

FCA Annual Meeting

October 13th, 3pm

Unity Center, Mills River

You are all invited to attend our Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 13, from 3:00 – 5:00pm in the Multi-purpose Room of the Unity Center, 2041 Old Fanning Bridge Road, Mills River.

Our meeting will feature updates on the popular Genesis Project, reports on the National Convention in Atlanta this past June, and a presentation by Caroline Yongue on the new Carolina Memorial Sanctuary, a land conservancy burial ground adjacent to the Unity Center.

We will also elect the Board to continue our work of consumer education and advocacy. Board members standing for re-election include: Ed Hillman, President; Michele Skeelee, Secretary-Treasurer; Jim Null; Sharon Bigger; and Jenifer Morgan. Other Board members may be nominated from the floor! Please join us for good information and fellowship!



Funeral Consumers Alliance of WNC
PO Box 2601, Asheville, NC, 28802

FCAWNC

Funeral Consumers Alliance of Western North Carolina

2016 FALL EDITION

Presenting Our 2016 Price Survey

By Ed Hillman

Helping consumers make informed choices about a big, once-in-a-“lifetime” purchase is the mission of FCA. Every three years, your FCA of Western North Carolina surveys all the funeral homes in our area to get an idea of certain basic charges. Price surveys can be a challenge as some funeral homes go out of business, new ones are established, and some trade hands. We believe our list is the most accurate listing. Some prices are lower than our 2013 survey!

Every funeral home has a General Price List (GPL) that they are required to give consumers who request a copy. In our survey, we are comparing three basic pieces of information which require some explanation. An “Immediate Burial” is a whole body burial in a very basic casket, without the funeral home being involved in planning a memorial service. They pick up a body within their service area, transport it to their mortuary, place it in a casket, and take it to the cemetery. The cemetery plot and opening and closing the grave are charges by a cemetery and are not included in the funeral home’s pricing.

Similarly, a “Direct Cremation” includes transport of the body to a crematorium, cremation, and holding the cremains in a simple container for pickup. Prices do not include planning for any kind of memorial service. You will also note the service radius for each funeral home in our survey and an additional charge for out-of-area service.

Funeral homes provide a great service where and when they are needed, and many are diversifying what they do to help in a variety of circumstances. Some are owned by national corporations, some are owned locally, some have their own crematorium, and others use outside services. Consumers should ask questions if these differences matter to them.

Remember, you only have to pay for services you need. FCA of WNC urges everyone to PLAN AHEAD. Just as important, make your plans known to your next of kin who will be carrying out your plans. This will give THEM and you peace of mind at a time that can be very stressful.

FCA WNC is Grateful to Our Donors!

We are so very grateful to those who have supported our work over the last couple of years. You enable us to continue our mission of reaching as many households as possible with important information about options we have at the time of death.

David and Jean Adams	Frank H. Konchar	Eleanor W. Schulman
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Betsy Brown	Florence F. McDonald	Meredith Springs
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Sid and Gloria Gordon	Stratton Peacock	Andrea and Martin Toren
Ed Hillman	Lyn Lacy and George Phenix	Marcia and Walter Weber
James Hostetter	Kent and Eileen Plemmons	Karen Ward
Joyce and Gilbert Johnson	Jack and Ruth Powers	Danny and Ginny Wyatt
Frances Jones	William and Mary Read	Herman Yawn
Allan and Anne Kime	Richard and Marian Renfro	Eleanor Zitin
	Diane Rhoades	

Also contributing was our late friend, Rev. Kathy Jennings. She is gone from us too soon. We will remember Kathy at our Annual meeting, and this newsletter is dedicated to her.

Meet FCA WNC's Board Members



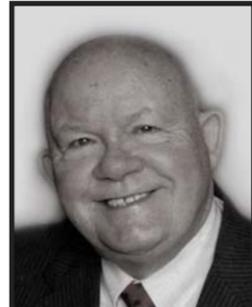
Sharon Bigger



Ed Hillman
President



Jenifer Morgan



Jim Null



Michele Skeelee
Secretary-Treasurer

Funeral Consumers Alliance of WNC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your tax-deductible gift enables us to continue reaching out to our region with important information for consumers.

Carolina Memorial Sanctuary and Center for End of Life Transitions

By Michele Skeelee

Those of us excited for greener end-of-life options have watched the growth of conservation burial grounds around the country with a keen eye. We looked to our neighbors in upstate South Carolina, leaders in this movement, Dr. Billy and Kimberley Campbell of Memorial Ecosystems, Inc. In western North Carolina, we felt fortunate to live near the first conservation burial ground in the United States, Ramsey Creek Memorial Preserve in Westminster, SC, but we longed for a place to call our own.

The wait is over! Carolina Memorial Sanctuary (CMS), North Carolina's first conservation burial ground, opened earlier this year in Mills River, essentially in our very own back yard.

CMS has grown out of the Center for End of Life Transitions (CEOLT), an all-faiths service project of Anattasati Magga, a Buddhist Sangha in Asheville. CEOLT began as a way to help our community to provide home funerals for their families and loved ones. Caroline Yongue, director of both CEOLT and CMS, saw a need for a greener alternative to the cemeteries in the region.

After many years of planning, talking with Bill & Kimberley Campbell, and looking for just the right location, Caroline purchased eleven acres for Anattasati Magga from the Unity Center of the Blue Ridge, just off Old Fanning Bridge Road in Mills River, NC. The property includes a meandering stream, woodlands, meadow, and a significant wetlands area. This spring a local environmental company began restoration and removal of invasive species on the property.

Carolina Memorial Sanctuary, open to all faiths, now offers an accessible, economical and environmentally responsible alternative to contemporary cemeteries, at one half to one third the cost of traditional burial. Being a conservation burial ground means that a conservation easement has been placed on the land, protecting against future development. Low impact vehicles, such as electric golf carts, will be used within the Sanctuary. Embalming with formaldehyde is not allowed, and caskets, shrouds, and cremation urns must be biodegradable. Graves are dug using hand tools with attention to protecting neighboring graves and sensitive plants. Graves are dug 3 feet deep instead of 6 feet which allows for the nutrients in the body to actually benefit what is planted above. As earth is removed when digging graves, it is removed in layers and replaced in reverse order, thus allowing for the soil to re-establish more quickly. Trees, plants and flowers on the graves and in the Sanctuary are native to this area and their particular habitat. Native stone is engraved and used as a grave marker – flat on the ground.

The park-like setting of the Sanctuary is intended as a living memorial, providing a peaceful and contemplative environment in which to lay loved ones to rest and will be available for burial of humans, pet companions and cremated remains. Trails and paths through the various habitats will enable guests to visit their loved ones and find solace in this beautiful place. The Sanctuary will also be available to host memorial services, weddings, family reunions, and much more.

To learn more about Carolina Memorial Sanctuary, schedule a visit, or reserve your spot, go to <http://carolinamemorialsanctuary.org/>

