



### Thank the Board

I want to thank our very amazing Board. It's the dream of every board chair to have an active board of capable volunteers who will take delegation and get the jobs done. This is that kind of Board.

### Merge Organizations

A big change we implemented this year was to combine the Funeral Consumers Education Foundation and Oregon Memorial Association. People's Memorial Association in Washington State's lawyers figured how to combine a membership and a charitable organization without violating IRS rules. It took a lot of work and attention to details. Board member Donna Loveland spearheaded the effort and almost single handedly got the job done.

We modernized the new bylaws to enable things like email voting. We will continue using the [fcaoregon@gmail.com](mailto:fcaoregon@gmail.com) email address, but will also receive email at [omaoregon@gmail.com](mailto:omaoregon@gmail.com). Likewise, the website can be accessed at [fca-oregon.org](http://fca-oregon.org) and also at [omaoregon.org](http://omaoregon.org).

### All's Well That Ends Well

We held more All's Well That Ends Well workshops to create more informed consumers of funeral services. This outreach is critical to our members and to our organizational survival. This year, we held AWTEW workshops at River View Cemetery in Portland, Restlawn in Salem, and Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Bend. Cathy has five more workshops scheduled around town, and we will be back in Central Oregon next year. Keep an eye on our website and FaceBook page for announcements.

### Financial Challenges

This year one of our primary providers in the mid valley dropped discounted services to our members. Others may be making the same choice in the foreseeable future. Changes in the industry – consolidation of "Ma & Pa" mortuaries into big nationals – along with consumer preferences moving to less-expensive dispositions like cremation, have cut into their revenue and ours. As a consequence, OMA is facing financial challenges of a magnitude it has never seen before. The board this year raised the membership fee to \$50 per individual, but this alone will not provide for our ongoing expenses. To save expenses, we dropped the 800 phone number and announced this annual meeting via postcard rather than the expensive annual newsletter. We have asked all of our members who can to switch from regular mail to email again to cut costs.

The Board will continue to find ways to cut costs and increase revenues, but we will be more dependent than ever on our members' generosity in making annual donations.



### Management Change

Earlier this year our part time office manager, Mary Ziemer-McGinn, left for a new job. We are incredibly blessed that Robin Chilstrom has been willing to step into the job, one she held as Mary's immediate predecessor.

### Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

One of our office manager's most important duties is to answer your phone calls. Often, the call is from the family of a member who has just passed away or is expected to soon. To answer the questions, we depend on your Personal Information Form. Most of them were filled out years ago and desperately need updating so that we can deliver on our promise to be there when you aren't. Please update. PIF forms are available in the lobby and on the website.

### Plots and Crypts for sale

We have some donated cemetery plots and crypts for sale. More information in the lobby and on our website. There's actually a lot more to talk about but my time is limited and other board members need to take the floor.

### Parting Shot

I have to go off the board after two three-year terms, and that's a good thing – both for my sanity and for the health of the organization. I want to tell you that serving OMA has been more than an honor ...it's been a privilege and, at times, a joy. This is important and satisfying work. OMA needs you. It needs someone qualified to step into the Treasurer position. It needs outreach volunteers to help us build membership, to help us expand our network of providers, to help with the website and FaceBook page, to become AWTEW presenters, and on and on. Please take a look at the "Ways You Can Volunteer" handout and give OMA serious consideration. If you do volunteer, I guarantee you will find that this board is a hoot to work with!