



Board of Trustees

2006 Term

Alan Bayer,
Isabel Berney
Darrel Clowes

2007 Term

Harriett Cooper
Dick/Cynthia Luke
Crosby Houston

2008 Term

Marcia Bailey
Gary Schroeder
Jenny Schwanke

Officers

President: Marcia Bailey
V. President: Alan Bayer
Secretary: Isabel Berney
Treasurer: Darrel Clowes

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Crematory survey completed

Cremation is growing in popularity both nationally and in our area. Our latest survey on crematories is ready for distribution. See the enclosed full report. All funeral homes offer a price for direct cremation which in our area ranges from \$480-\$1,770. A few funeral homes have their own crematory, but most contract for this service. Our survey contacted only the actual crematory facilities. If you care where the cremation takes place, be sure to inquire with the funeral home of your choice if there is onsite service or if another facility is used.

Volunteer members called on each crematory to obtain the

information for our survey. One crematory, Sherwood Memorial Park, does not deal directly with the public. It serves only funeral homes. The other crematories work with other funeral homes as well as dealing directly with the public.

The lowest price cremation in our area is handled by a funeral home with no crematory. Price isn't the only consideration when selecting direct cremation, but it is one factor that informed consumers want to know. Check our funeral home survey to compare the prices of all cremation options.

Executive Board elects officers

The executive board elected officers at its October meeting. The officers for the coming year are Marcia Bailey, president; Alan Bayer, vice-president; Isabel Berney, secretary; and Darrel Clowes, treasurer. The Board meets monthly to carry on our business.

Remember that Board meetings are open and members and friends are invited to attend. The November Board meeting will be on November 17 at 1:30, at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Prices Fork and Toms Creed Road, Blacksburg.

Bioethics teacher speaks at annual meeting



The annual meeting featured Dr. Bob Benoit, a Professor Emeritus in Biology at Virginia Tech who teaches a course in bioethics. Dr. Benoit spoke on ethical decisions at the end of life and what we have learned from Terri Shaivo. After a lively discussion, the business meeting ensued. Jenny Schwanke was elected to the Board for a three-year term.

Jenny is a teacher at the Children's Garden School in Blacksburg. A fairly recent member, Jenny brings a fresh eye and new insight to the Board. Marcia Bailey and Gary Shroeder were re-elected to serve three-year terms.



"Annual report was passed out at the annual meeting."

The annual report, enclosed here, was passed out to attendees at the meeting. We have had an active and productive year. Please remember the list of programs that we can deliver to community groups and religious organizations. We can tailor a program specifically to the audience

and we are glad to mail our program flyer to anyone interested.

Here are topics that we have ready to go:

- Comparison of prices and services of the 27 funeral homes in our five county area.
- Alternative funeral practices
- Non-traditional choices for body disposition
- Green burial
- Why I want to die from cancer, views from a former hospice nurse
- The Funeral Consumers Alliance movement
- Body and organ donation
- Preplanning, not pre-paying your final arrangements
- Death away from home
- When someone you care about is grieving
- Death Outside the Box – Virginia laws and caring for your own
- Surveys of area crematories, cemeteries, and funeral homes
- Memorial societies and the funeral consumers alliance movement
- How to select a funeral home

Are you the next Terri Shaivo? We hope not! Fill out an advanced directive – found in the plastic freezer pouch provided to all members. Additional forms are available on request, either printed or in electronic format.

Scattering ashes in Colorado

This is how one of our members dealt with a difficult situation. Don Johnson, from Critz, VA, gathered with his family in western Colorado where they scattered his sister's ashes this summer on Grand Mesa. He wrote this for the occasion.

Dearest Marilyn, loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, niece, cousin, friend and neighbor; as you scattered love to all you met and knew regardless of their worthiness, as you distributed care throughout your life without discrimination, as you planted seeds of example and thoughtfulness, as you offered of yourself unselfishly;

Now, may your journey continue, just as your spirit and essence will continue to comfort, guide and join us. No thoughts, no words spoken,

no actions done, nothing will suffice to contain the living, loving, caring totality of you, your life, your love.

We offer up now your physical remains to the grandeur of these mountains you so loved, the rich soil of this earth, the limitless winds of the sky, the wonder of songbirds, the beautiful wild flowers in this place, the wild free creatures that roam here, and the individual and common memories of you that will continue to reside in us all.

We will be ever grateful for you and for your presence in our lives.

Marilyn Johnson Graves (October 27, 1941 - February 13, 2005)



*"I would be glad to have it shared with others through the newsletter."
Don Johnson*

Funeral Home survey begins again

We begin work on our biennial survey of funeral homes. This is one of the most popular pieces of information we produce. If you would like to help with the survey, we are always looking for people to call on funeral homes and request the General Price List. Funeral Homes are required to give the price list to anyone who makes that request in person. About two-thirds of the homes honor our request by mail, but we always have some homes that require a personal visit. This takes less than an hour and is immensely helpful. It is also an opportunity for us to build good will. When funeral homes realize that we are ordinary citizens making a simple request, they are often very friendly and helpful.

If you are willing to help, please call 540-953-5589 or send email to fcavbr@bev.net. We can accommodate your schedule.

**Funeral
Consumers
Alliance of the
Virginia Blue Ridge**

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Blacksburg VA
24062-0082

PHONE:
540-953-5589

E-MAIL:
fcavbr@bev.net

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.funerals.org/fcavbr

Berney appointed to state Cemetery Board

Isabel Berney, a founding member and current secretary of our executive board, has been appointed to the Virginia Cemetery Board by Governor Mark Warner. This state regulatory board is charged with the regulation of commercial cemeteries. Only about 10% of cemeteries are regulated in Virginia and it is this board that oversees them. Private cemeteries, church cemeteries, and municipal cemeteries are not regulated by the state. The Board also oversees pre-need burial contracts and perpetual care trust fund accounts. Isabel's term is for 4 years. She reports, "I am looking forward to serving on this board. I think I can represent the interests of citizens."