



**Waller Funeral Home**  
*"An Oxford Tradition"*

# SEASONS

Don and Patsy Waller, Owners  
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## LET US BE JOYFUL

During the seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas, gratitude and joy fill our hearts. We need to extend these feelings throughout the year.

The Bible contains many references to joy: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say rejoice" (Phillippians 4:4); "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones" (Proverbs 17:22). None of us wants dry bones.

Recorded personal anecdotes and scientific research show that a cheerful and grateful attitude results in healthier and longer life.

A happy life requires that we have a positive attitude and that we take time to appreciate the world around us and the blessings that we enjoy.

Others around us are affected by our attitude. A good laugh is worth a hundred groans in any market.

To laugh is healthy, a relief valve for pent-up emotions. A good laugh is like sunshine. I envied Don's sister Mildred her hearty laugh. She would laugh so hard that tears rolled down her face, and she literally held her sides and gave herself completely to laughter.

We enjoy the company of happy people. Professional humorists have a place in our society. I think of the late Jerry Clower, whom we first knew while he was working in Lafayette County in 1951. We never dreamed how far Jerry would go in the entertainment field! He allowed God to help him use his ability to make people laugh. He helped us through the bad times and made the good times better. Christians have every reason to be the happiest people in the world. Good wholesome laughter

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## WALLER FUNERAL HOME RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD



*Pictured with the National Funeral Directors Association Pursuit of Excellence Award are the Waller Funeral Home staff: (seated) Patsy Waller, Don Waller; (standing) Bobby Phelps, Brett Rosson, Bob Rosson, Beth Rosson, Rocky Kennedy, Sally Kate Walker.*

For the sixth consecutive year Waller Funeral Home has received the National Funeral Directors Association Pursuit of Excellence Award, awarded on October 9, 2007, at the annual NFDA International Convention & Expo in Las Vegas. Nationally, 164 funeral homes received Pursuit of Excellence Awards this year, with Waller Funeral Home being the only award recipient in Mississippi.

The award honors funeral homes for their outstanding service to families, community involvement, technical abilities, and professional integrity. To achieve recognition in the Pursuit of Excellence program, a funeral home must meet quality

service criteria in nine categories: education, compassionate service, technical skills, community and professional service, library or media resources, professional development, in-house staff training, and public and community relations. Performing and documenting the specific and exacting requirements for this award require hard work of the funeral home staff and provide excellent opportunities for evaluation and improvement of funeral home services.

At the same NFDA convention in Las Vegas, October 7-10, Bob Rosson, CFSP, CPC, was installed

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## LET US BE JOYFUL

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can be a witness.

I have known and know now people whose joy in life was/is serving the Lord and other people. They have their priorities straight and are joyful and spread joy as they go about doing good. At church, they are the first to volunteer for tedious tasks. They always have time for others. They understand others with their hearts as well their minds. They seem surprised when someone expresses thanks for their deeds of kindness.

I believe God has a sense of humor. The world is full of reasons to laugh. I wish one of the fine artists had painted Jesus smiling. I can imagine that as he and his disciples walked the dusty roads they shared thoughts that brought smiles to their faces. Too, surely Jesus must have smiled as he gathered the little children around him. Jesus used his time with his disciples and others to teach great truths. He must also have wanted to add pleasure to their lives.

I have a small plaque near my kitchen sink which admonishes: "Do one thing every day that makes you happy." I like that thought. Sometimes we take ourselves too seriously.

My greatest joy comes from the beauty of nature and from family and friends.

Yesterday I listened to what sounded like dozens of little birds in a magnolia tree. They were enjoying a glorious time with each other. Listening to these small creatures of God jabbering lightened my heart. Later our resident mockingbird presented a repeat concert of the sounds of his friends. Other marvels of nature—too numerous to mention—move me every day without my even leaving our home place.

We are experiencing the joy of watching our great-grandchildren open doors to memories which had lain quietly in our hearts. They touch my heart with the same joy and boundless love that our children and grandchildren always have. Each of this new generation of little people has his/her own distinct personality, yet they find joy in the same discoveries others have made. At the ages of the great-grandchildren, our children were filled with the same joy of discovery of a bird's nest, a beautiful leaf, acorns, geese on the lake, a bird

feather, or a special rock. Each of these offers an opportunity to open a door of knowledge to share on their level of understanding. I remember the facial expression of one as she in her intense listening to shared information looks off into the distance in a most studious pose. I pity the children living in large cities in high-rise apartments who are never exposed to these thrills of childhood.

During a recent visit in the home of granddaughter Mary Beth and husband Chad, we, along with the rest of the extended family, enjoyed watching the play of their children, 5-year-old Murphy Grace, 2 1/2-year old Waller, and of 1 1/2-year-old Houston, son of granddaughter Joanna and Joe. Grandparents and parents played pitch with these three, and their antics in throwing the ball then chasing it when they missed a catch were more entertaining than a circus. Houston, the youngest, did not always understand the game but he mimicked his older cousins.

Daughter Susan, grandmother of Houston and Waller, cares for the boys most week days. To give them a change of scenery and to share them with us, she often brings them to our house. It thrills me to see them running and playing in the same yard where their parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins played. Many of the inside toys are carryovers from the days when the grandchildren visited not so long ago. It seems like yesterday.

I am already planning our Thanksgiving time. Each year it seems someone has graduated from the high chair to a chair at a grown-ups' table. These little ones will outgrow me too soon.

Other family activities make me joyful. In early September we enjoyed a Waller family reunion as the descendants of Don's Grandfather Waller and his brothers and sister came together at Clear Creek Church. The Lucious Waller clan had more than seventy representatives. There was much visiting and "remembering when." Some of us realized we are now the "old folks," but it was such a happy time this didn't bother us at all.

Later in the same day two of Don's nephews and their families visited in our home: Bob Waller with his wife Margaret and their children, Joy, Robert, Madeline, Millie, Ava Burton,

and Maggie; and Don Waller with his wife Yonnie and their children, Lucy, Anne Overton, and young Don. Our three children and their families also came for this gathering. The adults visited, and the young children entertained themselves by just being together. At one point great-granddaughter Murphy Grace came running to me, excitedly asking for a flashlight, and I gave her one. Later she came back declaring, "Pat Pat, we need more flashlights. A baby frog has hidden and we can't see him." Two more flashlights were happily given and received. I listened and loved hearing them taking turns with the lights.

Our children are eager for their children to form loving ties of family relationships.

It is a choice blessing that we can look back and recall the happy times without dwelling on the sad ones which come to every family. I am grateful for the memories I have stored and am storing now which bring me pleasure which will continue into the future. I think often of a quote from Longfellow: "The heart, like the mind, has its own memories and in it are stored the precious keepsakes."

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Are you having a bad day? Count the things that make you happy suggests Deborah Norville in the October 2007 *Reader's Digest* article, "How the New Science of Thank You Can Change Your Life." She says that feeling grateful can change us positively and quotes research that has proven that feeling grateful can actually make us healthier—we'll sleep better, exercise more, and feel more optimistic, alert, and active. We will be more pro-social and more compassionate. Another research study quoted in the article showed that those who found something to appreciate every day were less materialistic—less apt to see a connection between life satisfaction and material things and more willing to part with their possessions. Other research quoted found a grateful mindset leads to clearer thinking, better resilience during tough times, higher immune response, less likelihood of being plagued by stress, longer lives, closer family ties, greater religiousness." Wow!

Norville reported a study conducted by psychologist Alice M. Isen, a

Cornell University professor, which offered this hypothesis: "good feelings generated by something as simple as an expression of appreciation intervene in the release of dopamine, the chemical in the brain associated with happiness. . . . the positive feelings continue and even amplify, creating more good feelings."

Norville suggests keeping a gratitude journal—writing down each day three things for which you are grateful and why these things were good for you and noting anyone who played a role in what you recall for that day and how that person impacted your life. The journal will make you look at life in a positive way, and over time you will see a pattern in the people and experiences that have affected you.

And gratitude almost always comes back. In a study, cited by Norville, waitresses who simply wrote "thank you" on the check before handing it to their customers received on average 11 percent more in tips than those who didn't. And waitresses who wrote a message about an upcoming dinner special on the check received even higher tips—on average, 17 to 20 percent higher.

If you have a chance, read the quoted *Reader's Digest* article for more thoughts on the importance of gratitude. And let's all try to feel and show more gratitude for all the good things in life. The idea that this can change our world is powerful.

*Sincerely,*  
*Patsy*

## NATIONAL AWARD

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for a two-year term as an At-Large Representative to the Executive Board of the association.

NFDA is the leading funeral service association, serving 19,500 individual members who represent more than 10,000 funeral homes in the United States and other countries. From its headquarters in Brookfield, Wisconsin, and its Advocacy Office in Washington, DC, NFDA provides advocacy, education, information, products, programs, and services to help members enhance the quality of service to families.

## UNEXPECTED JOY

### *Conventional wisdom won't supply our religious needs*

Religious identity and faith have meanings as diverse as the millions who are believers and practitioners of the hundreds of faith streams flowing through our American society.

But a sizable percentage say the central benefit of religion is the joy and confidence that it enables and sustains, particularly in the face of adversity and uncertainty. And despite that belief, it is joy and confidence that escape many people's faith grasp.

There's plenty of cause for seeking joy and confidence. Despite the overall, relative ease of life in the 21st century, the oldest human conditions—war and its consequences, greed and its outcomes, anxiety and its burdens, broken relationships and their pain—still gnaw into us, sending some to the edge of despair, even over that edge in desperate and ultimately self-destructive acts.

The noted preacher John Buchanan, editor of *The Christian Century* and senior minister of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in downtown Chicago, reflected in a recent sermon on how modern Christians lose their focus and forget their source of joy and confidence.

Buchanan quotes Peter Gomes, the famous preacher at Harvard Memorial Church, in getting at the crux of the problem:

"Within the teachings of Jesus we have case after case of Jesus pointing to a God who is larger than the conventional wisdom, who is not downsized by the petty pieties of those who would constrain him by their own limited knowledge and experiences" (from "The Scandalous Gospel of Jesus").

And Buchanan also cites the familiar passage from Luke 13 when Jesus caused an uproar in the Sabbath service by healing a woman whose spine had been badly bent—physically and emotionally disabling her for 18 years.

**Grief helps for the holiday season** are being sent to families we have served since last Christmas. If you know of others who you think might benefit from these helps, please let us know and we will include them in our mailing.

**Inspirational and dashboard calendars** are available at the Funeral Home on request.

"The entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things he was doing," is the way the New Revised Standard Version describes the congregation's reaction.

The conventional religious leaders present were scandalized. It was not proper. It was religiously illegal. It was unexpected and beyond human control and origin.

"For Jesus, however, human need trumps religious law. For Jesus, religion ought to facilitate not prevent healing, wholeness, reconciliation, inclusion, restoration," Buchanan said.

The negative reaction came from people who had forgotten that God is not in their control and that God acts unexpectedly and outside conventional wisdom.

It is not an easy lesson for people who draw comfort from the familiar and predictable to accept. Its expanded implications lead to large fights about small, insignificant things among otherwise reasonable people.

"What gets lost in that whole sad litany is what was missing in the synagogue that day: a sense of God's love for all, everybody; a love that includes all, reaches out to all, deeply into the community, beyond the community, embraces all; a love that heals; a love that does not harm, demonize, hurt, kill; a love that refuses to be diminished or restricted or confined or denied by human prejudice, human laws, human customs, even particularly human religion," Buchanan told his congregation.

Faith is a great adventure of discovery in which nothing can be taken for granted, an adventure in which the surprised congregation in the Luke story got it right and set the example for us: "The entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things Jesus was doing."

— reprinted from  
*Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, September 15, 2007

Waller Funeral Home will on December 11, 2007, mark the 30-year anniversary of our beginning in funeral service. These thirty years have been for us an outstanding time of learning, serving, and forming meaningful personal relationships. We feel very privileged to be a part of this great community!

**MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS TREE**

You are cordially invited to participate in the annual Memorial Christmas Tree Service sponsored jointly by North Oxford Baptist Church, North Mississippi Hospice, and Waller Funeral Home on Sunday, December 2, at 5 p.m. in the Family Life Center of North Oxford Baptist Church.

The service will include the opportunity to celebrate the lives of deceased family members and friends by placing personalized ornaments on a Christmas tree. You can bring an ornament or you can personalize one of the ornaments provided.

The service will also include carol singing, special music, prayer, and a spiritual message. Refreshments will be provided but you can bring treats to share if you desire.

Participants in the past have expressed appreciation for this meaningful time of reflection and encouragement during the holiday season. Some come back every year.

This is a community-wide event for people of all denominations. We encourage you to come. If you have any questions, please give us a call, 234-7971.

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**We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve the families of this community. We are committed to compassionate, professional assistance to all those we serve.**

**Happy holidays and best wishes for the new year to each of you from each of us!**

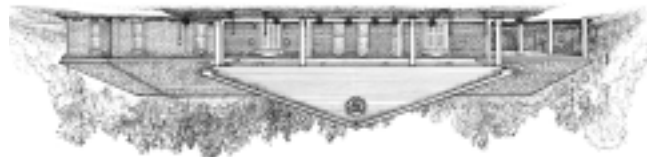
**-Waller Funeral Home Staff.**

**In Memoriam**

We dedicate this issue of *Seasons* to those who died and whose families we served from September 1, 2007, through November 13, 2007.

- Mrs. Opal Inez Ard McGregor . . . . . September 1, 2007
- Mr. William Edward Downs . . . . . September 2, 2007
- Mrs. Eula Faye Beene McCluskey. . . . . September 14, 2007
- Mr. Jay Morris Deaton . . . . . September 14, 2007
- Paul David Person . . . . . September 14, 2007
- Mr. Douglas Michael Harriger . . . . . September 14, 2007
- Mr. Charles Martin Fleming . . . . . September 16, 2007
- Mr. Herman Gary Hicks, Sr. . . . . September 19, 2007
- Mrs. Lura Pearl Salmon Young . . . . . September 22, 2007
- Mrs. Elwanda Fleming Boatright . . . . . September 22, 2007
- Mr. Harry Rowland Ayles . . . . . September 22, 2007
- Mr. James Louis "Pete" Vines . . . . . September 24, 2007
- Mr. William Patrick Tailyour . . . . . September 27, 2007
- Mr. Robert Patrick Caldwell . . . . . October 1, 2007
- Rev. Rush Glenn Miller, Sr. . . . . October 3, 2007
- Mr. Oscar Richard Rivers . . . . . October 3, 2007
- Mr. Herman K. Livingston . . . . . October 5, 2007
- Ms. Amanda Hallon Boatright . . . . . October 10, 2007
- Minister Edward Lynch Burns . . . . . October 27, 2007
- Mr. Billy Harold Houston . . . . . October 27, 2007
- Mrs. Clara Esther Edwards McCord . . . . . October 28, 2007
- Mr. Richard Wesley Matthews . . . . . October 28, 2007
- Mr. Joseph John "Joe" Arrechea . . . . . November 5, 2007
- Mrs. Dulcie Haney Mitchell . . . . . November 9, 2007
- Mr. Vincent Andrew Prochilo. . . . . November 11, 2007
- Dr. Thomas M. Atwood . . . . . Novemeber 13, 2007

NFDPA Pursuit of Excellence  
 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007



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