



Funeral Education Foundation & Funeral Consumers Alliance In Touch



A nonprofit organization educating consumers in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

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October 2005

Three Locals At State Meeting in Pomona

Joan Buell, Marjorie Bridges, and Katoko Sax represented Funeral Consumers Alliance of San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties at the September 30-October 2 meeting of California-Hawaii FCA held at Cal State Pomona. Marjorie was elected vice president for 2005-06. Joan continues as a trustee-at-large.

The group formed a Legislative Proposal Committee which will work toward developing new funeral laws to protect consumers. Anyone who wants to suggest legislation ("there ought to be a law about...") can call Marjorie at 650-321-6584.

Special speakers were Dan Redmond, Cemetery and Funeral Bureau Field Representative from Southern California; Rev. Leon Strand about memorials; Edward Woods, Calif. Senior Legislature; and Michelle Garcia, nurse, about Advance Health Care Directives.



Katoko Sax, top, Marjorie Bridges, left, and Joan Buell at annual state meeting of funeral societies.



New Office Manager

Harry Anisgard, left, president of FCA, greets the new office manager of FCA/FEF, Henry J. Kobbeman, right, who started work at the end of September. Before retirement, Henry was an independent real estate broker; program planner and accountant at Stanford Linear Accelerator Center; business services coordinator for San Mateo County Office of Education; and a government financial manager in Rockford, IL. He has an MBA from University of Chicago and B.S. in Agricultural Business from Iowa State University. Back in Illinois he served on the city council and planning and zoning commission, was mayor, and a member of a hospital board. Our former director, Susan Wriggins, moved from Palo Alto to Pleasanton and found the commute too grueling.

Senior Faire Coming

Funeral Education Foundation and FCA will be represented with a booth manned by Lou Gado and Janet Brewer at the 14th annual Adult Services Resource Faire on Thursday, Nov. 3, in San Jose. Come visit our booth at the faire, to be held 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 765 Story Road, behind Wal-Mart. Everything is free: parking, entrance, workshops, health

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FEF to Sponsor Nov. 12 Program in Burlingame

You are all invited to attend a public program "Planning Your Final Exit," co-sponsored by Funeral Education Foundation and Three Cities Assembly of God Church, 1120 Bayswater, one block north of Peninsula Ave. at Lorton Ave., Burlingame, on Saturday, Nov. 12, from 1 to 3 p.m.

The focus will be on three decision areas: funeral homes, cemetery property, and monuments and markers. The program will be moderated by Rev. Penny V. Phillips, chaplain at the hospice unit at VA Hospital in Palo Alto, and a FEF/FCA Board member.

Janet Brewer, an estate planning lawyer on the FEF/FCA Board, will speak about basic plans and funeral homes:

- Why plan ahead? How do FCA and FEF help?
- Components of a funeral plan
- Comparing funeral homes and prices
- What's involved in a traditional funeral, direct burial, and cremation?
- What is a home funeral?
- Strategies for saving money
- Other ways to make it easier for your family

The topic of purchasing cemetery property will be handled by Terry Arellano, Michael Schepers, and Bob Hoover from Cemetery Property Resales in San Mateo. They will cover:

- How the firm got started, memorable moments

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Planning Your Final Exit

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- Implications of buying ahead vs. at time of need
- Above and below ground locations
- Understanding interment rights
- Typical cemetery prices
- Comparing cemeteries
- Cultural diversity & ethnic marketing

- What marks a good cemetery?

The final speaker will be Carl Safford of Cypress Granite & Memorials of San Jose who will address:

- The company history and specialties
- What to look for in a good monument company

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 or (888) 775-5553. The subscription list includes FEF donors, members of Funeral Consumer Alliance of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, agencies, churches, and selected organizations.

2005-6 FEF Officers

Marjorie Bridges, President
 Harry Anisgard, Vice President
 Patricia Levin, Secretary
 Katoko Sax, Treasurer

2005-6 FCA Officers

Harry Anisgard, President
 Marjorie Bridges, Vice President
 Patricia Levin, Secretary
 Rev. Richard Roe, Treasurer

Board for FCA & FEF

Allan Behr, Janet Brewer,
 Maya Escudero, Sybil Florant,
 Lou Gado, Barbara Hultgren,
 Rev. Penny V. Phillips, Lois Salo

Office Mgr.—Henry Kobbeman
 Office open M-Th from 10 to 1 p.m.

Advisory Council:

Joan Dammann Joan Buell
 Dr. Robert Glaser Doris Hawks
 Jack Wallace Henry Mayer, MD

- Typical prices & ways to pay
- The choices: size, material, lettering, style, pictures, base, setting
- How much time to make it
- Cultural diversity in markers
- How veterans' stones are handled by the VA
- Special monuments he has made

Call (650) 321-2109 to make a reservation. The program is free and open to the public. There is some free parking in the church parking lot and on Bayswater and 25 cents for 2 hrs. parking on Lorton Ave. Enter the Community Room from Bayswater or the parking lot.

Senior Faire Coming

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screenings, prizes. Information will be handed out at booths; there will be glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, and bone density screenings; and workshops about family caregiving, financial planning, social security, and nutrition/diabetes management.

Who Has the Right to Make Decisions After Death

The California Health and Safety Code, Section 7100 identifies who has the right to make decisions about disposition arrangements after an individual's death if no directions are left. Family Code Sections 297 and 297.5 were added January 1, 2005 to include registered domestic partners to the following list of individuals. The responsibility for making decisions devolves in the following order:

1. Agent under a power of attorney for health care
2. Spouse or registered domestic partner
3. Adult children
4. Parents
5. Adult siblings and other competent adult kin

NOTE: Exceptions may apply in certain situations. You may wish to consult with an attorney.

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 Address _____
 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 _____

Combatting Hysteria Over Dead Bodies

The executive director of National FCA (Joshua Slocum) cleared up some misconceptions that were appearing in the press during the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans.

> Josh, how do we answer the following: What about the centuries-old above-ground cemeteries? New Orleans was devastated by yellow fever and typhus epidemics in the early 19th C. Are the old bodies hazardous?

Answer from Joshua:

>I sincerely doubt there is anything left of those bodies after all these years besides a few bones. Disease microbes, as far as I know, reside in the soft tissue, which has long, long since gone away. Besides, with rare exceptions (such as the prions that cause mad cow disease), disease dies with the body, or shortly after death. Disease-causing bacteria and viruses don't somehow hole up and go dormant for years in corpses, waiting to be reawakened.

People have much bigger things to worry about in that water - like human feces and petrochemicals. Many people, of course, have a visceral "feeling" that dead bodies "must" cause disease, but I believe that's more an emotional reaction borne out of a universal repugnance for corpses, not from any physical disease realities.

Here is one pertinent quote from a medical researcher commenting on the public health problems in New Orleans:

"... dead bodies should not be a disease concern to the public," said Dr. Joseph Guarisco, chairman of the Department of Emergency Medicine at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation in New Orleans. "Let's just make it real clear: Dead bodies in and of themselves — while they are mental health issues and tragic — they are not a public health issue from an infectious disease standpoint at all." <http://www.cnn.com/2005/HEALTH/09/01/katrina.public.health/>



One of the most frequently visited grave sites at Holy Cross Cemetery, Colma, is that of Joe DiMaggio, 1914-1999). Notice the baseball memorabilia left by admirers.

Signs of a Stroke: Ask 3 Questions

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and getting medical attention to the patient within 3 hours, which is tough.

Recognizing a Stroke

Susie is recouping at an incredible pace for someone with a massive stroke all because a friend saw Susie stumble – that is the key that isn't mentioned below – and then she asked Susie the 3 questions.

So simple – this literally saved Susie's life. Some angel sent it to Suzie's friend and she did just what it said to do. Suzie failed all three so 911 was called.

Even though she had a normal blood pressure reading, and it did not appear to be a stroke as she could converse to some extent with the paramedics, they took her to the hospital right away. Sometimes symptoms of these strokes are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

The three simple questions

1. *Ask the individual to SMILE.
2. *Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.
3. *Ask the person to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently) (i.e. 'It is sunny out today').

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

Forever Fernwood ***A Nearby "Green" Cemetery***

By Marjorie Bridges
In Touch Editor

If you have a little extra time, take a tour of Forever Fernwood in Mill Valley, the first "green cemetery" in Northern California. The cemetery is dominated by native grass, bushes, wildflowers, and trees, interspersed with stone walls and hiking trails.

Joan Buell and I went up there in May when they were busily cutting down hundreds of invasive eucalyptus trees, planting native herbal life, and restoring the natural beauty of 17 acres of the 32-acre hilly property that adjoins part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

They also were renovating the dingy and austere 1973 main building with skylights, carpeting, and a redesigned Gathering Room/chapel that has a whole glass wall overlooking a waterfall and beauty spot. As the Bay Area is noted for its diversity of cultures, there will be space for just about any kind of ceremony.

They have also installed the most up-to-date crematory machines. In Marin County, the majority of people choose cremation over land burial, and our guide said that 60 percent of these families want witnessed cremations.

The new owners, Tyler and Brent Cassity, who have also restored Hollywood Memorial Park into the

Friends

If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you.

— *Winnie the Pooh*

thriving Hollywood Forever Cemetery, have rules for the "green" section like no other cemeteries around:

1. No embalming
2. No burial vaults
3. No metal caskets
4. All natural burials using caskets of reclaimed or biodegradable wood, bamboo, or wicker; also biodegradable shrouds.
5. No non-natural grave markers. (Native rocks, bushes, and trees are allowed)
6. Relatives can locate graves by a Global Positioning System (via a borrowed laptop computer from the office which will also play a Video Memorial about the deceased person)
7. Retaining walls of native rock will hold cylinders for cremated remains, which also can be scattered at three locations for prices ranging from \$65 to \$400.

We examined a General Price List for the funeral home part of the business. The cremation package starts at \$985 (plus container) and The Simplicity natural burial package (one hour service) runs \$1,900 plus casket or shroud. Refrigeration for five days is included. Alternative containers cost \$95 up and natural burial shrouds from \$150 to \$350. Burial caskets range \$595 upward.

Spaces for interred cremated remains are available for \$2,000 to \$7,500. Body burial sites start at \$3,500 for pre-need; \$5,000 for immediate use.

The old part of the cemetery dates back to the 1890s, and regular burials will continue in this section. The Daphne family were previous owners of the cemetery.

Class About End Of Life Choices

The last Respecting Choices class for 2005 is soon to be presented by Coda Alliance, Silicon Valley community coalition for end-of-life care. Classes will be held at Council on Aging, 2115 The Alameda, San Jose, CA 95126 on November 3 and 10, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. For more information contact Coda Alliance at 408-261-9444.

This class is a \$400 value being offered locally for \$125, or \$100 for Coda members. You will learn to

- Assist people in understanding how their own values and needs can shape the choices they make for future medical care.
- Facilitate skills for discussing and assisting with the completion of Advanced Directives.
- Clarify the legal, medical and ethical issues in advance care planning.
- Learn tools for promoting and assisting with Advance Care Planning including diverse populations and strategies for educating health professionals and the community.

Help Needed

Our new office manager will need help handling all the mail that follows people receiving this newsletter. If you can spare a couple hours between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., call 650-321-2109 and sign up for a day.

Also, we expect there will be two openings to fill next spring on the FCA/FEF Board of Directors. If interested, please send a resume or letter of interest via mail, email, or fax to our address on Page 1 or 2.