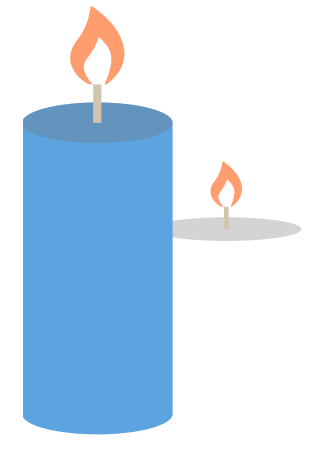


Badger Funeral Home and Ashelawn Memorial Chapel



Providing comfort and compassion to grieving families for over 160 years

As far back as fourth grade, Josh Roten can remember always wanting to be a funeral director. "It's rare to represent the first generation in a family to go into this business," he says. "More often it's a business for multiple generations." Roten started down the path of following his professional dream at age 16, when he began a high school apprenticeship in a funeral home

History of Helping

During the internship, Roten had the opportunity to see what the business was all about. In addition, according to Robin Miller, Inside Sales Coordinator at SkyLine/SkyBest, "Josh received our Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship to assist in pursuing his college career."

Roten continued his education at Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science in Cincinnati, OH to learn additional skills and techniques applicable to the craft. He then returned to Ashe County to find work. Roten and his wife, Holly, have fully owned Badger Funeral Home and Ashelawn Memorial Chapel since June 2017 and were part owners for 10 years prior. The company has been in operation since 1854. It's the oldest ongoing business in Ashe County and the 16th oldest funeral home in North Carolina.

Badger Funeral Home evolved from the cabinet and casket building skills of William Badger, a veteran of the Confederate Army in the Civil War who migrated to Ashe County from Petersburg, Virginia, before the war. For many years, the funeral home operated out of the second floor of what is now the Dollar Tire building in West Jefferson. In addition to conducting funeral services, the staff of the funeral home handled the ambulance service for Ashe County. The funeral home has been at its present location since the 1930s in a building formerly used as a residence and as a boarding house for a nearby school.

Ashelawn Memorial Gardens and Ashelawn Memorial Chapel were eventually established as part of Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home and merged with Badger Funeral Home in 2004.



Badger Funeral Home

Modern Services

In recent years, Roten has seen funeral services become less somber and more celebratory of the life of the deceased. "Technology has played a big part in that shift," he notes. "We're doing exciting things with photography and digital videos, and we're also able to use web-based software to include loved ones who may be unable to attend the service physically."

Roten and his staff of 12 derive satisfaction from knowing they've helped family members through one of the most difficult times in their lives. He notes, "We know we've made a hard time just a little easier by taking some of the load off of them. We're pleased that we can provide both funeral and cemetery services with our two locations. We try to offer the most professional and personalized service possible, and treat customers as though they were members of our own family."



SkyLine's Charity Shatley, and Craig Poe, with Appalachian Legacy Funeral Services owners Josh and Holly Roten and staff

The staff serves the community in other ways as well. Roten says, "We donate to different causes throughout the year. I'm currently serving as Rotary Club President and Ashe County Chamber of Commerce Treasurer. I'm also a member of the board of trustees for our local community college. Many members of the staff are involved in their churches, and one is the chief of a local fire department. As a result of us knowing so many people in the community, most customers who walk through our door already know someone here."

Roten gives SkyLine an "A++" for customer service"

- Josh Roten, owner, Badger Funeral Home and Ashelawn Memorial Chapel

Efficiency and Security

SkyLine provides Badger Funeral Home and Ashelawn Memorial Chapel with a phone system that includes Mitel 250 phones as well as VPN (Virtual Private Network), broadband and security services. The phone system enables easy transferring between locations, and the security system is used to monitor the facilities. Security cameras in the parking lot protect families from those who may try to take advantage at a vulnerable time.

Roten gives SkyLine an "A++" for customer service. He explains, "Whenever we have an issue, we tell a SkyLine representative what's going on. Most of the time they're able to fix it within minutes."

For Miller, the feeling is mutual. She comments, "We've watched as Josh has taken on both of these businesses, updated many aspects of each one and provided the best services to his customers when they need it most."



Craig Poe, SkyLine Field Services Technician