



Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County
Records, 1966-2007

Collection 38

Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Brandon Pieczko, April 2011

Creator/Corporate name: Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County; Champaign County Memorial Society

Inclusive Dates: 1966-2007, bulk 1975-2000

Physical Description: 2 boxes (1.1 linear ft.)

Language: English

Provenance:

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County records were donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Access:

These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Historical Note:

In 1966, a group of clergy and lay representatives from several local religious organizations led by Reverend John A. Taylor of the Urbana Unitarian Universalist Church met at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Champaign to call for the establishment of a memorial society in Champaign-Urbana as a branch of the Chicago Memorial Association. The Champaign County Branch of the Chicago Memorial Association was subsequently founded with the goal of providing affordable and dignified funeral and burial services for its members through partnerships with funeral directors in the Chicago area.

In January 1975, the organization's Board of Directors voted for separation from the Chicago Memorial Society and the organization became incorporated as an independent non-profit unit, the Champaign County Memorial Society (CCMS), the only such independent memorial society in downstate Illinois. Rose Hewitt was subsequently chosen to serve as the new organization's first president. In November 1975, CCMS became officially affiliated with the nationwide alliance the Continental Association of Funeral and Memorial Societies (CAFMS). CCMS thereafter re-focused its efforts as an organization on providing information on a variety of topics including hospices, funerals and memorial services, cremations and burials, and advanced medical directives in order to enable its members to make well-informed decisions concerning end-of-life arrangements. In 1994, the national organization, CAFMS, changed its name to Funeral and Memorial Societies of America (FAMSA), and again in 1999 to Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA), and encouraged its members to follow suit by renaming their local organizations. On April 23, 2001, the CCMS Board of Directors voted to change the organization's name to the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County (FCACC) and to apply for 501 (c) (3) status with the federal government as a tax-exempt, non-profit association.



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The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County (FCACC—formerly Champaign County Memorial Society) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing vital information to its members concerning final arrangements and end-of-life decisions. The self-proclaimed purposes of FCACC as an educational corporation are to promote simplicity and dignity in funeral and memorial services; to work to reduce unjustifiable costs associated with final arrangements; to help its members plan for death, informing them of all available options; and to support necessary state and federal legislation that makes these activities possible. Records end in 2007, though the organization continued to operate after that date.

Scope and Content:

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County collection includes records beginning with the organization's founding in 1966 through 2007. The bulk of the records in the collection extend from 1975 to 2000. The FCACC collection includes records pertaining to administrative functions such as by-laws, Board of Directors minutes, documents concerning FCACC's incorporation as a non-profit organization, and correspondence; general organizational activities such as the annual spring meeting, newsletters, and clippings; educational literature produced and/or disseminated by the organization such as brochures (includes a printout of CCMS Prairienet Community Home Page from March 28, 1998), funeral expense surveys, and forms and legal guidelines concerning end-of-life decisions (including "Final Arrangements Checklist," "How to Help Grieving People," Durable Power of Attorney form, Illinois cremation and organ donation guidelines, and a bibliography of books on the subject of death and dying). The collection also includes updates on relevant state and federal legislative activities such as the Illinois Living Will Act (1983, amended 1987), Federal Patient Self Determination Act (1991), Federal Trade Commission's "Funeral Rule" Law concerning funeral industry practices (1984, amended 1994), and HR 4006/S2151, a bill aimed at preventing assisted suicide. Finally, the collection also includes newsletters, brochures, and member directories from FCACC's national organization (FAMSA/FCA), as well as publications from other groups committed to actively addressing death and dying issues and rights.

Arrangement:

Materials are arranged by record type.

Subject Terms:

Funeral rites and ceremonies
Bereavement
End of life—Planning.

Container List:

Box 1

Folder 1: By-Laws, 1975-2001
Folder 2: Board of Directors Minutes, 1975-1992
Folder 3: Board of Directors Minutes, 1993-2003
Folder 4: Documents for Incorporation as Not-For-Profit Association, 1975-2006
Folder 5: Correspondence, 1966-1998



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Box 2

Folder 6: Annual Meetings, 1975-1997

Folder 7: State and Federal Legislative Updates, 1993-2000

Folder 8: Local Funeral Expense Surveys, 1981-1982, 1984, 1993, 1998, 2007

Folder 9: End-of-Life/ Final Arrangements Forms and Legal Guidelines, 1961-1995

Folder 10: Newspaper Clippings, 2005, 2007

Folder 11: CCMS/ FCACC Brochures, 1998-2001

Folder 12: CAFMS/ FAMSA/ FCA Newsletters, 1994-1999, 2004-2010

Folder 13: FCA Brochures, 1996-2005

Folder 14: FAMSA/ FCA Member Directories, 1996-2002

Folder 15: Hemlock Society & Compassion in Dying Federation Newsletters and Brochures, 1997-1999

Folder 16: Funeral Ethics Organization Newsletters, 2005-2006

**Please Note: The CCMS/ FCACC Newsletters, 1986-1987, 1990-2005 are located in the Champaign County Historical Archives separate Local Organization Newsletters Collection.*