



SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

Funeral Consumers Alliance of Houston

An affiliate of the national Funeral Consumers Alliance (www.funerals.org)

Website: www.funeralshouston.org

Tel #s: 713-526-4267

If no Answer: 713-464-8877 or 713-301-8566 or leave message

To-date nearly 16,000 visitors have accessed our website

www.funeralshouston.org.

Dear Members and Friends of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Houston

Join Us: Our next Annual Member Meeting will take place on **Sunday, March 6, 2016**, at the Unitarian Fellowship, 1504 Wirt. Please plan to attend and bring your family and friends. Refreshments will be served. Meet and greet starts at 1.30 p.m. and the official program begins at 2 p.m. We also extend an invitation to you to attend our brief board meeting afterwards.

This year's speaker will be **Portia Sweet**. Ms. Sweet is a deacon at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Spring Branch and has served as a volunteer hospice chaplain with Houston Hospice for nearly five years. She has nearly 16 years' experience, either as a lay person or as ordained clergy, in the field of pastoral care, serving members of congregations, residents of senior facilities, and in hospital and nursing home settings. Deacon Sweet has facilitated workshops on end-of-life issues and grief support groups. She has spoken to a number of groups about hospice care and related matters in the course of her ministry.

Portia is a West Virginia native who grew up in the Houston area. Her secular career in Human Resource and Administrative Management spanned over 30 years, with assignments in the insurance, hospitality and energy industries. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Houston, Lifetime Certification as a Senior Human Resource Professional, and is a graduate of the Iona School of Ministry. She was ordained by and licensed in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

Your Funeral Consumers Alliance could not function without you. Your donations are vital to our continuing existence. May we ask you again to generously help us pay for printing this newsletter, postage, and telephone costs? Remember, that your FCA Houston is led entirely by volunteers, and **100%** of your donation goes to pay for postage, telephone, copies, printing the newsletter. One way you can support our work in a major way is to make a **Lasting Gift** to the FCA of Houston. Keep in mind that donations are tax deductible, when itemized, because we are a 501c(3) nonprofit organization. FCA of Houston will benefit from the gift, and you will have a charitable deduction for your taxes. Gifts can be made to commemorate landmark events in the

lives of family and close friends, or to create a living memorial to honor those who have died. Whatever the reason, you can be sure that the funds will be well used to help many people right here in our own community.

A Word from our President Jerestene Leath.

Don't Bother Me! Talk About – What? Why? Now??

Dear Member and Friend of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Houston,

As the writer of this article I admittedly lack the expertise to know all there is to know on the subjects of Medical Health Care, Terminal Illness, Death and Dying. My primary focus today is to encourage you, the reader, to communicate with family and friends and to let them know your wishes before death. One day, after the fact, will be too late.

I hope to inspire or motivate you to get together with your family or significant other to plan and discuss future health care. My experience as a Texas Long Term Care Administrator and health care professional who has worked in private and public arenas in this dynamic industry has been that no one wants to talk about “what if” situations such as death or health care.

Consider:

Nearly 80% of people state that they would prefer to die at home. Fact: 70-75% die in a hospital or other health care facility. Also, at the most vulnerable stage of their lives – during the last few months of their lives – individuals are moved on average three times from their residence/assisted living facility or such to a hospital.

Suggestion:

Write a Living Will, a document where you specify your future medical treatment should you be incapacitated (permanently unconscious, persistent vegetative state). Do not belong to the 34% of adults who avoid talking about this subject. Most individuals say they support the quality of life instead having their lives extended by machines, yet only 7% have this important discussion with their physician, and only 23% put their wishes down in writing.

Research:

Hospice - compassionate care and comfort for individuals with terminal illnesses and their families.

Palliative Care - a multidisciplinary approach to specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. Palliative care focuses on providing patients with relief from pain, physical and mental stress of a serious illness, whatever the diagnosis. Its goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. Palliative care is not reserved just for patients with an end-stage illness.

To summarize:

Communicate your wishes in writing • Prepare a Living Will • Prepare a Last Will • Let your family/adviser know where the important documents are kept.

Your family will be grateful for your courage and thoughtfulness.

A fascinating website about death and dying is

Kearl's Guide to Sociological Thanatology

Check it out at <http://www.trinity.edu/mkearl/death.html>

Notes:

An Alternative to Porcelain or Metal Urns

While recently visiting the famous Farmers Market in Las Cruces, NM, I came across a stand with hand



carved unique wooden urns, quite unlike the ones you see online. The artist is Dave Gear. He can be reached at tel. 575.382.0045. The photo shows a selection of his work.

Did You Know?

Cremated remains can be scattered on your own property, in a public or national park, at sea or over a body of water, or many other locations. If the person who died specified where he or she would like his or her ashes scattered, follow those instructions. If no instructions were made, consider selecting a meaningful location.

Scattering Remains On Private Property

If you are planning on scattering the remains on your property, know that you have every right to do so. However, some states may require you to get a permit before you scatter the ashes. If you are planning on scattering the remains on private property that you do not own, be sure to get permission from the landowner before you do.

Scattering Remains in a National Park

If you are planning on scattering the remains in a national park, you will need to apply for a permit from the National Park Service. Every national park has a different application form for scattering permits. In Texas, it is legal to scatter a loved one's ashes in state parks, but only in designated, undeveloped areas.

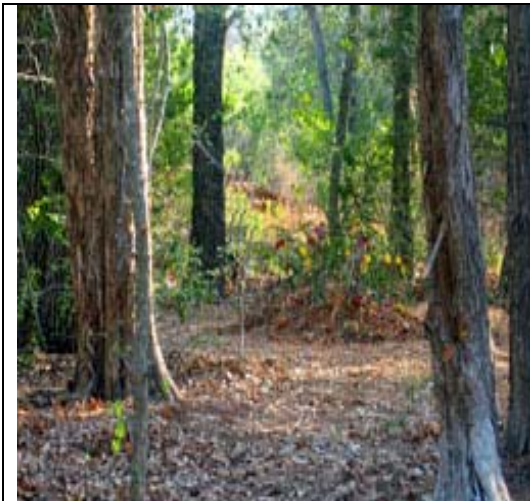
Hiring A Company to Scatter the Ashes

There are a number of companies that will scatter the ashes for you. Some specialize in scattering ashes from a small airplane, while others will scatter the remains in remote or distant locations around the world or over a body of water.

What About Green Burials in Texas State Parks?

As of 2013, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Green Burial Council (GBC) are working toward a pilot project to hold green burials in state parks. Ted Hollingsworth, director of land conservation at TPWD, says the agency is currently in discussions with the GBC to become one of the first state governments in the nation to undertake such a partnership.

Meanwhile, you may consider a Green Burial in **Eloise Woods Community Natural Burial Park**. Physical address of the burial park: 115 Northside Lane in Cedar Creek. The mailing address is: 3404 Shinoak Drive, Austin TX 78731. Contact information: (512) 796-5240 / ellen@eloisewoods.com. The Burial Park is privately owned. This community cemetery is less than 10 acres. There is a deed restriction on the property which states that the land must always be used for cemetery purposes as part of the cemetery's dedication. This ensures that all future owners of this land will need to keep the land as a green cemetery.



LIST OF COOPERATING FUNERAL HOMES in Alphabetical Order

Prices change—always call for up-to-date information

ALDINE CREMATIONS 9504 Airline Dr., Houston, TX 77037 http://www.aldinecremation.com 15% discount for FCA Houston members	281.591.6055
Direct cremation up to 250 lbs.	\$ 1,195
Direct burial, incl. 20-gauge steel casket	\$1,598
Gravesite service, incl. 20-gauge steel casket	\$2,147
Traditional funeral, incl. service at funeral home or Houston area church with embalming/open casket and night of viewing.	\$2,895
Distance charges beyond Harris County (Galveston, Ft. Bend, Liberty, Wallace, Brazoria)	\$ 158

ALLEN DAVE FUNERAL HOME Houston, Humble, Cypress, Katy, Klein, Spring, Sugar Land, The Woodlands 2103 Cypress Landing Dr., Houston, TX 77090 Brenham, Lyons, Somerville Caldwell, Bryan & Navasota Killeen & Central Texas Harker Heights Temple, TX Shreveport, LA Email: allendaveusa@yahoo.com /Fax: 713.634.2707 Website: www.AllenDave.com	713.480.2966
Direct cremation up to 275 lbs. (if body is picked up at a hospital, morgue, or other public facility. If p/u at other location, incl. home, add \$200.)	\$695
Direct cremation 276 – 350 lbs. maximum	\$995
Immediate burial with basic casket (Monday – Friday only)	\$1495
Traditional funeral with service at funeral home or church, incl. visitation/viewing one hour prior to funeral, incl. embalming, basic casket (Monday – Friday only)	\$2495 - \$2995

BERESFORD FUNERAL SERVICE 13501 Alief-Clodine, Houston, TX 77082 Email: info@beresfordfunerals.com /Fax: 281.933.9094 Website: beresfordfunerals.com	281.933.9090
Direct cremation	\$1,595
Cremation with Memorial Service or other Options (please contact funeral home for information)	\$2,195 - \$5,995
Traditional funeral service – different options available.	\$3,995 - \$7,995
GREEN BURIAL: The Beresford Funeral Home uses the Carmen Nelson Bostick Cemetery in Tomball, TX, a privately owned cemetery. Please contact Beresford for information.	

CARNES FUNERAL HOME 3100 Gulf Fwy (near exit 16), Texas City, TX 77591 http://www.carnesfuneralhome.com	888.822.7637
Direct cremation (Harris County)	\$ 835
Contact funeral home for all other prices	

CLAIRE BROTHERS FUNERAL HOME 7901 Hillcroft St, Houston 77081-7205	713.271.7250
Email: funeral198@aol.com /Website: www.clairebrothersrileysmith.com	
Direct cremation (Harris County)	\$ 795
Direct burial, 20-gauge steel casket	\$ 1990
Direct burial with graveside service	\$ 2290
Traditional funeral (20-gauge steel casket, chapel service, embalming, cosmetology)	\$ 3095
Distance charge: \$2.75/mi for distance beyond 50 miles (county exceptions) Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Cebuano, Filipino, French, Italian. Services: Protestant, Catholic, & others.	

DEER PARK FUNERAL DIRECTORS 336 E. San Augustine St., Deer Park, TX 77536 www.deerparkfuneraldirectors.com	281-476-4693
Direct cremation (‡ Price for FCAH members)	\$ 650
Immediate burial, 20-gauge steel casket	\$ 1495
Graveside service, 20-gauge steel casket, no embalming	\$ 1920
Distance charges and available services: Contact the funeral home	
GREEN BURIAL: Basic services of funeral director & staff, refrigeration, dressing & casketing the deceased, coordination & direction of graveside service, transfer of remains to funeral home, Green Burial casket*, transfer to Green Cemetery, one grave space in Green Cemetery marker section (for upright marker section, add \$175), & Register Book. Green Cemetery is in Tranquility Oaks Cemetery in Spring. <u>This cemetery is owned by the SCI Corporation.</u> (Green Burial products are made from sustainable biodegradable materials, are metal-free, and are suitable for burial in all cemeteries, including both traditional and conservation cemeteries.)	\$ 5595
*Natural Burial Trundle & Shroud (instead of Green Burial casket)	\$ 4545

FOREST LAWN FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY 8706 Almeda-Genoa Rd, Houston, TX 77075 http://www.forestlawnfuneralhomehouston.com	713.991.9000
Direct cremation	\$ 1315
Direct Cremation with Viewing, incl. service fee, embalming, 1-day visitation, removal within 40 m of funeral home, transportation to crematory, rental casket, standard cremation container, crematory fee, plastic cremains container, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$ 3045
Direct Cremation, then Memorial Service, incl. service fee, removal within 40 m of funeral home, transportation to crematory, standard cremation container, crematory fee, plastic cremains container, memorial service, wooden urn rental for memorial service, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$1,620
Direct Burial, incl. Gravesite Service (closed casket), incl. service fee, dressing and casketing, washing and disinfecting, gravesite service & equipment, removal within 40 m of funeral home, hearse, service vehicle, casket, outer burial container, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$4362

Direct Burial, incl. Gravesite Service (open casket), service fee, embalming, dressing & casketing, washing & disinfecting, gravesite service & equipment, removal within 40 m of funeral home, hearse, service vehicle, casket, outer burial container, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$4807
Traditional Funeral with Gravesite Service , incl. service fee, embalming, dressing & casketing, viewing per day, gravesite service & equipment, removal within 40 m of funeral home, hearse, service vehicle, casket, outer burial container, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$5122
Traditional Funeral with Church Service , incl. service fee, embalming, dressing & casketing, viewing per day, church service, gravesite service & equipment, removal within 40 m of funeral home, hearse, service vehicle, casket, outer burial container, police escorts, 1 death certificate, 20 prayer cards	\$5622
Distance charge, body pickup: \$2.25/mi beyond 50 miles. Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Vietnamese. Services: Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Greek Orthodox.	

CEMETERY: HOUSTON MEMORIAL GARDENS 16000 Cullen Blvd, Pearland 77581 Plot, open/close grave, grave liner. Prices increase due soon. Phone for new prices.	281.485.2221 \$2,450
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ORGAN DONATION (call or refer to website) – May save the lives up to 5 persons: Life Gift Organ Donation Center (www.LifeGift.org) Life Legacy Foundation (www.LifeLegacy.org) Bio Gift (www.biogift.org) Texas Organ Sharing Alliance (www.donatelifetexas.org)	713.737.8111 888.774.4438 866.670.1799 512.459.4848
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BODY DONATION TO MEDICAL SCHOOL Baylor College of Medicine (www.bcm.edu) Univ. of TX Health Sciences Center (www.uth.tmc.edu/nba/willed body) University of TX Health Sciences Center (www.uth.tmc.edu/nba/willabody) <i>Cremation free; charges for death certificate.</i>	713.798.3858 713.500.5603 713.798.3858
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Donations have some limitations, such as cancer, HIV / AIDs, tuberculosis, or hepatitis B/C.

Other Contact Resources: Bereavement Foundation Harris County Burial Assistance Texas Funeral Service Commission Texas Department of Insurance Monuments, headstones, etc. Rose Monument Co. Call for service delivery information	281.980.7505 713.696.1952 888.667.4881 888.827.8818 713.880.8091
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Member of the Federation of Nonprofit Funeral Information Societies

1504 Wirt Road, Houston, TX 77055

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The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Houston is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, 501(c)(3) organization of volunteers solely dedicated to protecting the public's right to choose meaningful, dignified, and affordable funerals.

Thank You for Your Tax-Deductible Contribution

(Contributions can be deductible as charitable donations for tax purposes.)

MY GIFT/CHECK OF \$ _____ IS ENCLOSED.

Current Member

Membership Application

Name(s) _____

Email Address _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone / Cell _____

Send your contribution to: FCAH, 1504 Wirt Rd, Houston, TX 77055