

THE FUNERAL CONSUMER SOCIETY OF COLORADO
P.O. BOX 4743
GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80155-4743
720-432-5379
E-MAIL ADDRESS: fucosoco@yahoo.com

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NEWS & VIEWS

(Published bi-annually in April & November)

FCSC NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2021

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 significant end-of-life topics.

ANNUAL MEETING SATURDAY MAY 1, 2021

LOCATION: Zoom. Link to meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83424457724>

When items (and term of Board Members) come up for a vote, instructions will then be given.

9:15-9:30 a.m. Time to get settled in on Zoom call

9:30-10:00 a.m. Welcome, Business Mtg. and Election of Directors

10:00 a.m. Presentation: "Funeral Consumer Protection", by Josh Slocum (info on pg. 2)

Note: In addition to the Annual Meeting, your Board meets on the 4th Thursday of the month 6 times a year. Please feel free to join us at 10:15 a.m. at the Englewood Library, or on Zoom for now. Call ahead at **720-432-5379** to learn the exact time and date of the next Board Meeting, or see the FCSC website: www.funeralconsumercolorado.org.

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Has your Membership expired? Please check the address label for your Dues Date (for example, DD: 01-Jul-21), 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 2021 or 2022, 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!

SPEAKER for the MAY 1st ANNUAL FCSC MEETING

Josh Slocum, Executive Directive, Funeral Consumers Alliance; 10:10 a.m. Presentation:
Bringing Funeral Consumer Protection into the 20th Century

Joshua Slocum joined the FCA staff in 2002 and became executive director in 2003. He has appeared as an expert commentator on funeral issues in national media such as 60 Minutes and the New York Times. On behalf of FCA's nationwide federation of consumer information groups, Slocum has testified before Congress and helped to draft federal and state statutes protecting funeral consumers.

Slocum co-wrote, with Lisa Carlson, *Final Rights: Reclaiming the American Way of Death*. (2011, Upper Access Publishers.) *Final Rights* combines a journalistic investigation of the funeral industry and how consumers navigate it with practical information on how to avoid funeral fraud and financial exploitation.

Funeral Consumers Alliance's recent public policy work in conjunction with the Consumer Federation of America produced several national surveys of funeral home price disclosure policies, and led to the organizations petitioning the Federal Trade Commission to require funeral businesses to disclose their prices online. Questions, answers and discussion to follow presentation.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

To look at a summary of Legislative Bills that have recently been introduced or acted upon in the Colorado Legislature, go to: www.leg.colorado.gov.

Senate Bill (SB 21-006) was introduced 2-16-21 under the title of **Human Remains Natural Reduction Soil**. This bill would allow for human composting, also known as "Recompose". On March 17, SB 21-006 was introduced in the House and assigned to the energy and environment committee.

2020-2021 FCSC BOARD MEMBERS

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

Jan Eccher	(2021) Education	Stephanie K. Schacht	(2023)
Anthony Bowerman	(2021) Membership Serv.	Judy Taylor	(2021) Media
Jim Taylor	(2023) Treasurer	Carolyn Tillquist	(2022) Secretary
Sue Mackey	(2021) President	Andy Sweet	(2023) Outreach

Note: Em Putnam has moved to Ft. Collins and has retired from the Board. There are four Board Members who are up for re-election; these will be voted on at the May 1st meeting. **We are looking for new Board Members---consider this worthwhile endeavor!**

Any member is welcome to attend any of our Board meetings; fresh ideas are always encouraged. The FCSC phone number is **720-432-5379**, email address is: fucosoco@yahoo.com.

OUTREACH

Funeral Consumer Society of Colorado is Reaching Out Virtually

The FCSC board has developed an educational presentation available online to any interested organization in Colorado. Without the restrictions of geography, we now have the ability to offer this presentation throughout the state, so if this might be of interest to your local senior center, a senior living community in your area, or any other community organization, please reach out to us. Your membership dues support this initiative and others to bring much needed facts to an often-avoided topic. *Available online and free of charge.*

OTHER NEWS

Extensively Updated Handbook: For those of you who have read the 60-page Handbook you received as a new member, you know what a wealth of information it is on all topics End-of-Life. It has recently been edited and updated with new resources. New copies, including new end-of-life planning forms, are available; just send us a note and a payment of \$20 either by check or order through our website. We will get one in the mail to you! Even if you've done your end-of-life planning in the past, it's not a one-and-done. Pull out your documents NOW, and revisit your decisions. Things change in ways that often take us by surprise!

Dec 2: Denver Post Briefs stated that the **Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA)** has issued a final order, relinquished registrations to the funeral homes and crematories owned by the Lake County coroner, Shannon Kent be shut down. Kent owned and operated Bailey-Kent Funeral Home in Leadville; Everett Family Funeral Home and Crematory in Gypsum; Hegmann Funeral Service in Idaho Springs and Runyan-Kent Mortuary in Fairplay.

A project in the works by your Board is to build a database of senior associations to contact regarding the availability of the FCSC educational presentation. This will be utilized in a new Zoom PowerPoint presentation, by two of our Board Members, Sue and Larry, and will be held in April.

Colorado is one of 20 states where **Alkaline Hydrolysis**, or "**Water Cremation**" is legal, and it's becoming more readily available to us as a green alternative. It's very environmentally friendly, using 90% less energy and 10x less CO2 emissions than flame cremation. Water is mixed with a calculated amount of alkali to break down the soft tissue. After several hours, everything but the bones dissolve into a liquid that is perfect for fertilizing flowers and trees. The remaining bone fragments are a white, uniform powder and may be scattered or placed in an urn. This process is available through The Natural Funeral in Lafayette, Be A Tree in Denver, Return to Nature Burial and Cremation in Colorado Springs and other funeral homes by inquiry.

Funerals During Pandemics: FCA's Executive Director, Josh Slocum, recently prepared video on this subject. It contains useful information on safe practices. You can view it by entering this link into your browser:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAFD_v1u6mU&feature=youtu.be

ANNUAL FINANCIAL SUMMARY April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021:

<u>Income:</u>		<u>Expenses:</u>	
Contributions	\$ 8916.00	FCA dues	\$ 741.75
Handbook Purchases	\$ 210.00	Printing (newsletters, etc.)	\$ 1,780.00
Interest & dividends	\$ 1,888.59	Postage	\$ 1,836.07
Membership fees new	\$ 850.00	Telephone	\$ 271.00
Member fees renew	\$ 2,440.00	Advertising	\$ 1,605.65
Other Income	\$ 0.00	Other expenses	\$ 120.16
Total income	\$ 14,304.59	Total expenses	\$ 6,354.63

This year, our income is up and expenses are down from increased contributions and no education expenses due to the COVID restrictions.

As you notice above in the Financial Summary, our **Valentine Appeal letter** was successful in bringing in funds leading to our goal of \$10,000. With this money, we can continue to provide the services we render, in addition to the goals we plan: Expansion to all of Colorado with Outreach programs, etc.; an updated price list of funeral home services, helping with on-line price lists of funeral homes; professionally made videos for Outreach programs; and more participation in community events, which sometimes have registration fees. And because of your contributions, these activities are already in the planning stages, or have begun. See the paragraph below, from our President, Sue Mackey:

A HUGE Thank You for Our Members' Generosity

On behalf of the entire board, we'd like to express our thanks for the overwhelming response to our Valentine's Day appeal. We put out the love, and the love and support was returned exponentially! Because of your generosity, we will be able to expand our commitment to funeral consumer education by collecting and making available basic pricing of funeral providers in all of Colorado. Pricing transparency is key to being able to be an educated consumer, and, sadly, many funeral providers do not provide pricing online. So, we are doing the legwork, connecting with each provider, collecting the data, and creating a format that will be available in the near future on our website. We couldn't do it without you!

Sue Mackey, Board President

End of Life Planning: Making Educated Choices

April 14, 2021, 9:30-11:00: This online presentation for the Denver Senior Coalition is an overview of your funeral consumer rights, so that you can make educated decisions when planning for the inevitable. Board members Sue Mackey and Larry Clarke will present. The link will be available on our website as soon as it is available. **Save the date!**

Expanding Focus for Funeral Consumer Society

We have always held a commitment to funeral consumer education and support. As an expansion of that commitment, **we have made a decision to shift away from our past focus on Contract Providers.** Contracting with a limited number of providers does not serve the consumer as well as having information about all providers. Pricing and ownership information will be available later this summer on our website as a pricing spreadsheet, and we are also available to talk through options with you by phone or email. We are most grateful for the excellent service provided to our members over the years, and we'll continue to refer to them when a member inquires, along with other excellent providers. Call or email us if you would like to talk through the best fit for your personal needs.

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***) by USPS to ***FCSC, P.O. BOX 4743, GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80155-4743.*** 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: _____

Email address: _____

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: