

Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island

119 Kenyon Avenue
East Greenwich
Rhode Island 02818

401-884-1131
fca-ri@cox.net
www.funerals-ri.org

NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2022

RETAIL CASKETS – WHAT'S LEGAL

from an article in the Spring 2022 National FCA Newsletter

Want to know your rights when buying a casket from outside a funeral home? Are you curious to know what funeral homes are allowed to do, and what they're not allowed to do, when it comes to third-party caskets? Consumers, FCA volunteers, and retail casket-sellers frequently ask for advice about this subject.

The Basics:

Under the Federal Trade Commission's "Funeral Rule", consumers have a right to buy a casket from outside the funeral home. In turn, funeral homes are not allowed to charge a "handling fee" for accepting outside merchandise. FTC staff advisory opinions also say: (1) Funeral homes may not require the customer to be physically present when the casket is delivered. (2) Funeral homes may not refuse to sign a delivery receipt for third-party caskets. (3) Funeral homes may not charge a fee to store a third-party casket ahead of an 'at-need' funeral (that is a funeral that's going to occur in the immediate future). (4) Funeral homes may not charge customers a fee to dispose of packaging material surrounding third-party caskets. (5) Funeral homes may not refuse the use of their equipment--such as a gurney called a 'church truck'--to move the third-party casket. It's also illegal for funeral homes to simply refuse an outside casket.

How to know if the funeral home's treatment of a third-party casket is legal:

The Funeral Rule requires funeral homes to treat third-party caskets in the same manner they

(Continued on the next page)

FIELD TRIP

Four members of your FCA-RI Board took a field trip to Prudence Island to tour Prudence Memorial Park, the first exclusively green cemetery in Rhode Island. (See article on pg 3). Robin Weber spent considerable time with us showing us the green burial grounds as well as the two recent interments. (See pictures below). We are pleased that Robin has agreed to be a speaker at our November 5th meeting where you will be able to learn much more about this cemetery which has been certified by the Green Burial Council.



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 and are greatly appreciated.