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Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home accepted into Order of Golden Rule

The Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home, Inc., which celebrates its 31st anniversary this year, has been granted membership in the prestigious International Order of the Golden Rule: making it only one of two funeral homes in all of Western New York to receive the honor.

The International Order of the Golden Rule is an international association with more than 1,200 independently-owned and -operated funeral homes located throughout the United States and across Canada. To achieve membership, funeral homes must adhere to the association's high level of conduct that guides their business practices, as well as adhering to a set of standards that requires its members to provide dignified, caring services at fair and reasonable prices.

Before qualification into the International Order of the Golden Rule, Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home was subjected to a highly selective process that included gathering comments from members of their community" IOGR Executive Director Donald P. Hagermann said. "We are pleased the Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home and its director, Charles A. Castiglia, have both met the association's qualifications, and earned so many professional and personal recommendations from the communities it serves, including Hamburg."

Known for its unique *Release of the Doves* service, the Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home now becomes one of only two IOGR members in all of Western New York.

The Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home's *Release of the Doves* ceremony involves the release of seven white doves — symbolizing the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit into the air at the end of a funeral, a service it has offered to its client families for more than four years now.

"It has been tremendously received and has been a very positive way to end a funeral. We perform the *Release of the Doves* for nearly 100 percent of the funerals we do. It really has become our trademark locally," said Charles A. Castiglia.

"The service came out of one that involved the release of several white homing pigeons at a wedding. I realized this would be even more symbolic at a funeral and our final presentation was formulated after several discussions with area priests and ministers," Castiglia said.

The Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home has been a family business since 1969 when Castiglia's father, Anthony, won \$25,000 in the lottery and used it to start and build his funeral home business. Castiglia became president of the Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home when his father died in 1994.

Last June, the Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home finished a 3,500 square foot expansion at its Hamburg facility, located on the corner of Camp Road and Route 5. The expansion of the Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home, which doubled its size to 7,000 square feet, was accented by a 1,500-square-foot chapel, and also features a lighted skylight, a baby grand piano, and several unique hand-painted murals on its walls and a *quiet room* for children, complete with a television, video games and a fireplace.

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■ BUSINESS NOTES

Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home Inc. was granted membership in the International Order of the Golden Rule, a funeral home association with more than 1,200 members. Charles Castiglia is president and director of the funeral home, founded by his father, Anthony, in 1969 after he won \$25,000 in a lottery game. Lakeside, which finished a 3,500-square-foot expansion last year, offers a *Release of the Doves* ceremony.

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