

Steps After Life Sponsors Events at Frozen Dead Guy Days

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— Steps After Life was able to reach new customers with an outside-the-box approach to connecting directly with consumers at the recent *Frozen Dead Guy Days Festival* in Estes Park, CO, held March 17-19, 2023. Steps After Life helps families with an online concierge who works directly with each family to swiftly resolve matters after a death.

The company sponsored two popular elements at the wild and wacky festival: Newly-Dead® The Game (modeled after the TV show *The Newlywed Game*) and the humorous documentary, "Grandpa's in the Tuff Shed," which tells the Frozen Dead Guy's origin story. Pioneering death educator Gail Rubin, CT, *The Doyenne of Death*® presented both events.

The festival drew thousands of attendees, people of all ages who are not afraid to laugh about death. Frozen Dead Guy Days originated in the tiny mountain town of Nederland, CO in 2000. Yes, there is a real frozen dead guy at the center of it all. Because of the event's popularity, the city was overwhelmed when the festival returned in 2022 after a two-year pandemic pause.

Nederland officials were unable to reach an agreement with festival organizers to hold the event there in 2023. The festival rights were sold to John Cullen, owner of the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, where "The Shining" was filmed. This is the first year the festival was held in Estes Park, a community better positioned to host large scale events.

Steps After Life CEO Diana Milian said, "We recognized this opportunity as a great way to introduce our services directly to those who will benefit from the personalized guidance of our After Life Concierge staffers. We welcome the opportunity to work with funeral homes and cemeteries to extend this valuable service to your customers." More information can be found at www.stepsafterlife.com.

Gail Rubin, a pioneering death educator who puts the "fun" in funeral planning, created the Newly-Dead game specifically for Frozen Dead Guy Days. She debuted the game in 2011 and has returned almost every year until the pandemic shut down the festival in 2020.

"In 2010, I was transfixed by a national TV news story about Frozen Dead Guy Days – the coffin races, the whole crazy scene. I swore I would be a part of it the next year. Creating Newly-Dead The Game was my way to get involved. Showing the documentary about the Frozen Dead Guy came a year or so later," said Rubin.

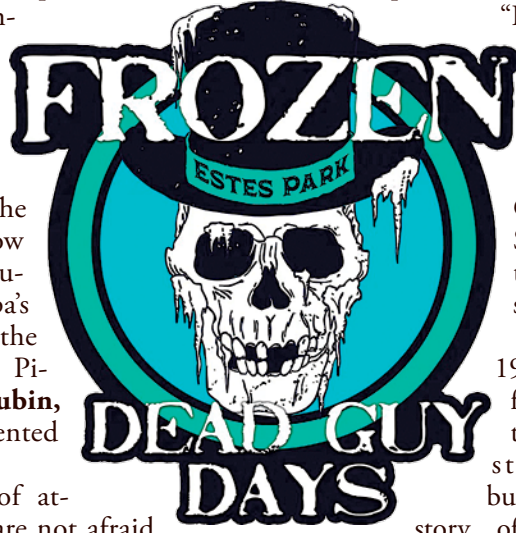
Grandpa's in the Tuff Shed, a 1998 documentary by award-winning filmmaker Robin Beeck was shown throughout the festival. It tells the

strange but true story of how Norwegian Bre-

do Morstoel became the Frozen Dead Guy and a resident of Nederland. His grandson, Trygve Bauge, a colorful character in Boulder and Nederland in the 1980s and '90s, his mother Aud, and local witnesses are the key players in this delightful 26-minute film.

Attendees had the opportunity to win fun funeral-related items at Newly-Dead game sessions and film screenings. Prizes include eco-friendly products from Passages International (their new Celeste urn and a new cremated remains scattering kit) as well as t-shirts and books from Gail Rubin.

To learn more about the event visit <https://frozendeadguydays.com/> or email Gail Rubin at Gail@agoodgoodbye.com.



Gail Rubin

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Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

Still Unsure About Social Media? Think Again.

If you haven't been thinking about social media as part of your funeral home marketing plan, believe me, I understand.

On the face of it, combining funeral home marketing and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter seems about as congruous as combining fried chicken and chocolate syrup.

Yes, it seems a bit strange at first. How can something as thoughtful and reverent as burial and cremation services coexist with social media engagement?

Well, it can. It just must be employed as carefully and thoughtfully as you employ all the services you provide.

Social media isn't some fad that's going away, and as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other networks continue to establish ways for small businesses to advertise themselves, they're going to increase in importance.

Establishing a strong presence on popular social media networks definitely will provide you a sizeable advantage over your local competitors over time. That's particularly true now that Google is factoring your company's overall "social influence" more strongly in deciding your relative importance in the industry. The more important Google believes your business to be, the higher it will rank against competing funeral homes in local search results.

With that said, I hope you noticed the part that read "over time." A social media campaign is part of your long-term strategy. If you're looking to build your client base quickly in the short term, you won't see a substantial improvement right away from social media. That's better suited for tools such as PPC ads.

Social media is best for establishing credibility, improving your overall SEO, and creating a digital form of word of mouth that helps you engage with potential

pre-need and at-need clients.

Another important consideration that most social media is free – and least technically free. It doesn't cost anything to post to Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc. (Yes, you can also do paid advertising through these platforms, but when we're talking about basic posting, it's entirely complimentary.)

With that said, social media isn't really entirely free. It requires resources — either the time of your or your staff, or actual money to have an independent contractor create and post updates for you.

Social media is never a one-off deal. You can't just post a few things and put your social media campaign on the back burner. Once you start posting (or tweeting, etc.), you have to keep updating regularly. That doesn't necessarily mean every day, but it does mean at least every few days.

Honestly, it's better not to have any social media presence at all than to create accounts on these platforms and then stop updating them.

Few things are more injurious to your funeral home's credibility than having a Twitter or Facebook account that hasn't been updated in months. The search engines will knock down your SEO, and people will wonder whether you went out of business! If you don't have the time or money to keep updating, you'd be better off closing the accounts entirely.

However, if you can commit to regularly posting on the major social media platforms, it's a good idea to do so. For one thing, Google now strongly factors your company's overall social influence in deciding your relative importance in the industry. The more important Google believes your company to be, the more prominently your funeral home will appear in local search results.

For more immediate results, you'll see much greater re-

turn from initiatives such as pay-per-click advertising, which will position your business above organic search engine results. PPC ads also can be precisely targeted and very easily modified, letting you tweak your approach on the fly and have a new pitch "live" almost immediately.

So...what do you post? My advice is for funeral homes is to publish the same sort of content I suggest for a blog on your funeral home website. In fact, you can create posts for your blog and then link to them in tweets and Facebook posts if you like.

The subject matter can be trends in your industry, information about how to effectively do preplanning, what to do in case of an unexpected death (and other at-need considerations), and even health and wellness content.

When you think about it, deathcare touches on many different areas of people's lives, and you can hit on all these areas in your social media 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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