

after that's over, I do pictures and get back to the news. Another day, I'll cover a city council meeting, an ATV story, the softball championship game, or someone knocking down mailboxes!"

"He's very versatile. He's like his daddy—he can do just about anything," Sue says proudly. "All the new technology has made Ritter's station possible. The change from tapes has allowed him to work with less manpower."

The Mortimers' devotion to where they live goes beyond lip-service. They are very involved with the Renaissance on Main program, as well as personally investing in restoring downtown Salyersville.

"We bought a couple of buildings downtown that we're in the process of restoring," Sue says. "When Doug's parents were young, they had the Tavern Restaurant, and people would come and just sit and visit."

"Downtown was a hopping little place then. We'd like to see that again. It does make you stop and think about the need to revitalize downtown."

"The second floor of one of our buildings is going to be the Mortimer Inn—a B&B without the breakfast. There's no place here at all for families to stay who have sold the homeplace and want to come back for a visit, or whatever reason. Paintsville or Prestonsburg are the closest. So we'll try it and see how it works."

Doug explains, "The first floor in one building is rented to a gas company. The other—which we bought just about four months ago—we haven't done much with yet. We couldn't do a lot with the first as far as restoration, but the second one, we may be able to take it back to the original '30s when it was built; it's in good enough shape, we think, to do a true restoration. It was originally a grocery store—the oldest business in town—run by a woman named Grace Howard for as long as she could breathe. She owned the building and lived upstairs."

Sue continues the story. "Eight or 10 years ago, I put together the local Renaissance on Main group and I guess I took myself too seriously. When we saw the building, I thought, 'Oh, we can do something with that.' We put two businesses on the Parkway, but they had to be there to get the traffic. The strip is in the city limits, and the business and restaurant taxes do help different things in the city. Still, we've helped pull things out of the downtown area, so maybe what we're doing now will help bring it back."

"One of the greatest things downtown, I think," says Doug, "is the Pioneer Village, a project of the Magoffin County Historical Society led by Todd Preston. It's just amazing what a handful of people have done. Those are original homes and schools from out in the county that have been dismantled and reassembled. It's very active—open to tourists. At Christmas, we have a beautiful parade, and on that night the cabins are opened up, with fires in the grates, and people come in with banjos. It is really nice."

Sue talks further about the Renaissance on Main program. "Our headquarters are in an old stone building, probably the second location of Salyersville National Bank, and they donated it to Renaissance. They had already made some changes on the first floor added—sheetrock and took out tin—but now we've got it and we're looking at restoring it. We've gotten the money to finish the second floor. Behind the building, there's a garden area that we've had put in using stone from a two-story, hand-carved stone drug store that was being torn down. Renaissance saved all that stone and used it for the garden area and will use the rest for the base of the stage of a theatre."

"Behind the Judicial Center, there's a mural you can see on your way out of town."

We raised money through donations and picked out some historic locations to have painted on the wall. Renaissance also did a water feature when you first come into town," Sue finished. "We've really worked hard."

When looking at the future, it's clear to see that to the Mortimers, the history and heritage of the past is an important part of the future.

When Ritter is asked what lies ahead for him, he smiles and says, "I spend so much time getting stories, I don't have much time to look down the road."

Sue adds, "He was offered a top position at a Knoxville station several years ago, but moving doesn't interest him. A regional station called him also—he told them, 'You don't have enough money.'"

Doug says, "From all of us, we couldn't imagine living anywhere else—we just wouldn't. Right now, there are lots of changes happening. It may not happen overnight, but Salyersville and Magoffin County are only going to keep getting better. It's easy for a community to lose its way, but I think people are realizing they need to be involved and to claim it. When young, talented people think about leaving, we need to tell them, 'You're really going to be sorry if you leave; the bright lights of the big city aren't all they're cut out to be.' They need to understand they have a sort of obligation to stay around and help this region get better. After all, you can travel to wherever you want—you're not that far from Lexington or wherever you want to go—but this is a good place to call home."

"We've taken advantage of opportunities here and we've been successful and happy," Sue goes on. "Take Ritter, not many people his age can say 'I love what I'm doing and I'm making a living out of it—and I stayed home.'"

Ritter's sisters, Kim and Cindy, live in Atlanta and Birmingham. "Their growing-up years were in the South, but they and their children share the same enchantment for this area that we do."

In the midst of the Mortimers, it is easy to see they're a family with both roots and wings—and very comfortable with both.

TRIBUTE TO GERVIS SINGLETON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to a man who has shown the utmost compassion and care for Kentucky families who are grieving the death of a loved one. Mr. Gervis Singleton of Laurel County, KY, has been established in the funeral and mortuary services business for over 50 years. He has treated each and every family who has had the unfortunate need for his services as if they were his own.

Mr. Singleton owns Cumberland Memorial Gardens and Mausoleum and is a partner, along with his son, Craig Singleton, of Singleton Embalming Service. Gervis has experienced firsthand the grief process thousands of families have gone through during the death of their loved ones; his father passed away when he was only 11 years old. He believes that mourning is a very important part of the grieving process, and he takes pride in knowing that he is doing what he can to help them through such difficult circumstances. As someone who is experienced in an area that is new to many of us, he is more than happy to assist the

deceased's loved ones in whatever way he can.

Gervis knows that his job is very much linked to emotion, but as a mortician, he understands that he must block out his own emotions while working on the important process of restoring the deceased individual to more closely resemble how their loved ones remember them in life. He feels that if he can assist the family during their time of mourning, that they will more likely gain closure on the loss.

During his half century working in the business, he has seen fads come and go. Mr. Singleton remembers the day when it was almost a requirement to wear all black to a funeral, a custom that he has seen almost completely go away. He has also seen families transition to more cremations in the past few decades. Cremation is a cheaper, sometimes more convenient alternative. The increase in number of cremations sparked an idea for Mr. Singleton, and in 1995 he built a signature addition to the Cumberland Memorial Gardens. The result was a 360-crypt mausoleum along with accommodations for 48 cremains.

Mr. Singleton takes a walk through his 16-acre cemetery every day, and reflects on the lives of the many who have passed away and are buried there. It is inspiring to see someone who is so involved and compassionate in an industry that is an uncomfortable topic for some, but still a vital service. Although the passing of loved ones is something we may prefer not to think about, it will most assuredly befall upon each of us at some point in time, which is why knowing there are those like Gervis to help is a comforting thought. There is a need for individuals like Gervis Singleton, who are so deeply convicted to lend a helping hand in whatever way they can.

I would like to ask my Senate colleagues to join me in commemorating Mr. Gervis Singleton. He is a fine Kentuckian who has made many a family feel comforted at a difficult time thanks to his deep respect for those who have passed away.

Recently, an article appeared in the Laurel County-area publication, the Sentinel Echo, that illustrated the contributions of Mr. Singleton to the people of Laurel County, KY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Sentinel Echo, Sept. 5, 2011]

SINGLETON TAKES PRIDE IN HELPING FAMILIES
(By Magen McCrayer)

Cemeteries are citadels for those who mourn the death of a lost loved one, and treating them with the ultimate respect is Gervis Singleton's calling.

Singleton is the owner of Cumberland Memorial Gardens and Mausoleum, and is partner in Singleton Embalming Service with his son, Craig Singleton. He was the second born of seven children. His father passed away when he was only 11 years old.

"I don't know if it has something to do with my father passing away," Singleton

said about his start in the funeral business. “(But) I grew fascinated.”

To embalm a body, Singleton said emotions should never play a part. In order to do his job, he must turn off parts of his limbic system, the primarily emotional core of his brain. After 50 years of being in the funeral and embalming business, he still struggles with the emotions of his job.

“There are certain things you don’t let in your mind. You close them out,” he said. Although, emotions play a large part in one of the reasons he still finds zeal within his career, comfort.

“I take great pride in being able to do something that makes it easier for families during those times. It’s not that you’re going to grieve with them, although you may, to some extent,” he said. “You are trying to help them through their grief.”

Singleton’s embalming business handles roughly 1,500 bodies a year. A single body takes about three hours to embalm. In a way, it’s an art, he said. His team of five provides services for funeral homes in north-eastern Tennessee and southeastern Kentucky.

Families may furnish Singleton with a photograph to preserve the body to its original state, and they may not. It’s up to the embalmer to transform the unknown deceased into who they were remembered as. Singleton found that some facial features after death need to be improved on, and he brings them back to life, visually.

But appearance isn’t everything, especially when it comes to funeral attire, he said. It’s not customary anymore to wear all black. Another uncouth practice that’s become popular in the past 30 years is cremation, he said. “It’s a growing thing, becoming more popular, and cheaper,” he added.

Singleton said mourning the deceased is important to gain closure, not only for children but adults, too. So in 1995, he built a mausoleum to accommodate 360 bodies and 48 cremation ashes.

A Laurel County Medal of Honor recipient is buried at Cumberland Memorial Gardens. There is a flag flown above the grave of Carl H. Dodd, a veteran of World War II and the Korean War.

“It’s the only site I’ll allow a flag to fly,” Singleton said.

Every day, Singleton walks through the 16-acre cemetery behind his office on south U.S. 25. About 80 individuals a year are buried on the grounds that offer three reflection stations and feature Little Laurel River and a wooded area from behind.

BIG GOVERNMENT

Mr. KYL. Madam President, Mark Steyn is one of the most gifted writers of our time. His trenchant analysis appears regularly in *National Review*. Steyn writes with biting humor and personal experience with government censorship and has chronicled the concomitant growth in government power and loss of freedom in Europe and North America.

In the March 5, 2012, issue of *National Review* he warns that America, which he calls the “last religious Nation in the Western world,” is in danger of going the way of European nations in replacing faith and family with the all powerful national government as the source of everything we need. He calls his piece “The Church of Big Government.” It reminds me of Barry Goldwater’s warning that “a government

big enough to give you everything you want is a government that is big enough to take away everything you have.”

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the *RECORD*.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the *RECORD*, as follows:

[From the *National Review*, Mar. 5, 2012]

THE CHURCH OF BIG GOVERNMENT

LEVIATHAN IS NIBBLING YOUR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AWAY

(By Mark Steyn)

Discussing the constitutionality of Obamacare’s “preventive health” measures on MSNBC, Melinda Henneberger of the *Washington Post* told Chris Matthews that she reasons thus with her liberal friends: “Maybe the Founders were wrong to guarantee free exercise of religion in the First Amendment, but they did.”

Maybe. A lot of other constitutional types in the Western world have grown increasingly comfortable with circumscribing religious liberty. In 2002, the Swedish constitution was amended to criminalize criticism of homosexuality. “Disrespect” of the differently orientated became punishable by up to two years in jail, and “especially offensive” disrespect by up to four years. Shortly thereafter, Pastor Ake Green preached a sermon referencing the more robust verses of scripture, and was convicted of “hate crimes” for doing so.

Conversely, the 1937 Irish Constitution recognized “the special position of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church as the guardian of the Faith.” But times change. In 2003, the Vatican issued a ruminative document on homosexual unions. The Irish Council for Civil Liberties warned Catholic bishops that merely distributing the statement could lead to prosecution under the 1989 Incitement to Hatred Act, and six months in the slammer.

In Canada, Hugh Owens took out an advertisement in the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, and he and the paper wound up getting fined \$9,000 for “exposing homosexuals to hatred or ridicule.” Here is the entire text of the offending advertisement:

Romans 1:26

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

I Corinthians 6:9

That’s it. Mr. Owens cited chapter and verse—and nothing but. Yet it was enough for the *Saskatchewan “Human Rights” Tribunal*. The newspaper accepted the fine; Mr. Owens appealed. That was in 1997. In 2002, the Court of Queen’s Bench upheld the conviction. Mr. Owens appealed again. In 2006, the Court of Appeal reversed the decision. This time the “Human Rights” Commission appealed. The supreme court of Canada heard the case last autumn, and will issue its judgment sometime this year—or a decade and a half after Mr. Owens’s original conviction. It doesn’t really matter which way their Lordships rule. If you were to attempt to place the same advertisement with the *Star-Phoenix* or any other Canadian paper today, they would all politely decline. So, in practical terms, the “Human Rights” Tribunal has achieved its goal: It has successfully shriveled the public space for religious expression—and, ultimately, for “exercise of religion.”

In the modern era, America has been different. It is the last religious nation in the Western world, the last in which a majority of the population are (kinda) practicing believers and (sorta) regular attenders of church. The “free exercise”—or free mar-

ket—enabled religion to thrive. Elsewhere, the established church, whether *de jure* (the Church of England, the Church of Denmark) or *de facto* (as in Catholic Italy and Spain), did for religion what the state monopoly did for the British car industry. As the Episcopal and Congregational churches degenerated into a bunch of mushy doubt-ridden wimps, Americans went elsewhere. As the Lutheran Church of Sweden underwent similar institutional decay, Swedes gave up on God entirely.

Nevertheless, this distinction shouldn’t obscure an important truth—that, in America as in Europe, the mainstream churches were cheerleaders for the rise of their usurper: the Church of Big Government. Instead of the Old World’s state church or the New World’s separation of church and state, most of the West now believes in the state as church—an all-powerful deity who provides day-care for your babies and takes your aged parents off your hands. America’s Catholic hierarchy, in particular, colluded in the redefinition of the tiresome individual obligation to Christian charity as the painless universal guarantee of state welfare. Barack Obama himself provided the neatest distillation of this convenient transformation when he declared, in a TV infomercial a few days before his election, that his “fundamental belief” was that “I am my brother’s keeper.”

Back in Kenya, his brother lived in a shack on \$12 a year. If Barack is his brother’s keeper, why can’t he shove a sawbuck and a couple singles in an envelope and double the guy’s income? Ah, well: When the president claims that “I am my brother’s keeper,” what he means is that the government should be his brother’s keeper. And, for the most part, the Catholic Church agreed. They were gung ho for Obamacare. It never seemed to occur to them that, if you agitate for state health care, the state gets to define what health care is.

According to that spurious bon mot of Chesterton’s, when men cease to believe in God, they do not believe in nothing; they believe in anything. But, in practice, the anything most of the West now believes in is government. As Tocqueville saw it, what prevents the “state popular” from declining into a “state despotic” is the strength of the intermediary institutions between the sovereign and the individual. But in the course of the 20th century, the intermediary institutions, the independent pillars of a free society, were gradually chopped away—from church to civic associations to family. Very little now stands between the individual and the sovereign, which is why the latter assumes the right to insert himself into every aspect of daily life, including the provisions a Catholic college president makes for his secretary’s IUD.

Seven years ago, George Weigel published a book called “The Cube and the Cathedral,” whose title contrasts two Parisian landmarks—the Cathedral of Notre Dame and the giant modernist cube of La Grande Arche de la Défense, commissioned by President Mitterrand to mark the bicentenary of the French Revolution. As La Grande Arche boasts, the entire cathedral, including its spires and tower, would fit easily inside the cold geometry of Mitterrand’s cube. In Europe, the cube—the state—has swallowed the cathedral—the church. I’ve had conversations with a handful of senior EU officials in recent years in which all five casually deployed the phrase “post-Christian Europe” or “post-Christian future,” and meant both approvingly. These men hold that religious faith is incompatible with progressive society. Or as Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair’s control-freak spin doctor, once put it, cutting short the prime minister before he could answer an interviewer’s question about his religious faith: “We don’t do God.”