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**ICCFA Magazine
author spotlight**

► **Reinholt** is a certified celebrant based in Edmonton, Alberta, working with several funeral homes in Edmonton and the surrounding area.

He received his funeral director's and embalmer's diploma through Mount Royal University, Calgary, and is a licensed funeral director in the province of Alberta.

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Editor's note

The ICCFA believes in the importance of celebrant training for funeral directors and cemetery workers who wish to better help families and to be successful in the 21st century. In addition to articles by celebrant trainer Glenda Stansbury of the InSight Institute, ICCFA Magazine will be running, as a regular feature, stories by celebrants about specific services they put together for families.

Contact ICCFA Magazine Managing Editor Susan Loving, sloving@iccf.com

- if you are a celebrant with a story about a service that the family involved is willing to let you share in order to inspire others or
- if you have any tips for conducting good celebrant services.

How to become a celebrant

Becoming a celebrant involves more than learning how to conduct a personalized funeral or memorial service. Celebrants trained by the InSight Institute learn how to talk and listen to grieving families and how to work with funeral directors.

- The ICCFA University College of 21st Century Services includes celebrant training by funeral director and celebrant Glenda Stansbury and minister Doug Manning. Students successfully completing the course receive certification from the InSight Institute as celebrants. **ICCF AU 2013 will be July 19-24** at the Fogelman Conference Center, Memphis, Tennessee. Details will be available in the spring of 2013 at www.iccf.com or by calling 1.800.645.7700.
- Contact Stansbury (glenda@insightbooks.com) or go to the InSight Books website, www.insightbooks.com, for information about celebrant training sessions scheduled around the country.

CELEBRANTS

It's easy to say that everyone deserves to be honored and remembered with a funeral or memorial service, but sometimes difficult to put into practice. Celebrant Todd Reinholt took the time to find a meaningful way to celebrate the life of a homeless man.

He died homeless but not forgotten

As celebrants, we are called upon once in a while to officiate at services that are a bit out of the ordinary. In fact, this happens to me quite often.

I recall a service I was asked to perform for a man who died at the age of 58. He had no family, no home and no possessions, with the exception of the clothing he wore.

Clarence had many health problems, and his support system was a shelter in Calgary, Alberta, which in essence was his home. His family was the shelter support team and others who came to the shelter for help.

His service was small, as expected. The attendees were his support workers and a few others from the shelter, who were brought to the funeral home on a bus.

Clarence loved to play cards, so prior to the service, I placed a royal flush in his hands as he lay in the casket.

He had a sense of humor and would often joke with the staff at the shelter about needing a new pair of socks—despite the fact that both of his legs had been amputated years earlier.

Saying he needed a new pair of socks became a standing joke between him and the staff. Of course I placed a pair of socks in the casket with him as well.

The service was not long, but I focused on Clarence's personality and what other people had told me about him. He had a sense of humor; he was cranky at times; he was not one to mince words!

We opened the service up to anyone who wanted to come

forward and share a story or two. A couple of his friends stepped forward and spoke briefly.

At the conclusion of the service, I announced that everyone there would be receiving a pair of socks and a set of hand warmers in memory of Clarence.

It was the middle of winter and I had done some research at the shelter while preparing for the service, learning that donations of warm items of clothing were welcome and needed.

I felt that giving out socks and hand warmers would be a good way to memorialize Clarence as well as a way to provide for the care and comfort of the homeless people attending the service. Everyone seemed to appreciate the gifts.

On that day, I believe we made a difference not only for this man who had no family but also for many others whose day-to-day life is far from easy.



People who attended the funeral were given hand warmers as well as socks.



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