



# FCACO

Funeral Consumers Alliance  
of Central Ohio  
*A Memorial Society*

# 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](http://www.funeralsohio.org).

## 2008-2009 Board Members

*President:* Sarah Wurdlow

*Treasurer:* Julian Larson

*Secretary:* Nancy Alonzo

*Membership Secretary:* Alice Faryna

*Newsletter Editor:* Dwight Sharp

*Board:* Marcy Baird, Deborah Cox, Su Ann Farnlacher, Dave Hedden, Dwight Sharp

## Message from the President



**Sarah Wurdlow,**  
**FCACO President**

If you are reading this newsletter, you are most likely already a member of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Ohio, but how much do you really know about this organization and what it does? For example, I didn't know when I first joined that the area we serve is large, and has included such cities as Athens and Mansfield, Ohio, for example. We're a "big" group, responsible to a lot of territory. One of the best ways to keep tabs on us, and on our "parent" organization, the Funeral Consumers Alliance, is to check our websites. You can find out what's happening locally by going to [www.funeralsohio.org](http://www.funeralsohio.org) and for the large picture, visit [www.funerals.org](http://www.funerals.org). There you will find this statement: "The Funeral Consumers Alliance is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting a consumer's right to choose a meaningful, dignified, affordable funeral. Think of us as the 'Consumer's Reports' of the funeral business." Some important words are in that statement. You want this final ceremony to be "meaningful," to truly reflect for your family and

friends the kind of person you were in life. It should be "dignified," for it is a significant occasion (I was going to say solemn or serious, but then I remembered my dad's memorial at which humor was an important element). However, it should also be affordable, as you determine that to be, not what bereaved family members might feel pressured into. Finally, we all have to remember that we are indeed dealing with a "business," with all that entails, and that does not change just because it is a business dealing with end of life issues.

Here in Central Ohio, the FCACO exists to provide you the tools to deal with these issues calmly and thoughtfully, rather than in a state of sudden need. Whether it's the Before I Go packet, the biennial survey of area funeral homes basic costs (now available online at the [www.funeralsohio.org](http://www.funeralsohio.org) website), monitoring meetings of the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors, or conferring with a state senator's staff in an effort to develop effective legislation on pre-need funding issues, our board and other FCACO members are working hard in your interests. Won't you consider becoming a part of this effort?

We're eager to hear from you.

## Message to Fellow Members

by Phyllis Byard

Many years ago I became a member of FCACO (then known as "The Memorial Society"). I submitted my Pre-arrangement Form and received the newsletter periodically, and that was my only connection. After about 5 years of receiving the newsletter, I saw the same request for help that was in each one, but this time it "spoke to me" and I thought, yes, I should volunteer because I think this organization is very important to me, my kids and my community. I sent in the little form saying I would like to volunteer...and I've been doing so for the past 20 years!

I can tell you my commitment to what FCACO does only grows each year. The phone calls I receive (I'm currently on the "emergency phone number") make me realize just how much we are needed. We can't meet everyone's need, of course, but we can certainly reach many more. The big issue is HELP. We need people to do things at the office, in the speaker's bureau, doing computer work, helping write grants. You offer your time and we'll find something that fits your schedule and interests.



## FCACO Wants You!

*If you can volunteer, please do. Don't assume someone else will always be there to do the needed work.*

# Green Cemeteries

For those of you who have received previous newsletters, you may recall some discussion about "green cemeteries." We're excited to tell you about the first one in Ohio: Foxfield Preserve, near Akron. If you want to learn all about it, visit [www.foxfieldpreserve.org](http://www.foxfieldpreserve.org) for complete information. Prices are very comparable to an ordinary cemetery. If you don't have access to a computer, write for their brochure: Foxfield Preserve, PO Box 202, 9877 Alabama Ave SW, Wilmot, OH 44689-0202, phone 330-763-1331.

Scripps News Service says that it is the "nation's first nature preserve cemetery operated by a conservation group. Essentially, it may be the cemetery of the future." "The goal is to achieve an environmental twofer – to offer natural burials that skip many of the costs of a modern funeral and, after creating a natural cemetery, to conserve and reforest land that might otherwise be developed."



## Alternatives

The scattering garden at the First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Columbus on Weisheimer Road accepts cremains of both church members and non-members. Call for information 614-267-4946.

We have found an interesting website: [www.eternalreefs.com](http://www.eternalreefs.com) which explains the concept and philosophy of a unique memorial, using cremated remains, which rests in specific areas of the ocean and is the basis of a new home for a variety of sea life.

## Speaker's Bureau

Do you have a place that would like to have a presentation about what we do? Our able representatives will be glad to schedule a time to explain our organization and how membership might help. Contact the office for information at (614) 263-4632. With the current economic situation, considering expenditures on a funeral makes even more sense. The quote "Being fiscally responsible is not being disrespectful" applies to one's self as well as others.



We've heard that a new, retail casket/urn seller is opening in Cincinnati. See [www.mainstreetcaskets.com](http://www.mainstreetcaskets.com) for information.

# Declaration for Funeral Arrangements (Designated Agent)

Many of you have already completed this form. GOOD FOR YOU! It is a natural addition to the other “advanced directives” of Living Will and Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare. It is really revolutionary, we believe. This form allows you to name someone (related or not) to be the person who will see to it that your wishes are carried out, concerning your funeral arrangements. This bill was signed into law in October of 2006 by Gov. Taft. It is a far-reaching and consumer-friendly law! If you need a copy you can either request one from us or go to the website of the Probate Court where you will be able to download one (the address is: [franklincountyohio.gov/probate/index/cfm/](http://franklincountyohio.gov/probate/index/cfm/)). We use the same version as the Probate Court, not the one that funeral homes use, which is more tilted towards the funeral industry. (That one provides space for your agent to sign and accept financial liability for your funeral!) You can also get the Ohio Living Will and the Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare at that website. Call our office for more information.

## New Pre-Need Legislation (Still Pending)

At our last Annual Meeting those attending heard a talk by Senator Tim Schaffer. His talk was about trying to get a bill passed that would be more consumer “friendly” and “protective!” FCACO has been included in the hearings and the “interested party meetings” and has been kept apprised of the status and changes in the bill. It has now cleared the Senate and remains to be approved by the House. It has had many iterations and alterations, some of which we agree with and some of which we don’t.

Your own consumer voice is represented by our board members Phyllis Byard and Dave Hedden. They will be representing YOU and the other citizens of Ohio whenever there is legislation concerning end-of-life issues (specifically, funerals/cremations). There may be a hearing on this bill on December 9th, and they will be there. Some of the concerns we had with previous versions seem to have been met but there is still work to be done.

As you know, FCACO rarely suggests that a pre-payment contract is a good idea. Pre-planning, however, makes a lot of sense. So, dig out the form that we sent you when you joined, fill it out, and send it in!! (If you can’t find it, call for a replacement!)



### Observation...

Have you noticed that area funeral homes are starting to advertise their prices in newspapers?

### Helpful Hint...

Tell your next of kin (or representative) where you keep your important documents. Idea: buy an accordion folder to keep bulky items in; order a BIG (Before I Go) kit to keep in your freezer with important items such as Copies of your Will, Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, DNR Orders, the Designated Funeral Agent form and anything else you can think of that your survivors will need. (The BIG kit has a booklet to list many things they’ll need to know. You can order one from the office. Please send a donation of at least \$10.00 to cover our costs of procuring and mailing.)

### FCACO Plan Options *(short version from our brochure)*

Periodically, usually on a two year schedule in November, FCACO renegotiates our contract prices. Our office has up-to-date figures.

All plans include transportation of the deceased within a 30 mile service area; a conference with survivors for arrangements; and procuring, preparing and filing all certificates & permits to comply with local regulations.

*Plan I: Direct Cremation*

*Plan II: Direct Burial*

*Plan III: Cremation after Embalming*

*Plan IV: Burial after Embalming*

*Plans V(a) and (b): Transportation associated with (a) Body Bequeathal and (b) Organ Donation.*



## Member Reminder

Please let us know when you move. We pay double for every piece of mail returned!

## Traveling Abroad?

If you are planning a trip out of the country, contact the office for an informative brochure.

We have many brochures on a variety of funeral-related subjects. Contact the office for information, or go to the national FCA website (funerals.org) to see all that are available.

## Good News

Pending Board approval, Phyllis Byard has agreed to assume the President Elect position for the remainder of this fiscal year. She will assume the position of President next year.

## Save the Date

Our Annual Meeting will be on May 23, 2009. Details in next newsletter

## All Ohio Meeting

Representatives of three of the five Ohio Affiliates met on August 2 in Mansfield, Ohio, to discuss how to better coordinate activities among our Ohio affiliates. Unfortunately, a representative from Akron and Cincinnati could not attend. We hope to meet every year. Want to go?

## Biennial Meeting

Two of your board members attended the FCA Biennial meeting in Seattle in June, 2008. FCA reports it had the highest attendance ever. The programs were informative and entertaining. If you are interested in attending a Biennial, check out the FCA website for information (funerals.org) or call our office.

# HELP...



Most of our members and friends realize that we operate on a "shoe string" budget. We rely on the income from new memberships but mostly on donations we receive in addition. This year our memberships are down and we are feeling the pinch. Your board members give many hours to keep the organization operational. Consider what you would lose if we could no longer continue. We are at the point of digging into our capital and that's not good. If you want our work to continue please send money. Doesn't matter how much! If each of

our members sent in a modest amount (\$5.00) we would be able to pay all our bills (rent, telephone, newsletter and postage) with no trouble. Please consider a donation today.

There is another way to help. We need people who can help us in the office and on the board. Perhaps you're recently retired from either a job or another volunteer organization and are looking for a rewarding way to fulfill your volunteering spirit. Make note of that on the enclosed donation envelope or phone the office and leave a message. You'll be glad you did!

## Welcome Aboard

The officers and Board of Directors of FCACO extend a hearty welcome to all new members.

## Local FCACO Office

PO Box 14835  
Columbus, OH 43214  
Phone: 614-263-4632  
www.funeralsohio.org

## Our Providers:

- Cook and Son-Pallay Funeral Home  
1631 Parsons Avenue,  
Columbus, OH 43206  
Phone: (614) 444-7861
- Conroy Funeral Home, Inc.  
1660 E. High Street,  
Springfield, OH 45505  
Phone: (937) 324-4973

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



## New Members Needed

We're asking that each person who reads this newsletter actively talk to another person and get them to join with us in our attempts to help people plan ahead. Without new members we will not survive. Let someone know that we exist. You can also request a brochure to be sent to them.

( ) Please send an FCACO Brochure to each of the following:

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_