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Wreaths Across America Announces Theme for 2022

COLUMBIA FALLS, ME— Each year, millions of Americans come together to *remember* the fallen, *honor* those that serve and their families, and *teach* the next generation about the value of freedom. This gathering of volunteers and patriots takes place in local and national cemeteries in all 50 states – most recently at more than 3,100 participating locations – as part of National Wreaths Across America Day. Each year, a new theme is chosen to help volunteers and supporters focus their messaging and outreach in their own communities. The national nonprofit has announced the theme for 2022, “**Find a way to serve.**”

The inspiration for this year’s theme came from a few different places and seemed to be a recurring conversation throughout the last year. Notably, the *American Rosie Movement* which highlights the stories of the World War II-era women known as Rosie the Riveters, or simply “Rosies.” These women pulled together to do the work that needed to be done for our freedom. The movement encourages youth to get involved in their own communities to serve in small ways that can make a big impact. As part of this new theme, **Wreaths Across America** is revamping its educational curriculum working with like-minded organiza-

tions to develop action plans to inspire young people across the country to *find a way to serve* in 2022 and beyond.

“You don’t have to be in military service to serve your community and country,” said **Karen Worcester**, executive director, Wreaths Across America. “Serving others, or being in service to others, gives purpose and I’ve seen first-hand from Gold Star Families to Veterans, how it can help people heal.”

In 2021, more than 2.4 million veterans’ wreaths were placed by volunteers on headstones at 3,137 participating locations around the country in honor of the service and sacrifices made for our freedoms, with each name said out loud. Wreaths Across America volunteers work year-round to ensure military laid to rest are remembered, their families and living veterans are honored, and the next generation is taught about the value of freedom.

This year, National Wreaths Across America Day is Saturday, December 17, 2022. For more information on how to volunteer locally or sponsor a wreath for an American hero, please visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org. To follow stories throughout the year from across the country focused on this theme, use the hashtag **#FindAWay2022**.



TFHT (Traveling From Here to There) is a Potent Story about What Comes After

MEADVILLE, PA— Christian Faith Publishing has announced the publication of **V. Vaughn Robbins’s** new book, *TFHT: (Traveling From Here to There)*, which encourages open discussion of death, the pain of a loss, and the hope for what awaits on one’s next journey.

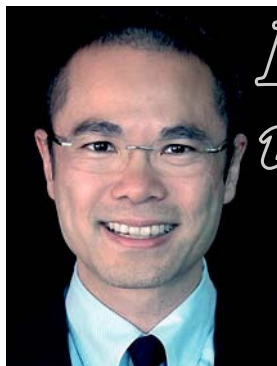
Robbins shares, “Children grieve differently. For Lyriq, it was in stages of remembering her dog traveling and returning until one day, he ceased to return. Though the shock was difficult, she was able to

use her imagination along with beliefs that were shared in a Christian home. Many children don’t have that second option and must fend for themselves. We encourage you to seek help or assistance to help a child cope with loss. TFHT is therapy from a child’s point of view. This story prepares the young reader to deal with one of life’s greatest challenges—losing something or someone dear to the heart. Travel with Lyriq as she finds answers to cope with her grief and shares them with

the reader in this insightful story.

Robbins shares in hopes of aiding young readers who find themselves faced with the loss of something or someone dear to their heart.

“TFHT: (Traveling From Here to There)” is available at traditional brick and mortar bookstores, or online at Amazon.com, Apple iTunes store, or Barnes and Noble.



Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

Why Is Marketing Your Cemetery Online So Competitive?

Mimicry is a biological phenomenon in nature. Organisms evolve to mimic each other for assorted reasons, including protection against predators, ability to attract a mate, or help in securing resources. For example, many insects mimic their more toxic brethren to reduce their risks of being eaten by birds.

Here’s how that relates to promoting your cemetery: Mimicry happens in online marketing too! It’s one reason the space can be so competitive. Everyone in your niche might be creating content to target the same keywords, connect with the same families, and answer the same questions.

But you’re not just competing with other cemeteries for attention online, and knowing exactly what makes digital marketing so competitive is the first step to securing better engagement from potential clientele.

SEO Can Feel Cutthroat

Showing up on search engine results pages (SERPs) can be harder than it sounds, and it takes an actual concerted effort to show up on the first page. The first page of Google results typically includes the top 10 organic results for each query as well as Google answer boxes, map results, GMB profiles, and paid search ads.

Unless you’re in an exceptionally large city or a highly competitive market, it’s true that ranking for “cemetery near me,” or another purely local search for the term “cemetery,” isn’t too tough.

However, it’s a lot harder to be ranked well for “cremation,” “funeral services,” “funeral preplanning,” and other terms people often search—and for which you definitely want your cemetery to be ranked.

The links on the first page of Google get almost *all* of the clicks for any given search. The top organic link alone gets around 30 percent of the clicks on average.

A little over half of all website traffic in the world comes from Google organic search traffic. That means the pages showed up in Google search results and people clicked those results to arrive on the site.

And yet around 90 percent of pages on the internet never get *any* organic search traffic. Another 5 percent of pages only get around 10 clicks a month. That means 5 percent of pages are getting virtually all of the search traffic every month.

For cemeteries, the question is this: How do you compete well enough online that you’re getting a good portion of the clicks for searches relevant to your niche and/or location?

You Compete Against Other Content Online

First, you must understand what you’re competing against and how the competition works. Many people make the mistake of thinking once the click is won, the competition is over. It is not.

No one comes to your cemetery’s website from a vacuum. Anyone arriving there has been on other websites—and possibly other deathcare sites. That’s especially true for individuals interested in preneed services, as they may be conducting research and shopping around for options.

For deathcare content marketing, that means every visit to a page has *tension*. Part of that tension occurs when the consumer consciously or subconsciously compares the page with all other pages they’ve seen—or at least the most recent pages they’ve interacted with.

Your Pages Compete Against the Promise of Other Content

As if actual competition wasn’t enough, cemetery content can also compete with the *idea* of other content. Internet users have been trained to expect instant gratification, and if they don’t find what they want or need quickly on your pages, better answers may be just a click or swipe away.

This is one reason *page speed* is so important. Pages that take three seconds to load can experience 32 percent higher *bounce rates* (people leaving the page almost immediately) than pages that take only one second to load. It only takes those two extra seconds for consumers to get FOMO (fear of missing out) and think about clicking away to see what other cemeteries have to offer.

Consumer Attention Is in Demand Everywhere

Online marketing doesn’t just compete with online factors. Your messaging must rise above the day-to-day distractions in the consumer’s environment. The TV might be on in the background and capture the person’s attention. The kids, a spouse, or a coworker might call for attention. The oven bell might ding, the telephone ring, or a delivery driver knock on the door.

You obviously can’t control these factors any more than you can control what your competition posts online. Stick to what you can control: your own content.

Welton Hong is the founder of Ring Ring Marketing® and a leading expert in creating case generation from online to the phone line. He is the author of *Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes*. For more information, visit www.FuneralHomeProfits.com.

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