



In Touch

Funeral Education Foundation: A funeral consumers alliance of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties
FUNERAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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Spring 2011 Issue

Annual Conference - Sunday, April 3

Los Altos Public Library, 13 S. San Antonio Rd., Los Altos, CA

Mark your calendars to join us on April 3, 2011, at Los Altos Public Library, at 2pm, to obtain the most up-to-date information on how to insure that your funeral and burial directions are carried out (and not subject to legal challenges by surviving family members).

Mrs. Colleen E. McAvoy is returning with her associates for an updated presentation on "Advance Planning for the End of Life." Learn of recent changes affecting probate law, living trusts, estate taxes, advance health care directives and estate tax planning and the new phenomenon of dealing with the

digital estates left behind by the deceased (*see NY Times article, Cyberspace When you're Dead* published 1/5/2011 by Rob Walker). Should digital memories (blogs, facebook) remain adrift on the web, a permanent mausoleum built on status updates and photo albums? Come to the conference for a legal perspective and Q/A session.

In addition to an array of published literature to help you with end-of-life planning, coffee and light refreshments will be provided. Invite your family and friends who have been hesitant to discuss end-of-life issues. Attendees will be eligible for door prizes.

Mrs. Colleen E. McAvoy

Mrs. McAvoy is a partner at the law offices of McGlashan & Sarraill (estate planning specialists) who represent many family businesses, handling their estate work and succession planning as well as business transactions. She received her undergraduate degree in public policy from Stanford University and graduated from Hastings College of the Law (University of California) in 1985. Named a Northern California Super-Lawyer in 2009, she is married with two children.



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IMPORTANT NOTE RE: PRICE LISTS FOR MORTUARIES. . . Please pick up a slightly updated copy at the upcoming Annual Conference or visit www.fcapeninsula.org!

Call for Nominations!

We need writers, speakers, organizers, computer support, problem-solvers, financial advice, leaders!!

And/Or

Do you have a background in hospice, medicine, psychology, problems of health and aging, death industry, law, volunteering, secretarial, marketing, business, accounting?

If you or a friend possess these talents, volunteer for the Board!

2011-12 Board Positions Available

Candidates for Board of Directors will be introduced for election at the Annual Conference on April 3. Other candidates can be nominated from the floor, too. Candidates include:

- Mila Popov of San Francisco, who has a Master of Business Administration from University of San Francisco and a B.S. in International Business, San Francisco State University. She has been an Executive Assistant to CEOs and CFOs for 15 years, and could help us with finance, computer, and administrative matters.
- Ann Nola of San Jose founded and is past director of the Association of Certified Professional Wedding Consultants and a member of or founder of many other organizations, including the Center for

Living with Dying. Semi-retired from a career focused on the celebration of love, she now focuses on the celebration of life.

- Byron Chan of San Francisco is a retired teacher and has been active in his church and U.S.O.. He has property to maintain and children living on the Peninsula so is often in the Palo Alto area.

Two or three other people are considering accepting candidacy, and the complete list of candidates will be posted at the Annual Conference.

Retiring board members are Robert Marder and Marjorie Bridges. Two other open spots were temporarily filled by former board members Allan Behr and Barbara Hultgren. The board recently appointed Ken Klucsor, a partner in Beddingfield Funeral Services of

San Jose, as the newest member of the Advisory Council.

Our members cover a wonderful cross-section of talent. This is a great potential pool of resources which could only enrich the benefits available to all members (see side bar).

A successful candidate for election to the Board of Directors would have:

- An interest in consumer protection
- Energy and Imagination
- Time (up to 8 hrs. a month)
- Can attend monthly Monday meetings from 11a.m. to 1p.m. in Palo Alto
- Lives any where from San Francisco to Gilroy and drives
- Has a phone, and email

Nominees elected at the upcoming Annual Conference would serve April 4, 2011 through May 1, 2014.

"Everyone gets organized at some point, they just might not be around for it."

-Illinois-based Certified Professional Organizer Sue DeRoos

If you would like to find out how Palliative Care differs from hospice or find out when it is appropriate to look into Palliative Care for a loved one in the hospital, check with your local hospital for classes.

El Camino Hospital in Mountain View offers a monthly lecture (free) to help explore ways to begin the difficult decisions, to consult with family members about medical treatment choices they prefer (in the event they can't speak for themselves) and learn what resources are available. Since seating is limited to 10 participants, pre-registration is required. To find out when the next lecture is, call 1-800-215-5556 and ask about the lecture, "Let's Talk about Palliative Care". Other lectures available include "Pathway's Home Health Hospice and Private Duty," and "Living with Loss".

Palliative Care vs. Hospice Care

Palliative care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv) is the medical specialty focused on improving the quality of life of people facing serious illness. Emphasis is placed on pain and symptom management, communication and coordinated care. Palliative care is appropriate from the time of diagnosis and can be provided along with curative treatment.

Ensures quality of life

Palliative care should relieve suffering through pain and symptom management, communication and coordination of your care. It treats people suffering from serious and chronic illnesses including cancer, cardiac disease like Congestive Heart Failure, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS and

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

Palliative care relieves symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. It helps you gain the strength to carry on with daily life. It improves your ability to tolerate medical treatments. And it helps you to better understand your choices for care.

Different from hospice

Palliative care is not end-of-life care and is not the same as hospice. Hospice is focused on providing quality care to people in the last months of life who have decided to stop treatments meant to cure them.

Palliative care on the other hand can be provided from the time of diagnosis. You can have pallia-

tive care at the same time as curative treatment.

Provided by a team

Working with your own doctor, the palliative care team (medical, massage, nutritionists, chaplain, etc.) of experts provides:

- Close communication
- Expert management of pain and other symptoms
- Help navigating the healthcare system
- Guidance with difficult and complex treatment choices
- Emotional and spiritual support for you and your family

—excerpted from
www.getpalliativecare.org

Office Records reduction—Member Action Requested

Although member records have evolved over the years from 3x5 cards to file drawers to computer databases, we have not previously examined the rationale for the volumes of information we keep. We are now engaged in an effort to rectify that. We will keep information about how to reach our members and next-of-kin, as well as what mortuary and funeral plan the member has chosen (if any). Much of the information we collected in the past, however, is really only for the mortuary to complete the Death Certificate. Until the time of death, this sensitive information should best remain in member hands only.

PLEASE NOTE that member information is safe with us. Records live in a locked office within a locked building, and our computer is password protected and has virus protection. We have, however, stopped collecting social security numbers and plan to purge our paper files.

WHAT TO DO??

Before we shred all the paper files, we want to offer our members the opportunity to retrieve their own records from us. Here is what to do if you want us to send you all the paper information we have for you:

1. Before June 1, send a stamped, self-addressed, business-sized envelope to:
FEF/Funeral Alliance
PO Box 60448
Palo Alto, Ca 94306
BE SURE TO INCLUDE your member number (if you have it), your full name, birth date, and a phone number and/or email address where we can reach you if we have questions.
2. We will then mail you whatever is in our paper files, along with a new Planning Form which you should fill out (if necessary) and keep with your other funeral-planning information, to present to

the chosen mortuary at time of need. If we have nothing in our paper files, we will send you a printout from the database.

3. When you receive this information, please check it over and let us know of any changes in your name, address, phone number(s), email, or next-of-kin information, so that we can update our database. You can inform us of changes by regular mail or email to office@fcapeninsula.org, or on the web at <http://www.fcapeninsula.org/MemUpdateForm.html>

That's it. If you do not want us to send you your information, take no action. Some time after June 1, we will be shredding all your paper records, retaining only what is in our database.

REMINDER: Membership is a thoughtful gift for your loved ones! Sign up on-line!

In Touch is published semi-yearly. If you want to be on the distribution list, email office@fcapeninsula.org.



Board Members

Bottom row, from the left: Janet Fire, Karen Ruiz, Deborah Meckler, Stephanie Sanford (office manager).

Top row, from left: Jim Reese, Marjorie Bridges, Nora Noldon, Carolyn Bechtold, Bob Marder, and Carl Ditmore.

Missing board members are Katoko Sax, Allan Behr, and Trudy Bowman. The newest Advisory Council member, Ken Klucsor, was the photographer.

Office

Mgr.: Stephanie Sanford
Hours: M,W,F 9am-Noon

2011 Consolidated Budget and Financial Report

Thank you for your continued (and needed) support!

Income		2011 Budget	2010 Actual
	Memberships	8,800	8,650
	Transfer memberships	50	40
	Contributions	15,600	12,965
	Special funds/interest	200	167
	Literature/tapes	350	301
	Total	25,000	22,123
Expenses			
	Annual Meeting	20	10
	National and Cal Alliance	1,755	1,239
	Computer Related	780	760
	Educational Material	150	130
	Finance Fees: CC/PayPal	440	436
	Bank Fees	120	65
	Insurance	800	757
	Office Supplies	550	552
	Newsletter/Appeal	5,800	5,754
	Payroll@9-12hrs/week	8,400	8,400
	Payroll Taxes	1,075	1,088
	Postage, Box, Permits	1,250	1,220
	Printing	200	692
	Rent (Office&Mtg Room)	2,400	2,400
	Telephone	860	1,078
	Programs	200	762
	Misc	60	85
	Secty of State (biannual)	40	0
	Reg Fee for Nat'l Alliance	0	250
	Total	25,000	25,678

In Loving Memory



With thanks to these donors.

Each year the funeral education and advocacy organizations receive gifts made in honor of or in memory of a missed loved one. Below are the financial memorials we acknowledged in 2010:

Don Fuller, from Susan Fuller of Santa Clara

Kenneth White, from Phyllis White of Palo Alto

Ruth W. Martin, from Robert Martin of Hollister

Martin Seaney, from Barbara Seaney of Menlo Park

Millicent Shulman, from Meyer Shulman of Mt. View

Joel Pencer, from Jacqueline Pencer of Saratoga

Luella McFarland, from Maggie Anderson of Palo Alto

Doreen Nawatani, from William Nawatani of Santa Clara

Janet Parker, from John M. Parker of Palo Alto

Edythe Wagner-Roop, from Dietrich E. Wagner of S.F.

Donna Gottdiener Oakes and Florence H. Gottdiener, from Sheila Botein and David D. Oakes of Atherton

And we thank the other 280 members who made contributions, referred friends, volunteered their time, and bought refrigerator kits to keep the organizations healthy.

—The Board of Directors

Use Your IRA the Smart Way

Miss your chance to take advantage of the charitable IRA legislation in the past?

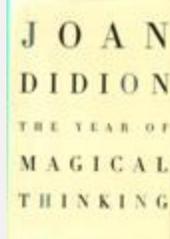
Recent legislation (2010) allows individuals aged 70½ or older to make immediate gifts of up to \$100,000 to qualified organizations* through direct transfers from their IRAs without paying income tax on the IRA distribution.

The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you don't itemize deductions (it may count against your required min. distributions).

www.independentsector.org/ira_rollover

*FEF is a qualified organization.

An addition to the FEF Library: In *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion vividly



describes the forms her grieving took following the death of her husband. This well written account of her grieving process provides insight into what may lie ahead for those experiencing the loss of a loved one. A National Book Club Award Winner, this book now sits alongside other books donated to the FEF Library and available for borrowing during office hours. We accept donations of similar books about death, dying, grief, memorials, etc. after you are through with them. *We need a book review/librarian volunteer, should you know someone who would be interested, call our office.*



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Visit our site on the web! www.fcpeninsula.org

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Annual Conference

Sunday, April 3, 2:00 pm

Los Altos Public Library

13 S. San Antonio Rd., Los Altos

BRING A COPY OF THIS BULLETIN!

All Members and Public are invited.

(Attendees eligible for door prizes)

Light refreshments will be served.

News Bits

"Final Rights: Reclaiming the American Way of Death," is a book written by Joshua Slocum and Lisa Carlson, executive directors of Funeral Consumers Alliance and Funeral Ethics Organization. It combines journalistic investigation with practical consumer advice. The only book of its kind, *Final Rights* unveils the tricks of the funeral trade (and how to avoid them), and has a chapter on the laws in each state.

National FCA should have copies available to ship by mid-April, but you can pre-order online at: www.funerals.org/newsandalerts/consumer-alerts/1083-finalrights promo

A Guide to the Great Beyond: Jane Brody, a columnist for the New York Times, writes extensively on health care but her recent book deals more with what to do at the end of life. As usual, her writing is based on practical, evidence-based information but this time also addresses emotion and spirituality. Divided into three sections, this book covers steps to take in the wake of a bad prognosis or while healthy.

- Tasks that help prepare for death.
- Useful information about what to expect towards the end of your or a loved one's life.
- The aftermath of death, including organ donation and autopsy.

This last sections deals with advance directives: What are your wishes concerning treatment should you lose the ability to communicate them yourself? Who should carry out your instructions? Some in-

structions left in advance directives can be confusing or even meaningless to medical personnel, so Brody gives examples of preferred verbiage.

Because death is one topic that is not often discussed in our society, and in fact actively avoided, this book is recommended by the FEF.

* * *

Where to obtain or file Death Certificates locally:

Birth and death records for current year events and one year prior are available from county health departments; records for all years are maintained by the county recorder.

- San Mateo County Health Department and Local Registrar of Births and Deaths (650) 573-2395
- San Mateo County Recorder, (650) 363-4500
- Santa Clara County Health Department and Local Registrar of Births and Deaths (408) 885-2010
- Santa Clara County Recorder (408) 299-5664

* * *

An interesting ecological spin: A plan to re-use energy generated by a crematorium incinerator to heat a public swimming pool has been given the go-ahead by councillors. Members of Redditch Borough Council (Worcestershire, England) hope the scheme to divert heat from waste gases from the crematorium into a nearby leisure centre will save the authority more than £14,000 a year. Work on the link between the Worcestershire town's crematorium and the nearby Abbey Leisure Centre, which is being re-developed, will begin this summer. Welcoming the full council's decision, the local authority's leader Carole Gandy acknowledged that the cremation process was a sensitive matter, but stressed that the proposals had widespread support.