

Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Virginia Blue Ridge

Cemetery survey posted

Our biennial cemetery survey is now posted on the FCAVBR website at <https://www.fcavbr.org/surveys>. It is arranged by cemeteries that offer green burial, then by region, and alphabetically within regions. It is in a downloadable PDF format. If you request one, a hard copy will be mailed to you. We applaud cemeteries that have their current price lists online and we have included direct links to those on the survey. There is a lot of variation in cemeteries and what they provide. Some only sell plots. They usually work with funeral homes to provide the other amenities they require. Most charge more for burials outside of their normal business hours. In this age of internet shopping, it is unfortunate that some cemeteries do not have a web presence. All are required to provide a General Price List if you request one.

To be an informed consumer, be sure to ask:

- Will they work with families who want a home funeral or to care for their own without going through a funeral home?
- Do they require vaults for cremation urns?
- Do they allow pets to be buried with the deceased?
- Are they responsive to phone calls and email?

It is always prudent to shop around using the survey as a good starting point.

Epitaph reported in *American Heritage Magazine*

She lived with her husband 50 years and died in a confident hope of a better life.



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Special points of interest

- Our generous donors
- FCAVBR monitors the state legislature in the consumers' interests



Grave Decisions

When you purchase a cemetery plot, you are buying the right to decide who will be buried in that space. The cemetery retains ownership to the land. Be sure to understand if you have the right to resell that space or transfer it to someone else. Consumers often are dismayed when they realize they no longer need the plot and find the cemetery is not interested in buying it back. The cemetery may charge to transfer the plot to someone else even if the plot can be sold.

There is a danger in prepaying for a grave site or for several plots to bury the family together. It is difficult to foresee what will happen in the future. Americans move and families scatter. People remarry or decide on cremation or other options besides traditional burial. In Virginia, if a plot is not used within 50 years of the sale, it can revert to the cemetery. This has surprised several people who have called us for help. Sadly, there is no recourse.

Remember too that if you prepay for the plot, that doesn't completely cover the burial. Cemeteries charge for opening and closing the grave, a vault or grave liner is usually required, and these costs are rarely included in prepaying.

Remember also that veterans are entitled to be buried for free in a veterans cemetery. The burial includes a marker. Spouses are also allowed burial at a much reduced cost. Let us know if you need more information about this benefit. Our local veterans cemetery is located at a lovely spot in Dublin, Virginia.

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Generous support continues

Thank you for responding to our once-a-year request. This organization depends on the generosity of our members. Perhaps we have not made it clear that we levy no yearly dues. You really are a member for life. We leave it to you to remember us when you receive our letter. We have no paid personnel, only dedicated volunteers. Thank you to everyone who donated to our cause. It is through you that we can continue our work.

Although some donors wish to remain anonymous, these folks agreed to be thanked publicly:

Susan & Bil Baker	Yvonne Olson
Adrienne Berney in honor of Isabel Berney	Wava Osborne in memory of Dorothy Osborne
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Evergreen Burial Park	Catherine Snyder in honor of Isabel Berney
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Joan Grayson	Dean Spader
Perrin Heartway in honor of Larry Crouse	Arville & Betty Stanley in memory of son Larry
Marquita Hill	Lee Stanley
Mary Houska	Peter Stazen
David Jenkins	Cortney Stewart and Scott Jamison in memory of
John & Andrea Kelso	Betty Blair & F.R. Stewart
Linda Lancaster	John Surr
Donald & Juanita Linzey	Alexandra Taylor in memory of Kathryn Neil
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Marie Magon in memory of son Norbert &	Charles Taylor
mother Louise	Martha A. Taylor
Paula Markham	Lynn & Forest Thye
Leanne & Larry Mitchell	Chris Walter in memory of Dean Mook
Franklyn & Bonnie Moreno in memory of Paul P.	Joanne Watson
Moreno	Alison Wilson in honor of Harriett Cooper
Network for Good	
Jerry & Ruth Anne Niles	

Every year we monitor the General Assembly. It helps to have people to add to our voices of support or opposition to proposed legislation which affects us as funeral consumers.

Next January we would notify you of what bills need our attention, whom to contact, and a sample script to use.

Please send us your email address if you are willing to be part of our lobbying email group. It does make an impact on legislators when they hear from their constituents.



Would you like to “save a tree” and get this newsletter by email? It looks nicer, you see it in color, and it saves money to send it that way. If you are not already receiving this by email and would like to, please contact us with your preferred email. We don’t share your information with others.

Consider a Medical Power of Attorney

Have you ever considered what would happen in a non-death medical incident or emergency? You could lose your ability to speak due to a stroke. You could be in a coma for many different reasons. Who will decide what happens next? Normally, your next of kin will make those decisions, but is that person the right person for the job? Perhaps a different relative or friend will have an easier time fulfilling your wishes. If that is the case, you need a health care power of attorney, designating who you want to make those decisions. Things a health POA can do are give consent or refuse medications, surgery, or therapy.



It is important that you have expressed what you do or do not want, such as intubation or a feeding tube. The POA can approve or deny admittance to various facilities such as a nursing home. The POA can also make sure your wishes for organ donation are carried out. This is your voice when you cannot speak. Please consult your attorney for more information on appointing a health power of attorney. This is different from a general power of attorney who can stand in place of you for such things as business transactions.

If you find such decisions difficult to think about or discuss, many have found the worksheet on **page 5** to be helpful. It is courtesy of Final Exit. It lists three scenarios with different options. It asks if you want these measures, do not want them, or are undecided. Members have found this helpful in having the important discussion with loved ones.

Board of Directors opportunity

Would you or someone you know like to join our Board, which meets monthly to do the day-to-day work of FCAVBR? Our meetings last one hour and this is an opportunity to serve as well as learn. Our meetings are always open to members and the public.

We do not make decisions for others or have an agenda, other than keeping consumers informed and providing our information at no cost. If you have a name to suggest to our nominating committee, please call 540-953-5589 or send an email to fcavbr@gmail.com.

Advanced Medical Directive Worksheet

1. MAKE THIS MEDICAL DIRECTIVE AS AN INDICATION OF MY WISHES REGARDING MEDICAL TREATMENT IN THE EVENT THAT ILLNESS SHOULD MAKE ME UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE THEM DIRECTLY. I MAKE THIS DIRECTIVE, BEING 18 YEARS OF AGE OR MORE, OF SOUND MIND, AND APPRECIATING THE CONSEQUENCES OF MY DECISIONS, I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT, BUT IS TO BE USED AS A GUIDE FOR MY PROXY.

Signature: Print Name: Date:	Witness to signature: Print Name: Date: Phone:
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LEGEND	SITUATION A			SITUATION B			SITUATION C		
	W=I want	DNW = I do not want	UND = I am undecided	If I become acutely ill and unable to express my wishes and in the opinion of my physicians there is reasonable hope that I can return to my previous state of health, then the following guidelines should be followed:			If I become acutely ill and unable to express my wishes and in the opinion of my physicians there is little or no reasonable chance that I can return to my previous state of health, then the following guidelines should be followed:		
	W	DNW	UND	W	DNW	UND	W	DN	UND
Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) -the use of artificial means to start the heart beating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mechanical breathing -use of a ventilator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Artificial nutrition -nutrition and feeding given through a tube in the vein, nose, or stomach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Major surgery -potential complications and discomfort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kidney dialysis -	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chemotherapy -	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minor surgery or invasive diagnostic tests -such as removing some tissue or using a flexible tube to look in the stomach with potential discomfort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blood or blood products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Antibiotics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Simple Diagnostic Tests - little potential for complications or discomfort such as X-rays	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pain medications even if they may indirectly hasten my death	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other-									

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Affiliated with Funeral
Consumers Alliance

Kroger Community Awards & Amazon Smile

Thanks to our members who have connected their Kroger Loyalty Cards to us. If you have a Kroger Plus card, consider signing up for Kroger Community Awards to give a percentage of your bill as a donation to FCAVBR.

Go online to <https://www.kroger.com>. If you already have a Kroger account, simply log in. If not, you will be asked to create one. When asked to select the organization to receive your rewards, enter this number:

TK761.

Amazon also supports us. At your browser, type smile.amazon.com. If you have an Amazon account, sign in and you will see the choice to select a charity. If you type in Funeral Consumers Alliance, several affiliates come up and you can scroll down to select Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Virginia Blue Ridge.