

Oregon Memorial Association

end of life planning since 1961

Susan Robinson
President

Bill Harris
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Secretary

Rev. Connie Yost
Treasurer

Cathy Hall
Director

Jaye Solowan-Weiss
Director

Oregon Memorial Association (OMA) is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping Oregon consumers choose dignified, meaningful, and affordable end-of-life services.

Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.
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We Are Here for You

Only two weeks earlier Judy had called OMA in a panic. “My aunt is in the hospital and the doctor thinks she may not come out again! I’m at her house going through her stuff trying to find any end-of-life papers and notes about possible funeral plans. I found a very old membership card with this number on it. I thought there’d be no answer, but *(starting to cry)* thank you for talking to me...”

Now OMA’s Office Assistant, Margot, could rejoice with her. “Aunt Hazel pulled through, after all. I thought you’d want to know. You seem genuinely interested in your members and I appreciate everything you were able to tell me. She’s got nine lives, I guess, and aren’t I lucky to have such tough, long-living relatives!?”

Keeping up with the constant changes in the funeral industry is challenging, but in Judy and Hazel’s case, Margot had a note in our database about what Aunt Hazel wanted and which mortuary she preferred at that time. She checked with that mortuary to ask if Hazel had paid for a pre-need contract or policy there and, finding none, advised Judy on our current contracts and prices. Judy says she plans to get her own OMA membership and is considering a green burial or another more sustainable option for herself.

Every month, Margot reports on calls she received, and they are varied. OMA is a valuable resource for hospices, senior center staff members, and the general public as well as OMA members. Almost every month she describes tracking down an old pre-need contract at a mortuary that no longer contracts with OMA or has been sold to another mortuary.

That’s why we are here. Your contributions make it possible for OMA to keep a staff person exactly for calls like this and so many more. We use your donations to make sure we can still provide crucial direct personal service. Please help us make sure we are able to continue this important service by making a tax-free donation at www.omaoregon.org/donate.



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Do we have your email?

As we only send one printed newsletter per year, our monthly e-newsletters are the best way to stay in touch.

Sign-up at www.omaoregon.org/e-newsletter.

“All’s Well That Ends Well” End-of-Life Planning Workshops

Using our end-of-life preparation workbook, participants learn what should be completed in order to make sure your final wishes are met and how to assist your survivors as they carry out your plans. We offer in-person and online (Zoom) workshops. Workshops can also be arranged specifically for your group or organization. If you have an idea of a place or area where an AWTEW session might be helpful, let us know. These workshops are led by trained volunteer presenters. Please connect with OMA if you are interested in becoming a presenter or would like more information. For a list of our workshops, visit www.omaoregon.org/education.

“You’ve obviously put a considerable amount of time and energy into educating people about how to plan for their end-of-life effectively!”

Saving the Planet, One Death at a Time

Around 60% of Americans choose cremation, and even more of us in Oregon at 79%. It is the most affordable of our choices. Many of us are now also contemplating the consequences of our body disposition choices. Should we be considering the effects our decisions have on future generations?

Can thoughtful body disposition choices help save the planet?

FACT: Body composting returns the carbon matter contained in each human to the earth rather than releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

FACT: Traditional flame cremation requires 2-3 hours at more than 1800 degrees of heat per corpse, releasing 573 lbs of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This is equal to driving 500 miles in a car, per *Chemical and Engineering News*.

FACT: Aquamation (aka “alkaline hydrolysis” or “resomation”) is done at far lower heat by using high

pressure and chemicals that emulsify the body. Byproducts are biodegradable.

FACT: Aquamation usually costs about \$1,000 more than flame cremation.

FACT: Both types of cremation cost less than burial, even green burial, due to the cost of cemetery plots.

FACT: While cremated remains are considered sterile and harmless, they can deter plant root growth due to high pH levels and excess sodium. A soil cremation mixture designed to lower both of these can be purchased to create a safe way to use them in your garden or other natural areas.



OMA started in 1961 to help people find the most affordable *and* dignified options. Today, we are adding earth-friendly options to the list as well. Visit www.omaoregon.org/resources for links to more information about various body disposition options currently offered in our area.

The Importance of Planning *and* Talking

You’ve planned, you’ve decided, and you’ve paid. You are sparing your survivors. But...*are you?* Many of us believe that it will relieve our survivors if our foreseeable funeral expenses are pre-paid. Pre-paying isn't always as fool-proof as we hope. We don't die where we thought we would, they don't have the coffin we chose, body disposition options keep changing, or survivors want a more sustainable option. If we haven't taught them how to make informed choices, if they do not know their funeral consumer rights, survivors are more likely to go into debt or have unexpected expenses. Planning is definitely needed, but talking is the most essential. Things to know:

- In Oregon all pre-need contracts must be revocable, unless the buyer is on Medicaid.
- If one is on Medicaid or applying for it, pre-pay to get funds out of one's estate, but seek legal advice first.
- Burial insurance can cost more than just setting aside funds in a “Payable at Death” bank account.
- Pre-paying locks in the price, but too often unexpected changes cost survivors more.

Contact OMA at omaoregon@gmail.com or visit www.omaoregon.org for more information.

OMA Member Benefits

OMA has agreements with mortuaries throughout the state which offer **discounted prices for OMA members**. Did you know that mortuaries are required to provide a price list on request? OMA helps members comparison shop and make sense of the various options. For more information on how to read a mortuary price list and other useful information, visit www.omaoregon.org/member-forms--information.

You can also download a new Personal Instruction Form, an important record of your final wishes to be filled out and stored where it can be easily accessed by your survivors, along with other end-of-life planning documents.

Be sure to contact our office for a list of providers or visit www.omaoregon.org/providers--price-lists. Don't see a funeral home in your town on the list? We're always looking for volunteers to help us find new partnership opportunities. Let us know if you'd like to help us establish connections in all corners of the state. Email us at omaoregon@gmail.com.



Calling all Pet Owners!

We want to see your favorite pet photos! Send us a photo of your beloved companion so we can feature your furry or feathered, scaled or shelled friend during our annual meeting (over). Include your name, pet's name, and phone number when emailing your photo to omaoregon@gmail.com.

And...simply by sending in a photo of your pet by September 5th, you'll be entered into our **Pet Lovers raffle**!

Your Support Makes It Possible

OMA has helped thousands of people save money over the past six decades, but most importantly, helped them sort out what is most meaningful to them and their families. It is all made possible by donations from people like you. Thank you!

There are several ways to donate:

- Reduce your taxes with a gift from your IRA account.
- Consider a bequest to OMA in your will.
- Donate online at www.omaoregon.org/donate.
- Mail in a check using the enclosed envelope.

Volunteers Needed!

We truly appreciate our volunteers who donate their time. Please be in touch if you are interested in becoming a board member or joining a committee.

Currently, there are 1, 2 and 3 year board terms open.

**Consider volunteering with OMA.
There is a role for everyone!**

Committing to just a few hours a month to an OMA committee or a specific one-time task can have a huge impact. We are seeking thoughtful people with financial, marketing, educational, or technology skills to step forward to help OMA evolve in the coming years. There are many volunteer roles to fill and everyone is welcome.

Contact us at www.omaoregon.org/volunteer or omaoregon@gmail.com.

Treasurer's Report by OMA Treasurer Rev. Connie Yost

We had a solid year in 2022 in which member donations once again brought in over half of our annual income. In addition, we had strong corporate sponsorship and the sale of one of our donated burial plots. But every year is a new year for an organization like OMA which relies primarily on annual donations in order to exist. We have a somewhat diversified income stream, which is good, with memberships, record fees, corporate sponsorships, and workbook sales. But we do need to raise an additional \$13,000 in donations in 2023 in order to make this year's budget, which is about \$26,000.

Please visit omaoregon.org to learn about all the many ways you can donate. We accept donations of stock and IRA distributions. You can designate OMA as the charity you want for Fred Meyer Community Rewards and Bottle Drop. Consider a legacy gift to OMA in your will. Thank you for your donations and for being an OMA member!

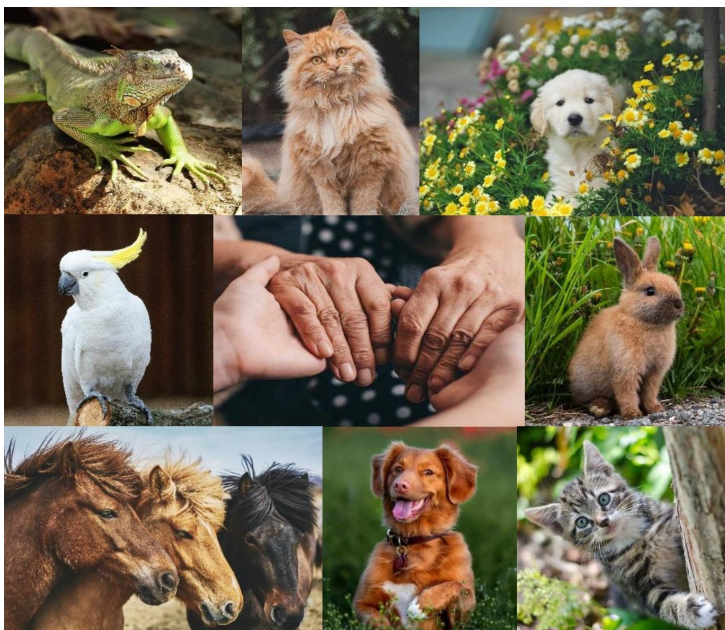


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See you on
September 9th!

Thank You to Our Gold Level Sponsor!



OMA's 62nd Annual Meeting
"Let's Talk About Death:
My Pets, My Helpers & Me"
September 9, 2023
2:00 pm

Join us online via Zoom on **Saturday, September 9th** for our 62nd Annual Meeting. Guest speakers Kathryn Karr, from the Oregon Humane Society, and local Death Doula, Nicole Comach, will discuss the various assistance that is available for both ourselves and our companions as we begin our end-of-life process.

Hear the latest news about OMA and how our mission continues.

Register at oma2023meeting.eventbrite.com.