

A full-service funeral home will open Sept. 22 in eastern Greene County. Victoria Grace Funeral Home and Memory Chapel will begin operations just off of State Road 54 — near the State Road 45 junction — in Little Cincinnati. "Everything will be complete (on site)," said owner Christy James. "We have the prep-room and everything."

James has hired licensed embalmer/funeral director Tina Wininger of Bloomington to be the director at the new business. Wininger has 15 years experience as a funeral director, according to James.

James, who said the business has been in the planning stages for the last two years, said the funeral home has received its state professional licensing approvals and will be ready to begin assisting bereaved families early next week.

On Friday, the Certificate of Inspection from the State of Indiana and approval by the Indiana Funeral Service Board was received.

"It (the chapel) is large. Everything is on one level," she said.

James pointed out that she feels there is a need for a funeral facility in the eastern part of Greene County.

Victoria Grace will provide a complete funeral services, including:

- Pre-planning and life insurance needs.
- Floral services on site.
- Unique family heirlooms.
- Memory photos and videos.
- Many choices of affordable decorative caskets.
- Fellowship room.

The building has two floors. The funeral home and chapel are the bottom level — all on one floor easily accessible for elderly and the disabled. The lower level is about 6,000 square foot, which will include the large open-to-ceiling entry, that proceeds to the chapel, and the viewing parlor (turret), a memory section for memorial photos on a 42" flat screen TV with seating, fellowship room, kitchen, floral and selection (merchandise), planning and prep room.

"I would really like people to realize that you can compare and save. They can get more for less," James stressed. "Once we get started and a few families come in, then they will see the difference. It (the funeral home) is such a beautiful place.

"As a florist for eight years, going through multiple back doors of other facilities in several counties, I know we will be considered to be right at the top for quality at an affordable price. There is no place that will compare to the serene atmosphere, and this area's beauty in farmland," James promised.

Looking ahead, James said she has plans to offer cemetery plots on an 80-acre tract of land she owns near the funeral home. It will be named "Graceland Garden of Remembrance."

"It will have beautiful scenery," she said.

According to James, Victoria Grace Funeral Home & Memory Chapel believes that a funeral is a meaningful event, and when planned properly, can help ease the pain of separation that naturally accompanies death.

"A funeral is a time to celebrate the beloved's life while providing a unique occasion for family and friends to share expressions of love and appreciation. It is more involved than a standard service and requires assistance of someone who will care and take the time to help you or create such a personalized tribute or celebration," she stated.

"With all respect and sincere condolences we will serve families in Greene, Monroe, Lawrence and surrounding counties, at no extra fees within a 75 mile radius," she added.

James owns two other area businesses — Country Ruffles and Victorian Lace

gift shop at the Gasthof Restaurant complex in Montgomery, and Among the Roses gift shop in Bloomington's College Mall. She formerly operated Country Ruffles and Victorian Lace shop in Bloomfield. The funeral home can be contacted by calling 825-3030. Visit its Web site at www.victorianroseflorals.com for more information.

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