

FUNERAL CONSUMER'S ALLIANCE OF SUNCOAST FLORIDA, INC.

Visit our NEW website www.FCASuncoastFL.com

P.O. BOX 15833 SARASOTA. FL 34277

Email FCASuncoastFL@gmail.com

941-953-3740

Christopher White, Editor

December, 2024

Help us celebrate at Our 53rd Annual Meeting **Friday, January 24th, 2024 2:00 PM**

Our Meeting will be held at Brewer and Sons Funeral Home. The address of the funeral home is 3328 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, FL. The business meeting will include the following:
Reports from the Secretary & Treasurer and a program featuring the owner, Barry Brewer.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Winter 2025

Happy Holidays. We are celebrating our 53rd year serving the Florida Suncoast communities. We're excited to hold the meeting in South Tampa to make it easier for our northern counties to participate. Please plan to join us at the annual meeting where we'll celebrate with some light refreshments, elect the next board and answer your questions, and remarks/questions with the owner of Brewer and Sons, Barry Brewer. Our by laws require annual election of officers and trustees. Inside this newsletter is a ballot for the board. Please complete it and return it to us, you can also vote by email or of course in person at the meeting. We continue our progress in getting valuable, useful information to you by publishing our newsletters twice a year, adding more content to our website at <http://www.FCASuncoastFL.com> and locating more participating providers. The local provider survey for 2021 is complete and posted on our website. We are working on a 2024 update to include our new merged Tampa Bay counties. Tucked inside this newsletter is a donation envelope. As we near the end of the tax year, this a great time to send a donation to your Alliance. We are all volunteers, but marketing and newsletters have a price. Thanks to all who have or will donate to our mission. Finally, a big thanks to our board members and trustees for the ideas they provide and contributions they make on your behalf.

Keith Miller – President

A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

Greetings Members,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your families well. We are looking forward to our 53rd Annual Meeting! We wish you all a Happy & Healthy 2025! The board of your Funeral Consumer's Alliance continues to meet quarterly and we continue to welcome new members and new board members. As always, we can use your help to share the benefits of belonging to our Alliance with your friends and families. For the 2024 Giving Challenge with the foundation match, we raised \$2984.88. Thanks to everyone who participated. Let us know if you would like extra brochures mailed to you or have anyone interested have them contact us. Current participating funeral providers are shown below. Contact us if you want to confirm the provider you have chosen or if you would like to change providers. As always make your choice of funeral provider based on what best fits your needs and **SHARE YOUR WISHES WITH YOUR LOVED ONES!** As the person who answers the phone and email correspondence, I'm often asked if my loved one had a pre-need contract, or in some cases what plan did they have? If you have a pre-need contract, please let us know so we can update your service record. We are here to help you and your family. We have a good supply of brochures and other informative pamphlets that can help in the planning process. **JOIN US!** We have room on our board. If you are interested in becoming a part of our board, contact us at 941-953-3740 or by email at FCASuncoastFL@gmail.com

Christopher White – Secretary

Saying Goodbye doesn't have to be so expensive or complicated, let FCA help you plan a dignified funeral

CURRENT PARTICIPATING FUNERAL PROVIDERS & PRICES

Your Traditions Cremation & Funeral Chapel - 2118 Constitution Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34231 941-921-4247
Direct Cremation with minimum container \$**\$1090.00, \$35 medical examiners fee is included for members of FCA *Prices subject to change **This is a price change from \$845

All Veterans All Families Funerals & Cremations – 7 South Lime Street, Sarasota, FL 34237 941-377-1060
Cremation \$795.00 plus \$35 medical examiners fee and death certificate for FCA members. *contact directly for prices on other services. *Prices subject to change

Maloney Funeral Home - 2401 Cattlemen Road., Sarasota, FL 34232, 941-759-3133. Family owned. Direct Cremation with minimum container \$1090.00, \$35 medical examiners fee is included for members of FCA. Death Cert \$10. *Prices subject to change

Brewer and Sons Funeral Home and Cremation - 3228 S Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa, FL 33629 813-835-4991
Direct Cremation \$950, Direct Burial \$1050. Many other discounted services for FCA members. See their GPL on our website for more details

A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

For the period July - November 2024, our Donations revenue totals \$1,577.00 and our Membership dues total \$320.00 for a grand total of \$2,097. Revenue for July-November 2023 was 1,355.00, this is an increase of \$742.00 from last year. Year-to-date revenue is \$7,666.96, compared to \$6,785.23 for 2023. This is an increase of \$881.73. Your Board has been working diligently to reduce our expenses without compromising our level of services. Expenses for this period were \$1,515.29 compared to \$4,109.06 for July-November 2023, a decrease of \$2,593.77. Year-to-date expenses are \$1,871.43, compared to \$6,848.86 for 2023. This is a decrease of \$4,977.43. We have a year-to-date surplus of \$5,795.92. I and the entire Board of Directors want to sincerely thank all of you who have donated to our organization over the past year, these contributions are essential to the ongoing longevity of our chapter.

Chuck Treadway – Treasurer

FCA National Policy Change

Recently, we were informed by FCA National of a policy change regarding our arrangements with local, family-owned funeral homes offering discounts to our members. FCA National's Board believes these "legacy" arrangements from our Memorial Society days distract from our legislative mission to affect change in Washington. They also believe that these arrangements present potential conflicts of interest, since we "police" the funeral industry and could be recommending a provider that has violated a state or federal regulation. And finally, they believe that price is not the only measure of a funeral. Our response to FCA National is below. We would like to hear from you if you feel we are on the right track or not?

The FCA Suncoast Florida (the only remaining active chapter in the state) Board of Directors strongly disagrees with the recent FCA National position on Funeral Home Discounts. The mission description included in a recent email is better suited to your board than ours. At our level we deal with individual families, not legislators. We have fulfilled the same mission for nearly 53 years, offering detailed information about the death industry in our service area and, yes, partnering with family-owned funeral homes that offer significant discounts to our members.

Should a partner funeral home fail to live up to our expectations, we will drop them and advise our membership. We recently dropped a provider that was bought out by SCI and no longer offered value or the service we expect for our members. We have a continuous feedback loop from our members. Additionally, all Funeral Homes, Cemeteries and Direct Disposers are regulated by the state. We have an established relationship with the state regulators and inform them of providers that violate state and federal laws.

None of our partner providers "push" unwanted products or services on our members. We also do not mention any membership reciprocity other than the ability to transfer membership to/from another affiliate.

We think you may be mistaken about the number of affiliates offering these arrangements. We plan to stay the course as we have for 53 years. The strength of FCA comes from the member chapters all across this country. Without us, FCA is just another non-profit trying to monitor the death industry remotely.

2024 NOMINEES FOR OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Keith Miller – Keith grew up in a military family (USMC). She moved a lot when she was young. Her parents retired to El Paso, TX where Keith graduated Texas Western College of Mines (renamed University of Texas El Paso) 1965 B.A. in Radio & Television / Minor in English / Speech. She taught in the El Paso schools for nearly 20- years. Moved to Sarasota in 1993 and has been active in business and civic activities. She has two children, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Keith has a Master's in Education from Lesley College. In retirement she enjoys golf, reading and volunteering. Keith joined the FCA board in 2017.

VICE PRESIDENT: Rich Gilbert - I am 74 years old, in good health (as far as I know), married to one woman for 54 years, raised two sons, and have eleven healthy grandchildren, now happily retired for almost six years. I was born in Iowa, grew up in Indiana, went to Michigan for college, got married, worked and raised our sons, always wanting to leave the cold. We finally moved to Florida in 2003. We joined FCA-Tampa Bay in 2017. I've been helping Sandra Elmore. She has been the driving force for years in FCA-Tampa Bay. I completed two years of college (engineering school) before forfeiting a degree to undertake familial responsibilities. I worked twenty-four-plus years for the City of Flint, Michigan, retiring in 1994. I was a real estate appraiser in the City Tax Assessor's office. After that I worked several years for a small non-profit Christian organization as the Business Director. After I rested a while, I needed a job, so I went to truck driving school and drove an eighteen-wheeler for the next fifteen-plus years, retiring in 2017. Rich joined the FCA Board in 2023.

TREASURER: Chuck Treadway – Chuck grew up in Miami, FL, after graduating he joined the Air Force Reserve, and then began his career with BellSouth/AT&T/Lucent Technologies. His career moved him to Atlanta GA area where he retired in 2000. He had two more careers as a project manager for a small software company, again retiring in 2008 and finally as a real estate appraiser, retiring in 2013. With his spouse, Ruth, they sold their home and became full time RV'ers. They spent the next 4 years traveling the country, a journey he will always treasure. They have visited almost every state in their RV and have seen so much of this amazing country. In 2016 they decided to return to Florida and chose to locate in Sarasota. They still travel in the RV when away from Sarasota during the summer and fall months. This will be Chuck's fifth year as Treasurer.

BOARD SECRETARY: Rosemary "Bo" Galford - Bo was born in Michigan and is a widow with two "over-the-hill" children. She migrated to the west coast, lived in San Francisco, Sonora, and Sequim. Then she headed to Seattle, returned to school, and received her MFA in Graphic Design at the University of Washington. She bartended at a wine bar in downtown Seattle, then went to work for a software company designing software manuals. Those were the days when software came in boxes. During a vacation in Hawaii, she and her family took scuba lessons, which provided a good reason to visit exotic dive spots. She retired to Sarasota to join her son and his best friend from high school where they opened and run a Scuba Center - - Florida Underwater Sports. This will be Bo's fourth year on the FCA Board.

BUSINESS SECRETARY: Colonel (Ret.) Christopher White – Was born in Columbus GA., but calls Sarasota, FL home after moving here when he was just a year old. He was commissioned in 1984 through Army ROTC at Eastern Oregon State College. During his nearly 28 year career, Chris served in ground and Air Cavalry, logistics and financial management assignments. Chris is a graduate of Eastern Oregon State College with a BS in Political Science, Campbell University – Masters in Business Administration, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College-Masters in Strategic Studies. In retirement, Chris joined the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Sarasota Manatee as the Vice-President in July 2014. Chris is married to the former Dianna L. Fischer of Ontario, Oregon (40 years) and they have two children, Corinne, 36 (Tampa. FL), and Miles, 30 (CPT, US Army, FT Lewis WA) and one grandchild, Neva, 3. This will be Christopher's 11th year on the FCA Board.

TRUSTEES

Rev. Donna Guillaume – I have the interest and background to be able to hopefully contribute to the continuity of this important organization. Besides raising a family, my main careers have been organist-choir director, Unitarian Universalist minister and real estate not-for-profit housing manager. I currently serve as the Dean and Chaplain of the American Guild of Organists chapter in St. Petersburg.

Brenda Gimán - Brenda was born and raised in central New Jersey, between Princeton and New Brunswick. Educated at Montclair University with a degree in Biology and later an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University. She worked for 32 years for a multinational pharmaceutical company, in production and research and development ending with a career in Quality and Compliance. Following early retirement, Brenda and her late husband, William, relocated to the Trilogy at Vistancia community in Peoria Arizona. Brenda served on the volunteer boards of several non-profits. This will be Brenda's third year as Trustee.

Need something? Want to help? Let us know by using the form below. Complete the form and return it to:

Funeral Consumer's Alliance of Suncoast Florida, Inc., P.O. Box 15833, Sarasota, FL 34277.

If you need additional information or have questions, call us at (941) 953-3740

NAME(S) _____

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

I WOULD LIKE _____ COPIES OF THE ALLIANCE BROCHURE FOR MY FRIENDS.

I WISH TO UPDATE MY RECORDS. PLEASE SEND ME A BLANK SERVICE RECORD FORM.

I WILL SERVE ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES. HAVE SOMEONE CALL ME AT: _____.

PLEASE ACCEPT MY DONATION OF \$_____ TO SUPPORT THE ALLIANCE.

Funeral Consumers Alliance
P.O. Box 15833
Sarasota, FL 34277

