

March 2010

Dear Friends,

Admittedly, some things have changed, but the Maine Funeral Directors Association (MFDA) continues to embrace a "Members First Attitude," and has continued to function in a state of continued transition throughout the year. This has resulted in a series of subtle, but very positive changes.

Everyone knows December is synonymous with convention; at least here in Maine! Equally as important, the association has continued to stand firm in its belief in the need to focus on service and the future of funeral service, as well as fostering and perpetuating the high ethical standards of funeral service. Inasmuch as many of our members have expressed disappointment in the lack of exhibits at the 2009 convention, the 85th Annual Convention, MFDA ... "*Mapping The Way To Success*," will include a tabletop exhibition. Moreover, we are pleased to tell you that the cost of booth space has actually dropped \$105.00 per space this year based on some really good negotiating.

The venue for the 2010 also has changed. We will be back in Portland this year; not at the Marriott, but at the Wyndham Portland Airport Hotel located at 363 Maine Mall Road, South Portland, Maine. You may recognize the address as the home of Portland's most recognizable and easily accessed landmark hotel - the former Sheraton Hotel. Also, we are back to a Friday and Saturday format. Specifically, convention will get underway Friday, December 3rd and conclude with the Annual Installation Banquet Saturday evening, December 4th. This exhibit format is an extension of our theme for the year and exemplifies the fact the MFDA truly is helping to map out a plan for continued success -- not only today, but in the days to come. Certainly, it is hoped that you, your family, and staff will plan to join us in this exciting endeavor where together we can share information, ideas, products and services; all the while, listening, growing and achieving the goals we have established for ourselves, as well as for the association.

For your consideration, a copy of the Rules and Regulations Governing the Exhibition has been enclosed, as well as a Contract For Exhibit Space, a diagram depicting available exhibit space and a credit card payment form. To attract convention participants, we are delighted to announce that a Welcoming Reception will be held in conjunction with a Preview of Exhibits Friday evening from 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

As you well know, we firmly believe that the tabletop format for exhibits provides an opportunity for our members, as well as the many funeral service professionals who are unable to attend other national or state funeral service exhibits to gain increased product knowledge. Additionally, it is our belief that this event will also allow you to interact with funeral service professionals in a

convention atmosphere; but at a reduced cost. You see, we appreciate the time, effort, and expense that goes into exhibiting your products and services.

As a gentle reminder, all contracts must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service on or before September 13, 2010. Yes, I know that sounds early, but there's a lot going on in the association at that time of year. As in the past, exhibit space will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis based on the receipt of the exhibit contract and payment for booth space. All contracts must be forwarded to the association office via snail mail. In an effort to be fair to all prospective exhibitors, hand-delivered contracts, e-mailed contracts, faxed contracts or phone requests for booth space will not be accepted.

It goes without saying, 2010 appears to be a year of ongoing change for the Maine Funeral Directors Association, but as Past President Katie Clay was often overheard to say, "Change is good!" Without reservation, I can unequivocally say that 2010 will also offer many new and exciting changes that will serve our members, out-of-state funeral service professionals and funeral service suppliers throughout New England well.

I do hope you will plan to join us for the 85th Annual MFDA Convention and find out exactly what is in store for the coming year! You'll be glad you did ... Promise!

Sincerely,

Rick

Richard M. Duncan, CFSP, Chairman
Convention Planning Committee

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