



San Diego Memorial Society

Winter 2008 Newsletter

CHANGES MADE

By now you feel that something is different. We have made changes.

We now have Barbara Thomson as our Office Administrator. She is proving to be a wonderful person to handle the office and all of the inherent concerns from our members. When you call the office you hear her voice and just know she can do it all and provide the moral support and compassion you might need from time to time.

As of August 29th, John Davis is no longer affiliated with the office. He can not be reached by e-mail or telephone at the Society.

Another big change is the newsletter. We hope that you will like this simpler format. It will be much less costly. This one provides as much information and will be just as readable. Please don't hesitate to give us your comments and suggestions for future issues.

Our office hours are the same: 9 AM to Noon Monday thru Thursday. Our phone number is still (858) 874-7921. Feel free to call if you have questions or need help with something.

The services at Featheringill Mortuary are changing effective Jan. 1st, 2009. After that date they will only be providing Plan 2 which is cremation at \$696. They will continue to honor all 4 plans to members that have signed up with them prior to Jan. 1st, 2009.

Effective Jan. 1st, 2009 the cost of cremation at American Cremation Society will be \$566 for Plan 1 which is the only one they offer. That applies to anyone who dies after Dec. 31st, 2008.

We do hope all of these changes will meet with your approval. Don't hesitate to let us know your opinions on the ones we have control over.

MILITARY CEMETERY DELAYED

The long delayed opening of a new military cemetery at Miramar Marine Corps Air Station has been pushed back again, but a Dept. of Veterans Affairs official said the latest timeline is one he is sure the VA can meet. It now is scheduled to open in February, 2012.

This will service an acute need. Fort Rosecrans, a military cemetery since 1882, has been closed to almost all new casket burials since 1966. The

construction of above-ground niches for cremated remains has kept the cemetery open, though more than 94,000 veterans and their family members are now crowded into the 77 acre burial ground.

The Miramar cemetery is expected to hold 200,000 gravesites and accept burials for at least 60 years.

WHEN THE TIME COMES.....By Gerald Newall, SDMS Board of Directors

Most of us prefer not to think any more than necessary about the time when death will separate us from our earthly existence. Obviously, the fact that you have joined the Society shows that you have given the matter some thought, since you have taken steps to keep your family out of the grip of those who might seek to profit from their grief.

While the Memorial Society helps you carry out your wishes with regard to final arrangements, we believe that we can also offer a useful service by providing information on related matters, and we will try to do so from time to time through our newsletter. We want to remind you that we have no ties, financial or otherwise, with any of the organizations mentioned.

END-OF-LIFE CHOICES

Many people suffer through a long and painful terminal illness. Some may turn to violent means at the end of life. *Compassion and Choices* is a national nonprofit group providing end-of-life consultation to patients and their families. If patients meet their guidelines and choose aid in dying, they offer continued consultation and arrange for spiritual support and emotional assistance. They can be reached toll-free at

1-800-247-7421 or online at www.compassionandchoices.org.

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATIONS

www.donatelifecalifornia.org/about Organ and Tissue Donor Registry is a nonprofit group authorized by the state to keep track of organ donations.

www.dmv.ca.gov/about/organdonor.htm Sign up through the Calif. Dept. of Motor Vehicles to become an organ donor and get the pink dot on your driver's license or ID card.

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/organ-transplantation.html The National Institutes of Health site provides basic information and multiple links about organ transplant procedures. Financial issues, clinical trials and disease management are among the many topics on the website.

In future issues of the newsletter we will feature additional resources on these and other topics of interest.

Sources: Union-Tribune archives and news sources.

WHO PAYS FOR SENIORS?

There are many myths surrounding the cost of care for seniors and who is going to pay for what. I hope these words will help to clarify some of the questions.

Medicare is medical insurance for people over 65. As medical insurance, it covers most doctor visits, hospital care, short term rehabilitation services and care and drugs. These costs are related to treatment of an illness or condition.

Medical (in other states it's Medicaid) is national medical insurance that covers long term care. It

pays for care for people who have run out of money and cannot afford private pay. It ONLY pays for nursing homes/convalescent homes in California. There is a shortage of available beds paid for by Medical and therefore, seniors must go on a waiting list for a Medical bed.

All other types of retirement living are **Private Pay**. Seniors pay for assisted living, memory care, independent living and residential care homes with private pay, from savings/ investments, retirement income, long term care insurance or VA Aid and Assistance. These types of care facilities do not work with the government to collect the board and care monthly charges and that's why they are only private.

VA Aid and Assistance is a financial assistance program for veterans and surviving spouses of veterans. If you are living in an assisted living community or receiving professional home care and are a veteran by their definition, you are eligible for between \$999/mo and \$1800/mo.

Contributed by Sydney J. Kennedy, CSA – Eldercare Advisor with A Place for Mom, Inc. Ms Kennedy is a member of SDMS. Her interface with seniors has been approved by Paul Ward, SDMS Vice President.

FYI: It is very important that you keep the Society advised of your current address, phone number or name change. We need to keep our information up to date in order to prevent our newsletters or any other correspondence from being unable to be delivered.

Also, the Society has openings on the Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving on the Board and getting involved with the Society, please call the office. We need fresh ideas.

We also need the services of a lawyer who is knowledgeable of equipment leases. If any of you have that knowledge or know someone who does please call the office. The need is urgent.

I would also like to remind all of our members of the importance of having an up to date Living Will and Medical Durable Power of Attorney with a copy to their doctor and their next-of-kin that has been chosen to speak for them when they cannot speak for themselves. So many of us forget or have never heard about these items and they are so important when the time comes they are needed.

A PLEA FOR YOUR HELP!

It is very difficult to ask our wonderful, devoted, loyal members who have been very generous in the past, to help us even more. Unfortunately, the Society has reached a plateau where our very survival is at risk. Without raising our Lifetime Membership Fee or asking for annual dues (which would be cost prohibitive), we need to ask for your help once again. With the economy affecting all of us, the Society has cut back as deeply as we can. We are desperately in need of any donations you can manage to send at this time.

Indeed it would be a tragedy for an institution like ours, which has survived the peaks and valleys here in San Diego County for over 50 years, to finally succumb due to lack of funds. We have no intention of letting that happen if there is any way we can prevent it. As you can see, we no longer put out a fancy newsletter. We are no longer sending out the donation envelopes that have always been included with our newsletter and were a handy reminder to mail in your donations. We have over 10,000 members and only a very

small percentage of you have found it in your heart to contribute over the years. Our only income is from your one time Membership fee and donations that we receive. You get so much in return. Any amount will help. If each of our 10,000 members contributed only one dollar, that would finance our Society through most of next year, so please don't think a small donation will not help or be appreciated. We also need help bringing in new members. We have never been able to afford to advertise so we rely on referrals from other members, family, clergy, hospice and social workers. Word of mouth helps keep us growing.

If you belong to a Sr. Citizens group or any other organization and would like for someone to come speak at one of your meetings and tell your other members about the Society, just call the office. If you live in a Mobile Home Park, Assisted Living Facilities, Senior Apartment Complex, etc. we

will have someone contact you to set up a time and date to come and talk about the Society and all of it's wonderful benefits.

Also remember that all of our members are not Seniors. We have many middle aged and younger members.

Anything you can do to help us gain more members and bring in more money is desperately needed.

Thanks so much for listening and thanks in advance for your financial help. Our mailing address is San Diego Memorial Society, 4885 Ronson Ct., Ste J, San Diego, CA 92111. 'Til next time.....

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!