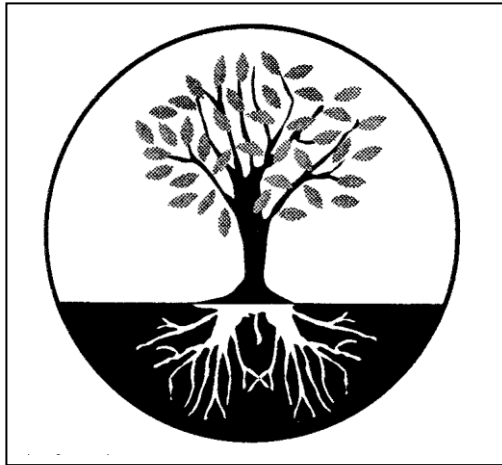


Cleveland Memorial Society



Annual Meeting
Sunday Sept. 18, 2011 at 2:00 p.m
West Shore Unitarian Church
20401 Hilliard Blvd.
Rocky River

SHERYL HARRIS is an award-winning business columnist with the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and WCPN "Ideastream." She writes each Wednesday and Sunday about issues vital to consumers, such as identity theft, unclaimed funds, robo-callers, new appliances and their warranties, what to do when a utility damages your property, and changes in the law that affect consumers.



Her website, www.cleveland.com/scamfinder, is an excellent resource for consumer information, complaints and solutions. She is a sought-after speaker and provides great insight into the hows, whys, and how-to-fix-it in this world of consumer vs. corporation.

Join us to hear about scams, frauds, and artful dodges.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

There will be an election of officers and trustees. The nominating committee, Miriam Grossman, Iris Bishop, and Bob Murphy, recommend the following slate:

President – Linda Betzer
Vice-President – Bill McCullam
Secretary – Mark Binnig
Treasurer – Bob Poe

Trustees: –
Martha Manring
Jack Ulman

Continuing in office are Jane McCullam and Patty Moll (terms expire 2012), and Patrick McCabe (term expires in 2013).



Green Burials

What for millennia was called “burial” is now called “green burial”—simply digging a grave and laying a wooden casket or the body wrapped in a shroud in it. In contrast, what we now call a “traditional funeral” is not ecologically friendly. Despite government warnings about the carcinogenicity of formaldehyde, funeral directors still prefer to use it and other toxic chemicals for embalming. These chemicals may leak through the casket and vault and poison the groundwater and soil.

Many memorial society members think of cremation as an eco-friendly alternative to embalming and burial but it uses scarce fossil fuels such as natural gas and propane and contributes to carbon dioxide emissions. A typical cremation uses three hours’ worth of fuel. Another concern of cremation is the release into the air of mercury from dental fillings. The EPA estimates that, although less than 1% of mercury emissions in the US come from crematories every year, as the cremation rate rises, so will the concern. In comparison, the British estimate that fillings account for 16% of mercury emissions in the United Kingdom, where the cremation rate is greater than 70%. Clothing made of synthetic materials also puts toxic chemicals into the air when cremated.



Green burial avoids use of the formaldehyde and other toxic chemicals and avoids the energy consumption and emissions that result from cremation. Green burial containers are made of biodegradable materials. Green burial is growing in popularity throughout the country. A few funeral directors in Ohio have been certified as “green burial providers” by the Green Burial Council. This means that they use natural embalming chemicals and biodegradable

burial containers. There are many green burial sites in the U.K. and they are becoming more common in the U.S. Some traditional cemeteries are setting aside areas for green burial.

Unfortunately there is only one green cemetery in Ohio, Foxfield Preserve, in Wilmott. Instead of a traditional cemetery lawn, the 43-acre preserve is prairie and forest. Nature trails provide access to the site. There is no Ohio law that prohibits placing a casket directly in the ground, but most cemeteries require a vault to prevent the ground from settling above the casket. A vault is a sealed cement or metal box that contains the casket. It is supposed to protect the casket from ground water and prevent the escape of embalming fluids and body fluids. A few cemeteries allow a grave liner instead of a vault. A grave liner keeps the ground from sinking as the casket and body decompose, but is open at the bottom so that the remains can return to the earth.

There are some new environmentally friendly techniques that are gaining popularity in Europe. One of these is alkaline hydrolysis. By combining an alkali and heated water in a pressurized chamber the body is decomposed in three to four hours. The bone fragments are removed, processed and given back to the family just like cremated remains. A Columbus, Ohio, funeral home was the first in the US to offer this method, but was stopped by a court order. The Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors has said that alkaline hydrolysis is not an approved alternative method.

Another green option available only in Sweden and the United Kingdom is a process known as human composting. This method freeze-dries the body in liquid nitrogen, making the body very brittle. The body is pulverized. What is left is very similar to the remains from cremation.

The options for green burial are limited in Ohio, but you can make choices that take the environment into consideration. All funeral directors offer direct burial, which uses no toxic chemicals. You can choose a biodegradable burial container. Muslim and Jewish cemeteries and some other cemeteries allow grave liners instead of sealed vaults.

-Mark Binnig

Grave Technology



USA Today reports that new technology is invading the cemetery. A small square image known as a quick response or QR code can be affixed to tombstones. People can scan the QR code with their smartphones and be taken to a website relating to the deceased. The family can place the obituary, a photo gallery, letters and tributes on that website. Some enterprising people like to set up their own website while they are alive. That way, their life story gets told the way THEY want it told.

Body Donation for Use in Medical Education

Once, when delivering my 11-second elevator speech for the Memorial Society, my companion remarked she had it all planned, she would be giving her body to science. It almost seemed too simple, and I wondered how the body donation process worked.

It can, indeed, be an economical solution. Most larger cities, such as Cleveland, have a medical school, with an anatomy department, where there is a permanent need for a fresh supply of normal dead humans. CWRU's Medical School Department of Anatomy will collect the remains at no cost to the donor within a 75-mile radius of Cleveland and furnish and file an official Death Certificate. All of this is in accordance with the Ohio Anatomical Gift Law. The remains will eventually be cremated, again at no cost, and buried in a special grave at Lakeview Cemetery where a simple headstone reads: "They Gave in Death for Those in Life."

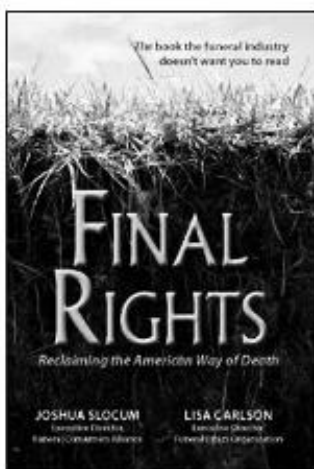
There are several issues that members should, however, bear in mind. First, the school will embalm the body. Second, they do not have to accept the body, and probably will not do so if any of the following applies:

- death by certain contagious diseases,
- organs have been removed as part of an organ donation program, except eyes,
- the person is obese or malnourished,
- death resulted from a disfiguring accident.

The other reservation one may have is that of death outside of the school's service area. Cleveland Memorial Society members, for example, are covered by the Funeral Consumer's Alliance umbrella, should their death occur in another state, via mutually agreed contracts with local funeral directors in those states. Full information about body donation is available at:

Case Western Reserve University
Department of Anatomy
216-368-3430, weekdays, 9-5.

Bill McCullam



Book Review: *Final Rights*

Those of you who heard Josh Slocum speak at last year's annual meeting know that he was collaborating with Lisa Carlson, author of the landmark book, *Caring for the Dead*. Josh and Lisa's book, *Final Rights: Reclaiming the American Way of Death*, was released this spring. In her preface Lisa writes, "*Final Rights* is a new book, not just an update to an older one. Josh Slocum, now the nation's foremost advocate for funeral consumer rights, has joined as coauthor, bringing with him his considerable experience and insights."

Final Rights describes the misdeeds and abuses of the funeral industry and offers good advice on dealing with funeral directors and cemeteries. It explains the Funeral Rule and the FTC's role in enforcement (or lack thereof). It gives information about green burials and it summarizes the issues involved in home funerals. Approximately half of the book is devoted to the funeral laws and requirements of each state.

Besides being packed with information, and in spite of its subject, this is a fun read. For example, Josh writes, "You're likely to pay \$700 to \$900 per day for a rental casket to hold a dead body. By comparison the most expensive room at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City cost \$559 per night and sleeps two living people Does your rental casket feature high-speed wireless Internet, mini-bar, maid service, and a marble bathroom?"

Final Rights can be purchased on the FCA website, www.funerals.org , or at your local or online bookstore.

Price Survey

Initial results of our recent price survey may be of interest to our members. Using the General Price List provided by each funeral home, we have attempted to determine prices for direct burial and direct cremation. Prices for direct burial include a container but not a vault or cemetery charges. Prices for direct cremation are based on the family supplying a container. If a container is supplied by Funeral Home, add \$0-\$3,995, depending on the funeral home.

Funeral Home	Direct Burial	Direct Cremation
DeJohn-Flynn-Mylott	3845	3070
Brown-Forward	4985	3031
DiCicco	2695	2095
Johnson-Romito	3725	2150
Berkowitz-Kumin-Bookatz	3203	2558
Jardine	3050	1800
McGorrey-Hanna	2965	1550
Ripepi	1995	1295
Tomon	1400	

Funeral Home	Direct Burial	Direct Cremation
Dicken	1190	850
McMahon-Coyne-Vitantonio		695
Cummings & Davis	1490	1145
Chambers	3345	1795
Brunner	1045	1495
A. Ripepi	3190	1195
Ferfolia	2708	2538
Average	2,722.07	1,817.47
Median	3,725.00	2,558.00



Will Your Obituary Appear (Free) in The Plain Dealer?

Yes

Head of State
 Star Athlete
 Ohio Member of Congress
 Famous Artist
 Media Superstar
 Fortune 500 Executive
 Royalty
 Notorious Criminal

Maybe

Controversial Oddball
 Famous Chef
 Best selling Author
 Judge
 Philanthropist
 Scandalous Lover
 General
 Famous Doctor

Buy a Death Notice

Politician
 Mafia Soldier
 Banker
 Computer Programmer
 Housewife
 Teacher
 Salesman
 Priest

Unless, of course, your manner of passing is remarkable, such as:

In 1673, **Molière** the French actor and playwright, died after being seized by a violent coughing fit, while playing the title role in his play *Le Malade imaginaire* (The Hypochondriac)

In 1940, **Marcus Garvey** died as a result of two strokes after reading a negative premature obituary of himself.

In 1982, **David Grundman** was killed near Lake Pleasant, Arizona while shooting at cacti with his shotgun. After he fired several shots at a 26 ft (8 m) tall Saguaro Cactus from extremely close range, a 4 ft limb of the cactus detached and fell on him, crushing him.

In 1993, **Garry Hoy**, a 38-year-old lawyer in Toronto, Canada, fell to his death on July 9, 1993, after he threw himself against a window on the 24th floor of the Toronto-Dominion Centre in an attempt to prove to a group of visitors that the glass was "unbreakable." The glass did not break, but popped out of the window frame.

Plain Dealer Obituary Information

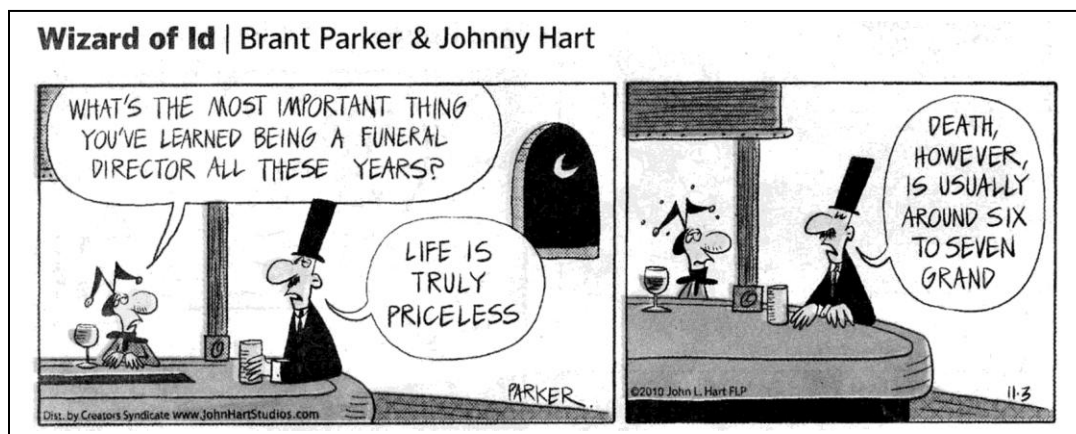
Hours: Monday – Friday 9 AM to 6 PM
Saturday – 12 noon to 6 PM
Sunday – 1 PM to 6 PM

Obituaries and Lodge notices: call: (216) 999-4860
Email: paidobits@plaind.com
In Memoriam, Card of Thanks: call: (216) 999-5555

Prices: \$45.00 for 6 lines without a photo
\$8.75 for each additional line
\$65.00 for 14 lines with a photo

Why Families Don't Talk About End-Of-Life Issues

- I'm leaving all these decisions to my children. They'll know what is best.
- My children know I love them. I don't need to discuss such things with them.
- Our family will have a funeral just like my mother's. It's expected in our family/neighborhood/church.
- Things will always work out for the best. What will be will be. It's in God's hands.
- My time has not yet come. This illness will pass and I'll think about it later.
- I don't want to talk about such sad things.
- I'm sure my father has years of living ahead. We'll face this when we're forced to. Every time I start to talk about my pain and wanting to end it all, the children shush me up and won't hear me out
- I don't care where my money goes after I'm gone. Let the law decide how it is distributed.



Our Generous Donors 2011

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	Elaine M. Kukawka		
	Jim LaRue		

Donations

Each year, we turn to our members for donations. Let's face it; it's been a bad year for the economy whether you are employed or retired. But think how badly your family would be hurt economically if they suddenly had to pay \$10,000 for a funeral !!

Think your \$10 doesn't mean much? Think again!! We can mail out 15 brochures for about \$10. But if you gave \$10 last year, can you give \$20 this year? If you can, then we can continue to serve our members. Maybe even do some advertising or more sponsorships!!

Please use the envelope included with this newsletter or fill out and send in the form below.

MY SPECIAL GIFT OF \$_____ IS ENCLOSED

Name_____

Address_____

Phone_____

My group would like to have a Memorial Society speaker. Call me at_____

Please return your donation and this tear-off slip to:

Cleveland Memorial Society
21600 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44122

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Compassion and Choices

We have just received the attractive *Compassion and Choices Magazine* which contains some inspiring stories of people who have scripted their own life. Like your memorial society, Compassion and Choices advocates pre-planning and pre-need discussion with family and friends concerning end-of-life decisions.

Visit their website at www.compassionandchoices.org.

They have a superb preplanning checklist entitled *The Good To Go Toolkit*.



Thank you, Jackie Stimpert, our Executive Secretary, for keeping our Memorial Society running smoothly. Jackie works with distraught people every day, providing information and comfort. Her dedication and enthusiasm makes the Cleveland Memorial Society one of the best in the country. She's the voice on the phone, the clerk at the ready, and the brains behind much of what we do.

Cleveland Memorial Society
21600 Shaker Boulevard
Cleveland, OH 44122

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www.clevememorialsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

These funeral directors are our contracted participating firms

**F. J. Corrigan
Burial & Cremation Services**
27099 Miles Road
Orange Village, OH 44022
440-349-1900

Fioritto Funeral Home
5236 Mayfield Road
Lyndhurst, OH 44124
440-442-5900

Dicken Funeral Home
323 Middle Ave.
Elyria, OH 44035
440-322-3224

**Busch-Boswell-Jones-Deck
Mortuary and Cremation
Service**
4334 Pearl Road
Cleveland, OH 44109
216-459-2660

**Maher-Melbourne Funeral
Home**
4274 Mayfield Road
South Euclid, OH 44121
216-382-4500

Malloy Memorial Service
1575 W. 117th Street
Cleveland, OH 44107
216-221-3380

Shapiro Funeral Services
27099 Miles Road
Orange Village, OH 44022-2130
440-498-1993

**Cummings & Davis Funeral
Home**
13201 Euclid Ave.
East Cleveland, OH 44112
216-541-1111

**Vitantonio & Son Funeral
Home**
6330 Center St.
Mentor, OH 44060
440-255-1655