

# Tending To Hearts

“A Snyder Funeral Homes Publication”

## Funerals and Social Media

By J. Todd Snyder

“Is it okay to take a photo at the funeral home?” I not only get this question frequently – but I’m also asked to be the guy to take the photo (who really wants the old man in the dark suit in their photo anyway, right?).

Of course it is fine to take photos at a funeral, depending. For many groups, it is a rare gathering when all the branches of a family tree are collected – so a photo seems in order. The venue seems secondary.

Is it okay to photograph the decedent in the casket? The urn? Stunning displays, personalized with enlarged photos, florals, memorabilia, and all manner of items help tell the story of the life lived. It’s hard to not want a snapshot to remember the scene. But what will people think? Am I weird? What will people think? Is it appropriate? The answer is yes...and no.

In Victorian days, funeral photos – specifically photographs of decedents – became fashionable. Elaborate sets were created to memorialize these scenes...and even these people.

Today everyone carries a great quality camera with them in their smart phone; many people have become adept to posting their every move to social media accounts. How do we reconcile this with the decorum of a funeral or memorial service?

Those Victorian “death photos” have fallen from favor, yet many families still capture a final image. If you are not an immediate family member, it’s best that you leave that for the closest of kin. Consider photos of flowers and displays as a lovely reminder of the event - and even then with the permission of the family.

Social media looms large in our world. Whether you allow smart phones at your dinner table or not is a battle for you and your family. But smart phones walk into the funeral home in every purse and pocket.

Mercifully, selfies taken at funerals are rare. More common are “check-ins” which equate to a digital visit or “I was here.”

Posting anything from a funeral can infringe on a family’s privacy, and rightfully, is looked down on. Respect the decedent and the family, do nothing that could interfere with their grieving process. It seems odd to have to say - but so pervasive is technology in our culture – and some people can be thoughtless. Your ability to own and operate a smart phone does not equate to permission to transgress the etiquette to intrude on someone else’s grief. Unless you are part of the immediate family, don’t risk offending someone.

And yet social media certainly has a place in grief and our response to bereavement. Here are some simple guidelines on digital media as it relates to funerals:

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## **Don't Share News that is Not Yours**

The truth is you learn about most deaths now on social media these days. Texting is quicker, but a post to a Facebook account reaches a larger audience quickly. A grieving family will text extended family and close friends, but they generally rely on social media to distribute the news. These outlets: Facebook, Instagram, X, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and others have become the newspapers of our day. Following a loved one's passing, sharing that news with others is a job that vies for the attention of survivors along with emotions, exhaustion, and a long list of practical details. Telling everyone about their loss may not be their highest priority. Don't make it yours. Give the close family members some space – and time – to own their grief. Let them post the news of their loss first to social media. If you have become aware of the passing, keep it to yourself. Posting to social media is likely not the family's top priority, it's not your place to prioritize that for them.

## **Express Your Sympathy, Just Don't Go Overboard**

Once the family has made their loss public, it is very appropriate to post a comment expressing your sympathy. Don't inundate them with private messages or questions. Now is not the time with prying questions. A simple "You have my sympathy, and will remain in my thoughts and prayers" is appropriate.

## **Remember this is Not About You**

If someone else makes a faux pas following a death – or towards a surviving family - just ignore it. Don't address it publicly. Address them privately if you must, but don't cause more attention, don't cause more pain. Remember this is not about you.

## **Use Social Media to Help**

The power of social media is communication with large groups of people, quickly. A call to action on someone's behalf can be very beneficial to someone in need. Consider using your post to form a meal train, child care, or donations that will benefit the family. Others are often eager to help, but don't have an idea for a tangible way to feel useful. Be wary of a *Go Fund Me* account to benefit a family, if it was not established by them directly. The news is peppered with reports of these accounts never ending up benefiting the family. Instead, make a contribution directly to the family or funeral home. Snyder Funeral Homes offers a crowd-funding feature that makes this easy and secure.

## **Get the Facts**

Typically within a day or two, an announcement or obituary will be approved by the immediate family. This usually includes some biographical information, a list of

some family members, and the date, time and location of funeral or memorial services. The family may repost this to their social media accounts, but it is always available on the funeral home's website. This is the best source for correct information about the funeral schedule. If you plan to share this information with others, check this information twice – remember, check the date, not just the day, some events are planned a week or two in advance.

## **Check Your Privacy Settings**

Before you post, or share, or comment on sensitive information, it's important to know who can see it. Do you have a variety of privacy settings? Perhaps your Instagram settings override your Facebook settings – or your phone may have different privacy settings than your tablet. Before you post or share, verify who will be able to see it.

## **Read the Room**

Just like everyone's response in grief is unique – every funeral is different. Many funerals are just plain sad, the result of a tragic and sudden loss to death. Some funerals are less sad, the culmination of many years of illness and the death is viewed as a "home-going" or "celebration." When you attend in person, the case of the former, a photograph with family or friends seems out-of-synch. But in the later, if laughter is the tone of the room, a reunion photo may be just fine.

## **Good taste prevails**

"What should I say at the funeral home?" There are no magic words to comfort those mourning. Your presence means more than your words. Remember, they likely will not remember your words – but they will remember your presence. Perhaps the best advice is to put your phone away, or certainly to silence it, and to seek permission from the closest family members to take pictures.

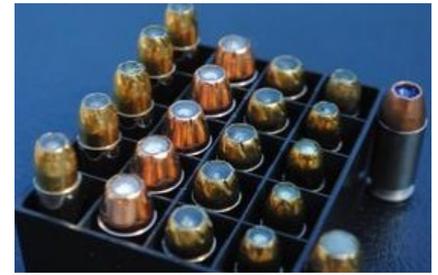
## **Human connection**

From a touching tribute on Twitter to a memorialized Facebook account, social media can be a strong force in grief, bereavement and mourning. It is not, however, a replacement for the personal touch. No digital comment replaces a warm hug and physical presence – the personal support when it is needed most. Remember your use of social media can be powerful and meaningful as you consider the feelings of others is paramount.

*J. Todd Snyder is a third-generation funeral director. He lives in Mansfield, Ohio with his wife Linda, also a funeral director, and works alongside his two children Hannah Snyder Wernecke and Gideon Snyder, also funeral directors.*



*Holy Smoke, LLC provides their Patriotic Salute above where they can add custom colors producing the red, white, and blue smoke (other colors also available)*



## Cremation Creations

contributed by Beth Buxton, LFD, Snyder Funeral Homes

Holy Smoke, LLC started in 2011 in Stockton, Alabama. Co-owners, Clem Parnell and Thad Holmes were friends and state law enforcement officers who decided they wanted to create a unique way of creating a meaningful tribute. This began their endeavor of placing cremated remains in ammunition.

Some reasons Holy Smoke, LLC came into existence was to allow an outdoorsperson a fitting tribute based on their hobbies and interests, a way to allow the deceased to participate in that last hunt, and it is a way to feel useful after death by providing a source of protection for their loved ones.

Holy Smoke staff fills almost any caliber or gauge of ammunition with care and reverence. Approximately one pound of cremated remains allows a case of ammunition to be filled. For Holy Smoke, LLC it is all about choices and how a life can be honored and celebrated, while providing a cost effective, ecologically friendly option.

Please visit their website at [www.myholysmoke.com](http://www.myholysmoke.com) to read about their history and all their offerings. Please contact the associates of Snyder Funeral Homes for more information and pricing at 740-362-1611.



## Comfort Corner—Quarterly Featured Recipe

### Homemade Butter Chicken

recipe by Antonio Rey, Apprentice, Snyder Funeral Homes



#### MARINADE

- 2 lbs boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 1 cup plain full fat yogurt
- 1 tbsp garam masala
- 1 tbsp salt

1. Cut boneless skinless chicken thighs into 1-inch cubes, ensuring similar size for even cooking.
2. Place cut chicken thighs into a container with 1 cup of plain full-fat yogurt, 1 tbsp of garam masala, and 1 tbsp of salt.
3. Leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes, but preferably overnight.

### Butter Chicken Ingredients & Directions

- ◆ 1 large yellow onion
- ◆ 1 tbsp of ginger paste, or 1 2-inch knob of garlic finely diced
  - ◆ 6 cloves of diced garlic, or 1 tbsp of minced garlic
  - ◆ 2 tbsp vegetable oil
  - ◆ 2 tsp paprika
  - ◆ 2 tsp cumin
  - ◆ 1 tbsp garam masala
- ◆ 1 14 oz can crushed tomatoes
  - ◆ 2/3 cup of water
  - ◆ 1 cup heavy cream
  - ◆ 2 tbsp butter
- ◆ Basmati Rice with Cilantro to serve
  - ◆ Naan to serve

1. After marinating your chicken thighs, start heating a large cast-iron or ceramic pot over medium-high heat.
2. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil and wait for the oil to shimmer.
3. Add the chicken in batches, searing for 2-3 minutes per side. We want to develop a thick fond on the bottom of our pot, as well as get nice color on the chicken. Set aside our seared chicken for later as it is cooked.
4. After searing our chicken, lower the pot to a medium heat. Add slightly more oil to the pot, and add our diced onion, ginger paste, diced garlic, as well as salt and pepper to taste. Stir the veggies often, cooking for 2-3 minutes or until softened.
5. Next we will add all of our spices to the pot, mixing in 2 tsp paprika, 2 tsp cumin, and 1 tbsp garam masala. Stir this mix into the veggies, toasting the spices for 1-2 minutes, or until very fragrant.
6. After our spices have finished toasting, add our 14 oz can of crushed tomatoes to the pot as well as 2/3 cup of water. Stir well, and let simmer uncovered for 6-8 minutes, or until reduced. (\* Optional: use hand blender to blend the vegetables into a puree)
7. Once reduced, add our chicken back into the pot. Let simmer for an additional 3-5 minutes to ensure that our chicken is fully cooked.
8. Stir in 1 cup of heavy cream, mixing while adding to the pot. Stir until fully incorporated. Allow it to be brought to a light simmer and reduce the temperature to medium-low. Allow to simmer for 3 minutes.
9. Remove the pot from the heat and add 2 tbsp of butter. Stir until fully incorporated and serve with basmati rice and fresh cilantro.

# Cemetery Spotlight– Mound Hill Cemetery, Seville, Ohio



## *“The Seville Giants” - Contributed by Kim Pattee, Apprentice Snyder-Rodman Funeral Center*

In the village of Seville Ohio, Mound Hill Cemetery hosts the final resting place for both the “tallest married couple in the world” and their infant son who set the record for the “largest human baby known to medical history”.

Captain Martin Van Buren Bates and his wife Anna Haining Swan Bates settled in the small town of Seville Ohio in 1873 after the passing of their daughter who had passed shortly after birth. Captain Bates stood at a towering 7’9” and 470 pounds while Mrs. Bates stood even taller at 7’11” and 413 pounds. Their second child, a son, who also sadly passed away 11 hours after his birth was recorded as being 30 inches long and weighing in at nearly 24 pounds.

Anna Bates would pass in 1889 and be buried with their infant son who passed prior in 1879. A grieving Captain Bates arranged for a custom monument to be made to memorialize his wife, tall statue of a woman high up on a pedestal now stands as an eternal tribute to Mrs. Anna Bates. Captain Bates would later pass in 1919 and join his wife and infant son in their final resting place below the towering statue that stands in Mound Hill Cemetery. Mound Hill Cemetery is located on the north side of East Main Street/Seville Road in Seville Ohio and is open to the public. Along with the monument the Seville Historical Society houses a display of the Bates family’s belongings and is located at 70 W Main St, Seville, OH.

(Source information: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/resting-place-of-the-giants>)

## Snyder Rodman Funeral Center

### *“A CENTURY OF CARE”*

The Snyder family has been honored to serve Ohio families for over 100 years. Since the funeral home founding in 1922, five generations of Snyders have gone above and beyond to comfort the living while creating meaningful tributes to honor and celebrate each unique life lived. To learn more about our story, please watch the documentary produced by [New Day Creative](#)

## Our Snyder Funeral Home Family—Est. 1922



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