

THE LIGATURE

THE TIE THAT BINDS



Official Publication of the

John A. Gupton College Alumni Association

President's Letter

Dear Gupton Alumni:

I would first like to say what an honor it is to serve as the John A. Gupton 2013-2014 President. I hope that I can represent the Alumni Association as proudly as so many others have done in the past.

What a great time we all had at this year's reunion, talking with others and sharing stories from the past. If you missed this year's reunion I want to encourage each of you to start making plans to attend next year. We have come a long way, but with your support I feel that we can make the Alumni Association even better.

On behalf of the entire association, I would like to extend a '*Thank You*' to Nashville Wilbert Vault, Aurora, and Batesville Casket for their continued support of the Alumni Association.

I would also like to invite everyone to visit our new alumni website. It is a great way to keep you informed about the college and alumni news.

I encourage each of you to consider giving back to your college either through the Harris O. Yates Endowment Fund, alumni donations, or honorariums to the library.

In closing, if you have any suggestions about how to make our Alumni Association work better for the future, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Warm Regards,

Tim Bond
Class of 1989



Want to go Green??

Coming soon:
Get an electronic
version of The Ligature
(We are building our
database)

Email us:
padgett@guptoncollege.edu
allen@guptoncollege.edu

Check us out on facebook

JOHN A GUPTON
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Tag photos,
leave comments
find old friends

Or check out our web site

www.guptonalumni.com

Obituaries

Charles A. "Tony" Alexander

Charles A. "Tony" Alexander, class of 1967, age 67 of Gallatin, passed away Tuesday, September 24, 2013. Funeral Service was held Thursday, September 26th from the chapel of Alexander Funeral Home with Dr. Larry Yarborough officiating. Interment followed in Sumner Memorial Gardens. Tony was born December 22, 1945 in Trousdale County. He is preceded in death by his father, Paul D. Alexander and sister, Paula Ann Alexander Troutt. He is survived by his wife, Sue Newby Alexander of Gallatin; mother, Rubye Anne Russell Alexander of Gallatin; children, Doug Alexander and Travis



Alexander of Nashville, Jennie Alexander, **class of 2011**, Brandy Shrum (Jon) and Bobbie Newby of Gallatin, Kipp Compton (Jocelyn) of Murfreesboro and Marni Akins of Smyrna; grandchildren, Addison Shrum and Will Osborne; brother-in-law, Bill Troutt of Gallatin. Tony was owner of Family Heritage Funeral Home & Alexander Funeral Home in Gallatin.

Billy Joe Jordan

Billy Joe Jordan, class of 1958, passed away on June 26, 2013. Funeral Services were held on July 1, 2013 at the First Baptist Church in Blakely, GA. Billy Joe was born on August 26, 1930 in Blakely to the late Joseph Thomas and Ruth Houston Jordan. He was a retired funeral director and former President of Manry-Jordan-Hodges Funeral Home in Blakely, GA. He graduated from John A. Gupton Mortuary in 1958. He was a member of the Magnolia Lodge #86 Masonic order, the Blakely Eastern Star, and Deacon of First Baptist Church. He served 29 years as Coroner of Early County and was a US Air Force Veteran serving in the Korean Conflict and he was the voice of the Early County Bobcats from 1972 until 2011. He was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Carolyn Hearn Jordan. His survivors include a son, 2 daughters, one brother, 8 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren. Manry-Jordan-Hodges Funeral Home.

Floyd D. Ricketts

Floyd D. Ricketts, class of 1959, funeral services were conducted Monday, Dec. 17, 2012 at Ligon and Bobo Funeral Home with Michael Grooms officiating. Interment followed in the Wilson County Memorial Gardens. Floyd Ricketts, 76, of Lebanon, passed away Saturday, Dec. 15, 2012 at University Medical Center in Lebanon. Floyd was

born Aug. 11, 1936 in Wilson County, the son of the late Girsham Greely and Floy Tarpley Ricketts. He was also preceded in death by two brothers: Hall and Edward Ricketts; two sisters: Virginia Fuqua and Nettie Ruth Ricketts. Mr. Ricketts was a 1955 graduate of Mt. Juliet High School and later graduated from John A. Gupton College of Mortuary Science. He worked for over 50 years as a funeral director and embalmer in Wilson County, having owned Ligon & Bobo-Ricketts Funeral Home from 1976 to 1980. He was a member of the Highland Heights Church of Christ. Bass Funeral Home of Gordonsville, TN., was in charge of arrangements.

Johnny Wilson

Johnny Wilson, class of 1959, aged 81, of Brunswick, GA died Wednesday the 7th of August 2013 at the Southeast Georgia Health System. Funeral services were held at the First Baptist Church of Brunswick Saturday the 10th of August 2013 with Reverend Jim Crandall and Dr. Ronny Spillers officiating. Interment followed the service in Chapel Park Cemetery. Mr. Wilson was a native of Jenkins County, GA born the 24th of September 1931 to the late William Monroe Wilson and the late Annie Lewis Wilson. After returning from the US Army, Mr. Wilson was employed by Fletcher Funeral Home in October of 1952, where he worked for six years before attending John A. Gupton School. After graduation in 1959, he moved to Brunswick Georgia where he was employed by Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home in July 1960. Mr. Wilson became Co-Owner of Edo Miller and Sons Inc. in 1962 and was later appointed President of Edo Miller and Sons Inc. He was President from 1964 until 1993, in which that time he became consultant of Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home. Mr. Wilson was a 50 year member of the Georgia Funeral Directors Association; he was also a member of the Georgia Graduate of Embalmers and a past member of the Brunswick Jaycees and Kiwanis Club. Mr. Wilson was a member of the First Baptist Church of Brunswick, where he served as Deacon and Sunday school teacher and other various activities. Family request in lieu of flowers memorial contributions be made in the honor of Mr. Johnny Wilson to Cross Point Church Building Fund, C/O Capital Bank, 10134 Two Notch Road, Columbia, S.C. 29223 Arrangements were entrusted to Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home.



Micah Rex Morris

Micah Rex Morris, class of 2009, bounded into the world on June 6, 1985 to Lana Waldron and Thomas Desoto Morris in Payson, Utah. He died August 10, 2013 in Sandy, Utah in a vehicle accident. Micah lived 28 wonderful years, and he lived them fully. He was blessed with a sharp intellect, and a deep sense of fairness and compassion. He was filled with wonder and awe at God's creations and had a love for knowledge. Micah graduated from Timpview High School, in Provo, Utah in May 2003. He obtained his Funeral Director License from Gupton College, in Nashville, Tennessee in December 2009. In December 2011, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Philosophy from Utah State University. He was and always will be a proud Aggie. Micah was a traveler. He



was not afraid to leave home and seek new adventures in pursuit of his education and dreams. In doing so, he made friends of every kind across the country and as he moved on, he did his best to stay in touch with them. Micah eagerly embraced his career as a funeral director with Russon Brothers

of Bountiful, Utah earlier this year. He cared deeply. He loved the work. He enjoyed his colleagues, and he felt honored to help families through their grief. Micah had the gift of simple faith. The golden rule set the path in his life. His heart was pure, and he loved and followed the Savior. He did it in his own way, but he did it consistently. Micah read many books, but the worn Bible at his bedside was the most treasured. Micah loved the simple things in life — camping in the wilds of Idaho, finding the wettest, coldest spot in a mountain waterfall to climb under, to smell and touch the earth and its wonders. He took great pride in canoeing the length of Redfish Lake with his mother, and in helping her check off a "bucket list" item by canoeing through the rushes and marshlands of Cache Valley. He loved playing cards, listening to music and long walks, and he delighted in catching a sunrise or sunset. Micah was blessed with a sharp intellect, and deep sense of compassion. He was an avid reader, and set a goal to read all the works of John Steinbeck. He almost made that goal. He was an explorer. Within weeks of arriving in a new location, Micah knew where to find the most interesting local exhibits, entertainment and food. His zest for life could not be contained, but spilled over into the lives of all those he could coax along in joining his adventures. Micah was deeply devoted to those he loved, particularly his family. He was a tease — but he was also their strongest defender and their greatest friend. He was big-hearted, and felt tremendous gratitude for the people and circumstances in his broad but simple life. He was one of a kind with a smile that lit up the room. We will miss his always-

entertaining stories and his loving, generous spirit. Micah will be missed daily by his parents, Lana and Rob Perisho and family, and Tom and Lynette Morris and family; his adoring "big" sister Megan (Glen) Walker and his loving "little" brother, Daniel; his grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, spiraling out to more friends than one could count. Our lives are forever changed by his presence and his sudden loss. We are blessed beyond measure by his humor and tender heart and the life he shared with us. In lieu of flowers, please do something kind in Micah's memory.

Joe H. Sellers

Joe H. Sellers, class of 1962, age 72, of Leesburg, Florida, was born January 3, 1941 in Cleveland, Ohio and died Tuesday, August 27, 2013. For over 50 years, Joe worked and was Vice President at Beyers Funeral Home. He was City Commissioner from January 1972 to 1980; past Worshipful Master of Local Masonic Lodge #58 and 50 year member; past District Deputy Grand Master Florida F.&A.M.; 1981 past Grand Most Illustrious Master in the Council of the York Rite; past President of the Leesburg Sunrise Rotary; and past Board/President of the Leesburg Area Chamber of Commerce. Joe was on the LifeStream Board of Directors and Past President for over 30 years; Mayor in 1974 and 1978; FMEA Board from 1977 to 1981 and President 1979 to 1980; City's Personnel Committee from 1976 to 1980 and chairman 1979 to 1980. He was a member of the Florida Electrical Municipalities Association; Lake County League of Cities; Leesburg Jaycees, receiving the Distinguished Service Award and Florida Municipal Utilities Association. Joe belonged to Main Street Baptist Church for over 30 years and was attending Christian Ministries Worship Center in Leesburg. Joe is survived by his daughters, Lisa M.(Mike)Pitts of Pembroke Pines, FL, Kimberly R.(Jack)Bitting of Leesburg, FL; sisters, Liz Sprecher of Bushnell, FL, Patty Price of Goose Creek, SC; brothers, Bob(Karen)Davidson of Fairview Heights, IL, Bud Davidson of Oklahoma City, OK; eight grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and his dog, Bruiser. He was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth in 2003 and brother, Glen. Funeral Services were Saturday, August 31, 2013 at Morrison United Methodist Church, Leesburg. Interment with Masonic Rites Services followed at Lone Oak Cemetery, Leesburg.



Correction to spring 2013 Issue of Newsletter: In the latest edition of The Ligature the obit for W.O. Billy Williams contained an error. He was from Soperton, Georgia (GA) not Alabama. (AL). We do apologize for the error.

Alumni News

Alumni Reunion

The 2013 Alumni Reunion was a huge success. We had our traditional Wilbert sponsored reception on Friday evening, which is always a largely attended event. There were over 40 people attending the Saturday morning's breakfast, sponsored by Batesville and Aurora Casket companies. The Saturday business meeting was held at the college with a large group in attendance. The meeting was called to order by David Horner, '76, with the Invocation led by Gene Pike. Mr. Pike also gave the report of the Board of Directors. The meeting was held in the new classroom on the main floor. The new classroom, with new digital equipment, has seating for approximately 110 students. The renovation also included administrative offices, a new marketing/conference room, and office space for the TFDA offices. President Spann gave the State of the College Report. Mr. Spann announced that following the meeting there would be a brief ceremony to dedicate the new classroom in memory of Dr. Yates followed by a luncheon. Mr. Spann also mentioned that the college is up for SACS and American Board Accreditation in the next few years. Currently, the National Board Rate for the college was at 100%, which Mr. Spann credited Donna Collard with a job well done. He announced that the new furniture, pictures, and accessories were all donations from the four major SCI markets in Tennessee. At the conclusion of the meeting, new officers were installed and the meeting adjourned.



We want to thank Kent Kressenburg, class of 2010, for providing some great alumni pictures. Kent is pictured here with Mrs. Betty Yates, after the dedication of the new Dr. Harris O. Yates Lecture Hall.



Dedication of the Dr. Harris O. Yates Lecture Hall

The new lecture auditorium was dedicated in memory of Dr. Harris Oliver Yates for his dedicated years of service to the college. The Yates' family was invited for the ceremony. His wife, children and grandchildren were very appreciative. A luncheon was held following the ceremony for alumni to meet with the Yates' family.

Pictured is President Spann receiving a dedicated section of the "Southern Funeral Director Magazine" article from editor and John A. Gupton honorary alumni, John Yopp. A portion of the magazine was dedicated to the life and work of Dr. Harris O. Yates.



Friday Night Wilbert Reception

Nashville Wilbert once again provided a fantastic evening for the alumni on Friday night. The Wilbert Reception has become an Alumni Annual Meeting and Reunion Tradition. Good food, drink and fellowship gave those present an opportunity to meet new friends and renew old friendships. A special thank you to Danny Hurt!

Wilbert

Alumni Breakfast

For several years, Batesville and Aurora Casket Companies have sponsored the annual alumni breakfast. We had a wonderful breakfast, filled with good people and good conversation. Be sure to thank David Bentley, class of 1968, Bill Hudson, class of 1991, and Charlotte Williams.



Aurora
Because You Care.

Saturday Night Event

The Saturday night event was held this year at Miss Jeanne's Mystery Dinner Theatre, near Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. There were a large number of attendees with the Gupton group and all shared a good laugh at the dinner theatre. The picture was taken while all were on break from the show!



New Officers Installed

President: Tim Bond, '89	Nashville, TN
First Vice-President: Greg Greene, '08	Athens, TN
Second Vice-President: Jeff Duffer, '84	Brentwood, TN
Treasurer: Bill Hudson, '91	Franklin, TN
Secretary: Billy Yarbrough, '84	Jackson, TN



President Spann, Greg Greene, Billy Yarbrough, Tim Bond, and Jeff Duffer.

Redesign of Alumni Website

The John A. Gupton alumni website now has a fresh new look! Special thanks to Tracy Hamm Allen, class of 1998, Director of Alumni Affairs, for spearheading the effort! Michael Fox, Fox Enterprises, did a wonderful job with the new added features and overall design. This website is more user-friendly and will also provide more up to date information to alumni. Please make sure that you continue to update the college of any address changes. If you haven't visited it in a while, I encourage you to do so:

www.guptonalumni.com

College News

Graduation Commencement Exercises Set

The 2013 Graduation Ceremony will be on Friday, December 6, 2013, 2:00 pm at Blakemore United Methodist Church.

Summer Top 10% John A. Gupton College

George Benuska	Nashville, Tennessee
Bobby Cook	Portland, Tennessee
Dana Gerecke	Murfreesboro, Tennessee
Caleb Leach	Speedwell, Tennessee
Jason Mason	Andersonville, Tennessee
Lindsey Pack	Clinton, Tennessee
Timothy Walker	Bean Station, Tennessee
Jason Wright	Columbia, Tennessee

Marketing Class Trips

The Marketing Class of John A. Gupton College was honored to be guests of Wilbert Vault Company in Nashville on May 21st. Wilbert provided breakfast at the Holiday Inn on West End along with a presentation prior to the tour of the Wilbert plant. Thanks to Jackie Purcell and Danny Hurt and all of the Wilbert team that was involved in making this trip a success!



On May 9th, Aurora Casket Company hosted the marketing class of John A Gupton College. The students were provided a great lunch at the Applewood Restaurant and had the opportunity to meet several Aurora representatives during lunch and during the tour of the plant. Thanks David Bentley, class of 1968, for arranging this trip.



The Marketing Class visited the Batesville Casket Plant in Manchester TN on June 13th. The class had an exciting time learning different ways of casket production. Thanks to Charlotte Williams and Wendell Cates for being such great hosts!





SCI Gives “Cosmetic Touches” To John A. Gupton College



Jeff Duffer, SCI Nashville Market Director, recently launched a campaign to garner support from his colleagues in providing John A. Gupton College a number of cosmetic touches and furnishings. After sharing the idea with Gene Pike, SCI Chattanooga Market Director, Fred Berry, SCI Knoxville Market Director and E.C. Daves, SCI Memphis Market Director, Jeff received enthusiastic support from the Tennessee SCI community. The financial support, interior design services, furniture and other items provided by the Tennessee SCI team has given John A. Gupton College an extensive update to its facilities. “I simply felt John

A. Gupton College's high educational and professional standards should be reflected more clearly in the campus' physical appearance as well”, said Jeff Duffer. “I was grateful for the excitement and gracious response I received from my SCI colleagues across the state and the opportunity for SCI to give something back to the school.” Jeff's campaign allowed SCI to provide new furniture, update the interior design and provide the labor that went into the effort. Service Corporation International (SCI) is North America's leading provider of death-care products and services, with more than 21,000 dedicated employees and a network of more than 1,800 funeral homes and cemeteries. Everyone is invited to stop by the campus at 1616 Church Street in Nashville and see the updates that the College has received from the SCI Tennessee team.



NFDA Holds First Certified Crematory Operator Program Certification at John A. Gupton College

On Friday, September 20, 2013, John A. Gupton College hosted the National Funeral Director's Association Board of Directors along with local funeral directors and embalmers for a day of cremation certification. This one day seminar was filled with great information for funeral directors in relation to cremation. Gupton was proud to participate in the roll-out of this new program for the NFDA. Gupton College presented guests of the seminar with a great breakfast and the NFDA supplied the attendees with a great lunch. Special thanks given to Mike Nicodemus and Colleen Murphy Klein, with the NFDA staff for their combined effort to make this seminar successful. In addition to the NFDA Board of Directors, this seminar was full of Gupton Alumni!



NFDA CCO Program



NFDA President Bob Rosson and Gupton President Steve Spann



NFDA Executive Director Christine Pepper, President Steve Spann, Tracy Hamm Allen and Colleen Murphy Klein



Tracy Hamm Allen, Mike Nicodemus and Donna Collard

CLASS OF 1963

The alumni association is trying to locate members of the Class of 1962, which we have no current addresses. We would like them to attend this coming year's reunion. If anyone knows how to contact them please contact the college.

NCA: Indicates no current address. DEC: Deceased

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	STATUS
Acree	William D.	136 Peters Street	Calhoun	GA	30701	DEC
Almond	Howard Glen	1020 Spring St. N.W.	Atlanta	GA	30309	
Blair	Joel	Rt 2, Box 151	Belton	SC	29627	NCA
Bond	James Turner	302 Carlton Pl.	Goodlettsville	TN	37072	DEC
Braswell	James Reginal	Box 391	Conway	AR	72032	NCA
Buckner	J. Dan	204 East Hills Terrace	Dickson	TN	37055	NCA
Burke	Roger	1355 Crescent Dr.	Cookeville	TN	38501	
Carson	Jerry H.		Bolivar	MO		NCA
Cash *	Ted Dwain	376 Fairview Road	Stockbridge	GA	30281	
Cawthron	Harold D.	212 Crest Drive	Tullahoma	TN	37388	DEC
Chapman, Jr.	Clyde A.	10141 Colerain Road	Saint Marys	GA	31558	
Dickson	Lawrence Dale	1107 W. 22nd	Stuggart	AR	72160	NCA
Elmore	Otis	221 Broad Street	Sumter	SC	29150	NCA
Grant	Harold Bruce	2014 Brookview	Nashville	TN	37214	NCA
Griffin, Jr.	William L.		Pittsboro	NC		NCA
Hamlen	Thomas Benjamin	4344 W. Highland Apt. 124	Macon	GA	31210	NCA
Holt	William T.		Cookeville	TN		NCA
Hunt, Jr.	George Riley	P.O. Box 1221	Perry	GA	31069	
Jester	John Shelby					NCA
Johnson	James E.	305 Hallbrook Drive	Gray	TN	37615	
Jones	Omar Benjamire	Rt. 3 Box 444	Baldwyn	MS	38824	
Kirk	Sherrill N.	P.O. Box 219	Marion	AL	36756	
Leitch, Jr. *	Powell Murry	427=RW Riverside St.	Covington	VA	24426	NCA
Lipton	David Charles	1204 N. Main St.	Monticello	AR	71655	
Lorimer III	Buford F.	Chattanooga Fun Home P.O. Box 9	Hixson	TN	37343-0009	NCA
Luna *	Bill R.	211 Hermitage Drive	Tullahoma	TN	37388	
Lusk	Jamie R.	1200 Union Avenue	Memphis	TN		NCA
Mason *	Glen Douglas	901 Marshall	Little Rock	AR	72200	NCA
McBride, Jr.	William Lee	206 N. Commerce St.	Ripley	MS	38663	
McNeil, Jr.	John A.	P.O. Box 127	Sneedville	TN	37869	
Moody	Harry G.	1679 Johnson Rd.	Macon	GA	31210	
Moore	Ray Lynwood	228 South Main Street	Sardis	MS	38666	
Morgan	Nathan C.		Brunswick	GA		NCA
Newby *	Bobby C.	693 Creston Road	Crossville	TN	38571	
Nix	Jerry Wayne	2255 Pint Circle	Longs	SC	29568	
Osborn	Bill Doyle	Dorling-Mouser Funeral Ho	Brownsville	TN	78520	NCA
Partlow	Jackie Ray	2384 Coles Ferry Rd	Lebanon	TN	37075	
Patterson	Jack S.		Hartsville	TN		NCA
Philipp	Donald	6741 Hendon Ln	Houston	TX	77036	NCA
Pittman	George B.		Naples	FL		NCA
Potts	William Ronald	1803 Lorain Ave	Pulaski	TN	38478-4809	
Ray III	Fletcher Holmes	2215 Liberty St.	Canton	MS	39046	NCA
Richards *	Ralph Ray	P.O. Box 656	Logan	WV	25601	NCA
Rutledge	Edward E.	9 Sharolyn St.	Sumter	SC	29154-1629	
Scriven, Jr.	Robert	Route 2 Box 483				NCA
Seabaugh	Robert L.	1426 Madison 222	Fredericktown	MO	63645	
Shackelford	Don H.	Box 232	Bolivar	TN	38008	DEC
Smith	Adeline	109 Rands Avenue, S.E.	Huntsville	AL		NCA
St. Claire, Jr.	Duncan		Columbia	SC		NCA
Thomas	Dean N.		Silver Point	TN		NCA
Thompson	Walton Ray	843 N. Main St.	Dyer	TN	38330	
Todd	Jack Harold		England	AR		NCA
Waldeck	George W.	554 Bay Ridge Rd	Jacksonville	FL	32216	NCA
Welch	Phillip Oliver	Box 588	Starkville	MS	39759	NCA
Wilcox	Thomas Eugene	1065 Jordan St.	Carthage	MS	39051	NCA
Wray	Kenneth Joe	Box 664	Rural Hill	NC	27045	NCA
Wright	Joe	814 S. Broad St.	Rome	GA	30161	

Alumni Association

John A. Gupton College
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John A. Gupton Alumni Association

www.guptionalumni.org

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