

# Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island

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## NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2015

### PLANNING YOUR FUNERAL

Planning your own funeral arrangements can be a thoughtful and considerate way to ease the burden on your family. Planning lets you shop and compare goods and services without time constraints. You can find the best prices, make sensible decisions, and discourage emotional overspending on elaborate arrangements that family members might be tempted to purchase in their bereavement. Share your plans with family members so they understand your desires and have the information they need. Remember, you do not have to accept a 'package' of goods and services offered by many funeral providers. You have the right to choose only those goods and services you want or need and to pay for only those you select. Know what your reasonable budget is before you begin planning.

### CASKETS

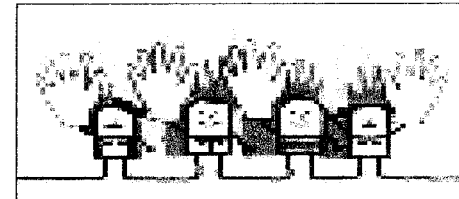
The Big Three casket makers (Hillenbrand "Batesville", Matthews International, Aurora Casket) control over seventy percent of the casket market. While most American manufacturing has failed to keep out Chinese-made products, through various means the funeral industry has succeeded so that nine out of ten Americans continue to be buried in USA-made caskets.

Have you prepared a 'Funeral Planning Agent Designation Form' ? If a deceased has a Designated Agent in place, that person's directions will override anyone else's, regardless of marriage or other kin. The form may be found at:  
[www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/FuneralPlanningDesignation.pdf](http://www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/FuneralPlanningDesignation.pdf)

Visit us anytime at:

[www.funerals-ri.org](http://www.funerals-ri.org)

for announcements of upcoming events, copies of past newsletters, links to forms and publications, our funeral home price survey, and much more.



### STEP UP

Become a FCA volunteer

We need your help and  
your ideas.

We meet one evening each  
month at East Greenwich  
Public Library

Call us at 401-884-1131

THE MISSION OF THE FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE OF RHODE ISLAND IS TO PROTECT THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE MEANINGFUL AND AFFORDABLE FUNERALS. WE EDUCATE CONSUMERS ON AVAILABLE OPTIONS, PROVIDE STATE-WIDE PRICE INFORMATION AND GIVE CONSUMERS INFORMATION, TOOLS AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR PREPLANNING.

# IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD THE FUNERAL YOU WISHED FOR

## ● Consider body donation to a medical school:

You'll be helping train the next generation of doctors and depending on where you live, the cost could be minimal to free. Most medical schools will return your cremated remains in one to two years after study if you request this beforehand.

## ● Donation to an anatomical organization:

Many of these organizations will accept a body at no charge and will arrange for transportation to their facility at no cost to the family. Most of these companies provide body parts for non-transplant purposes including research and medical training. There is usually no expense to the family, even for out-of-state shipping. The consent form should be explicit that the body will be surgically divided. Some body parts may be shipped outside the U.S. These companies deal with both nonprofit and for-profit entities. Any unused or already-used body parts will be cremated and returned to the family when so requested although some of the end users dispose of tissue.

## ● Whether there is government money to bury the poor ("indigent") depends on the state:

Some states have a budget for this while others leave it up to the local county, city, or town. If a family has no money, the first thing they should do is call the department of social services (or whatever their state calls the welfare office) to see if there's an indigent burial / cremation program. If your state or county offers help, it's not going to cover a full-service funeral with embalming, a public viewing, and associated ceremonies. The family is usually going to get a direct cremation or immediate burial at most. Remember that you can organize a memorial service later at home or church etc.

The above information comes from an article in the Fall 2014 issue of "The Grim Reader", a publication of the Funeral Consumers Alliance  
33 Patchen Road, South Burlington, Vermont

## DONATION REQUEST

Please consider making a donation to the FCA of Rhode Island. Your donations are our primary source of funds which will help us to continue to:

- publish our Newsletter
- publish a funeral home price survey
- maintain a telephone line for consumer inquiries
- hold group presentations
- conduct educational workshops

We are a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible and any size donation will be greatly appreciated.

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TALKING TO YOUR PARENTS  
The "Ask a Mortician" series

Take a look at Caitlin Doughty's latest video, "Talking to your parents about death" !!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dzumsrueji](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dzumsrueji)  
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## PRESENTATION

Dana DelBonis, past President of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island will be giving a talk on:

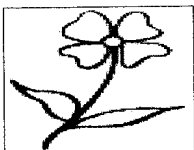
"FUNERAL PLANNING"

Tuesday, May 12th, 2015

at the 1st Unitarian Church  
1 Benevolent Street, Providence

at 6:30 PM

We hope you will be able to attend !



SPRING IS HERE !!