

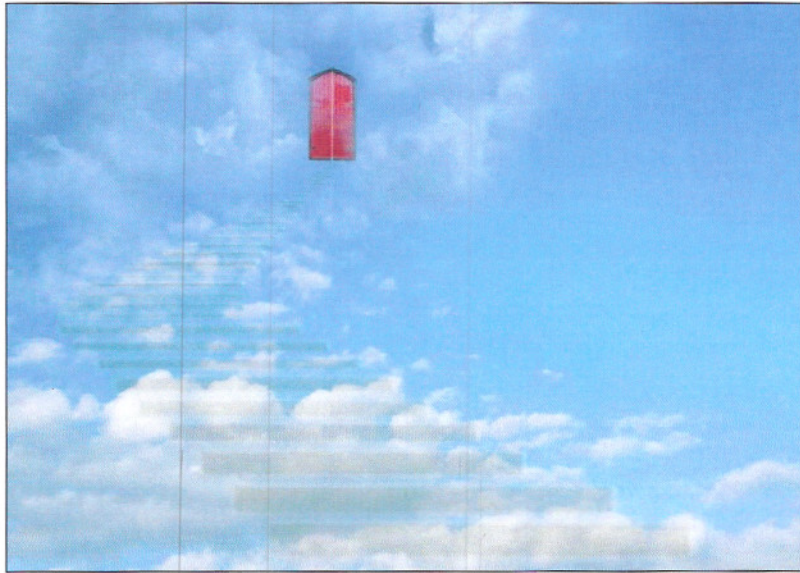
# Answering to a Higher Calling

**M**any associates in our Company have jobs that involve a very unique, important and sensitive responsibility: caring for human remains that have been entrusted to our custody.

These positions include our removal personnel, embalmers, cosmetologists, funeral directors, cemetery associates handling burials and entombments, crematory operators, and any other associates who handle human remains. These positions involve a calling unlike any other; one that requires both special people and special care.

At all times, we must remember that what is passing through our hands or our facility is not a mere commodity; it is someone's child, parent, spouse or other loved one. That casket being buried in our cemetery is not just a fancy box; it contains the remains of some very special person. It must be handled accordingly. A gravesite within our cemetery is not merely a patch of grass. It is the final resting place of someone who is very dear to one of our clients, who may view that space as sacred ground. That urn sitting on a shelf in your funeral home is more than just a

decoration. It is the receptacle that holds someone's mortal remains. All human remains we encounter, all final resting places, and all caskets, vaults and urns containing human remains, must be



treated with the utmost dignity and respect. Although any job can become routine after awhile, we must never become complacent and lose sight of our unique responsibilities.

Many states have laws recognizing the special nature of human remains, and the importance our society attributes to them. For example, grave desecration is a crime in most states. California law goes so far as to make it illegal to use profanity at any time while removing remains or preparing them for disposition. However, when the essence

of one's business involves the handling of human remains, it is not enough to simply avoid mistreatment or disrespect of remains. To the contrary, we must strive to treat all human remains with

reverence, and at all times act as we would if the family were present.

Failure to treat remains sensitively and respectfully can have serious consequences. Lawsuits may be filed. Disciplinary action may be taken by state regulators.

Negative publicity

could result. Those are very good reasons for treating human remains with the utmost dignity and respect. However, the most compelling reason for handling remains in that manner is that it is simply the right thing to do. Our client families deserve no less. Ours is a unique and special calling, and we must constantly strive to live up to that responsibility. ➔

## Joe Hayes

Vice President  
Ethics and Business Conduct