

# Business In Focus



Hi friends! Did you hear? On June 27<sup>th</sup> of this year, two very special men entrusted decades of family tradition and responsibility to this very excited girl... me! My name is Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge and I am the proud owner of the Townley & Wheeler Funeral Home in Ballston Lake, NY. I am a New York State Licensed Funeral Director, and for the past 24 years I have been helping families in this area to lovingly and respectfully say goodbye to their dead in a most meaningful manner.

Most importantly, I have been there in the darkest moments of many people's lives. I have seen the wraths of cancer; searched for the victims of fire; pulled the carnage from wrecked vehicles, carried still-warm bodies down the stairs from their bedrooms where they peacefully passed. I have recreated facial structure; removed tumors and pace makers; swaddled precious babies for the last time on earth; felt human remains run through my fingers; and literally held the heart of many who I never knew. I have prayed with their families; holding them and helping them to find a way to cope with their loss. By guiding them to choose a funeral with meaning and purpose unique to each family, I can fulfill their religious, economic, and personal needs while memorializing their loved ones.

You might think that this avocation would make me grim, but to sum it up, it is my reward! I know that it is my duty to console and assist families during a most difficult time. When I started this business, I promised myself to always be fair and treat people with a "for real" attitude. If you know me, you are smiling right now because it is my motto - "Be For Real." I also promised to be charitable and never greedy. I believe that giving back to the community is paramount.

I have three beautiful and very witty girls who are no strangers to the business either. Since they were little they watched me "Paint" the ladies" and "fix up" the gentlemen. We live our lives knowing that when the phone rings around here, our plans might have to be put on hold. We respectfully receive the dead into our home, and we believe that each person, living or dead, who comes to our home plays a vital part in our learning process in this life.

I am living my dream and I realize it, unlike so many other events in life that seem to pass so quickly before you fully understand the importance. It is my extreme pleasure to competently handle my day to day business dealings. I come from some good roots too! My mamma, Carol Ann is full blooded Italiano (although she can't cook

worth a damn) and my Dad, Bill, would call himself a mutt jokingly even though he was

mainly English. They were hard workers - Dad, a NY telephone installer and specialist and Mom, an English teacher. Mom and Dad raised me right along with my two little sisters with love, discipline, traditions and religion. Back then we all went to church every Sunday, visited the sick and volunteered locally with great community spirit.

I am so happy to say that I have great rapport with the clergy in Ballston Lake and in the surrounding areas. I have met and prayed with many of them in the course of my journey in life. And, together, we have sent your loved ones to a place of rest and peace. Whether Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu or any other religion, we have come to better understand and appreciate the spirituality that brings us together in the endeavor of ministering to families.

So listen, if you see me out and about give me a shout out or introduce yourself! I also encourage you to stop by my place of business, which is also my home, any time to say Hi. I would love to meet you and hey, you just might be able to test out my sauce! (I usually have a pot of something going on the stove - yes, contrary to Mamma, I can cook!)

In the months ahead I hope that this column will enlighten you about funeral service. There are so many topics to cover... Burial, Cremation, Veteran's Benefits, Social Security, Medicaid, Pre-planned Funerals, Green Burials, to name some.

I am hoping that you will give me some ideas to write about too! Don't be afraid to email me or call me anytime and let me know what you want to discuss. I am at your service 24/7 with compassion and understanding for your sad and hard to handle moments of life when facing death.

With sincerity and friendship,  
Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge

## *Passing of the Torch*

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