



FCACO

Funeral Consumers Alliance
of Central Ohio
A Memorial Society

(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.

2009-2010 Board Members

Past President: Sarah Wurdlow

President: Phyllis Byard

President Elect: Alice Faryna

Treasurer: Julian Larson

Secretary: Nancy Alonzo

Membership Secretary: Alice Faryna

Newsletter Editor: Dwight Sharp

Directors: Deborah Cox,

Su Ann Farnlacher, Dave Hedden,

Dwight Sharp, Frank Timmons

FCACO—Serving the Central Ohio Community since 1953

Notes from the President



Phyllis Byard,
FCACO President

It has been just over a year now since our financial markets went into a freefall. Slowly things seem to be returning to some sort of normalcy. One effect of the past year is that people are looking more closely at their

spending patterns, and I would suspect that includes funerals/cremations. We get many phone calls asking if we provide funds for people who don't have the cash or credit to pay for a loved one's funeral or cremation. True, people should plan ahead for this certain eventuality and put money aside perhaps either in a savings account or as an insurance policy. But some don't or can't and some die earlier than would be expected. We do not provide funds but can help the caller by

using our survey to direct them to the lower priced options. These are difficult phone calls to take and answer. There is, of course, a legal responsibility from all municipalities to take care of indigent persons, but many times these callers are not eligible even though poor.

This brings me to the thought that we who are members of FCACO are fortunate, indeed, that we have put our plans in order...and if we have not yet done so, still have that opportunity. This planning ahead is especially important to our survivors. Make sure you have written everything down for them so that all is known. Talk to them. Make sure they know your wishes. The end of the year is a wonderful time to do this "housekeeping." If you haven't already obtained the BIG pack ("Be-

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

From the President

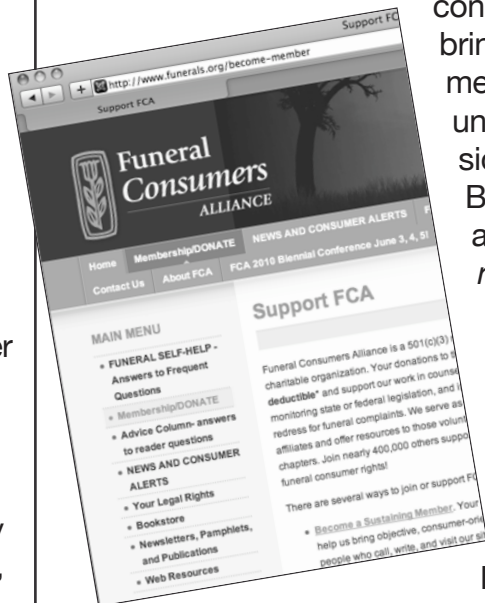
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fore I Go" booklet) call the office for details.

I have been volunteering for FCACO for many years and find our organization more important than ever! People who have never purchased a funeral oftentimes do not know or understand what's involved and what their rights are. Costs are increasing. Becoming a member and attending informational meetings along with our newsletter provides valuable information. While I'm talking about our organization, formerly known as the Memorial Society, I'd like you to realize there is a commercial funeral establishment in Columbus which named itself the Columbus Cremation and Memorial Society. They use a Web site which has a ".org" ending, which most people think is a non-profit. They are not. Please be sure that when you talk with friends about joining with us they actually contact us, the non-profit funeral information organization serving the Columbus area since 1953 and conforming with the description of a memorial society by the Federal Trade Commission.

News From Our National Organization

Josh Slocum, Executive Director of FCA, reports that he recently testified before Congress on behalf of FCA and all funeral consumers concerning the need to bring cemeteries, crematories, monument dealers and caskets retailers under the Federal Trade Commission's Funeral Rule. (Read about the Bereaved Consumer's Protection Act at <http://www.funerals.org/become-member>). The significance of the Funeral Rule, established in 1984, is to protect consumers purchasing funerals. This set of rules says, among many other things, that a printed price list must be provided to a consumer. You can read a full version of the Funeral Rule at this address: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/rulemaking/funeral/index.shtm>.



Many affiliates worked for years to bring the Funeral Rule to fruition and we will be pleased to see this additional consumer protection established. Josh is requesting that if you have stories related to the need for such additional legislation to let us know by email at info@funeralsohio.org or phone the office.

More National News

In many funeral related articles you will see a reference to FCA or Josh Slocum, or both. We are so fortunate to have such a talented, resourceful person working on our behalf with his small but equally dedicated staff. We need to support our national organization as well as our local one. Donate generously when you can. You can now set up a tax-deductible monthly donation to national FCA as a "sustaining member." See the national FCA Web site, www.funerals.org for details on how to give.

Report from the Treasurer

New memberships have increased slightly over the past years but donations have decreased. It is the donations from members that keeps FCACO working at publishing our newsletter, paying the office rent, telephone, printing for public speaking engagements and a few other bills. Please give FCACO high priority in your year-end charity donations. We are a 501(c)(3) organization and your donations are tax deductible. Remember, board members are all volunteers and we have no paid personnel.

✓ **Survivor's Checklist**

Survivors who are the ones "in charge" after someone's death need to know many things about the deceased. We have prepared a document which is posted on our Web site, www.funeralsohio.org. If you cannot access the Web site, phone the office and we will send it to you. Among the topics: Decision Making (who has the right); Information needed for an Ohio Death Certificate; Other Decisions; After Disposition. This is a work in progress and will be amended as new information is obtained. Be sure to check the Web site regularly.

Monthly Open Public Meetings

Our Speakers Bureau is now presenting an open, informational meeting on the 4th Monday of each month at 7:00 PM. These meetings are scheduled for Room H at the First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Columbus, 93 W. Weisheimer Road, Columbus, Ohio. Prospective members, interested parties, and current members will all find useful information at these meetings. Perhaps it has been some time since you first joined, or perhaps you have had questions that you've never asked. Now is the time to get the answers. We hope to have more open meetings around the area on a regular basis. Let us know of any organizations looking for a program on this topic. Our volunteers freely donate their time to keep this organization afloat. Please come, and bring others with you.

Volunteer Opportunities

Have you been thinking about what you could do to help FCACO? There are many small jobs that a volunteer can do which don't require a long-term time commitment and some can even be done from your home. Some of those would be checking our Web site for incoming mail and forwarding those needing replies to our membership secretary; keeping track of proposed and pending legislation; researching the Ohio law concerning funeral is-

sues; updating office files and supplies; preparing hand-outs for our meetings; volunteering to pick up price lists from local funeral homes for our next survey; attending the monthly meetings of the State of Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors and reporting to the FCACO Board. Please consider responding on the remittance envelope in this newsletter, or call the office at 614-263-4632 to volunteer. We need you! THANKS!!

2010 Annual Meeting

Mark on your calendar the date of our next annual meeting. It will be at noon, May 22, 2010 at the Maple Grove United Methodist Church, corner of High Street and Henderson Road in Columbus. Following lunch there will be a brief board meeting. Our featured speaker will be Ann Harr. She is a social worker (and member of FCACO) who became interested several years ago in the budding trend of home funerals and caring for our own dead. More details of the meeting will be in the spring newsletter.

All-Ohio Meeting

We recently sent representatives to an all-Ohio meeting on Saturday, October 24, 2009. Representatives from four of the five affiliates met to discuss items of interest and compare notes and tips on helping our respective organizations to continue to grow. Toledo, Cleveland, Akron, Cincinnati and Columbus are the five affiliates in Ohio. Josh Slocum, Executive Director of our national FCA was the featured speaker at Cincinnati's Annual Meeting that evening. We hope to meet twice yearly. If you have family or friends in these Ohio areas have them get in touch with their local group. Visit www.funerals.org.

Local FCACO Office

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

National FCA Office

33 Patchen Road
South Burlington, VT 05403
Phone: (802) 865-8300
www.funerals.org

Our Providers:

■ *Cook and Son-Pallay
Funeral Home
1631 Parsons Avenue,
Columbus, OH 43207
Phone: (614) 444-7861*

■ *Conroy Funeral Home, Inc.
1660 E. High Street,
Springfield, OH 45505
Phone: (937) 324-4973*

Update on Advance Directives

These forms (Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, Designated Funeral Agent, Do Not Resuscitate Order) are available from the Franklin County Probate Court Web site, www.franklincountyohio.gov. When you reach this site, choose Probate Court from the "Agency List" and then choose "Advanced Directives" from the available options. They can be used in any Ohio county. If you do not have computer access, most public libraries will be happy to print out these forms for you (take this newsletter with you). Let your family know about them!



While we're talking about letting people know your plans, be sure they understand what your membership entitles you to—A membership in FCACO provides information and also preferential pricing at our cooperating funeral homes for both funerals and cremations. Sometimes a family member calls us to say they have "found" some old membership papers in a deceased person's files and they think that the entire funeral was already paid for. Many times they call too late, after the funeral has happened. Make sure your "designated" survivor knows that if you are planning to use one of our contracted funeral homes they must phone them when the time comes before the body has been removed from the place of death.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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P.O. Box 14835

Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Ohio

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