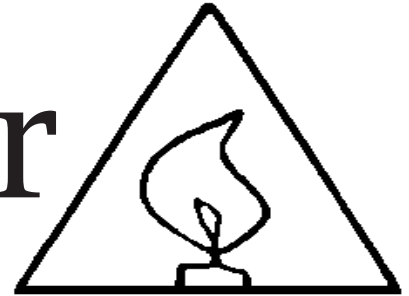


The Messenger



A Publication of the Funeral Consumers Information Society of Greater Detroit

Founded in 1961

Spring 2005

49th Annual Meeting 2005

“Facing the Future”

Plan to attend and hear our National Executive Director, Mr Joshua Slocum address our membership. I am sure you will be interested to hear what he has to say about “Where we are, and where we need to be”.

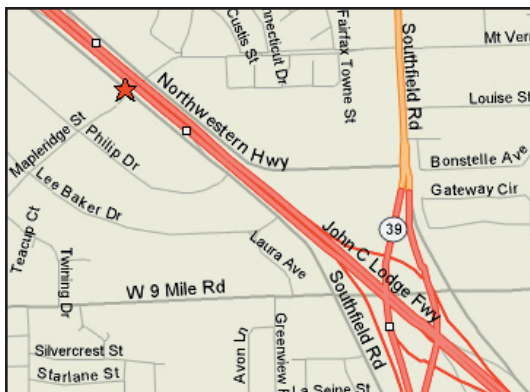
Sunday May 15 at 2:30 p.m.

Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church

23925 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield, MI 48075-2528
248-354-4488

Program Agenda

1. Short reports by officers
 2. Speaker, Mr. Joshua Slocum, Executive Director, FCA
 3. Brief refreshment period
 4. Brief Business Meeting, Election of officers for 2005-6
- Open period for questions and reactions from the floor.



Northwest UU Church is located on the South bound Lodge service drive midway between 9 and 10 Mile Roads. At the traffic light.

Nominations for Officers

President - Richard N. Miller
Vice President - Carter Stevenson
Treasurer Pro-tem - Russell Peebles
Secretary - Tom Madsen

Current Directors

Mary Beth Naylor
C.J. Harrison
Al Ugelow
Richard N. Miller
Larry Zimmerman
Vacant

Current Representatives

Ray Bazmore, Central United Methodist
Al Ugelow, Emerson UU
Carter Stevenson, First UU



**FUNERAL CONSUMERS
INFORMATION SOCIETY**

P.O. BOX 24054
Detroit, Michigan 48224
313-886-0998

FCIS@juno.com
www.detroitfunerals.org

Funeral Consumers Alliance
www.funerals.org

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bman32@comcast.net

Vice President

Vacant

Treasurer Pro-tem

Russell Peebles 586-498-9850
peecarus@concentric.net

Secretary

Thomas Madsen 313-824-6368
tomandwinn@earthlink.net

Directors

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Richard Miller 248-356-7850
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Al Ugelow 248-689-8544
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Larry Zimmerman 313-331-1614
larryzimmerman@wayne.edu

Representatives

Ray Bazmore
Central United Methodist Church
Detroit, MI

Alvin Ugelow
Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church
Troy, MI

Carter Stevenson
First Unitarian Universalist Church
Detroit, MI

Newsletter Editor

Aletha E. Craig 248-524-9338
aarvcraig@mac.com

President's Remarks

As you no doubt have observed in all the recent media, the case of Terri Schiavo has been one of the most prominent items being dealt with. The sad case of this poor young lady has focused broad public attention on a matter we have so frequently been emphasizing to our members and to whatever public presence we could reach; namely the matter of a "Living Will" and the legal document that

agencies with whom we exchanged literature, and with whom we may interact to everyone's benefit.

We learned a lot with this experience, and are looking forward to our next appearances. (See the schedule in our "Public Presence" column, page 4.) These things together with the coming improvements in our internet web page, which one of our Board members, Ms. C.J. Harrison and her hus-

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supports it, a "Durable Power of Attorney" It so happened that we were making our FCIS presentation at a Health-O-Rama booth here at the Southfield Civic Center on the Wednesday that this matter came out in bold headlines in the Detroit Free Press. Al Ugelow, one of our Board members, came by to take a turn at our booth and had with him a copy of the Free Press. We immediately put it on the table with the rest of our display and it was the source of much attention during the day. We received many questions about our organization and were able to put our brochure in the hands of quite a number of people. We were happy to find that the booth next to ours was being conducted by a lady who happened to also be a member of our FCIS, and a long time supporter. This display opportunity thus enabled us to make contacts with other

band have agreed to prepare, will focus our efforts to much more effectively reach more people with the message of our services.

By the way, it would be appreciated if any of you would be able to serve as an attendant with one of our booth committee members for an hour or two. Call Al Ugelow at 248-689-8944, or Dick Miller at 248-356-7850 for details. You will find it to be an enjoyable experience, and a needed boost for our Society. Thank you!

I also want to add my personal urgent request for your presence at our Annual Meeting Sunday afternoon, May 15. We want to show a good support for Josh Slocum, our National Director.

Richard N. Miller,
Acting President

Reminder

*From The
Office Coordinator*

Some of our members have overlooked their membership dues. If you haven't done so already please mail your 2005 membership dues to Funeral Consumers Information Society P.O. Box 24054, Detroit, Michigan 48224.

*We appreciate
your continued
support!*

Thank You

To Ms. Suzanne Gardon, one of our most faithful Board Members and her husband Robert are moving to the New York area. Suzanne has often contributed articles to our Messenger, made arrangements for housing many of our meetings, and has always been a valuable source of council at our Board Meetings. We will miss her presence greatly.

To David Dickason, who volunteered his services to create and maintain the first internet web page for our society and has served well in that capacity for the past two years. His generous contribution of skills and time has guided a number of persons to our services, and we have appreciated it.

Treasurer's Report

Proposed Budget For 2005

Submitted by Richard N. Miller, Acting President, FCIS
on February 1, 2005

	Jan-Dec 2004	2004 Budget	Proposed Budget 2005	
Receipts:				
New members	\$340.00	\$3,102	\$1,716	(a)
2004 renewals	5,710.00	5,900	5,710	2004 actual
Donations	3,065.00	2,050.00	3,065.00	2004 actual
Investments	40.90	50	50	(b)
Miscellaneous	1.20	50	50	(2004)
2003 renewals	120.00	50	100	(2004)
2005 renewals	120.00	50	100	(2004)
Totals	\$9,397.10	\$11,252	\$10,791	
Disbursements:				
Annual meeting	\$163	\$125	\$600	(c)
Bank charges	0	10	10	(d)
Employee taxes	253	254	264	(e)
FCA dues	1,101	1,338	1,430	(f)
Office coordinator	3,420	3,315	3,445	(g)
Mailing	583	772	769	(h)
Postage	1,417	1,450	1,450	per actual
Print & duplicate	1,022	1,100	1,177	(i)
Rent	694	728	728	(j)
Supplies & equipment	124	160	160	per actual
Telephone	642	450	642	per actual
Yellow pages & advertising	1,354	1,350	---	cancelled
Miscellaneous	20	50	50	
Consultants	23	100	100	
Travel mileage	76	50	80	per actual
Totals	\$10,892	\$11,252	\$10,791	

Rationale: (a) precludes a balanced budget; (b) $\$10.50 \times 4 = \50 ; (c) $\$50$ (hon) + $\$50$ (rent) + $\$25$ (refreshments) + $\$475$ (travel & housing) = $\$600$; (d) a bad check; (e) $3,445 \times .0765 = \$264$; (f) $\$3,100 + 5,700 + 3,050 + 50 + 50 \times 12\% = \$1,430$; (g) $130 \times 13 + 135 \times 13 = \$3,445$; (h) $3 \times \$253 = \759 ; (i) $3 \times \$317 + 223 + \$1,177$; (j) $\$55 \times 12 + 68 = \728

The Lighter Side



"I'm afraid, Mr. Wallberry, that I know of no legal mechanism by which you can bequeath them all a swift kick in the pants."

Letters To The Editor

Our sources of material include daily press clippings, our national News Letter, Funeral Consumers Alliance, nearby Funeral Consumers publications, even Funeral Directors publications, etc.

We got to thinking lately, maybe we are overlooking a source that might be even more vital to our members; namely our own local membership. You have experiences, suggestions, observations, comments, maybe even complements or criticisms that might make informative news for us to include in our Messenger. So let's see what you have on your minds.

Exercise & Good Nutrition

....go hand-in-hand if you want a healthier and better quality of life.

But listen to what the late Eubie Blake, famous jazz musician (who rarely practiced either) had to say upon reaching his 100th birthday —

“If I knew I was going to live this long, I'd of taken better care of myself.”

Ah, Eubie.

Frank Singer
“The S.O.S. Digest”

Public Presence (Part II)

We are happy to announce several community appearances by FCIS this Spring. As mentioned in the last issue, plans were underway to participate in the City of Troy Senior Health Expo on April 28. The event will be at the Troy Community Center, Livernois Road north of Big Beaver Road, and we look forward to that involvement.

As of this issue we have also received confirmation for participation in these other health fairs, organized by the metro area's Project Healthy Living:

- March 23: Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Road at Civic Center Drive in Southfield.
- April 13 – 15: Livonia Mall, 29514 Seven Mile Road, Livonia (sponsored by Botsford General Hospital)
- May 9 – 10: Universal Mall, 28582 Dequindre Road (at 12 Mile Road) in Warren

In these events we will have a splendid opportunity to meet with the public, network with health care representatives, and raise awareness about the value of informed planning regarding final arrangements at fair cost as well as health related issues.

If one or more of the dates are still timely when you receive your Messenger, feel free to drop by and say hello if you are in the vicinity and visit the health care exhibits as well. Also we would welcome help at any point.

Al Ugelow, FCIS Board Member

Things Like This Bother Me

I recently learned of a case where one of our members who died, did not pass the word to survivors regarding how she wanted her final plans carried out. The family proceeded on their own with a less than complete idea of what she had wished. It was known that she preferred cremation, so family looked up cremation in the Yellow pages, and found “Cremation Society of Michigan” and made the final arrangements with them. This resulted in a needless over payment. They would have saved over one thousand dollars if they had made their plans through their membership with our Society.

Members

1. **Make sure you have prepared your plan. And have it on file in a convenient place.**
2. **Make sure your family knows your plans with the Society and how to contact us.**

Richard N. Miller, Acting President

Introductions

Dr. Larry Zimmerman:
Larry is Director of Enrollment Management & Graduate Officer at Wayne State University. When asked why he agreed to accept a position on our Board, Larry said he felt he had accepted the benefits of the Society long enough without giving any service in return. He felt it was time he stepped forward to make whatever contribution he could to support this movement that he believed in and help to ensure its continued service.

He has been helpful with his council and insights at Board meetings, and has picked up the responsibility of hosting the speaker at our Annual Meeting. He is definitely a contributing member of our Board and we do appreciate his services.

Mr. Alvin Ugelow:
Al quietly took up membership on the Board as a Representative from Emerson Universalist Unitarian Church over a year ago. Al is a quiet sort of person who seldom contributes trivia, but always contributes valuable suggestions, and what is more important, follows through with action plans, and even more importantly, agrees when asked, to lead in the implementation of those plans.

Our present activities in the area of "Public Presence" with appearances at four scheduled Public Health Fairs were initiated by Al. He has also agreed to author a "Public Presence" feature in our Messenger Newsletter. He is a very valued presence on our Board.

Our New Beefed Up Web site

We have talked about doing something to make our Web site more friendly and informative. C. J. Harrison, one of our newer board members has been especially pushing us on this. Finally she, with the help of her husband Bill who is an experienced web master, have gotten it going.

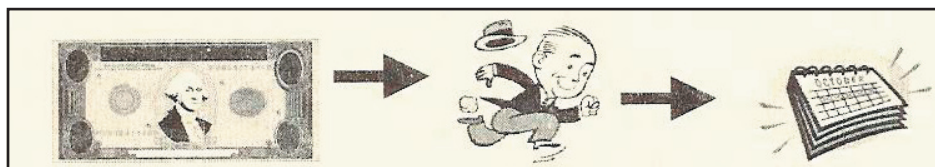
Bill has created a new web address (URL) for us. Our address is now www.detroitfunerals.org. This is a more recognizable address for people who are looking for funeral advice and should result in many more people reaching us. Try it if you have a computer, and see what it can do. Now we have to create an appealing format that will lead people to becoming supportive members of our Society.

The site is still under construction, but is serviceable. Bill and C. J. have many interesting ideas to draw people's interest.

Richard N. Miller, Acting President

Pass the Buck

PASS THE BUCK TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE



"ONE DOLLAR / PER PERSON / PER YEAR"

Our Funeral Consumers Alliance national office needs your financial support to:

- Be a National watchdog over the death care industry
- Educate consumers through brochures, news releases and speeches
- Provide a voice for consumers to state and federal regulators
- Maintain our authoritative National website at www.funerals.org

Join with 400,000 members to donate a dollar (or more...we don't mind). FCA will be able to maintain operations, build an endowment that will sustain our consumer movement and allow us to grow and serve you better. All donations are tax deductible. Pass the buck(s) to:

Funeral Consumers Alliance
33 Patchen Road
Sough Burlington, VT 05403

Some Things We Do For Our Members

1. Forms and information and on **Living Wills** and **Durable Power of Attorney** for health-care and lists of items and assets that need to be accounted for.
2. Access to our office phone for emergencies or information regarding funeral arrangements, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. Provide you with information from our periodic surveys of 250 funeral homes in our tri-county area. Including their basic prices for either cremation or burial services.
4. Provide you with a “**Funeral Pre-Plan Form**” to assist you and members of your family in making your own choices among the options available for your funeral arrangements. One copy of the form is kept by you, and one copy is returned to the Society office as a back-up.
5. Provide information on **organ or body donation** through Wayne State University or University of Michigan Medical schools.
6. Seasonal Newsletters that keep you up-to-date on end-of-life concerns.
7. A wallet I. D. card that identifies you as a member of FCIS and provides contact directions to the Society and to your family.
8. A Speakers Bureau with informative presentations, available for organizations, or gatherings.
9. An invitation to our Annual Meeting where authoritative speakers present serious topics pertaining to end-of-life matters.
10. A variety of brochures on many end-of-life matters including “Before I Go You Should Know” by Edward Gorey.
11. For the computer oriented, our web site is: www.detroitfunerals.org and our e-mail address is: fcis@juno.com.

www.funerals.org
Affiliated With
Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA)

www.detroitfunerals.org
313-886-0998
Detroit, Michigan 48224
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