

# AHWATUKEE FOOTHILLS NEWS

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## Ahwatukee man's firm memorializes the deceased

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**B**rian Musgrave and his younger sister, Camille Musgrave Barnett, were young when their father passed away suddenly from a heart aneurysm.

He was 13, she was only 8.

And their father's passing ultimately inspired Brian to start a unique business, called LegacyMarker, that offers family and friends the ability to share stories and anecdotes about a deceased person online. Even photos can be uploaded to their own Legacy Markers site for free.

What sets LegacyMarker apart from the online sharing of memories is how those memories can be accessed graveside by using a smartphone's QR (quick response) code scanner to read the matrix barcode sticker that LegacyMarker securely fas-



Brian Musgrave's son Dodger Thomas partly inspired the creation of his unique marker for gravestones that links to a website honoring the deceased. (Special to AFN)

tens to a headstone or memorial with a small, stainless steel marker.

"A lot I know about my dad came from stories - my aunt, a college buddy from

Kansas State University where he'd graduated. My sister and I thought what if we could create a way that we, and our children could learn more about dad. That's one of the reasons behind our starting Legacy-Maker," said Musgrave, an Ahwatukee resident born and raised on the 100-year-old family farm in Atwood, Kansas.

The idea for Legacy-Maker came about when Musgrave, an engineer at PhoenixNAP, and his wife Amber, an assistant manager at Rawhide, visited a Kansas graveyard during a family reunion.

"We attended my wife's family reunion

in Junction City, Kansas and took our then 1-year-old son to visit the cemetery where a lot of family members were buried," he recalled. "We walked around trying to read the old headstones and wondered what their lives entailed. I remember one that said the man buried there had been a Confederate soldier."

Time had made some older headstones nearly illegible.

"Many of the headstones were worn down to where you could hardly read them and most had only their name and dates listed," he recalled.

"We knew these people had so much more to their life story than just these two lines. But as our older family members pass away, we knew it would become harder and harder to find someone who

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knew these stories that we could then share with our son."

The first person honored on Legacy-Maker.com was his father, Tom Musgrave.

"I was only 13 when my dad passed away, leaving me with very few years to really know him as a person, aside from just being my dad," Brian said. "Having his LegacyMarker profile where other people who knew him through all walks of his life can post stories of him - this allows people to get to know him in a whole new way."

"My grandmother is now passed away as well and as more of these older generations pass, unfortunately their stories can go with them. LegacyMarker is a way to capture those moments and those lives for many future generations to be able to enjoy," he added.

Musgrave said he started LegacyMarker to produce "a true legacy to those family members that have passed."

"Our mission is to build a bridge from the past into the future with the use of modern technology, resurrecting legacies



The QR code fastened securely on gravestones can be used to connect a cellphone to a website with tributes to the deceased. (Special to AFN)

that risk being lost forever."

Registering on LegacyMarker.com and starting a memorial page is free; the charge comes only when ordering the marker - a 24-gauge stainless steel, 2"x3" plaque permanently engraved with a QR code and a searchable number.

"When this is scanned with any smart device, the code takes you directly to the loved one's memorial page that has been set up by the family," explained Brian's sister Camille and company co-owner. "The page

can also be accessed by entering a name of the searchable number on the site."

The personalized memorial site also features a life timeline, photos and videos, any links the family wishes to share, a story sharing capability for visitors and a guestbook.

"We set it up so the site is completely free - free to build a profile, free to include photos and videos, free to visit and sign other people's guestbooks," explained Brian.

The stainless steel plaque can be attached to any sealed surface, Camille said the plaques come with industrial-grade 3M high-bond peel-and-stick adhesive "that you don't have to worry about coming off".

Noting "the plaque can stick to almost any surface," Brian said, "We haven't received any complaints or push back from any cemeteries. And I think it would work great on a columbarium niche, too, if there was no objection from the cemetery."

The searchable marker number provided for each LegacyMarker memorial also allows friends and family who can't physically visit the actual gravesite location to access the information and photos of the person being memorialized.

The dedication of the first LegacyMarker was in March on the 27th anniversary of Tom Musgrave's passing and was attended by extended family and friends in Kansas.

"It was bittersweet that six of Dad's nine grandchildren were there to witness it," Camille said. "They never got to meet him. These stories are as close as they will get on this side of heaven."

Creating a Memorial Page can be done easily at LegacyMarker.com as they provide the tools to post memories, photos and links.

Their Facebook page has a video by Camille that explains the product and process and the site has a messenger application that can also answer questions.

"The hope is that the next time we visit one of these cemeteries with my son, Dodger, that he's not bored looking at old, worn-down cement, but instead enthralled with opening each profile and actually seeing these people come to life through photos, videos and real life stories," said Brian of his now 2 1/2-year-old son, Dodger Thomas Musgrave. "This can make him all that more proud and knowledgeable of his lineage."