •

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2024**

**GULF HILLS COUNTRY CLUB**

TEE TIME 8:00AM \$75 = 18 HOLES & LUNCH

REGISTER AT:  
[WWW.TRISTATE.ORG](http://WWW.TRISTATE.ORG)

TEE GIFTS &  
DRINK CART  
PROVIDED BY:  
LINDLEY & LINDLEY

SCAN TO  
REGISTER:



13700 PASO RD  
OCEAN SPRINGS, MS 39564

SPONSORED BY:



# Tri-State Cornhole Tournament

**AUGUST 12, 2024  
11:00AM  
IP RESORT & SPA  
STUDIO B**

REGISTER AT  
[THETRISTATE.ORG](http://THETRISTATE.ORG)



# Installation Banquet

**AUGUST 13, 2024  
6:00PM**

**IP RESORT & SPA  
BALLROOM A-B**



# Special Entertainment

**Cocktail Reception & Banquet Music**

Provided by:



Sponsored by:



# TEAM BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP

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What makes a team? This can be a million-dollar question. I often refer back to the days when I was involved in sports. I will always remember the cliché message of “there is no “I” in TEAM”. It should be known that success in any organization is determined by the bond of its members. Every organization should view its staff as a team. Furthermore, every member of the team should be a team player. Like a well-oiled machine, the team should function no matter how many hiccups there are on the road.

How can one achieve this? Leaders should strive to ensure their TEAM represents the morals and values of the organization. Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly quick meetings are good to recap the message. As an organization grows and more people are brought in, the leader needs to make sure each member feels appreciated for the services they bring to the table. This can be a very hard concept for large companies. However, letting an employee know they are doing a great job and are appreciated, can go a long way, if it is genuine. On the other hand, one of the biggest “no-no’s” a leader can do is point out a flaw to an individual around others. This should always be done in private. One should always remember this statement, “the weather can be predicted”. Good or bad attitudes can rub off on everyone. Furthermore, if owners, managers, department heads, etc. are not making the attempt to know the ones around them, how can they say they are part of a team? It starts from the top.

Most professional organizations I have been affiliated with have team-building routines that help strengthen the bond of the organization. Team building exercises or retreats are great ways to build the bonds of your members. The real and most important part of team building is to make sure they are meaningful and relevant. Some of the best team-building exercises were those that made me vulnerable. For example, these were the ones that made me break out of my comfort zone and realize that I cannot achieve it all by myself. The lessons learned from these activities helped me grow. The best thing about it, the people around me grew too. We began to understand our strengths and weaknesses. Where one would fall, someone else was there to assist. We became a much stronger unit. This made the daily operations more successful, and the stress began to fade from everyone.

# TEAM BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP

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On the flip side of team building, we have leadership. The leaders need to ensure that they are willing to be part of the team and not above it. Leadership is not, “do as I say, not as I do”. True leadership is willing to be just as involved in daily operations as the low man on the totem pole and treat everyone equally. As humans, we can fall into tendencies to which we favor one person over the other, and therefore one or a group of individuals may be able to get away with a few more. This could destroy a team from the inside out and place the whole organization at risk of failing. As a leader, one needs to discover what works for their team and what can help their team grow. The key to success is for everyone to be together as a unit and not fight against one another. The leader should ensure they are a team player as well.

The biggest takeaway is to always remember your organization, company, and industry work best when the team is unified in their goals. Next, activities that are meaningful will always build better bonds for success. Ensure that the intended outcome helps build and grow the unit. There will be a time to support individuals that need it and are loyal and willing to bring success. If they are loyal and willing make time for them. Lastly, the leaders need to understand they are part of the team and not above the team. They can determine success or failure based on their attitude towards the ones they are leading. As Terry Bradshaw says, “bad attitudes will ruin your team”. A leader should always be fair and just when action is needed taken. Leave your negative attitudes behind. To quote Abraham Lincoln, “A house divided against itself cannot stand”. I say, “Be the leader; unite your house”.

David C. Sharp  
MSCCFA



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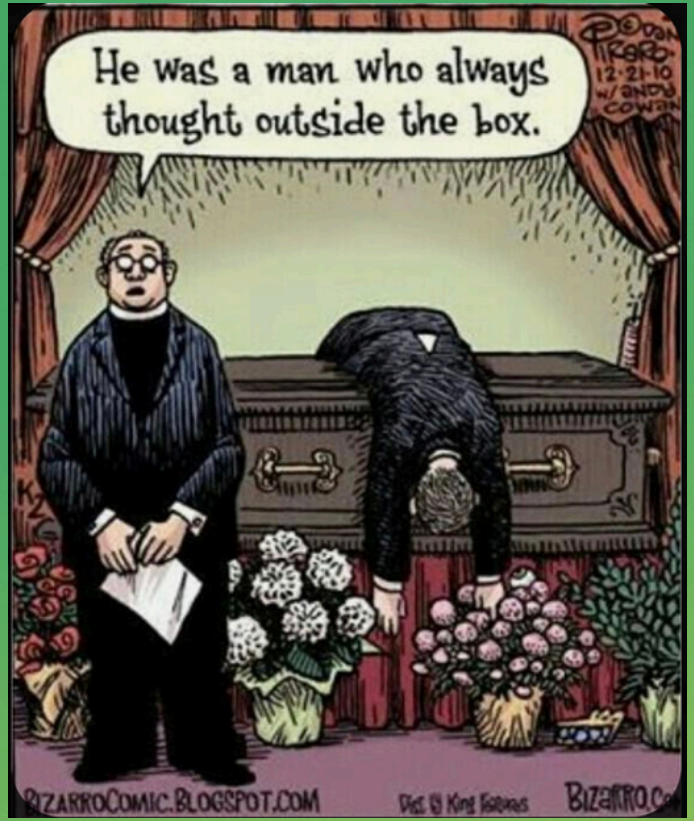


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# UPCOMING EVENTS

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**2024 SCCFA Convention**  
**July 15th - 17th**  
**Hilton Head Island, SC**

**ICCFA University**  
**July 19-24, 2024**  
**Emory University | Atlanta, GA**

**ICCFA 2024 Pet Loss & Integration Short Course**  
**July 20-21, 2024**  
**Emory University | Atlanta, GA**

**2024 Tri-State Joint Conference**  
**August 11-14, 2024**  
**IP Resort & Spa | Biloxi, MS**

**ICCFA Leadership Summit**  
**October 15-17, 2024**  
**The St. Anthony Hotel | San Antonio, Texas**



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