

THE FUNERAL CONSUMER SOCIETY OF COLORADO  
4101 E. HAMPDEN AVENUE  
DENVER, CO 80222-7262  
303-759-2800  
E-MAIL ADDRESS: [fucosoco@yahoo.com](mailto:fucosoco@yahoo.com)

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DENVER, CO  
PERMIT NO. 142

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## NEWS & VIEWS

(Published bi-annually in April & November)

FCSC NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2015

### **FCSC MISSION STATEMENT**

FCSC was founded a half century ago with the goal of helping families find funeral or memorial services at fair prices, but it has greatly expanded to include education of all end-of-life topics.

### **ANNUAL MEETING SATURDAY MAY 2, 2015**

**Location:** First Universalist Church, 4101 E. Hampden Avenue, Denver (northeast corner of intersection of S. Colorado Blvd. & E. Hampden Ave.)

**Times:** 9:00-9:30 a.m. *Coffee, tea and refreshments in the lobby*  
9:30-10:00 a.m. *Business Meeting and Election of Directors*  
10:00-11:59 a.m. *Presentations and discussions (see pg. 2)*

*Note: Your board meets on the fourth Thursday of the month six times a year, plus the annual meeting where we invite speakers. Please join us at 10 a.m., at First Universalist Church, 4101 E. Hampden Avenue. Call ahead at 303-759-2800 to learn the exact date of the next board meeting.*

### **MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

**Has your Membership expired?** Please check the address label for your Dues Date (for example, DD: 01-Jul-15), above your name. If this date is past or coming up soon, you must **renew your membership now** to remain active. Dues are \$10 for one person and \$20 for a couple, for two years. If the year indicated is 2016 or 2017, you are paid up until then. If you see DD: Life Member, you paid more to join as a life member prior to 1999 and owe nothing more. **Voluntary contributions are always appreciated.** Remember, we are strictly a volunteer organization, and no one is paid. All funds are dedicated to expenses of the society. NEW MEMBERS are welcome! We know there are people out there who don't know the **Funeral Consumer Society of Colorado** (FCSC) exists. There are many people who don't know what our purpose is (see the FCSC Mission Statement). Help us by giving a friend your newsletter, and inform them of our service...you will be doing them a favor!

## **ANNOUNCEMENT:**

See the special insert of this newsletter for the Funeral Home Price Survey, conducted by FCSC Board members over the last six months. It was quite an endeavor!

The FCSC Board has advertised in the Metro area using Facebook and Google Ads. The emphasis is on educating the public as to our Mission (see page 1), and the benefits of becoming a member, such as the 55-page comprehensive handbook, newsletters with up-to-date information on the industry, and finding a reputable crematory or mortuary. Also mentioned is that FCSC can provide a guest speaker who will present basic information about our organization, end of life issues, and being a wise consumer regarding cremations and funerals.

## **LEGISLATIVE NEWS**

On Feb. 6, 2015 the House Committee on Health Care & Human Services postponed House Bill 15--1135 indefinitely regarding "Death with Dignity Act". On the 8th of February the Canadian Supreme Court overturned a 1993 ban on doctor-assisted suicide on the grounds that it infringed on citizens' rights. Will Canada choose to allow assisted suicide?

There is another Bill HB 15-125 that was introduced concerning a statewide registry of advance directives; however, the State Veterans & Military Affairs postponed this bill indefinitely on Feb. 9th.

Based on recommendations from Department Of Regulatory Agencies's Sunset Review in October 2014, Senate Bill 110 was introduced to extend the regulations for funeral establishments and crematories through 2024, and will include new requirements pertaining to the identification and tracking of human remains from the time it takes custody until final disposition or the return to the next of kin. The Bill changes certain regulations and language from a cremationist to a crematory. The Bill has been assigned to the Business, Labor & Technology committee.

## **2014-2015 FCSC BOARD MEMBERS**

Our current Officers and Directors are listed below. Term on the Board expires in the year in ( ).

Jan Eccher	(2016) President	Ross Getchell	(2016) Education
Anthony Bowerman	(2016) Membership Serv.	Judy Taylor	(2016) Newsletter Editor
<b>Jim Taylor</b>	<b>(2015) Treasurer</b>	<b>Larry Clarke</b>	<b>(2015) Phone Secretary</b>
<b>Em Putnam</b>	<b>(2015) Secretary</b>	Grant Steffen	(2016) Vice President & Phone Secretary

**We need to have some new candidates for the Board of Directors!** Fresh ideas are always welcome. At the Annual Meeting we will attempt to fill 8 vacancies (1 is retiring) on the Board. If you are willing to help plan and implement the future of the Society, please consider becoming a Board Member. For information about what is involved, please call us at 303-759-2800, or by E-mail at [fucosoco@yahoo.com](mailto:fucosoco@yahoo.com). Ross Getchell announced that he will be retiring after our Annual Meeting in May, 2015. He joined FCSC twenty years ago in February, 1995.

## Colorado Funeral Price Survey – January 2015

The Funeral Consumer Society of Colorado compiled this survey of funeral costs throughout the State of Colorado, beginning in the fall of 2014. This study was made to enable us to better understand the range of funeral costs in Colorado, and accordingly, better serve our members and the public at large. 211 funeral service providers were mailed a survey form by the Society, and 43 responded with most of the information requested. While this response represents only a disappointing 21% of funeral providers contacted, the information gathered does present one of the best available gauges of funeral costs in Colorado at this time. The categories for which price estimates were requested from providers are highlighted below. It should be noted that this is not an inclusive list of all services and merchandise offered by the respective firms, but provides for a general range of prices for the most commonly selected basic final disposition plans (i.e., cremation, direct burial, or a traditional funeral).

The compilers of the survey would like to note the following with regard to the Federal Trade Commission Funeral Rule:

Funeral homes are not required to respond to written requests for a copy of their General Price List (**GPL**).

There are sixteen services and goods which should be itemized, if offered, on the General Price List. These do not have to be listed in any specific order. In some instances, because of the wording used, the compilers could not be sure if some services were offered or not.

Of the 43 funeral homes that responded to the request, all had websites, but only 14 showed the GPL available on-line.

The survey report is arranged by an alphabetical listing of Colorado communities where the responding funeral providers are located. If a particular Colorado city that has a funeral service firm located within it is not listed, then its absence indicates that the provider likely did not return the General Price List to us as requested.

The three services that the funeral providers were asked to furnish price information for include:

- 1) The price estimate for a **direct cremation** generally includes the charges for transportation of remains from place of death, necessary authorizations, basic services of the staff, minimum preparation and handling of the body prior to cremation, refrigeration, crematory fee, and transportation of the body to crematory, if necessary. We asked for the price range for all basic or alternative cremation containers and cremation caskets, plus the price range for all cremation urns.
- 2) The price estimate for a **direct burial** generally includes the charges for transportation of remains from place of death, necessary authorizations, basic services of the staff, minimum preparation and handling of the body prior to burial, refrigeration, the least expensive casket, and transportation of the body to cemetery.
- 3) The price estimate for a **full “traditional” funeral service** generally includes the charges for transportation of remains from place of death, necessary authorizations, basic services for the staff, embalming, dressing, casketing and cosmeticizing the body, use of the facilities/staff for a two-hour public viewing, followed by a ceremony at the mortuary chapel, memorial/prayer cards, register book, and transportation of the body by hearse to a cemetery. We then asked for the price range of all caskets offered, as well as the price range for all burial vaults offered.

## ***"The Denver Death Cafe"***

The Denver Death Cafe is a place where conversations, questions and concerns about the dying process are held; it is an informal discussion group, where the only topic is death---"and it makes for a fantastic conversation!" The meetings are on the 3rd Sunday of each month, starting January 18, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Porter Place; 1001 E. Yale Ave., Denver, CO 80210. Request: "Please arrive a few minutes early to secure a seat and grab some refreshments. We begin promptly at 3:00. No RSVP required." Facilitator Anita Larson can be reached through e-mail: [denverdeathcafe@gmail.com](mailto:denverdeathcafe@gmail.com) Anita will be one of the speakers at our annual May meeting. Death Café gatherings began in England, and now there are over one thousand Death Cafes around the world.

### ***Have you seen our new web site?***

We welcome you to view our new web site and share it with your friends and relatives. The site has much information and provides links to other web sites that can answer many questions you might have. See: <http://FuneralConsumerColorado.org>

### ***A REMINDER:***

There are several web sites by other organizations which erroneously describe FCSC as a "funeral home". We are in the process of notifying the various sources and clarifying this mistaken identity. We are not a charity nor a funeral home, nor a funeral insurance plan, nor prepayment plan. We are not affiliated with any mortuary. We do not make decisions for our members. We are a voluntary educational organization, which provides funeral information to help you, or your survivors, make these choices. Although we are not antagonistic to the funeral industry, we are a force promoting consumer choice and fair dealing with them.

### ***OTHER NEWS***

FCSC has the revised (2013) Member Handbook available for all FCSC members. This is being issued to all new members as part of their membership package. **Existing members can purchase a copy for the price of \$10.00.** Order from FCSC, 4101 E. HAMPDEN AVENUE, DENVER, CO 80222-7262, or order one through e-mail: [fucosoco@yahoo.com](mailto:fucosoco@yahoo.com)

Grant Steffen, our Outreach Presenter, has arranged a meeting on April 7, 2015 with the Retired Federal Employees group. He visited the Denver Hospice to ask about making a presentation for them. They asked for a preliminary meeting with the staff to learn whether the presentation would be appropriate for their clients. If you know of a group that would benefit from a presentation (about 45 minutes to an hour long), contact FCSC: **303-759-2800**. Someone will call back within a few days.

FCSC is looking into creating a new tri-fold publication, one which makes it clear that our main mission is education on end-of-life issues. These would be distributed in waiting rooms of nursing homes, hospices and hospitals.

There was an interesting article in the Bloomberg Businessweek magazine, Feb. 23, 2015. The Executive Director, Josh Slocum, of our parent organization, FCA (Funeral Consumers Assn.) was quoted in this 4-paged article, "*The funeral industry has had a goddamn easy ride for the last 150 years*". The story is about imported, much less expensive caskets from China being denied access to the American market. As Josh states, "*It defies all known rules of supply and demand.*"

## **Speakers for the May 2 Annual FCSC Meeting:**

### **Jim and Judy Taylor, Board Members, FCSC:**

Jim Taylor, Treasurer of FCSC, and Judy, Newsletter Editor and webmaster, will give a short presentation on highlights in the new web site.

### **Anita Larson from the Death Café:**

Anita Larson is a Family Celebrant who interviews families in their home usually within a day or two after the death of a loved one. She captures the stories of their loved one then writes and officiates the Celebration of Life Ceremonies. The location is chosen by the family – it can be in a mortuary, church, park, near a lake or in a backyard. Anita's interest in facilitating a Death Café started when she was in school to become a Celebrant. She attended her first "Death Cafe" in Taos, New Mexico and returned to Denver to start the first "Denver Death Cafe" in September of 2013. These gatherings are held monthly and Anita will tell us more about Death Cafes globally and locally.

### **Stewart Fleisher, Attorney at Law:**

Stewart Fleisher, an estate attorney, who spent many years on the Board of FCSC, will address our annual meeting at 11:00 A.M. He will speak on Colorado rules, regulations and new taxes related to estate planning, such as gift taxes, estate taxes, trusts and probate.

*---Questions, answers and discussion to follow presentations---*

### **A LAUGH OR TWO:**

There are two kinds of people who don't say much – those who are quiet and those who talk a lot. – *Ideas for Better Living*

Live your life so that you don't have to hide your diary – *Robert Orbin*

### **ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Check out the new web site: <http://FuneralConsumerColorado.org>.

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY April 1, 2014- March 31, 2015:**

<u>Income:</u>		<u>Expenses:</u>	
Contributions	\$ 1,685.00	FCA dues & donation	\$ 1,664.49
Handbook Purchases	\$ 381.50	Printing (newsletters, etc.)	\$ 1,066.83
Interest & dividends	\$ 462.07	Postage	\$ 2,261.07
Membership fees new	\$ 870.00	Telephone	\$ 867.73
Memb. fees renew	\$ 1,930.00	Special Expense (FCA)	\$ 5,938.78
<u>Other Income</u>	<u>\$ 100,074.16</u>	<u>Other expenses</u>	<u>\$ 170.41</u>
Total income	<b>\$ 105,402.23</b>	Total expenses	<b>\$ 11,969.31</b>

Thanks to contributions, bequests, new members and member renewals, along with the reserves, your organization is financially sound.

## FCSC CONTRACT PROVIDERS and FCSC member prices (as of March 2014)

**Note:** All direct burial prices *include* a minimum casket. Basic funeral and graveside service prices do *not* include a casket. Funeral followed by cremation includes rental casket. Contact the provider for more information or prices for other services.

### Stork Family Mortuary

1895 Wadsworth Blvd.

Lakewood, CO 80214

303-237-5350

direct cremation with no services or viewing: **\$875**

direct cremation with memorial services: **\$1,395**

direct burial, no services: **\$1,305**

graveside services (plus casket): **\$1,425**

traditional services (church or chapel) + casket: **\$1,780**

ship out charges (no casket plus airfare) **\$875**

funeral service with cremation after: **\$1,975**

### Bohlender Funeral Chapel

121 W. Olive St.

Fort Collins, CO 80524

970-482-4244

direct cremation- no services: **\$995**

direct burial-no services: **\$1,495**

traditional funeral: **\$1,600**

graveside services: **\$1,395**

funeral-cremation after: **\$2,100**

### M.P. Murphy & Associates Funeral Directors

4984 Idylwild Trail

Boulder, CO 80301

303-530-4111

direct cremation, no services **\$995**

direct burial, no services: **\$1,475**

basic traditional funeral: **\$3,580**

graveside service: **\$3,380**

funeral, cremation after: **\$3,580**

(Less 15% of all prices for members)

### Cappadona's Alternative Cremation & Funeral

1020 East Fillmore

Colorado Springs, CO 80907

719-520-1817

direct cremation, no services **\$825**

direct burial, no services: **\$1,645**

basic traditional funeral: **\$1,840**

graveside service: **\$1,540**

funeral, cremation after: **\$2,315**

## PLEASE tell us if you move

If you have changed your mailing address, **please notify us** by sending the form below (or by E-mail: [fucosoco@yahoo.com](mailto:fucosoco@yahoo.com)) to: FCSC, 4101 E. HAMPDEN AVENUE, DENVER, CO 80222-7262 **You can also use this form to pay dues, or to make a donation** to the Society to keep us financially strong. If you know someone who is not a member, they can use this form to join.

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

Please check appropriate box: I am a current (\_\_\_\_) new (\_\_\_\_) member of FCSC.

Old address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a donation to the Society in the amount of: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed are my dues for the next two years: (\$10 per adult member) \_\_\_\_\_

Please send an FCSC information brochure and application to: