



# Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island

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## NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2021

### A NATIONAL SURVEY SHOWS THAT MOST CONSUMERS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR FUNERAL RIGHTS

The Funeral Consumers' Alliance of Rhode Island offers a free pamphlet that explains these rights along with key consumer tips !

Only one-quarter of consumers surveyed (25%) know that funeral homes are required to provide price quotes over the phone and an itemized price list at the funeral home. Only five percent of consumers are aware that funeral homes are required to accept a casket provided by the family without charging a handling fee.

These are two findings of an online consumer knowledge survey of 2,009 representative Americans commissioned by the Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA) and Consumer Federation of America (CFA) on November 18-22, 2020.

The Funeral Consumers' Alliance of Rhode Island is a member of the Funeral Consumers Alliance federation.

It is understandable that consumers who rarely purchase funeral services do not know about federal consumer protections.

#### Our Free Pamphlet Provides Key Money-Saving Tips

To better inform consumers about their funeral rights, the free pamphlet titled, "Planning a Funeral: 5 Key Tips" was prepared by the FCA and CFA. These tips include:

- Talk it out ahead of time: Tough decisions about cremation or burial, venue of any memorial services, and related issues can be resolved without the pressures of immediate disposition of the body.
- Know your rights: The Federal Trade Commission's Funeral Rule provides specific rights including an itemized price list, a written price estimate, and acceptance of your casket without a handling fee.
- Shop around: Comparing prices at area funeral homes can lower costs by as much as fifty percent.
- Keep it simple: The typical cost of a full funeral is \$7,360, according to the National Funeral Directors Association, yet in most areas a cremation without extras can cost only \$800-\$1,200.
- Avoid expensive extras: Most funeral homes offer dozens of service options, including sealed caskets, that may not provide you with value.

(Continued on next page)



"Planning a funeral ahead of time can reduce costs by well over 50 percent and provide peace of mind." said Joshua Slocum, FCA national's executive director.

You may request our new pamphlet by US mail or view the 5 Key Tips on our website at (www.funerals-ri.org).

**Survey Findings Support Online Price Disclosure**

The Federal Trade Commission is currently considering whether to revise its Funeral Rule. FCA and CFA, among other groups, have argued that this revision should include requiring funeral homes to post their price lists online.

"Online prices could be easily compared, obviating the need to visit a number of funeral homes to collect price lists," said FCA national's Slocum. "One cannot expect a recently bereaved family under pressure to make quick decisions to take the time and effort to visit several funeral homes," he added. The value of easier access to funeral home price lists was suggested by the FCA/CFA survey finding that only 17 percent of the 2,009 that responded correctly thought that direct cremation of the body is usually available for less than \$1,200. Fifteen percent thought the low price was usually above \$2,400, and 38% said they did not know. "Online price lists would dramatically increase a consumer's ability to cut funeral costs," said CFA's Brobeck. "Online posting of an existing price list would cost funeral homes a trivial amount," he added.

**Older Persons Are Least Informed About Funeral Rights**

Only 15 percent of those 65 years and older know that funeral homes are required to provide price quotes over the phone and a price list at the home, and 60 percent said they did not know the answer to this question. In contrast, nearly 30 percent of those aged 18-54 knew the correct answer. Moreover, 76% of older persons surveyed said they did not know whether funeral homes were required to accept a casket provided by the bereaved without charge.

"We were surprised to learn that older persons are least aware of their funeral rights because they are the age group most likely to confront funeral-related decisions," said FCA's Slocum.

The survey data and method are available on request. For details, contact Josh Slocum at [josh@funerals.org](mailto:josh@funerals.org).

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**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island is to protect the right to choose meaningful end-of-life options. We educate consumers, provide state-wide price information, and supply resources and encouragement for preplanning.

**PRESENTATIONS VIA 'ZOOM'**

We can now offer a virtual presentation on end-of-life options and funeral planning. This free program is available to any group interested in learning how not to take their final wishes to the grave ! You may contact us at 401-884-1131 or by email at [fca-ri@cox.net](mailto:fca-ri@cox.net)

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**GREEN BURIAL:** There are currently 2 cemeteries in Rhode Island that offer green burial services. 1. Swan Point Cemetery in Providence has a designated area for green burial called 'The Ellipse'. The area has space for 150 grave sites each of which can accomodate one full body or two sets of cremated remains. 2. The Stearns Memorial Section of the Arnold Mills Cemetery located in Cumberland also offers plots for green burial. (2)



# HOW TO HOLD A VIRTUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

See the Jan 14, 2021 article 'How to Hold a Virtual Memorial' by Steven Birenbaum in the New York Times. It provides a useful 'how to' guide for the process. Mr. Birenbaum is Senior Communications Officer at the California Health Care Foundation.

Holding a funeral or memorial on a videoconferencing platform like Zoom offers several advantages: It's easy for distant guests to attend, and you can record it. He describes his personal experience in organizing such a service when his father recently died. While not sure how it would turn out, all found it to be an event filled with emotion, humor and love. Since you can join such an event from anywhere, more people are likely to attend than if they needed to travel to an in-person event. The event can include photos, videos, music, several speakers, etc.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/well/family/virtual-funeral-advice.html?smid=em-share>

## COMMONLY HELD MYTHS ABOUT END-OF-LIFE ISSUES

from 'Advance Care Planning', a Harvard Medical School Special Health Report

**Myth:** More care is always better.

**Truth:** Not necessarily. Sometimes more care prolongs the dying process without respect for quality of life or comfort. It's important to know what interventions are truly important. It's often impossible to know that in advance. That's where the advice of a healthcare team is invaluable.

**Myth:** Refusing life support invalidates your life insurance, because you are committing suicide.

**Truth:** Refusing life support does not mean that you are committing suicide. Instead, the underlying medical problem is considered to be the cause of death.

**Myth:** If medical treatment is started, it cannot be stopped.

**Truth:** Not starting a medical treatment and stopping a treatment are the same in the eyes of the law. So you or your health care agent can approve a treatment for a trial period that you think may be helpful without fear that you can't change your mind later. However, be aware that stopping treatment can be more emotionally difficult than not starting it in the first place.

**Myth:** If you refuse life-extending treatments, you're refusing all treatments.

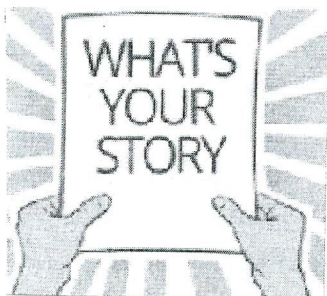
**Truth:** No matter what treatments you refuse, you should still expect to receive any other care you need or want -- especially the pain and symptom management sometimes called intensive comfort care.

**Myth:** Stopping or refusing artificial nutrition and hydration causes pain for someone who is dying

**Truth:** Unlike keeping food or water from a healthy person, for someone who is dying, declining artificial nutrition or intravenous hydration does not cause pain.



## WE NEED YOUR HELP !



The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island is committed to providing members with information about final affairs. However, we would like to hear from you about what experiences you have had with funeral homes and funeral/burial arrangements. How did it go? Were you satisfied with the services you received? Were the costs reasonable? Were there any surprises? What advice would you pass on to other members of our

organization? In future newsletters, we hope to publish some of these stories. Of course, we would ask your permission and you could do so anonymously.



## BURIAL CORRIDORS

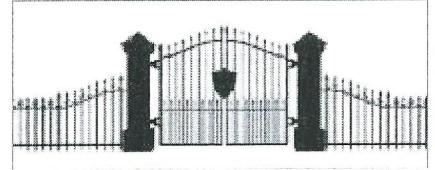
With 500,000 deaths annually in England and Wales, all current burial space will be taken up within five years.

A leading public health expert has proposed green "burial corridors" along highways and rail lines to reduce the volume of the dead being interred in cemeteries and graveyards. He adds that the environment and human health impact of the fluids and materials used in embalming and coffins is a matter of grave concern.

The "corridors" would be eco-friendly as the bodies in these locations would not be embalmed. He suggests biodegradable coffins and limitations on marking stones. In his recent article in the journal of the Royal Society of Medicine he suggests trees as plot markers to reduce pollution.

## PAYING IN ADVANCE

We endorse the idea of planning your funeral in advance. However, be very cautious if you decide to pay for your funeral in advance. Maintain control over your funds to assure they will finance your funeral when the time comes, and to confirm your money is protected.



## BURIAL RIGHTS FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

On December 16th, The House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation that contained the Burial Rights for America's Veterans' Efforts (BRAVE) Act. It was part of a larger omnibus veteran's bill that passed the Senate the previous week.

Sponsored by Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Reps. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) and Chen Bustos (D-IL), the BRAVE Act will update the current burial benefit to treat all non-service-connected deaths equally, regardless of where the veteran passes away. Under the then current policy, survivors of certain veterans who die in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility are provided greater funds to cover the cost of a funeral than veterans who die in their home or another medical facility.

In addition to the BRAVE Act, the omnibus bill included several other funeral or burial benefits for deceased veterans, including:

Expanding transportation of deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries.

Extending the VA's requirements for outer burial receptacles to cemeteries.

Authorizing the VA to replace existing VA-furnished headstones to add inscriptions for deceased spouse and eligible dependent children, and allow for inscriptions on headstones furnished by the VA if the spouse or eligible dependent child predeceases the veteran.

Making grants via the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program to counties for veterans' cemeteries.

Authorizing the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) to furnish an urn or a commemorative plaque, in lieu of a headstone or marker, to eligible individuals whose cremated remains are not interred in a cemetery.



## FREE PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE FROM FCA-RI

How to Choose a Funeral Home

Should you prepay for your Funeral ?

How to Pay for a Funeral (English or Spanish version)

Organ and Body Donation

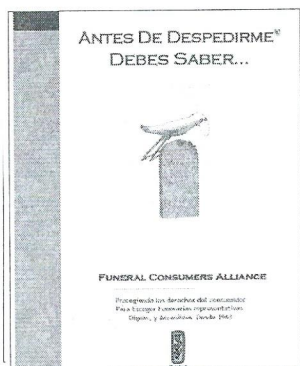
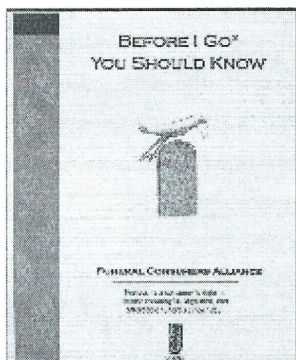
How to Arrange a Home Funeral

Green Burial: An Environmentally Friendly Choice





## BEFORE I GO, YOU SHOULD KNOW



Our comprehensive end-of-life planner features illustrations by Edward Gorey. It is BIG. with 30 pages to record everything from your preference for burial or cremation to how to close down your social media accounts and online life.

Don't take your last wishes to the grave.

Before you go, they should know:

- Your funeral plans
- Where your important papers are
- Who should take care of your pets
- Who to call when the time comes

**TO ORDER:** Send your check for \$15.00 per copy to:

Funeral Consumers Alliance of RI  
119 Kenyon Avenue  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

Be sure to specify English or Spanish version !

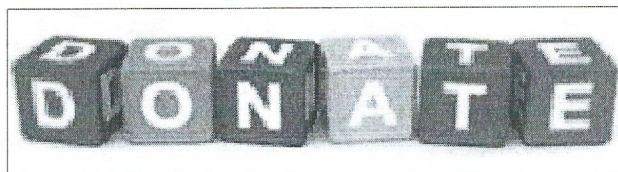
## WEBSITE

Visit us anytime at: [www.funerals-ri.org](http://www.funerals-ri.org)

## CREMATED REMAINS

The United States Postal Service has revised the procedures for shipping cremated remains. Registered mail service is no longer a shipping option. Customers must use Priority Mail Express service and Label 139 'Cremated Remains' which will expedite the shipping process and improve visibility of such shipments. The process for international shipments has not been changed. Publication 139 will provide a guide for customers shipping cremated remains. It may be downloaded at:

<http://about.usps.com/publications/pub139.pdf>

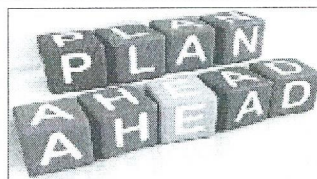


Please consider making a donation to the FCA of Rhode Island. You may send a check using the enclosed envelope or you may use the 'Donate' button on our website's Home Page to donate by credit card.

Your donations are our primary source of funds with enables us to continue to:

- publish a Newsletter
- provide a Funeral Home price Survey
- maintain a telephone line for consumer inquiries
- hold group presentations with guest speakers
- conduct educational workshops

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are fully tax-deductible and any size donation will be greatly appreciated. Thank you



## ADVANTAGES

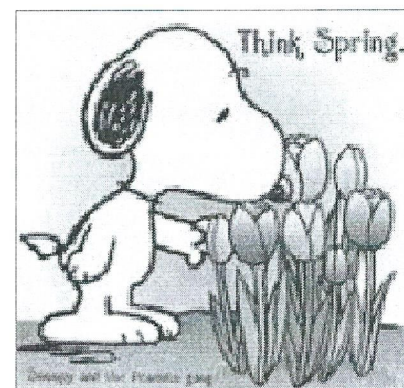
You may choose the type of funeral service you desire.

You will save your survivors from making choices during the stress of bereavement.

You can do comparison shopping at available funeral homes.

You can make knowledgeable and thoughtful decisions.

You will be stimulating family discussion, sharing, and decision-making.





# ESTATE PLANNING

from an article by Sarah Mahoney in the November 2020 AARP Bulletin.

The pandemic has spurred many older Americans to write or revise their wills. But many others keep putting off the task. A 2016 poll revealed that more than 30% of Americans 65 and older didn't have a will, nor did 40% of those between ages 50 and 64. Common reasons given were (1) just haven't gotten around to it yet or (2) don't have assets to leave to anyone. These are not good reasons. Even if you have no assets to pass on, the right paperwork can save your loved ones headaches and heartache.

A will directs what happens after a person dies. You should also have (1) a health care directive (living will) which allows you to appoint someone to make medical decisions if you are unable and also outlines the care you desire. and (2) A durable power of attorney which lets someone make financial decisions on your behalf if you are incapacitated. People often delay preparing these documents, saying that talking about death will upset their spouse and family. But actually, knowing a person's wishes about everything from medical care to funeral plans is very reassuring and gives families a sense of relief when they know what to expect.

It's important to work on the task with a lawyer licensed in your state. Laws are different from state to state. Be sure to select the agent that will arrange your affairs based on their ability to manage things, not by birth order (many select the oldest child). Don't be afraid to split the duties. Someone making end-of-life decisions has a very different role than someone distributing property after someone dies. Leaving more to one child or leaving one out entirely almost guarantees challenges later. Feelings are hurt and can result in legal hearings after death. If you do leave different amounts, talk over the decision with the children now to avoid legal action later. Note that step-children are not automatically treated as children for legal purposes. For them to share in an inheritance, they must be specifically named.

Remember that your documents may need revision from time to time. If there is a major life event like moving to a new state or having a beneficiary or agent becoming ill or dying.

## IMPORTANT FORMS

Have you prepared your RI Funeral Planning Agent Designation Form ?

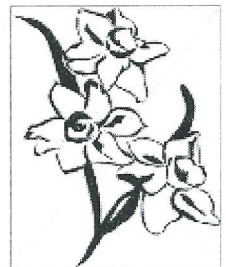
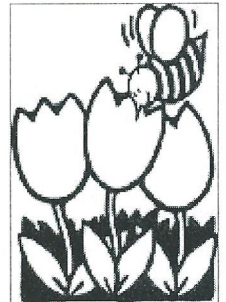
The form may be found at:

[www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/FuneralPlanningDesignation.pdf](http://www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/FuneralPlanningDesignation.pdf)

Have you prepared your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care ?

A form you can use for this purpose may be found at:

[www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/DurablePowerOfAttorneyForHealthCare.pdf](http://www.health.ri.gov/forms/legal/DurablePowerOfAttorneyForHealthCare.pdf)



## AQUAMATION

Washington State funeral homes now provide Aquamation (legally known as alkaline hydrolysis) On October 14th, the first Washingtonian was aquamated at a care facility in Kent. To learn more about this alternative to flame-based cremation, see page 8 of our Spring 2020 newsletter at [www.funerals-ri.org](http://www.funerals-ri.org)



## ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

from the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)

Organ donation takes healthy organs and tissues from one person for transplantation into another. Experts say that the organs from one donor can save or help as many as 50 people. Organs you can donate include:

Internal organs: Kidneys, heart, pancreas,  
intestines, lungs

Skin

Bone and bone marrow

Cornea

Most organ and tissue donations occur after the donor has died. But some organs and tissues can be donated while the person is alive.

There is no age limit for organ donation. One of the oldest organ donors in the US was age 92. His liver saved the life of a 69-year-old woman. Doctors will decide at the time of your death whether you can donate. In 2019, about 63 percent of all people who received organ transplants were 50 or older, and over 21 percent were 65 or older. One out of every three people who donated organs was over the age of 50. You're never too old to make a difference !

Even with an illness or health condition, you may be able to donate your organs and/or tissues upon death.

Currently, organ donations from donors known to have Covid-19 is not recommended, but this guidance may change as more becomes known about the disease.

## OUTER BURIAL CONTAINERS

There are two types of outer burial containers: grave liners or burial vaults. Although you are not legally required to purchase them, most cemeteries require these products. If you are not interested in purchasing a burial vault or grave liner, consider burying the remains in a 'green burial ground' which does not require either.

By surrounding a casket with one of these outer burial containers, when decay does inevitably occur, the earth around it will remain undisturbed. By preventing graves from caving in, the cemetery assures that their ground remains level and people are not likely to fall, twist ankles, or otherwise injure themselves. Also, performing routine maintenance on the property is simpler with level ground. If the grave is allowed to settle, there is also a chance that headstones and monuments can shift or tip over.

GRAVE LINERS partially or entirely enclose the casket but only offer minimum protection from the elements. Soil and moisture will make their way inside over time. Some liners have removable lids while others are bottomless.

BURIAL VAULTS seal and entirely enclose the casket and have water resistant seals in the lid and walls to prevent elements from reaching the contents.

Burial vaults are often much more expensive than grave liners. Grave liners usually cost between \$700 and \$1,000, while burial vaults usually cost between \$900 and \$7,000 though can cost as much as \$13,000.

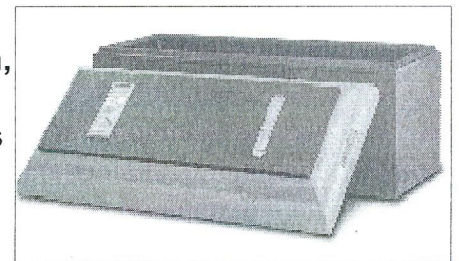
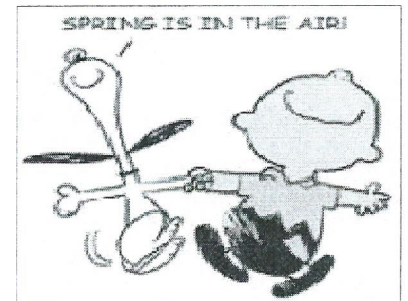
For the most part, cemeteries and funeral homes encourage the sale of burial vaults over grave

## THANK YOU

Thank you to all members and friends who were able to send us a donation this year ! Your gifts are our main source of funds.

## FUNERALS

What kind of funeral will there be for you, for your parents ? You may have more choices than you think. Talk it over, and plan now. Or, someone else will make decisions that you may not have wanted !





liners. The reason for this seems to be because burial vaults are more expensive than grave liners, and are thus a more profitable sale. However, both burial vaults and grave liners serve the same purpose: to protect the earth around the casket. Therefore, if you would rather purchase a grave liner than a burial vault, you should not feel pressured to purchase a more expensive vault.

Asking for a complete list of burial vault and grave liner prices before you are shown any items may help you make your selection without feeling pressured by the salesperson. If you are interested in purchasing a grave liner and the retailer you are working with only sells burial vaults, consider contacting another retailer.

### GENERAL PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Rhode Island's General Public Assistance Program funds funeral and burial services for recipients and indigent individuals. The cost of funeral services is limited to \$900 and consideration is given to the costs of cemetery and cremations according to the following:

Cement liner \$125, Crematory fee \$150, Cost of plot \$150 Opening & closing of grave \$175  
The maximum amount that may be contributed by friends and others without affecting eligibility is \$1,600.

A person must be over age 18 to apply for GPA and:

Have an illness, or medical condition that is expected to last 30 days or more and prevents a person from working

Have a monthly income limit of \$327/month for an individual and \$449/month for a couple

Have resources of \$400 or less

Have only one automobile with a value of less than \$4,650

Cannot be eligible for other federal assistance programs, except for SNAP benefits

Cannot have a child under 18 living with the applicant


Cannot be pregnant

### RESOURCES

(End-of-Life Doulas)

1. End of Life Doula Training, International End of Life Doula Association  
[www.inelda.org/faq/](http://www.inelda.org/faq/)
2. Sacred Passage: End of Life Doula Certificate, Conscious Dying Institute  
[www.consciousdyinginstitute.com/sacred-passage-guide-certification](http://www.consciousdyinginstitute.com/sacred-passage-guide-certification)
3. End of Life Doula Counsel, National Hospice and Palliative Care Association  
[www.nhpco.org/about-nhpco/committees-and-councils/end-of-life-doula-council/](http://www.nhpco.org/about-nhpco/committees-and-councils/end-of-life-doula-council/)
4. Trainer Directory, National End-of-Life Doula Alliance  
[www.nedalliance.org/trainer-directory.html](http://www.nedalliance.org/trainer-directory.html)

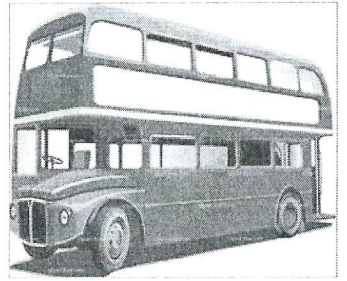
### CREMATION BACKLOG

In Los Angeles County, the South Coast Air Quality Management District has had to lift current limits on the number of cremations that can be conducted monthly. An official said "The current rate of death is more than double that of pre-pandemic years, leading to hospitals, funeral homes, and crematoriums exceeding capacity without the ability to process the backlog of cases". On Jan 15th there was a backlog of more than 2,700 bodies being stored at hospitals and the coroner's office. The air quality limit change was made since the county's 28 crematoriums have the resources and  capacity to perform more cremations than the regulatory limits allowed.



## THE POPUP TRAVELLING "GRIEF SHOP"

Seven years ago, David Harradine lost his sister. He struggled with grief at first, then learned to accept that grief had changed him. He says "There's no going back from that state. Everyone becomes a different person when they are bereaved". Because many of his friends and colleagues stopped acknowledging his grief he wanted a T-shirt that said: "I am still grieving, why have you stopped talking to me about it?".

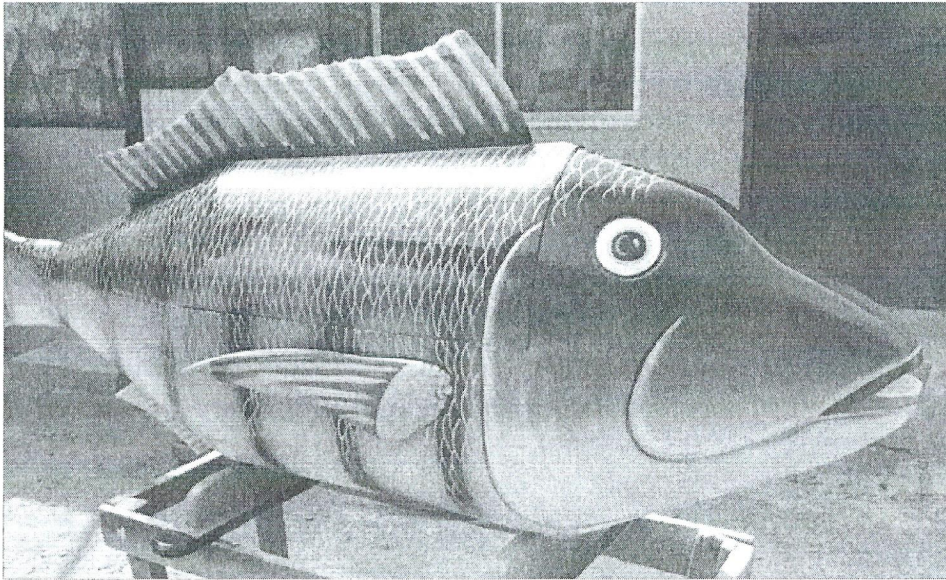


That was the start of his 'Grief Thing' project which he began with his friend Sam Butler. The idea was to encourage people to talk openly about grief and to help those who haven't experienced it to speak to their grieving friends and family.

Their shop uses empty retail units for two weeks at a time and then moves on. It sells products designed to spark conversations about grief. They have condolence cards, badges and brochures, T-shirts, hoodies and scarfs, all printed with a faded font, with slogans: There is "Grief = Love", "Grief is like the weather", "There will be joy again", and "Don't panic if I cry".

The items are sold on a pay-what-you-can basis and the store is also a place where 'Grief Gatherings' are held — when the doors are closed for one hour and customers are invited to discuss grief. The 'Grief Thing' will be popping up in different cities around the U.K. to help people deal with the death of their loved ones.

### GHANA'S 'FANTASY' COFFINS



Creations are inspired by a person's life, character or profession.

### VICTORY FOR FUNERAL HOME MANAGERS & CONSUMERS

A recent bill (SB1424) introduced in the Virginia Senate proposed that any funeral home manager must be a licensed embalmer. The National FCA as well as the Virginia FCA affiliate filed letters of opposition to the bill. They argued that there is no consumer protection purpose served by requiring the managers of funeral homes to themselves be embalmers. Hospitals do not require their CEOs to be surgeons, and airlines do not require their operations people to be commercial pilots. There

is no connection between expertise in embalming and proper management of a funeral service establishment. As in other businesses, managers contract out for specialized services or hire employees with those skills. The bill seemed to be an attempt to stifle competition from innovative funeral establishments (with non-embalming directors) that can bring alternative choices and lower prices to grieving families. The opposition's arguments prevailed and the bill was defeated!

### SIX SPANISH LANGUAGE PAMPHLETS NOW AVAILABLE

Como leer la Lista General de Precios de Un Funerario  
Diez Sugerencias Para Ahorrar En Un Funerario      Planificacion funeraria de cuatro pasos  
Como cubrir los costos de un funeral u otros servicios funerarios  
Como elegir una funeraria ... de manera inteligent      Sus derechos funerarios



# HORRIFYING DISRESPECT

from a December 2020 article in the New York Times by Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura

As the pandemic engulfed New York City in 2020, funeral service providers were overwhelmed. Andrew Cleckley was the first funeral director in NEw York to have his license revoked over the way he handled the remains of pandemic victims. Sharon Escobar had paid Cleckley's funeral home to tend to the remains of her father after he died in mid-April from complications of Covid-19.

To weeks later she learned that his body had been disintegrating alongside more than a dozen others inside two U-Haul trucks parked in front of the funeral home. Odors seeping from the trucks prompted passers-by to complain to authorities. The discovery shocked and angered the city and led to the state revoking Mr. Cleckley's license.

Mr. Cleckley said he was overwhelmed by the deluge of bodies his home received and said that even though he was the principal leaseholder, five other funeral homes also operated out of the building, and he could not be responsible for overseeing how all of them were treating remains. But a large part of his job involved embalming bodies for the other firms, raising questions about the extent of his role. He had continued to accept bodies even though he could not keep up with the mounting caseload and never sought outside help. As a result, dozens of decomposing bodies were scattered throughout his home and some families were unable to locate their relatives.

The President of the Metropolitan Funeral Director's Association said this was the "craziest time I've ever been alive". Funeral homes were forced to find space for bodies wherever they could, in chapels or visitation rooms, raising the air conditioning to try to slow decomposition. Some had to send bodies to other cities or out of state to have them cremated.

The director of the funeral services administration program at SUNY Canton was asked to help catalog and transport 63 remains from the Cleckley funeral home to a makeshift morgue on the Brooklyn waterfront. When he arrived at the funeral home on May 1st, he was disturbed by what he found. Bodies inside trucks were stacked like firewood. In the visitation room, unwrapped remains that had not been embalmed were piled haphazardly and the smell was nauseating. Boies were lying across a chapel floor.

According to the state Health Department Report, some remains had been there for greater than four weeks. The report recommended that Mr. Cleckley's license be revoked and he be fined \$68,000. There had been a horrifying disrespect for human remains. He should have focused on the remains and the preparations needed to connect them with loved ones. Instead, the bodies became victims of neglect while he increased his load by taking in more work.

Many families who hired the home to care for the remains of their dead relatives described shoddy practices thst deepened their trauma.

Before the pandemic, Mr. Cleckley averaged six to seven funerals a month. By the end of February, he had already done 20. At the beginning of April, he began to get 20 calls a day. He was calling crematories, but all claimed they were full. On April 12th he rented his first truck to try to keep up with the rapidly increasing load.

Mr. Cleckley is now out of a job. The state said that he bore ultimate liability for what occurred. "If your name is on the front of the building, whoever was doing illegal acts or immoral acts, you're the responsible party"

## HOME FUNERALS

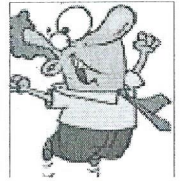
Home funerals are now legal in every state. They allow family, friends, and community to be invited into a healing after-death care experience in a safe and familiar place, with care performed by loving hands. The average dead body is not dangerous or contagious. Embalming is not required by law. Dry ice, Techni-ice, or AC can keep the body cool for up to three days. Families have full control of the loved ones and can choose whether or not to hire a funeral director (nine states do compel hiring a funeral director for filing, transportation or disposition witness). The casket or shroud can be made at home, purchased from a local craftsman, or ordered online. Clergy and celebrants can come to the home for services, or family members may design a fitting goodbye.

For more information visit: [www.HomeFuneralAlliance.org](http://www.HomeFuneralAlliance.org)



**THE FUNERAL CONSUMERS' ALLIANCE OF RHODE ISLAND'S  
FIRST DIGITAL CONFERENCE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS !**

Amanda Herpoel FCA-RI



Let us take the time to thank everyone who joined us live and all those who watched the replay. Without you, we couldn't have done this. Another very special thanks to Anthony Hollingshead (President of Swan Point Cemetery) for coming, supporting our mission, and sharing his vast knowledge with all of us.

During this year's conference we jumped on the digital bandwagon that Covid-19 thrust into our laps and delivered our messages on preparing for the end through the lens of how that looks during a pandemic. We learned about different disposition options such as green burial, body donations and cremations. We learned about different ceremony and funeral options such as home funerals, virtual memorial services and direct interment. Our guests were wonderfully focused and involved. We had open questions regarding pre-planning and visiting funeral homes. There was so much knowledge being shared and everyone was open and curious about their options. It was a lot of fun !

It is our hope that if you haven't had the time to watch our presentation, that you do so today. It is filled with important information, humor and heart. Please let us know what you think, we would love to hear from our members so we can improve on future presentations. We would also love to know if you have taken any field trips to funeral homes and your take-away.

Happy Spring and we look forward to staying connected !

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**E-MAIL ADDRESS NEEDED**

We need your e-mail address in order to send you notifications of FCA events. We may also at times distribute our newsletter by email. If you have not provided an e-mail address in the past, please send it to us in the enclosed envelope or to our e-mail address !

**ANOTHER COVID SITUATION**

What has never happened in the non COVID world is the huge back-up and delays at some of America's cemeteries. At the largest cemetery in the United States (Rose Hills in Whittier, CA) there has been a backlog of up to six weeks for interments.

**BRAND-NEW PAMPHLET**

We have a brand-new FREE pamphlet on organ, tissue, and whole-body donation now available.

**COVID: FACTS, NOT FEAR**

Do the bodies of those who died from Covid19 need to be cremated immediately ?

**NO.** The dead are not the source of transmission of the pandemic. Communicable diseases do not live indefinitely in dead humans – they need a living body for a host environment. They also will not contaminate the ground from being buried.

Is cremation dangerous ? Will it spread the virus ?

**NO.** Remember, the virus cannot even withstand hot water and soap that we use to wash our hands. There is no chance it would survive a 1600 degree Fahrenheit cremation.





## MEMBERS RECEIVE

### The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island

is a 501(c)(3) fully non-profit educational organization dedicated to helping consumers make funeral or memorial arrangements that are meaningful and affordable.

Founded in 1980 and incorporated under Rhode Island law as the Memorial Society of Rhode Island, we changed our name in 2009 to emphasize our consumer focus. Our organization is one of over 100 similar groups across the country, supported by our national office located in South Burlington, Vermont ([www.funerals.org](http://www.funerals.org)). This affiliation allows reciprocal arrangements for people who move to other parts of the country.

We are run solely by volunteers and have no attachment to the funeral industry or any religious group. Membership is open to all.

### WE INVITE YOU TO BECOME A MEMBER

Please complete and mail this form with your check to:

**Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island**  
**119 Kenyon Avenue**  
**East Greenwich, RI 02818**

( ) \$25 - Individual Membership Donation

( ) \$50 - Couple's Membership Donation

( ) \$\_\_\_ Additional contribution to support  
consumer education programs

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

email address: \_\_\_\_\_

- the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island newsletter.
- our Funeral Home Price List Survey
- various pamphlets and a directory of FCA affiliates across the U.S.
- invitations to our annual meeting, educational workshops, and programs featuring speakers of interest.
- the satisfaction of helping to support a national organization dedicated to educating consumers on end-of-life choices and protecting their rights to choose arrangements that are meaningful and affordable.
- the opportunity to purchase our "Before I Go .. You Should Know" end-of-life planning kit.

### BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- you receive advice from knowledgeable volunteers who are not selling any services.
- you gain information on conventional burial, "green burial", cremation, donation of organs or the whole body, home funerals, and other options available for disposition of remains.
- you become an educated consumer, able to shop for services with full knowledge of your rights and options.
- you learn why it is important to plan ahead for the funeral or memorial arrangements you want.
- you learn why it may not be wise to prepay for these arrangements and what your alternatives are.
- you leave behind a final gift, sparing your next of kin the burden of making difficult decisions during a time of grief.

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Have you considered what immediate decisions must be made by your family when you or they die ?

When death occurs in a family that has done no advanced planning, the survivors may accept conventional and costly funeral arrangements because of social pressure, emotional stress, or lack of time.

**Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island**

**(401) 884-1131      [fca-ri@cox.net](mailto:fca-ri@cox.net)**

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