**Funeral Consumer Alliance** 1 2 **Board of Trustees Meeting** June 4, 2011 3 4 Doubletree Reid Park, Tucson, AZ 5 6 The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by President Laurie Powsner. 7 Also in attendance were: Ruth Bennett, Jim Bates, Rodger Ericson, Joyce Mitchell, Nancy 8 Petersen, Don Mertic, Barbara VanDroof and David Morrison and Executive Director, Josh 9 Slocum. 10 Minutes of previous meetings and teleconference meetings were approved without objection. 11 12 Executive Director's Report – June is the formal release date for *Final Rights*. About 210 copies 13 have already been sold. FCA has put together a combination of the individual state chapters of 14 Final Rights and the Before I Go (BIG) kit and most new orders for the BIG kit request the state 15 chapter version. 16 17 It was suggested that everyone ask affiliates to put info about the book in their newsletters and to 18 order extra copies to give to hospice organizations and ask local libraries to buy the book. It was 19 suggested that Laurie send an email to all affiliates urging everyone to buy the book and state 20 that the front half should be required reading 21 22 23 Laurie is updating the BIG kit. Nancy, Joyce and Barbara have volunteered to work with Laurie to update and reformat it. 24 25 26 Several items were added to the agenda: - Dishes to Die For project - Ruth, Nancy and David 27 - Online database for affiliate use – Jim 28 29 - Sales idea – Joyce - Retail vaults – David 30 - Cremation problems on GPLs – David 31 32 - October Board meeting – Josh - Annual Affiliate Survey – Josh 33 Approved without objections 34 35 Financial Report – There was a discussion of some line items of the Income and Expense Budget 36 vs Actual 37 38 It was mentioned that the telecommunications numbers haven't dropped as much as predicted. 39 Laurie has volunteered to purchase an answering machine to facilitate transfer away from the 40 #800 phone number and she will coordinate that with Josh. 41 42 Treasurer's Report – The market is up 37.2% on American Funds account and up 26.9% in the 43 Vanguard Fund. Be it resolved that: That American Funds and Vanguard Funds be directed 44 to send copies of all reports to David Morrison, Treasurer of Funeral Consumer Alliance at 45

600 A Eden Road, Lancaster, PA 17601. David moved the resolution and Don seconded. It passed without objection.

David feels the need to rebalance our investment accounts and will work with the Financial Committee to facilitate the rebalancing. Formal Board policy is to have our assets as follows: 0%-50% in equities, 40%-60% in fixed income, cash 0%-10%, real estate, 0%-10%. Our endowment assets are to be allocated as follows: Capitol campaign net assets of \$28,000 cannot be spent (although interest may be spent), Board restricted endowment of \$56,000, other endowment – equities,50%-75%, fixed income, 10%-50%, cash, 0%-10%, real estate, 10%-20%. David will write a new policy for determining just how decisions of the Investment Committee will be implemented.

<u>Direct Mail</u> – 31 affiliates have agreed to lend us their lists resulting in 44 mailed appeals (10 have done it twice and 3 have done it three times). Several affiliates share their lists annually and we hope that others will follow suit as they come to see that it does not have a negative effect on their own fundraising and, in fact, often improves it. Josh, Laurie, Ruth, Don and Rodger agreed to help with this project.

Affiliate Dues – 21 affiliates have voluntarily jumped straight to 15% dues and several of those gave significantly more in the form of gifts. Three affiliates paid at 12% and nine did not return the dues worksheet with their dues and Rodger, Josh and Laurie are follwing up. In many cases there is a problem with volunteers and communication to affiliate board members. Sherry is now sending dues notices to the Treasurer, President, Secretary and VP (also to ED where there is paid staff) about how to figure the amounts due to FCA. Sherry is following up with the several affiliates who are late. Rodger is following up with the few that are behind or out of compliance with dues.

<u>Affiliate Relations</u> – Laurie proposed changing the current Affiliate Relations project to more of a triage mode with every Board member committing to calling 12 affiliates twice a year with a short, friendly check-in conversation, rather than the 26 AR questions. If there are problems with an affiliate, then those folks will be passed on to Rodger and Joyce for more intensive TLC and coaching.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12N and reconvened at 1:27P.

Ruth introduced 2 guests from FCA of Southern AZ, Mary Koopman, VP and Dawn Jacobs, ED.

## 2012 Biennial Planning – Josh

 The FCASAZ will help with logistics such as receiving shipped materials, looking for local talent, being on-the-ground research sources, helping develop program with some suggestions for local speakers. Mary Koopman agreed to be the local contact for the Logistics Committee and Dawn will solicit volunteers and work with marketing. Both Dawn and Mary have lived in the area and will develop outside activities to offer to attendees. The Program Committee is Nancy, Ruth and Rodger.

Ruth will work on fundraising at the banquet including a silent auction, affiliate awards, etc. 92

Suggestions for the Biennial included giving stickers to first time attendees and maybe other 93

stickers to signify 15% affiliates, individual pledgers, affiliate big gifters, how many biennial 94 95

attendances, etc.

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Joyce, Don, Jim and Ruth have terms ending 2012. Jim is term limited so cannot run again in 2012. The Elections Committee Board member for 2012 is Barbara and we will ask Valerie Slocum of FCA of Princeton and Rod Stout of People's Memorial Association to be the nonboard members of the committee. Nominations need to be completed by October 1, 2011 and

submitted to the national office. 101

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Ruth will finish the Survey Monkey asking Have you attended a Biennial in the past?, Are you planning to attend JUN 7-10 2012 Biennial?, If not, why not?, What have you liked from past Biennials?, What would you like to see in the 2012 Biennial? Josh will send it out to past attendees and current/past affiliate board members.

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Legal – The Batesville Casket suit is under appeal.

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- 110 Legislative – The Bereaved Consumers Bill of Rights Act has been reintroduced with Rep.
- Bobbie Rush as the sponsor. We need a senator to sponsor in the Senate. We may get more 111
- traction with this bill when the 60 Minutes piece airs, perhaps this fall. 112

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114 Returning to Affiliate Relations – (see AR report) The Nevada affiliate is having trouble and sent out a "we're drowning" letter. They are having a special meeting on June 18, 2011. Joyce will 115 follow up to see how we can help. 116

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Our Bylaws require that we survey affiliates on their activities, finances, board members, 118 membership and more. We did not send one last year but Laurie and Josh have revised it and 119 120 Josh will get it sent and Jim will analyze the results and report back to the board.

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Dishes to Die For is in process. There will be a blurb in the current FCA newsletter to solicit recipes to be sent to Nancy, Ruth, Nancy, David and Joyce will meet at the October meeting to organize it and make the order.

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Joyce submitted a proposal for selling license plate holders with a humorous pro-FCA message. Josh will research how unrelated business income will be treated by the IRS to make sure there will not be a negative tax impact.

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Online Database – Jim proposed that we make MySQL available to all affiliates to manage their 130 databases. He has purchased www.FCAdata.org for affiliates to use and it will include website, 131 database(s) and more for \$4.95 a month. Jim will work with Joyce on a test of the UT data before 132 rolling it out to all affiliates. The Biennial will be a great stage to roll this out. 133

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The Board agreed that Board meeting minutes be posted on the FCA website and links sent to 135 present affiliate boards and other interested parties. Minutes will be sent to FCA Board members 136 within 72 hours of adjournment and any changes or amendments must be made within one week 137

of adjournment. Anyone not requesting a change or clarification is presumed to approve of the meeting.

Ruth pointed out that it appears that traveling to Burlington for the OCT meeting is expensive and we will discuss the possibility of moving the meeting to a less expensive destination this evening and make a decision on Sunday.

Laurie mentioned that the American Library Association has a nationwide summer theme each year and the theme for 2013 is *Under the Ground* which seems to be a natural for us! Affiliates can be encouraged to propose books or films to their local libraries.

The meeting recessed at 5P for dinner at Ruth's home.

## 5 June

Meeting reconvened at 1:10P

David presented the newly written Investment Policy of the FCA. David moved *that the Board adopt the new policy*. It passed without objection. The Investment Policy will be shared with all members of the Finance Committee.

There was a discussion of the apparent restraint of trade regarding sales of vaults directly to consumers. Josh feels that a possible suit is a non-starter.

David is concerned that quotes from FDs over the phone are inaccurate and misleading. Josh says that since state laws are so different it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the FTC to prescribe exactly what a direct cremation price quote by phone must include. Josh's suggestion is that FCA take on a complete re-write of the Funeral Rule. Ruth moved *that Josh and the Legal Committee be directed to completely rewrite the Funeral Rule to present to the Spring 2012 Board for approval prior to submission to the FTC.* David seconded. Motion passed with no objection.

Jim brought up that funeral homes will often put their logos and contact info into obituaries that families are paying for. In other words, families are paying for the funeral home advertising. In Texas, families are paying between 1-2 million dollars in advertising just in Texas for funeral home advertising without families realizing it. The FCA in Texas has asked the FTC for a ruling on the legality of this and will report back to the board. Jim suggests that other affiliates check Statement of Goods and Services from the funeral home to see if families are paying for the total column inches, including logos. Jim asks that people send research to him.

179 <u>Biennial Program – The Board spent an hour discussing possible programs for the Biennial.</u>

Please see the attached list.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35P.