
In Touch



FUNERAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION & FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE

Nonprofit organizations educating consumers in
San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

463 College Avenue, P.O. Box 60448, Palo Alto, CA 94306 (650) 321-2109 www.funeralconsumerinfo.org Spring 2008

Annual Meeting to Focus on Memory— Sunday, April 13: Don't Forget!

A program on “Maximizing Your Memory” will be presented by John Timbs, Family Care Specialist from Alzheimer’s Association in San Francisco, at the annual Funeral Consumers Alliance meeting on Sunday, April 13 afternoon. It will be held in the program room at Los Altos Public Library, 13 S. San Antonio Rd.

Timbs is a Licensed Marriage, Family Therapist and Family Care Specialist. He works with families experiencing the effects of Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders. He also facilitates a support group for people diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer’s and has presented many educational programs in the Bay Area for families and care professionals.

“Maximizing Your Memory” discusses types and aspects of memory, how aging affects recall, the difference between normal age-related forgetfulness and dementia, tips for optimal cognitive performance, and managing memory problems.

Timbs will bring slides, plus handouts for FCA’s usual well-laden brochures table. Come at 1:30 to register, chat,



*John Timbs,
Family Care Specialist*

and browse. The business meeting starts at 2 p.m., followed by a review of “Eight Reasons Why Funeral Directors (Almost) Always Have the Upper Hand” by Marjorie Bridges, board member. There will be a refreshment break before 3 p.m., then Timbs will speak around 3:15 p.m. The event will close at 4:15. As usual, the meeting is free to the public, so invite relatives and friends.

Is FCA/FEF Moving?

It may happen, as we are looking for a low-cost first floor location. Ideas welcome. Call the office, 650-321-2109.

Judy Yee Is New Office Manager

With great regret in January we lost Office Manager Paula Troncone to a full time job at a funeral home. This necessitated a concentrated search for a replacement, and we came up with another winner.

She is Judy Yee of Sunnyvale, who has special skills on the computer and in helping people. She has worked for nonprofits in the past, and is active with church affairs. She has experience arranging events, customer service, and mailings.

Judy is intent on automating our office to reduce the amount of paper filing necessary. As new members join, their Planning Forms will be scanned and kept in digital format. Eventually she will go through all the old file folders and scan them into files. To this end we have purchased (with some money from Cathryn Cannon’s bequest) a 4-in-1 copier-fax-scanner-printer.

We have changed the FCA/FEF public office hours to 9 to 12 a.m.

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Before I Go Kit

A fill-in-the-blank 20-page kit titled "Before I Go, You Should Know" is available for \$10 through the Funeral Consumers Alliance (<http://www.funerals.org>). It comes in a transparent blue case with forms for an Advance Health Care Directive which gives instructions on how you should be cared for in the event of your incapacitation, and designates a person in charge of pulling (or not pulling) the plug. This is arguably the most important official document to have completed at any point in your life, and it can be rendered official without a lawyer. All you need are witnesses and a quick notarization. Kits are available through the local or national FCA.

In Touch is issued twice a year by Funeral Education Foundation and Funeral Consumers Alliance, P.O. Box 60448, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Phone/fax (650) 321-2109. The subscription list includes FEF donors, members of Funeral Consumer Alliance of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, agencies, churches, and selected organizations.

2007-8 FEF Officers
 Harry Anisgard, President
 Joan Buell, Vice President
 Carolyn Bechthold, Secretary
 Katoko Sax, Treasurer

2007-8 FCA Officers
 Joan Buell, President
 Harry Anisgard, Vice President
 Carolyn Bechthold, Secretary
 Linda Borders, Treasurer

Board for FCA & FEF
 Allan Behr, Marjorie Bridges,
 Lou Gado, Jane Hillhouse,
 Robert Marder, Nora Noldon
 Lois Salo

Office Mgr.—Judy Yee
 Office open M-W from 9 to 12 p.m.

Advisory Council:

Joan Dammann	Janet Brewer
Dr. Robert Glaser	Doris Hawks
Jack Wallace	Henry Mayer, MD
Barbara Hultgren	Richard Roe



Judy Yee in the Office

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Monday through Wednesday because of budgetary constraints. The telephone tape recording gives a phone number to call in case of emergencies that happen outside of business hours.

Also, remember we have a web site that provides almost all the information available at the office. You can send an email to the office to update your information, or print out a form that can be faxed or mailed. The email address is peninsulafca@yahoo.com, and the web pages are at <http://www.funeralconsumerinfo.org>.

Ten Commandments Of Funeral Planning

1. Thou shalt write a "Bucket List" (things to do before you kick the bucket).
2. Thou shalt think about thy Funeral.
3. Thou shalt talk about thy Funeral.
4. Thou shalt shop around for thy Funeral.
5. Thou shalt obtain multiple price lists from different funeral homes.
6. Thou may get thy casket or urn from a third party.
7. Thou shalt not purchase a funeral package anywhere.
8. Thou shalt not purchase funeral goods or service in advance.
9. Thou shalt not purchase funeral goods or service while under emotional distress.
10. Thou shalt write the funeral details down in advance and tell friends and relatives where to locate the papers.

By R. Brian Burkhardt, Author of *Rest in Peace: Insider's Guide to the Low Cost, Less Stress Funeral*, and Yourfuneralguy's Weblog

New Information for My File (I Already Have a "Planning Form" in My File)

Name #1 _____
 Name #2 _____
 Date _____ Memb. No. _____
 Old Address _____
 Old City, Zip _____
 New Address _____
 New City, Zip _____
 New Phone _____
 Current Email (to get *In Touch*) _____
 New Mortuary _____
 New Next of Kin _____
 Kin's Address _____
 Kin's Phone _____

(A new wallet card will be automatically sent to you with changes of kin or mortuary.)

I (we) now desire

- C1 — Direct Cremation
- C2 — Cremation & Scattering at Sea
- B1 — Direct Burial
- B2 — Direct Burial with Graveside Services
- B3 — Traditional Funeral with Simple Casket

Signed #1 _____
 Signed #2 _____

State of Financial Affairs *(we need your help)*

By Linda Borders, Treasurer

Funeral Consumers Alliance and Funeral Education Foundation are reaching a financial crossroads. We must either increase income or must continue to cut back on operations.

We have had deficit spending the last two years and our operating reserves are running low; please see below financial statements for the last several years.

	2005	2006	2007	2008
FCA/FEF Income:	(Actual)	(Actual)	(Actual)	(Budget)
Contributions	18,700	16,300	19,500	20,500
Memberships, misc	9,500	10,200	6,200	7,700
Total income	28,200	26,500	25,700	28,200
FCA/FEF Expenses:				
Payroll	11,000	12,700	13,500	12,000
Rent	1,200	1,200	2,400	2,400
Newsletter	2,700	3,100	5,700	3,000
Program- telephone, dues advertising, supplies printing, postage, misc.	13,100	15,700	9,600	5,600
Total expenses	28,000	32,700	31,200	23,000
Surplus(deficit)	200	(6,200)	(5,500)	5,200

Cost-saving measures started in 2007 and will continue until we regain financial stability. The change that may affect members the most has been a reduction in our office hours from 16 to 9 hours per week. The office will be open from 9 a.m. to noon, Monday through Wednesday. Also, in March the Board voted 6-5 to increase the membership fee from \$40 to \$50.

We are also considering reducing our printed newsletters from two to one a year; each newsletter costs \$3,000 to print and distribute. If we do distribute only one printed newsletter, we will publish the second one via emails and on our website: www.funeralconsumerinfo.org. To help FCA/FEF save on postage costs, please send your email address to peninsulafca@yahoo.com.

We also need to increase financial contributions from our members; fewer than one-eighth of our members contribute each year. We appreciate all donations.... large and small donations help us continue to offer information and support for families to make wise decisions about end-of-life care. Please support us with your money and time. Note the opportunities on the remit envelope and elsewhere in this newsletter.

GIVE TO A FRIEND TO JOIN

I would like to join Funeral Consumers Alliance. I enclose a check for \$50 (or \$100 for two). Mail to: FCA, PO Box 60448, Palo Alto 94306.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Birthdates _____ and _____

I was given this by _____

Raffle Ahead!

Have more fun!!! Add cheer to your life!!! Help a worthy organization be there when help is needed. Contribute \$25 or more to FCA or FEF (tax-deductible) by May 15 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$100 gift certificate to Beltramo's Wine and Spirits in Menlo Park. Enclosed is a contribution envelope, or call our office to process a credit card contribution. Your support is needed and appreciated.

eScrip Is Another Way To Donate to FCA

One fund-raising tool for the Funeral Consumers Alliance is painless, yet has the potential for providing a big boost for our budget.

FCA has account number 140973356 with <http://www.eScrip.com>. Our members and their friends can go online and enroll so that a small part of each dollar they spend at certain retailers will be donated back to the FCA. Both in-person and online shopping are counted.

Members provide contact information and their credit and debit card numbers so their purchases can be automatically tracked. It is all very secure, and only the last four digits show up on the screen. Advice: Be sure to save your username and password so you can enter the site again! After you sign up the only thing you need to do is re-enroll the Safeway card every January, and the charge cards each time you get an updated card. You can check your donating progress online during the year. The money gets to FCA about five months after the expenditure.

Some of the retailers willing to give up some profit for charity are: Andronico's, Macy's, Lands' End, Baja Fresh, Safeway, and Big O Tires.

Funeral Education Foundation
463 College Ave., P.O. Box 60448
Palo Alto, CA 94306

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ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, April 13

“Maximizing Your Memory”

Funeral Home News . . .

The FCA Mortuary Committee made its yearly visits in January to the cooperating funeral directors. Be sure to look at the enclosed mortuary list for 2008-09 changes.

Some prices are up due to higher fuel costs. However, we hear the funeral homes who are not on our list have huge price increases in transportation and embalming. One piece of good news is that the \$8.50 body disposition fee levied by the state Cemetery and Funeral Bureau has been suspended for 2008. Death certificates are also reduced to \$12 each for our two counties.

Bay Area Cremation and Funeral Services has built its own crematorium in Stockton, called A Bay Area Crematorium, Inc. Alameda Family Funeral Home expanded its space several years ago to increase accommodation for

a variety of religions and beliefs. Last year the Crosby chain closed Menlo Colonial Funeral Home and O’Connells’s, and operations were consolidated at three other mortuaries. John Crosby started All County Cremation Service in San Mateo, as well. San Jose Funeral Service’s owner, Ronald Brown, is semi-retired, and Tom Beddingfield manages day-to-day operations.

Board Candidates

Election of new board members is one of the important items of business at the annual meeting on Sunday, April 13. Four people are on the slate as we go to press.

Candidates for a three-year terms are: **Joan Barbour** of Portola Valley, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice, specializing in grief counseling. **Marjorie Bridges** of Stanford, incumbent, a former FCA office

manager, journalist, editor, and counselor.

Candidates for a one-year term are: **Robert Marder** of Hillsborough, incumbent, a former Administrative Law Judge for the State of California. **Linda Borders** of Palo Alto, a former accountant, who has been filling in as treasurer since September, when Richard Roe resigned. She will serve until moving away in November. **Lou Gado** of Los Altos, incumbent, former businessman.

Another three-year Board term is available. If you could serve, please email a description of your experience and interests to the office at peninsulafca@yahoo.com.

Retiring board members are Lois Salo of Palo Alto, who has served six years, and Jane Hillhouse of El Granada, who is resigning to form a home funeral business. We thank them so much for past service!