

## Tradition of service

# New owners settling in at local funeral home

By JARED NELSON  
The Times Leader

The past four months have brought some major changes into the lives of Brian and Jenna Wainer — from relocating across the country to welcoming the birth of their first child.

In addition, the Wainers have become the new owners of one of Princeton's most well-respected businesses, Morgan's Funeral Home.

The Wainers assumed ownership of the funeral home and its sister facility, Lakeland Funeral Home in Eddyville, in January.

The Morgan family had been involved in handling the funeral needs of local residents since 1906, when Robert Morgan established the Princeton Furniture and Undertaking Company.

Morgan went on to build the first funeral home in the county in 1937, and the business has remained in family hands since then.

That legacy included the construction of the current funeral home on West Washington Street, which remained owned and operated by Morgan's grandson, Rick Morgan, and his wife, Linda.

In December, the Morgans announced the sale of the funeral operation, a

## Welcome cookout planned Saturday

move made after months of deliberation.

The business became a part of another well-established funeral service franchise, Milner & Orr Funeral Homes.

That family firm, headquartered in Paducah, operates facilities in Ballard, Carlisle and McCracken counties.

Brian and Jenna Orr Wainer, the son-in-law and daughter of Milner & Orr owners Randy and Andrea Orr, were chosen to oversee the Morgan's and Lakeland operations.

But even though the funeral business had been a part of her family's life for generations, moving into the field herself was not a given, Jenna Wainer said Monday.

In fact, she noted, her parents required job pursuits in other areas first.

"Their rule was go to college, get a degree in something you're inter-



FURNISHED PHOTO

Morgan's Funeral Home's Rick and Linda Morgan (from left) are welcoming new owners Jenna and Brian Wainer, with their daughter Pepper, to the

local funeral services business. A meet-and-greet

cookout is planned Saturday evening behind the funeral home on Washington Street.

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# Wainers welcomed to funeral business

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elors in business administration from the university and moved to Arizona for a career in medical sales.

They met in the fall of 2008 and married in 2012.

Their union, in part, played a role in bringing the idea of the funeral field back into mind, Jenna recalled.

"When I met Brian, he took on, I felt, a lot of the characteristics that my parents had," she said. "That's when it became more of a real consideration."

After the Morgan's sale to Milner & Orr was successfully negotiated, the Wainers said their goodbyes to Arizona and made their way back to western Kentucky.

They first settled in an apartment at the Lakeland facility in Eddyville before purchasing a home in Princeton, to ready for their next milestone — daughter Pepper Caroline, who was born April 10.

The Wainers are now busy training as they prepare for full-time careers in the local funeral industry.

Jenna is working to-

ward a funeral director's license, while Brian is pursuing licensure as both a funeral director and embalmer.

A year of coursework in Nashville will be required to complete that certification, he noted.

At the same time, they are both working with Rick Morgan and the Morgan's staff to gain a full understanding of the operation.

"It's gone well," Morgan said of the transition Monday.

"They're still meeting people, getting to know people and getting to know Princeton."

Morgan said he planned to remain involved full-time until Wainer completes his apprenticeship and obtains his licenses.

"And after that, I'd still like to work part-time, if they'll keep me on," she said.

That should not be a problem, the Wainers noted.

"Jenna and I both feel extremely fortunate and blessed to follow in Rick's footsteps," said Brian.

"It's been really good, because the staff has been really patient and under-

standing, and really helpful in the transition," Jenna added.

"I think his family took pride in serving the families of the county through tough times, and I think that's our same goal," Brian noted.

Apart from some minor back-office adjustments, families who turn to Morgan's in their time of need should see little, if any change, in the operation.

Both Brian and Jenna, who recently returned from maternity leave, now plan to be regular presences at the funeral homes, both in Princeton and Eddyville, to work with families during their time of grief, and building relationships within the community.

That spirit of service, witnessed throughout her life within the Milner & Orr family, is now being experienced personally, Jenna noted.

Having the opportunity to serve and visit with families making arrangements, being able to assist "was a lot more gratifying than what I anticipated," she said.

"It went above my expectations of what I

thought you could get out of it."

The couple also extended thanks to members of the Caldwell and Lyon County community for welcoming them to the area.

"We have both thought time and time again how nice everyone has been in welcoming us to town, and for their support in following Rick's footsteps," Brian said.

## Meet-and-greet cookout planned Saturday

The Morgans and Wainers are extending an invitation to the public to a cookout aimed at introducing the Wainers to the community.

The event will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. this Saturday, June 11, behind the funeral home on Washington Street.

The community can enjoy hot dogs, ice cream and cold drinks while getting a chance to meet the new owners and welcome them to the area.