



Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central New York, Inc.

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WINTER 2021

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Jenifer Breyer

Welcome to our FCA of CNY winter newsletter. We are dedicating this issue to Jae Evangelisti, a long time, loyal and energetic member who helped us become who we are today. We lost Jae last May, and Board Member Dr. Joel Potash has written a tribute to him. We have set up a memorial fund to continue Jae's work.

As we emerge from our foxholes, the toll the pandemic has taken hits us in the face. Even for those of us who work with end-of-life realities on a daily basis, this is something new. The COVID-19 crisis was confronted and dealt with admirably, but we are learning it may be only one of many, and the challenge of carrying on will ask more of us than we anticipated.

We at FCA of CNY, like other FCAs, learned to live and work remotely. We did, with great reluctance, not host booths at some senior fairs and the Westcott Street Cultural Fair. This hurt, but our active membership is of an advanced age, and we believe in "an abundance of caution."

Mid October, we were able at last to host a table at Senator John Mannion's Senior Fair, fully vaccinated, masked, spread out in the larger-than-life SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College. It was amazing and worth the wait.

Also, FCA National, led by Executive Director Joshua Slocum, set a stunning example by hosting its full three-day virtual biannual conference October 15 – 17. Subjects ranged from organic reduction to veteran's burial benefits, tax-sheltering funeral
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

In Remembrance of Jae Evangelisti

BY JOEL POTASH

My friend and neighbor, Jae Evangelisti, died recently. Jae and Peg, his wife, have been FCA supporters for quite a while. Jae called me Dr. J. I called him Dr. Jae. I met Jae and Peg before they moved onto Edgehill Rd. through my across-the-street neighbors.

Jae was a big man and he loved big equipment as a builder/contractor. You might see him barreling down our street with a pay loader, pushing snow. After the great Labor Day storm knocked down most of my 100 or so year old pines and leaned one of them on my roof, Jae appeared with a cherry picker to move it off the roof. I think the cherry picker spent the winter on my front lawn.

Jae did some work on my house. He was a perfectionist, and loved restoring old houses. The little ledges between my first and second stories are now lined with copper to prevent the wood from rotting.

And remember to take care of yourselves and others as we face together this international health crisis. One day Jae and I rode down Erie Boulevard in his giant scoop to the Soldiers and Sailors monument. He dug a trench around the monument and we planted many hundreds of daffodils. I have no idea whether he got permission to do this from the city. The daffodils were a sight to behold in the spring. But like Jae, they are no longer. When the new bicycle path was made, the periphery of the monument was paved over.

Jae and I both liked to talk a lot, often at the same time, often at neighborhood watch meetings. We sometimes took opposite sides on issues. At some point I stopped going to those meetings (CONT. ON PAGE 2)

because, between the two of us, it was hard for others to get in a word edgewise.

Jae was always dropping off medical supplies and medicines from his challenge with diabetes. He knew they would help some uninsured people at the free clinic I attended. Our latest difference of opinion involved a proposed housing project in the field behind our houses. I learned from Jae what it means to be part of a community, as he explained his stance.

So, Dr. Jae, RIP. Things will be too quiet on Edgehill Rd. without you. And thanks for your great send off at Thornden Park. Community!

Current Price Guide is Available

You can view the current price survey of local funeral homes at our website (fcacny.org) or request a printed copy. The survey lists the costs of basic funeral services based on each establishment's General Price List. You can also see a more detailed breakout of costs by going to the funeral home's website. Not all have those prices on their website, but many do. Our national FCA is working toward requiring that prices be displayed on each website.

Special thanks to the board members who worked to create this valuable asset:

Cory Kinane, Diane Case, Robert Sarason, Joel Potash, Lanny Freshman, Joyce Homan.

As you know, your membership in FCA of CNY is lifetime, although we do appreciate contributions. We have found the cost of printing and mailing our twice-yearly newsletter to be very costly. In the future we will publish our newsletters online only (fcacny.org), UNLESS YOU REQUEST A HARD COPY OR AS AN ATTACHMENT TO AN EMAIL. You can let us know your decision by sending us an email (fcacny@gmail.com) or old-fashioned letter/postcard to: PO Box 67, Dewitt, NY.

Please help us conserve money, paper, and energy, and keep our membership fee low. Accept our appreciation.

**Who You Gonna Call?
By Diane Case**

Well not you, but the person you have chosen to make your final arrangements after death.

The New York State Department of Health Bureau of Funeral Directing has an easy to fill out two page form. Its title is "Appointment of Agent to Control Disposition of Remains." (Quite a title). It provides space for you to appoint a person and their contact information. This is followed by specific instructions that you want carried out. A space is provided to check off if you have a pre-funded pre-need agreement with a funeral firm.

The second page is to list name and contact information for a second and third person, should the initial person(s) not be able to do it.

Your signature and date in the presence of two witnesses is required. That is it.

You may be thinking my spouse/partner, dear friend will take care of me. However, with accidents and our current pandemic, that may not be possible. There may be several family members and friends all with differing ideas, each believing they are certain about what you wanted. This form provides several people to be called who know what you want. Sharing your wishes with family and friends as well as with who you have chosen will hopefully lessen or avoid hurt feelings at this stressful time.

Sometimes this information is in wills or legal documents that may be less accessible.

A copy of this form is available on our website @ fcacny.org.

Please join me in filling out this form to make life a little less stressful for our survivors.

FCA of CNY BOARD

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CONTINUATION OF PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

prepayments, contract funeral home discounts, alkaline hydrolysis, newsletter fundraising and Jewish funeral traditions. Fortunately, FCA National has risen to the challenge of information exchange utilizing online resources, and all of the above presentations are now available at its website (www.funerals.org). Talk about a sharing gesture . . .! All videos are available for purchase for online viewing. Visit funerals.org/store, and scroll to “videos.” You’ll find the conference videos and more.

We are blessed with two “new” Board members. Read their profiles in the next column. Remember, we are always interested in adding to the Board, so be in touch if you can afford a meeting in person or via Zoom every other month. The next meeting is Wednesday, December 8, at 6:30 p.m. We look for folks with related specialties who are willing to attend fairs and other informational gatherings and/or to help us answer questions from those who call us with questions.

Do check in on our website (fcacny.org), which is full of information including past newsletters and the latest price guide.

And remember to take care of yourselves and others as we face together this international health crisis.

Note to self:

None of us are getting out of here alive, so please stop treating yourself like an after-thought. Eat the delicious food. Walk in the sunshine. Jump in the ocean. Say the truth that you're carrying in your heart like hidden treasure. Be silly. Be kind. Be weird.

There's no time for anything else.

Nanea Hoffman, *Sweatpants & Coffee*

Hospice of Central NY and Hospice of the Finger Lakes

November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. This year, the theme is “Meeting You Where You Are”. At Hospice, this theme is always relevant as we work with patients and their families in all types of setting, but it reigns especially true this past year given Covid-19 and all its challenges it’s put on our Hospice community. Throughout the month we will be talking about Hospice, why it is important, and where to go should you have questions.

PROFILES OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Kateri Spinella, Board President and Co-founder of Anthony House by Wellhouse Ministries, Inc.; member of Omega Home Network, a coalition of comfort-care homes nationwide.

She became passionate about caring for people in hospice care after working several years as a home hospice nurse case manager for Oswego County Hospice. Kateri is an RN, earned a Masters in Nursing Education, and is a part-time seminary student furthering her education in Ministry.

After serving in health care for 25 years, Kateri retired from acute care nursing in 2018. Her experiences in life and in medicine have heightened her awareness of the needs surrounding end-of-life care issues. These experiences set the course for her vision to open a comfort-care home and services surrounding end-of-life care needs in Oswego County.

Native to Upstate New York, she lives with her husband David. Together they share 5 grandchildren. Kateri enjoys spending her time outdoors in the beauty of the seasons, traveling, and cooking alongside her husband.

Peggy Chestnut is rejoining the board after being away from the board for a few years. She reports “The Funeral Consumers Alliance helped my husband and me more than 20 years ago when my brother-in-law passed and we have been involved in the organization ever since.”

“My husband recently passed away after a short battle with cancer. I believe that after caring for my husband, I have gained more knowledge about the end of life concerns and I would like to be able to share that with others. I look forward to meeting more people in the organization and getting to know new board members and reacquainting myself with the board members that I have known. Thank you for this opportunity.”

2022 ANNUAL MEETING
Look for details in the Spring 2022
Newsletter

Your Board Members at Work for You!
 President Jenifer Breyer
 and Treasurer Susan Rainey “table” at the
 Senior Fair



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
 CONTRIBUTIONS**

We rely on your donations to continue the work of the organization. We thank these members who made contributions since the last newsletter:

Catherine Bart-Patterson, William Billingham, Mark Briggs, Diane Case, Peggy Chestnut, Robert Coye, Linda DeStefano, Earleen Foulk, John Ellis, Jane Feld, Lanny Freshman, Ramish Gaonkar, Peter Garner-Richards, Nan Gartner, Jane Guiles, Elizabeth Haswell, George Kirkpatrick, Cheryl McLeod, Deborah Mitchell, Francis Morigi, Margaret Muller, Caroline Palmer, Shirley Quinn, Robert Sarason, Vicky Schipper, Anita Slagel, Janet & Warren Solomon, David Tatham, Ann Tussing, George Ward, Jr., Shaila Wood, Richard Weiskopf

***I want to support the work and mission of
 the FCA of CNY. My check is in the mail.***

**Let us if you would like to receive your newsletter by email.
 Let us know if we may honor your gift with your name in
 our next newsletter.**

Contributions to FCA of CNY are not tax deductible.

**Are your end-of-life preferences up to date? This
 is a good time to check and make sure. If you
 would like a new Preferences form, send us an
 email or letter.**