



# ONE FOOT IN...

FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE OF HUMBOLDT

SPRING 2013

## THE DIFFERENT SIDES OF GRIEF

We are very pleased to welcome Sheri Whitt, MFT, as the keynote speaker for our Annual Meeting. Ms. Whitt has a rich background in helping people dealing with loss, grief and mourning. Your experience of grief may have come with the death of a parent, spouse or child. Our shared grief may have come from one of the many traumatic deaths in our community this last year. We may seek to

change our relationship to death or how we approach the end of our own days. Come hear an insightful discussion about these experiences. Ms. Whitt currently works as the Clinical Director for the Humboldt State University Community Counseling Clinic. She also volunteers for Hospice of Humboldt, hosting the Saturday Morning Slipper Club - a group for those impacted by the death of a loved one who find it helpful to have a

"warm start" to their weekend. She is finishing up her first year at HSU. Prior to that, Ms. Whitt managed the grief support program for Hospice of Humboldt. In that role, she provided psychoeducation and emotional support to Hospice families and community members who had been impacted by death. While at Hospice, she developed programs, provided training for professionals, and supervised volunteers and grief support staff. She has a great love for her work and is very excited to speak with us at our meeting.

*Funeral Consumers Alliance of Humboldt*

### Annual Meeting

**Saturday, April 13, 2013**

**1pm - 3:30pm**

Humboldt Unitarian

Universalist Fellowship

24 Fellowship Way, Bayside

*FCA Members and the public are cordially invited to attend. Join us early for socializing & homemade treats (so good)!*

*Keynote presentation begins after a short-n-sweet business meeting.*

### Board of Directors

**President,** *Denise George*

**Secretary,** *Nancy Ortiz*

**Treasurer,** *Lionel Ortiz*

**Member Services,** *Jan Rowen*

*Suzan Jernigan*

*Peggy Dickinson*

*Aisha Coriell*

*Joellen Clark-Peterson*

### Board Candidate

*Paula Rhude*

### Advisors To The Board

*Anne Weiss*

*Gretchen Ziegler*

*Karen Roemke*

*Tracy Jordan French*

*Charlotte August*

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT	2
MEMBER SERVICES	3
WORD ON THE STREET	4
WANTED: BOARD MEMBERS	5
TREASURER'S REPORT	6
GREEN BURIAL	7
LEGISLATION 2012	7

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**82% of people say it's important to put their wishes in writing.**

**23% have actually done it.** (Source: Survey of Californians by the California HealthCare Foundation -2012)

Dear FCA of Humboldt Members,

Here at the Funeral Consumers Alliance, we stress the importance of preplanning. While it is so important, and I know and preach this, even I have been dragging my feet. I am partway there, having made most of the decisions and put them on paper. The step I must now take is communicating these details and decisions to those who will be faced with my disposition and with wrapping up my affairs.

Planning for and talking about death are topics most people conveniently steer clear of. Not sure if this classifies as optimism, but if that's what it is, then a little pessimism may be healthy here. My own parents clammed up in the past when I attempted to voice some of the decisions I was contemplating for myself. ...And sadly, I know nothing of what they want for themselves. If I let this information remain unknown, I foresee a likely unpleasant debate between my five siblings and I, during a time of grief, to decide for them. This glimpse of "what may be" serves as a motivator for me to finalize and share my plans with them, in hopes it will facilitate a discussion of their last wishes. I also hope that in sharing this with all of you, I might inspire you to follow through with your own preplanning, if you haven't done so already.

Two documents that got me going are available through your very own local FCA. They provide a template to clarify what you want (and don't want) and assist your loved ones in wrapping up your business.

Before I Go, You Should Know (Gorey Pouch) details:

Where to locate your helpful and required legal documents

Who you have appointed to oversee/carry out your wishes

How you want your remains handled

Family, friends and other significant contact information

Active accounts, account numbers, passwords, etc

Obituary notes

This packet also includes an Advanced Directive form.

Five Wishes details:

Who you have appointed to make healthcare decisions for you when you're not able to

Medical treatment you want and don't want

How comfortable you want to be

How you want people to treat you

What you want your loved ones to know

This document can be completed online and printed for free at [AgingWithDignity.org](http://AgingWithDignity.org).

Both documents are recognized as legal documents in California and will be available for sale at our upcoming Annual Meeting. (There are eight states in which Five Wishes does not yet meet the legal requirements.)

Before I Go You Should Know - (Gorey Pouch)-\$10      Five Wishes -\$1

While no doubt thought provoking, the documents are very simple to complete. Spelling it all out left me feeling a bit liberated as well as grateful to have a say in these matters. My next step will be to share the details with family and the few friends I have asked to be involved. I have already found I am comfortable talking about these topics with my friends. It's the communication with my parents I expect to be challenging. In the end, I know it will bring me considerable peace of mind to know that my loved ones know what I want and that I am making the whole business end of it significantly easier for them when my time comes.

Motivated to walk the talk,  
Denise George, Your FCA Board President

---

## **MEMBERS SERVICES REPORT**

By Jan Rowen

After 10 years of being on the board of our local chapter of the Funeral Consumers Alliance I have had to step away. I remain committed to educating the public about the importance of talking with family members and friends about their end-of-life wishes and, equally important, putting aside some money for the expense of a cremation/burial/memorial service. I have been honored by many families to assist in the passing of beloved family members and am thankful. I will continue to be a voice for the FCA and will do some public speaking. I am available for questions and will continue to answer the phone. Many use the internet now for information and to that note we have a very good website which is updated as news comes to us. Still, it is nice to know one can pick up the phone at all hours and hear a friendly voice on the other end. I am able to maintain this service and enjoy it. As I say farewell for now, please get your affairs in order, no matter your age.



Ligia, Teacher- "Not much to resolve. Experiences...visit more places in the world and O! I'd like to hold my grandbabies!"



Jessamy, 4 yrs old- "I don't have a problem, and I want to go up to the sky and look at the sun."

### WORD ON THE STREET

ASKED IN NORTHERN HUMBOLDT  
BY JOELLEN CLARK-PETERSON

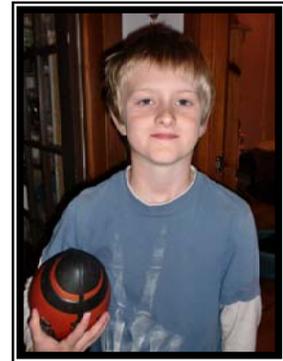
"Is there some-  
thing you hope  
to have resolved  
or experienced  
before your  
death?"



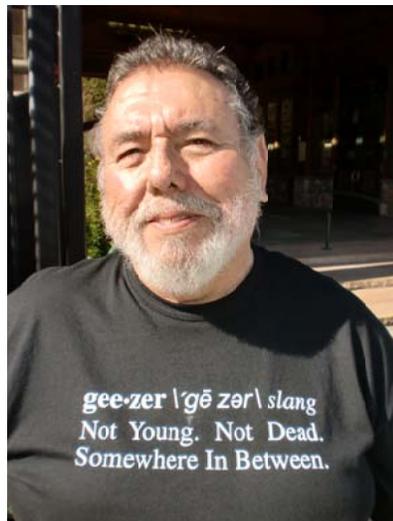
Vicky, Business Owner- "I'm doing what I love to do. If I'd really wanted to do it, I have done it by now. Okay, I'd do more camping."



Conrad, Artist- "I want all my personal relationships to be good. Nothing standing in the way between me and anyone I know. Experiences? I could say travel, but I want to experience matters of the heart. I want my heart to be in a good place when I pass away."



Benny, 9 yrs old- "I don't want to be nervous before swimming. And, I want to go around the world."



gee-zer |'gē zər| slang  
Not Young. Not Dead.  
Somewhere In Between.

A standing ovation to champion board member, Lionel Ortiz, for all the blood, sweat, tears and time he's given towards (hopefully) attaining a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and tax-deductible status for our local FCA. We absolutely would not be able to achieve this without you, Lionel!

off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



**WANTED: BOARD MEMBERS**

A friendly, inspired, go-getter type who is interested in joining and being an active FCA board member! About half of our current board has more than put their time in and are looking to pass the torch to new people who share the calling to bring attention to the topic of conscious death and dying to the Humboldt community. The FCA board is a friendly group of people who meet quarterly over a mellow potluck of snacks and we welcome all those interested to attend a meeting and see if you'd like to commit. It's enormously satisfying to serve an aspect of life that is often shied away from, and to instead meet it with courage and compassion (and as it turns out, people who work with death have an extraordinary sense of humor). Hope to see you soon. We need bright minds to join our group and get our message out!

**MEMBER DISCOUNT RATES FOR LOCAL SERVICES ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE**

After many years of service and partnership, we recently discontinued our agreement for FCA Member reduced rates with Pierce, Paul's and Goble's mortuaries. In pursuit of 501(c)(3) status, we may no longer offer special prices or benefits exclusively for our members, but rather serve as an educational resource assisting in providing access to simple, dignified funeral and mortuary services for all. Thank you Pierce, Paul's and Goble's for the excellent service that you've always provided to our members.

*"Life is not separate from death. It only looks that way."  
-Blackfoot*

*"There is no death, only a change of worlds." -Duwamish*

**WE RELY ON YOUR SUPPORT**

**We appreciate any contribution you can offer.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to help! I'm enclosing my donation of  
\$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enclosed a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would be willing to consider serving on the Board.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can volunteer for a few hours. My interests are:  
Public Speaking \_\_\_\_\_, Writing \_\_\_\_\_, Computers \_\_\_\_\_,  
Financial \_\_\_\_\_, Legal Advice \_\_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I can't volunteer right now, but I have some good ideas. Please contact me to discuss them.

**Please Print Your Information:**

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Send your reply to:

**Funeral Consumers Alliance of Humboldt**

P.O. Box 856

Arcata, CA 95518

707-822-8599

[info@fcahumboldt.org](mailto:info@fcahumboldt.org)

**HAS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGED?**

Help us to better serve you by keeping your contact information current. **Please print the following:**

Name:

Old Address:

New Address:

Old Phone Number:

New Phone Number:

Email Address:

\_\_\_\_\_ I have moved from our service area. Please cancel my membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ Transfer my membership to the FCA affiliate in my new locale.

Send your reply to:

**Funeral Consumers Alliance of Humboldt**

P.O. Box 856

Arcata, CA 95518

707-822-8599

[info@fcahumboldt.org](mailto:info@fcahumboldt.org)

*Privacy: We never rent, sell or share your information with organizations outside of the Funeral Consumers Alliance.*

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Year 2012 Highlights**

Members 1540

New Members 58

**Income for the year**

New Memberships \$1,456

Donations (thank you) \$1,300

Educational Materials \$85

**Total Income \$3,147**

**Expenses for the year**

Membership Services \$900

Annual Meeting Expenses \$1749

Dues and Fees \$245

Website Setup and Updates \$170

**Total Expenses \$6,520**



**FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE OF HUMBOLDT**

P.O. Box 856 Arcata, CA 95518 •

707-822-8599 • [fcahumboldt.org](http://fcahumboldt.org)

### **A PERSONAL STORY OF GREEN BURIAL**

Years ago my husband, Danny, expressed his wish to have a green burial. While he was alive his passion was to work to avert climate change. For him green burials were the most environmentally sensitive way to dispose of our bodies when we die. They negate the need for caskets and concrete liners and avoid the CO<sub>2</sub> producing effects of crematory fires.

Danny was buried in the 18 plot green cemetery site at the Blue Lake Cemetery. The representative of the Ocean View Cemetery – Sunset Memorial Park, owners of the Blue Lake Cemetery, the only presently permitted green cemetery site, was extremely supportive of Danny's decision. Ayres Family Cremation, too, provided incredibly sympathetic and helpful assistance. (Danny chose to donate his brain to the Mayo Clinic for research into his atypical Parkinsonism and thus needed the services Ayres provided.) Our friend, Kathy Morris, made Danny the perfect shroud in which he was buried. Woven natural fiber caskets and shrouds are available locally.

Danny's burial was, as he would have wished, largely carbon neutral.

Nancy Ihara

### **2012 LEGISLATION AFFECTING FUNERALS**

These bills were passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Brown.

Probably the most important was SB No. 658 which requires all licensed funeral service establishments to list their services on their websites. Unfortunately the section of the bill which required that they post their prices for each service online was amended out at the last minute. Several other important bills affect military veterans. Here are the most pertinent new laws:

SB No.611 makes it a crime to picket within 300 feet of a funeral for one hour prior to, or one hour after, the service. This follows a national law signed by the President after demonstrations disrupted numerous veterans funerals.

AB No. 1225: Protection of Veterans Markers: makes it a misdemeanor to sell, trade or transfer veteran's commemorative property. Defines "commemorative property" in detail.

AB No. 1806: called the "Burial With Honor Act of 2012" it requires county veterans service officers to determine if unclaimed remains are those of a veteran or dependent of a veteran, and if they are, do they meet the criteria for burial by a veterans organization. Also details use of that information.

A bill passed in 2010 provided for the burial of honorably discharged veterans by veterans organizations if the family has insufficient funds.

Other legislation passed and signed in 2012 covered the disposition of small estates (under \$100,000); strengthens an employee's right to bereavement leave; requires the Cemetery and Funeral Bureau to put on the internet information about funeral industry operators of various services, their licenses, etc.

Additional information can be found by Googling "California Legislation/Funerals."

Also of note is a national bill (HR3655) to protect cemetery users. It puts many requirements on funeral industry establishments, especially the disclosure of prices, and assures the choice of services. This bill grew out of Congressional hearings on the scandal in the Chicago area which revealed that 300 graves had been dug up and then resold. The National Director of Funeral Consumers Alliance, Josh Slocum, spoke at this hearing and urged lawmakers to look into the many deceptive practices in the funeral industry which "take advantage of vulnerable families."

FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE OF HUMBOLDT

P.O. Box 856 Arcata, CA 95518

(707)822-8599 [fcahumboldt.org](http://fcahumboldt.org)

**Consumer  
advocacy for  
dignified and  
economic  
end-of-life  
choices.**



**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Presorted Standard

U.S. Postage

P A I D

Arcata, CA

Permit No. 32

**PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND CO-WORKERS!**

We always welcome new members! Stock your place of worship, Senior Center, workplace or service club with our brochures. Remember that FCA-Humboldt gives presentations to churches, organizations, clubs -- wherever people meet. Help us to get the word out about our organization and our services. Please contact us for details and brochures (707-822-8599 or [info@fcahumboldt.org](mailto:info@fcahumboldt.org)).

We are also interested in knowing if, in the future, you would prefer receiving your newsletter electronically. Many of our members have provided e-mail addresses and that information is contained in our data base. Please let us know what your preference might be by contacting us at the above e-mail address. Thank you!

**FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCES**

FCA of Humboldt

P.O. Box 856

Arcata, CA 95518

707-822-8599

[www.fcahumboldt.org](http://www.fcahumboldt.org)

FCA of California

P.O. Box 1945

Turlock, CA 95382

650-321-6584

[www.fca-calif.org](http://www.fca-calif.org)

FCA National

33 Patchen Rd.

So. Burlington, VT 05403

802-865-8300

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