



FCACO

Funeral Consumers Alliance
of Central Ohio
A Memorial Society
"as defined by the FTC"
(614) 263-4632

News

FCACO Mission Statement

- To promote end-of-life planning and preparation
- To outline practical steps to be taken before death
- To inform and instruct the public concerning the funeral industry
- To offer reasonably priced options for dealing with remains at death
- To monitor the funeral industry on a local and statewide level
- To maintain public awareness and wariness through action, education and publications

Funeral Advice You Can Trust

Founded in 1953, FCACO is one of more than 110 similar alliances across the country working in conjunction with the national Funeral Consumers Alliance. We are run by volunteers and have no connection with the funeral industry, or any religious group. Membership is open to all in our service area that includes Columbus, Springfield, Yellow Springs, Dayton and outlying areas.

FCACO invites your inquiries. Call (614) 264-4632 or visit us at www.funeralsohio.org.

2012-2013 Board Members

Past President: Su Ann Farnlacher

President: Alice Faryna

President Elect: Open

Treasurer: Su Ann Farnlacher

Secretary: Nancy Alonzo

Membership Secretary: Carol Bohumolski

Newsletter Editors: Phyllis Byard, Carol Branscomb

Newsletter Editor Emeritus: Dwight Sharp

Directors: Edgel Alley, Cathy Elkins, Nancy Greene, Frank Timmons, Jan Waters

FCACO—Serving the Central Ohio Community since 1953

President's Message

New Roles and Technology



Alice Faryna,
FCACO President

Our fiscal year which began on June 1, 2012, resulted in some board members switching hats. After 4 years as your membership secretary, I now have the pleasure of presiding over a board of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers. Past president Su Farnlacher is now our treasurer, and Nancy Alonzo continues her role as recording secretary. Carol Bohumolski is our immediate link to new members and queries from the public at large. New board members Cathy Elkins and Jan Waters replace Nancy Greene, who has enhanced our role in the past year in our role as monitor of the monthly meetings of the Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. Frank Timmons and Edgel Alley support the board with fresh ideas and in-kind donations. This is who we are: volunteers committed to education of and advocacy for consumers.

We also strive to stay abreast of technological advances to improve communications. Some of you may wonder what that funny

square symbol is at the bottom of this page. It is called a "QR" code and functions like a bar code. When scanned by a smart phone, our Web site appears on the screen. The person can immediately navigate through our resources and call us if there is a question or need.

Keeping our records and files up to date and accessible has been a continuing challenge. We now have a free account with **dropbox.com** which allows us to store key documents "in the cloud". This is geek language to describe file storage on the internet. As many of you know, sensitive files can be lost forever when a hard disk suddenly dies or is compromised by a virus. The dropbox allows our board members to access a document at home instead of making a trip to the office. Dropbox is not just for institutions. We encourage all members to consider scanning important documents and storing them in the cloud. That is just the first step. Trusted family or friends must know where to access either the paper documents, or be given access to the password to the dropbox. All your plans for final disposition of your property and your remains come to naught if these documents cannot be found.

We always need and welcome new members!

Stock your place of worship or Senior Center with our brochures. Remember that FCACO talks to clubs and organizations. Help us to get the word out about our organization and services. Call for details and brochures. **(614) 263-4632**



Fall 2012/Winter 201

FCA Biennial Meeting

In June, two local members (Edgel Alley and Su Ann Farnlacher) attended the biennial meeting of our national organization, Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA), in Tucson, AZ. This was the first biennial meeting they had attended and both were very impressed with the quality of the general meeting and the vari-



Josh Slocum and Edgel Alley

ous workshops that were available. Some of you may recognize FCA's Executive Director Josh Slocum in the picture with Edgel.



Lisa Carlson

The other picture is of the former Executive Director, Lisa Carlson. Lisa and Josh co-authored "Final Rites: Reclaiming the American Way of

Death." available on the FCA Web site, www.funerals.org.

Donations of time and money are always appreciated. Use the enclosed remittance envelope to let us know how you would like to help.

Consumer Overview

Monthly Meeting of State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors

by **Cathy Elkins, FCACO Member**

Jan Waters and I, as members of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Ohio, are attending the monthly meetings of the Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. Nancy Greene has been doing this and has been very helpful to us as we find our way. Prior to that, longtime member Marie Lorz was the liaison. This Board, with meetings open to the public, meets monthly and consists of 7 members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Five are licensed embalmers and practicing funeral directors each with at least 10 consecutive years in Ohio. One must be knowledgeable and experienced in operating a crematory. Two members represent the public, one of whom must be over 60 years old. The Web site for this Board which has lots of interesting information is: www.funeral.ohio.gov. The legal founda-

tion for this Board is found in the ORC (Ohio Revised Code) 4717.02 A. This Board has a staff that investigates complaints and reports to the Board. The Board gives a lengthy discussion of the complaints but has limited enforcement power, sending serious offenses to the Attorney General's office or to the local law enforcement of the jurisdiction in which the offense occurred. It also monitors and grants licenses to funeral directors and crematoriums in the State of Ohio. From what Jan and I have observed all members are conscientious with their Board responsibility. Their mission statement is: "The mission of the Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors of Ohio is to protect consumers and regulate the funeral service profession by establishing a standard of competency through the licensure of embalmers, funeral directors, funeral homes, crematories and embalming facilities."

FUND RAISING

In an old newsletter (2011) from one of our sister organizations, AMBIS (Austin Memorial and Burial Information Society), we found an interesting tidbit about fund raising, a subject near and dear to any non-profit organization's heart! We decided it could be transplanted to Ohio! Their idea was to designate a special day and coordinated special dollar amount, i.e., a special donation option of \$11.11 that should be affordable to all members. So when the date 11/11/11 rolled around members would send in their special donation. Well, that date of course is past, but we do have one coming up that we can use. How about sending at least \$12.12 to us on 12/12/12? We do not require annual dues, so your regular donations enable us to carry out our mission to help all consumers learn to plan for an affordable funeral. Please, give as generously as you can (and if the \$12.12 made you smile a bit, add that into your regular donation amount, too!)



Save the Date! FCACO Annual Meeting May 11, 2013

Please mark the date for the Annual Meeting, so it doesn't slip your mind. You will receive another Newsletter with all the information about the speaker and refreshments in the month before the meeting next May. But, we need more of our members to attend. This is our only meeting of the year and is a wonderful way to introduce your friends and family to what we do and why we are so committed to doing it year after year! This year's annual meeting will be held on May 11, 2013 at the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Avenue, Columbus, OH 43214 at the usual 12:00 noon. We have not yet secured our speaker, but be assured, as in the past it will be someone who will provide you with much information—and you'll meet the retiring officers and board as well as the incoming new ones. Plan to attend.

FCACO attempts to verify all information in this newsletter, but cannot guarantee all. Legal questions should be directed to your attorney.

BOOK REVIEW

Notes from the Waiting Room: Managing a Loved One's End-of-Life Hospitalization

by *Bart Windrum*
Axiom Action Press
(AxiomAction.com) \$25.00

by Edgel Alley, FCACO Member

I attended a seminar by the author at the last FCA national convention and was impressed enough by his presentation to purchase his book that chronicles his experience and lessons learned in attending the hospitalization and end of life of both his parents within a two year period. While Mr. Windrum's account is highly personal, he gained many insights into how to advocate for a loved one during this stressful period. Most importantly, he discov-

ered that hospitals are equipped for body repair but often fail to provide care. The author gives us guidelines to understand how a hospital functions and where to find help in advocating for a loved one's care and comfort. He tells what "Power Documents" our designated care giver will need to have access to our medical records and make informed decisions on our behalf and where to find them for free. He has a section on how and when people die in the 21st century and our care giver's role in that process. And he explains that dying peacefully and with dignity requires getting on course long in advance of actually dying. Mr. Windrum also has a section on handling the body after death that he wrote after consulting with funeral directors that lays out the options available.

I belong to Funeral Consumer's Alliance because I want to help my children and loved ones deal with my eventual (and certain) death in as fair and stress free way as possible. This concern extends to end of life decisions and I believe that this book will be of help in that.

(Why not share membership information with your friends and loved ones so they, too, have this comfort?)

Ash Scattering Alternatives

Merilyn K. Lee, FCACO Member

If you have decided on cremation, have you thought about where your cremated remains will end up? Abandoned cremains are a growing problem¹. Human cremains have reportedly been found in storage units, hotel rooms, and the trunks of junked cars. Some families just don't know what to do with Mom's ashes.

I want my remains returned to nature, not sitting in a funeral home or the back of a relative's closet for decades, so I began to search for places where cremains may be scattered, legally, and for a reasonable cost.

The simplest possibility is to scatter or bury the cremains on your own private property. There are no laws in Ohio preventing the disposal of cremated remains on private property with the property owner's permission. Think carefully, however, about how your survivors may feel if the property is later sold or developed.

Nature lovers may wonder if it's OK for their family to scatter their ashes in their favorite park or forest. It depends. Most parks have rules governing the disposition of cremains. If you have a particular park in mind, contact the governing authority to see if scattering is permissible and if a permit is needed. Scatter-

ing is not prohibited in national forests, as long as you comply with all applicable local and state regulations, but is not expressly permitted, either².

A more traditional alternative would be dedicated scattering gardens, which are now available at many cemeteries. Costs vary; a big city cemetery may charge \$750 or more for your ashes to be scattered and have a record made of the disposition, but small town and rural cemeteries often charge much less. Don't overlook "green" cemeteries—Ohio's only green cemetery, Foxfield Preserve, allows the scattering of cremated remains for a reasonable fee (currently \$250).

Some churches also have scattering or memorial gardens in which members' and non-members' ashes may be scattered. There is normally a reasonable donation (\$75-\$150) requested, and the disposition of the cremains is recorded in the church's records.

Cremated remains can also be sent to companies which will scatter them in the ocean, on land, or from an airplane with or without survivors present. These services vary in price, but many are quite affordable. An unattended scattering in the Pacific Ocean can cost as little as \$95. These services are particularly useful if your survivors are elderly or mobility impaired—all that is needed is for the cremains

Recycled Medical Devices

A recent news article in the *Columbus Dispatch* (September 30, 2012) describes an attempt by a group established to try to recycle medical devices for use in developing countries. The group, Project My Heart Your Heart, spearheading this effort is led by Dr. Thomas Crawford, a cardiologist at the University of Michigan. The article states that in data collected from a study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania between February 2009 and July 2011 a number of devices recovered after death still had substantial battery life left to be of benefit to recipients. The study's lead author was Dr. Payman Zamani, a fellow at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The article goes on to state that an estimated 1 million to 2 million people die worldwide each year because they lack access to pacemakers. Project My Heart Your Heart plans to file an application with the FDA for permission to test the used devices for safety in a clinical trial.

Odds 'n Ends

■ Recently one of our members, Judith Allee, had the sad task of dealing with her mother's and her husband's death within a two month period. She said that being a member of FCACO and having their affairs in order in advance of death was a true gift which helped immensely.

■ Have you completed your arrangements forms? Can't find them? Either phone the office at (614) 263-4632 or go to our website and download what you need. Make sure your loved ones know what you want and where to find all your papers!

to be securely boxed up and taken to a U.S. Post Office. The company will do the rest and will provide a certificate documenting the scattering. An internet search for "ash scattering" will turn up numerous options.

If you have a preference, write it down to give your family that final push to honor your wishes. It's not always obvious what to do with the cremated remains of a loved one; make it easy for your survivors.

¹ http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004433569_remains23m.html

² <http://www.fs.fed.us/faq/#question8>

Contact Information & Resources

(Please keep this in a handy place)

Body Donation at OSU

614-292-4832

<http://go.osu.edu/bodydonation>

LOOP

(Lifeline of Ohio Organ Procurement)

(includes cornea donations)

877-223-6667

www.lifelineofohio.org

Franklin County Probate Court

www.franklincountyohio.gov/probate

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<http://www.funeralsohio.org>

FCACO News

Team Members Needed

For those of you who would like to pull together information for our newsletters, here is your opportunity!

Contact editor Phyllis Byard

(614) 263-4632, for more information.

How Your Family Benefits from Your Membership
Show this Newsletter to Your Family

I know, I know! We're harping on it! Talking about your membership in the FCACO and just what that means. Since family members are the most likely persons to make disposition decisions upon your death, showing them this newsletter may be very useful for them.

Here it is laid out: as a member of FCACO (a non-profit memorial society as defined by the FTC) you are entitled to choose one of four different funeral "plans:" Plan 1 – Direct Cremation, Plan 2 – Direct Burial, Plan 3 – Cremation after Embalming and Showing (at the funeral home), Plan 4 – Burial after Embalming and Showing (at the funeral home). Each plan has a specific set of details and a specific fixed, contracted, discounted price. (This price is negotiated periodically on your behalf by the FCACO with the funeral home provider). Upon joining, each member receives a form on which to choose the desired plan, a copy of which should be sent promptly to the chosen funeral home. If the member has chosen such a "cooperating funeral home" the prices are automatically set. If the member has chosen a funeral home "outside" of the organization, the prices will be based on that funeral home's

general price list. Usually a member has NOT pre-paid for the plan chosen, although that is possible and should be clearly stated in the individual's records, with any receipts attached.

When death occurs and the body has been released by the authorities, your funeral agent (the one who will be going to the funeral home to sign the actual contract for service and taking care of other things) will call the funeral home with which you, the member, are registered. In Columbus, Ohio, that is Cook and Son-Pallay Funeral Home, (614) 444-7861 and in the Springfield/Dayton area, that is Conroy Funeral Home, (937) 324-4973.

If you are away from your home area when death occurs, there will obviously be other issues for your loved ones to deal with. When you travel you might want to take copies of pertinent documents with you. Check out the national website at www.funerals.org for helpful information and brochures that you can print and give to your relatives in advance of your travel. They could also phone Funeral Consumers Alliance (National Headquarters in Vermont) at (802) 865-8300 for assistance and advice should the need arise.

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Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Ohio
P.O. Box 14835
Columbus OH 43214-0835
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