



# *Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes*

## *Spring 2022 Newsletter*

www.fingerlakesfunerals.org • info@fingerlakesfunerals.org

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### **A Note from the Acting President by Donna Scott**

Greetings from what we hope is the tail end of COVID! This year the Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes will hold just a brief business meeting for our Annual Meeting. This means that we still need many of you members to “tune in” to our Zoom meeting for a few minutes to vote on our new members for the Board of Directors. The meeting is at 2 PM, Sunday, April 24, 2022.

For many years we have had speakers at our Annual Meetings who have addressed several interesting topics, but this past year has been a challenge for some of us ever-aging Board members, so we do not have a speaker this April. For personal reasons, our President, Diana Nathanielsz, had to step down; I assumed the office of Acting President on top of serving as Corresponding Secretary. Luckily, former Treasurer, Carol Hardy, has been helping me with the latter job. Apparently, I was not busy enough, though. The stars aligned to show me “the perfect” cottage at Kendal at Ithaca, this year, instead of next year, as planned. So, I have had to drop everything to finish downsizing and pack to move me, my belongings, and the cats in early June.

Our longest serving Board member, then Advisor, David Bandler has stepped down, as has Advisor, Jack Booker. We thank them both for their thoughtful service to FCAFL. Several of us have worked hard to find new Board members, though, so we keep chugging along! The biographies for our new Board members follow.

Please attend our Zoom Annual Meeting at 2 PM, Sunday, April 24, 2022 – we need a quorum in order to vote in our new Board members. We will work to provide a good speaker in 2023!

To join, go to our website: [www.fingerlakesfunerals.org](http://www.fingerlakesfunerals.org). On the homepage under the title “Annual FCAFL Board Meeting,” you will find the link to the Zoom meeting.

### **A Bit of History and What We Do Today by Angela Mennitto**

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes, founded in 1958 as the Ithaca Memorial Society, has changed over the years. Originally focused primarily on the financial aspects of funeral planning, Ithaca Memorial Society members received discounts on services at participating funeral homes. As the funeral industry changed, this was no longer a viable model, and we moved away from it in 2010.

Today, we are a member of the [Funeral Consumers Alliance](#), a federation of nonprofit consumer information societies across the U.S. Our mission is to provide the public with unbiased information about funeral planning, practices, and costs. This includes:

- producing a biennial price survey of area funeral homes to allow cost comparison for services (they can vary widely from one funeral home to the next);
- offering funeral planning seminars for groups;
- helping individuals needing reliable information about funeral matters;
- providing information on our website about a variety of funeral planning topics;
- supporting legislation that benefits funeral consumers, and opposing legislation designed to benefit funeral businesses but not consumers.

#### **What you can do...**

Many of our members have been with us since we were the Ithaca Memorial Society and have paperwork tucked away that still references our old model. Recently several family members contacted

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# Helping Others Through Organ and Tissue Donation

Today in the United States, there are more than 113,000 men, women and children on an organ transplant waiting list. Nearly 9,000 are waiting in New York State, with almost 600 from our region alone. Someone is added to the national waiting list every ten minutes and, sadly, 20 people die each day before an organ becomes available. One donor can help save the lives of up to 8 people through organ donation, provide sight to two people through cornea donation, and improve the lives of nearly 75 more through tissue donation.

## Why is it important to decide and talk about organ donation?

Organ, eye and tissue donation is an end-of-life option that everyone should decide upon. Making your decision now means your family won't have to make it for you later. It only takes a few minutes to enroll online in the New York State Donate Life Registry. Regardless of whether you chose to register as a donor or not, telling your family what your wishes are will give them peace of mind.

## FACTS ABOUT ORGAN DONATION

- Anyone age 16 or older can enroll in the NYS Donate Life Registry at [www.donatelife.ny.gov/](http://www.donatelife.ny.gov/) register. There is no upper age limit to registering as an organ donor.
- Don't assume you aren't healthy enough to donate. Health conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension, do not prohibit someone from registering as a donor.
- Traditional organ donation requires a person to be in the hospital and on a ventilator when they are pronounced dead. Tissue donation may be possible if the donor dies in a non-hospital setting.
- Medical professionals and tests will determine what organs and tissues can be donated at the time of death.
- The doctors and nurses involved in life-saving care are separate from the medical professionals who perform organ transplants.
- Only authorized organ and tissue recovery specialists (not doctors or nurses in the hospital) have access to the confidential donor registries. A person's registration status is only checked at the time of death.
- Enrolling in the NYS Donate Life Registry is the best place to document your wishes regarding donation.

- Tell your family what your wishes are regarding organ donation.
- Major religions support an individual's choice to be an organ donor.
- Final burial wishes can be honored after donation

## HOW TO REGISTER AS AN ORGAN DONOR

There are several ways to enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry. Regardless of which method you choose, the information is sent to the state's organ, eye and tissue donor registry database. Signing the back of your license is not enough to ensure your wishes are known.

- **Online:** New York State residents can sign up at [www.donatelife.ny.gov](http://www.donatelife.ny.gov). Registering only takes a few minutes.
- **DMV:** Check the "New York State Organ and Tissue Donation" box when applying for, or renewing, a Learner's Permit, Driver's License or Non-Driver's ID.
- **Voter Registration Form:** Check the "New York State Organ and Tissue Donation" box on the voter registration form.
- **New York State of Health – Health Insurance Exchange:** Residents applying for or renewing health insurance benefits through the state may register as an organ, eye and tissue donor.
- **Don't reside in New York?** Go to <https://www.organdonor.gov/> to find out how to register as a donor in your state.

*This information is from The Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network*

## A Bit of History and What We Do Today

*CONTINUED from Page 1*

us to learn more about their loved one's wishes for their funeral. They assumed that we maintain that information, which we do not.

All of our members should have a Funeral Planning Form that outlines their preferences for the disposition of their remains (cremation, burial – green or traditional, donation), their funeral ceremony, and their preferred funeral establishment on the front page, and the basic information required for a death certificate on the back.

Please share this information with loved ones and replace older information that may be on file. The insert in this newsletter is the Funeral Planning Form.

## Biographies of Board Member Candidates

**Maureen Kelly** brings more than 25 years experience as a not for profit healthcare program manager and senior leader. Maureen's career has included teaching, training, instructional design and building community programs to serve typically underserved communities. Maureen was the primary caregiver for both her parents through lengthy illnesses and was present as each died. Navigating those discussions, decisions, and learning has lead to her deep interest in being a part of creating tools and resources related to dying with dignity, planning for a good death with the living, and caring for self as many care for others. She lives in Ithaca with her partner of 27 years, together they love their very energetic Red Heeler, Rosie, and 27 tropical fish.

**Gary Reinbolt** grew up in Buffalo, NY and studied at SUNY Fredonia as Music major. After becoming disillusioned with that course of study, he spent the next 40 years in public broadcasting in various parts of the country as an engineer, producer/director, development officer and administrator, with a six year tenure as CEO for WSKG. Gary's experience with nonprofits include sitting on numerous grants review panels, a stint as Executive Director for The History Center of Tompkins County, and board membership for WSKG in Binghamton, the Binghamton Philharmonic, The Imaginarium, Music's Recreation, and the Kitchen Theatre Company.

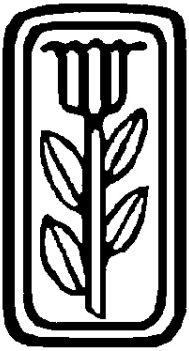
**Patricia Mason** has worked in emergency management/emergency preparedness for 25 years. As part of that work, she often focused on mass fatalities, cold storage of bodies, and working with coroners and funeral homes. She also spent many years working with organizations to provide information and forms on Health Care Proxy, Living Wills, Organ Donations, pre-planning and the like. Patricia has a great interest in Death with Dignity. She presently works for Tompkins County Public Health Department as the Preparedness Coordinator. Pat is interested in the important topics covered by FCAFL, subjects that she says many shy away from. She looks forward to learning more about burials, especially, green burial, funeral and memorial planning, body donation, and different customs and religions, as they relate to funeral and burial rituals. She has three grown children and 12 grandchildren. She and her husband live in Groton with their cat and five hens.

### ***Donations gratefully received***

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louise Pier Bement <i>in memory of</i> my twin sister, Laura Pier Smith</li> <li>• Carolyn &amp; Anatol Eberhard <i>in memory of</i> Donna Bergmark</li> <li>• Elizabeth Einstein <i>in memory of</i> Nicki R. Palmer</li> <li>• Nancy T. Gabriel <i>in honor of</i> Barry Adams</li> <li>• Sally McConnell Ginet &amp; Carl Ginet <i>in memory of</i> Tom Reimers</li> <li>• Beverly Hammons <i>in memory of</i> Norma Helsper</li> <li>• Maureen Kelly <i>in memory of</i> Bill &amp; Kathy Kelly</li> <li>• John J. &amp; Kathleen Kramer <i>in memory of</i> J. Michael Lowe</li> <li>• Rhoda Linton <i>in memory of</i> Nina Linton</li> <li>• Ann S. McAdams <i>in memory of</i> Alan &amp; Lee McAdams</li> <li>• Christine A. Ogden <i>in memory of</i> John D. Ogden</li> <li>• Joel Rabinowitz <i>in memory of</i> Jane Charles</li> <li>• Rose G. Seely <i>in memory of</i> Kenneth L. Smith</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gayleen S. Austen</li> <li>Carol A. Burnett</li> <li>Roger K. Cowdery</li> <li>Catherine S. Crymes</li> <li>Janet Desch</li> <li>Susan Fast</li> <li>George &amp; Kristina Finley</li> <li>Danny Fox</li> <li>Francoise P. Gebhart</li> <li>Greensprings Natural Cemetery Assoc., Inc.</li> <li>Frances Helmstadter</li> <li>Jean W. Jagendorf</li> <li>Rosalind Kenworthy</li> <li>Judith G. Koch</li> <li>Donald H. Lein</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lynn Bradley Leopold</li> <li>Jean N. Locey</li> <li>Lodewijk &amp; Beatrice Magre'</li> <li>Daniel P. Loucks</li> <li>Lois Lounsbery</li> <li>Patricia Mason</li> <li>Adrienne McNair &amp; Josie Zanfordino</li> <li>Hermogenes J. Mecnas, MD</li> <li>Loyd E. Powell</li> <li>Richard E. Rosenbaum &amp; Jane Marsh Dieckmann</li> <li>Mary W. Wright</li> <li>Yohko Tsuji</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

**Donations received 9/22/21 – 3/12/22**

***Sincere thanks to all our donors. We couldn't do it without you!***



**Funeral Consumers Alliance  
of the Finger Lakes**  
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**The Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes, Inc.**, founded in 1958 as the Ithaca Memorial Society, is a non-profit, tax-exempt, public-service organization that promotes advance planning of funeral arrangements and consumer education and protection with respect to funeral-related issues. Membership is free and open to all. Volunteers provide all services and programs. A Board of Directors is elected by the members. The FCAFL is supported entirely by donations and is a member of the national Funeral Consumers Alliance, Inc., which has more than 80 affiliates. This Newsletter is published twice a year and is freely available. **Check out our website: [fingerlakesfunerals.org](http://fingerlakesfunerals.org) AND “LIKE” us on Facebook**

### **The Board of Directors**

Donna Scott, *acting president  
& corresponding secretary*  
Bronwyn Mohlke,  
*recording secretary*  
Joel Rabinowitz, *treasurer*  
Carol Hardy  
Deborah Harper  
Angela Mennitto

Tim Mount  
Diana Nathanielsz

### **Advisors:**

Barry Adams  
*Recently stepped-down:*  
David Bandler  
Jack Booker

### **Ways FCAFL helps the public**

Those with questions about funeral planning can talk to an FCAFL volunteer by phone (607-273-8316) or by email [info@fingerlakesfunerals.org](mailto:info@fingerlakesfunerals.org) or go to: [fingerlakesfunerals.org](http://fingerlakesfunerals.org)

### **FCAFL presentations**

Volunteers can give Zoom presentations to groups of 10 or more people. Presentations include information on funeral planning and price comparisons.





**Information for Death Certificate**

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Military service \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of service \_\_\_\_\_ Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_

Hispanic origin? ☐ yes ☐ no. If yes, country or ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Race \_\_\_\_\_ Education: highest grade or degree \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security no. \_\_\_\_\_ Marital status \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse (name) \_\_\_\_\_

My occupation before retirement \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of business/industry \_\_\_\_\_

Name &amp; locality of firm \_\_\_\_\_

Father's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's maiden name \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Space below for additional instructions.

Keep this form where it can be easily found.  
Give copies to those who will be responsible for your arrangements.