



New England Cemetery Association 54th Annual Frederick R. Laffond Cemetery Management Seminar December 2 and 3, 2024

Speaker Biographies

Marc Lamb: Mr. Lamb is a Solutions Consultant with PlotBox. Prior to being at PlotBox, Marc was a General Manager of a large cemetery based in Massachusetts. Marc has also been a municipal executive for the past 10 years, including the past 6 years as a Selectman in a municipality of 26,000, and 4 years prior to that as Chair of Finance, giving Marc a wide range of experience and expertise. His background as a cemeterian, coupled with municipal financial structures allows him to see unique paths toward success. Marc's goal in working with cemetery folks is not simply to show them how cemetery software will help them operate their cemetery with incredible efficiency, but also the path on how to attain it.

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Barbara Kemmis, CAE: Barbara Kemmis is Executive Director of the Cremation Association of North America, where she promotes all things cremation through member programs, education, and strategic partnerships. After more than 20 years of experience in association leadership, Barbara knows that bringing people together to advance common goals is not only fun, but the most effective strategy to get things done. Barbara has served two prior professions as the Director of Member Services at the American Theological Library Association and Vice President of Library and Nonprofit Services at the Donors Forum (now Forefront.) Barbara earned a master's degree in library science from Dominican University, a graduate certificate in nonprofit management from North Park University and a B.A. from Earlham College.

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Matthew 'Twig' Largess: Mr. Largess, or the 'voice of the forest,' as he is sometimes called, is a nationally-acclaimed International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certified arborist who has appeared in hundreds of press events including television, radio, and news articles throughout New England and beyond. Beginning his career as a logger in the giant trees of the Pacific Northwest, he quickly realized he did not want to cut down trees, but save them instead. In 1986, he founded Largess Forestry, which today boasts a customer list of over 15,000. His tree preservation efforts are highlighted in *Treehugger* by Shamus Flaherty. Trees are cool and so are you!

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Todd Mannix: Todd's career spans over 30 years in financial roles, including over 16 years working in financial service companies such as Fidelity Investments in Boston and Dallas, American National Bank & Trust Company in Chicago, and Cooperative Funeral Fund, which is located in Madison, CT. Todd has a BS in business from Boston College and an MBA in strategic business from Boston University. Todd has a unique background in both finance and operations, which allows him to offer "insight beyond the numbers." Prior to joining CFF, Todd also worked at NBC Universal in Los Angeles and was responsible for managing the financial and operational transition of worldwide distribution from a tape-based to digital fulfillment model.

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Thomas P. Daly, CCE: Mr. Daly has been involved in the cemetery profession since 1967. He has served as CEO of cemeteries, with management responsibilities for all financial and day-to-day operations, and with oversight responsibility for its perpetual care trust funds. Tom utilizes professional experience to plan, design, and construct new cemeteries, community mausoleum and columbaria. He has also initiated new sales and marketing strategies to increase awareness and sales for one of Boston's premier cemeteries, including the first touch screen Kiosk for individual grave locations.

Tom has received his Certified Cemetery Executive designation from I.C.C.F.A., his Certified Catholic Cemetery Executive from the Catholic Cemetery Conference, and his Crematory Operator Certification from C.A.N.A. Tom has served as President of both the Massachusetts and New England Cemetery Associations, and was a past recipient of N.E.C.A.'s Professional Achievement Award, as well as serving 3 terms on the Board of Directors of I.C.C.F.A., where he now serves as the chairman of the Cemetery Consumer Service Council.

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Stephen Chiavaroli, GISP: Mr. Chiavaroli is a Certified GIS Professional and the Senior GIS (Geographical Information Science) Manager at GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc., a multidisciplinary environmental engineering firm headquartered in Norwood, MA, with 32 offices nationwide. Before joining GZA in June 2023, Stephen was formerly the GIS Manager at Mount Auburn Cemetery for 5 years, where he managed the entire cemetery and botanical gardens' GIS database in coordination with cemetery development. As an active NECA member since 2018, Stephen has previously presented at both the Laffond Seminar and Annual Meeting & Conference discussing GIS, natural or green burials, and cemetery development at Mount Auburn. Now at GZA, Stephen manages over 150 GIS staff, along with pursuing new project work involving cemetery management.

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Candace Currie: Candace Currie serves on the board of directors of Green Burial Massachusetts, and is president of Green Burial Massachusetts Cemetery, a non-profit, private cemetery organization working to bring conservation cemeteries to Massachusetts. Her passion for this work developed during her 20-year tenure at Mount Auburn Cemetery, the first garden cemetery in the nation, where as Director of Planning and Sustainability, she led its certification as a hybrid cemetery. She was also a key force behind Mount Auburn's Climate Action and Sustainability Plan. Candace served the Green Burial Council as board member and compliance specialist. She is a 1997 graduate of the Conway School of Landscape Design and believes that anyone who desires an earth-friendly burial should be able to obtain one easily, affordably and locally.

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Rob Baker: With his matinee idol good looks and a sweet, melodic voice that even the angels envy, one can't help but wonder why Rob Baker is in our line of work instead of being out west, walking Hollywood red carpets and dating supermodels. But truth be told, Rob Baker would rather be walking our cemeteries. He started his cemetery career in upstate New York, helping a scandal plagued cemetery recover from a state investigation that uncovered a trail of more than 50 mis-burials, theft of funds and a mausoleum scheme that left dozens of families with no actual crypt space and with no way of recouping hundreds of thousands of dollars entrusted to the cemetery. From there he moved to Boston's North Shore where he was charged with starting an outside, pre-need sales program for the more than two dozen Catholic cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Boston. That program's success led him to being appointed Director of Sales and Marketing for the entire organization. These days, he is the Regional Field Sales Manager for Matthews Cemetery Products where he covers New England and

New York. In his spare time, he teaches pre-need sales and best practices classes to cemeteries throughout the Northeast and beyond. His book, TURNING PRE-NEED LEADS INTO PRE-NEED SALES, is now being used as a training tool in more than 2 dozen cemeteries and his next book, ONBOARDING NEW-CEMETERY HIRES (FOR SALES AND ADMIN) will be ready for use soon. Rob lives in Danvers Massachusetts with his beautiful wife Erin, his son Ethan (who is 16 going on 6) and his daughter Amelia (who is 14 going on 24). He is also a 2-time winner of the NECA annual golf event trophy.

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