

RECONNECT *ing*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

SAM SCOTT

By: Laura L. Valenti

Sam Scott was a very fortunate teenager in that by the time he graduated high school, he had a pretty clear idea of what he wanted to do as a career.

A resident of Dallas, Texas for the last many years since graduating college, the 1999 LHS graduate, shared how he once called himself a landscape architect when he first went to work for Kenny Howe at Holman-Howe Funeral Home in Lebanon.

He laughed as he stated, "At age 15, I was the guy who mowed the grass but it brought me into association with the funeral home business and especially, with Kenny Howe. He slowly and thoughtfully, introduced me to this business."

And that influence has led to remarkable professional success for Scott. Today, he works for the largest funeral provider in the world, Dignity Memorial in the Dallas area where he manages three funeral homes and a cemetery operation.

"Last year, we served over 1,000 families," he continued. "I really do appreciate the way Mr. Howe slowly introduced me to the industry, not wanting to overwhelm a teenager, obviously. It also allowed me to think about my future career while I was still in school. I went to college at SBU at Bolivar and then SMS before moving on to mortuary school in Dallas. My studies were in business administration and marketing but even physical education, for instance, areas like weight-lifting took on more importance because obviously, in this profession that can be a significant part of what we do."

Despite a decade in the big city of Dallas, Scott said he thinks his small-town upbringing has had an impact on his colleagues as well as his clientele. "I think characteristics that still come from my small town roots make me stand out in a way that's not a bad thing, in a large company in a big city."

"I just owe such a debt of gratitude to my grandparents, the Scotts and the O'Dells and my parents, Steve and Nancy Scott as well as Mr. Howe for all that they taught

me along the way."

Working in Dallas, has also found him serving some well-known people and their relatives by providing funeral services to the families of musician Charlie Pride, politician Ross Perot, and athletes like Mickey Mantle and Dallas Cowboys Coach Tom Landry, as well as those of other well-known Dallas Cowboys and Texas politicians.

"We also provided services for the Russian ambassador who died here suddenly so we literally serve all kinds of people," Scott continued.

As the former director of the National Association of Funeral Directors, Kenny Howe's influence also extended to another side of Scott's livelihood in that he, too has become involved in the leadership of his profession.

"I'm serving as the secretary-vice president of the Texas Association of Funeral Directors right now, with a progression toward becoming president of the association in 2025," he added.

When not at work, Sam Scott admits that his favorite activity is hanging out at home with his wife, Olga and their three daughters, Emma age 17, Kathy 14, and Isabel 13 and their 11 year old son, Landon. "I just like to be at home, watching movies, playing games, enjoying good food. My wife, Olga and I met here in Dallas and she is also a funeral professional, in charge of student programs at Northeast Texas Community College, at the local mortuary school there. A marriage like this where you are both in the same field can make for some great professional conversations but we have 'normal' conversations, too!" he added with a laugh as he concluded on a heartfelt note.

"Without the saving grace of Jesus and His love and commitment to me, this profession would be overwhelming. I am grateful to God that He allows me to serve Him by laying His earthly creations to rest. We are, after all, each fearfully and wonderfully made."



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Left, Sam Scott and his wife Olga. Below, a photo of Sam Scott with his son, Landon and daughters, Emma, Katie and Isabelle.



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