

*Apologies for the late newsletter... our printer died and we were waiting for delivery on the new printer!*

## Chair's Report

As Spring 2023 is here, FAMSS is able to start strategic planning for the next 3 – 5 years. The past few years have been a holding pattern, as we waited for the pandemic to subside. The board will soon decide our “next steps” to ensure Saskatchewan has access to simple, dignified and economical alternatives to increasingly costly funerals.

I want to take a moment to thank those of you that donated to FAMSS. Without you, we would not be here. One of our goals is to remain financially secure and we are.

Please join us at the AGM to hear our guest speaker Allan Rath. He will talk about the financial aspects of planning for our passing.

We encourage everyone to practice prevention protocols to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

## Speaker notes AGM April 3 2022:

### Rob Weiler: MAID

Live Streamed via FaceBook

Speaker: Rob Weiler, Medical Director for the Saskatchewan Medical Assistance in Dying Program. Rob is a former anesthetist with 25 years of experience; he has given many presentations on



Bob has a near-death experience

MAID since the Federal exemption was granted in June 2016.

The MAID movement started with the case of Sue Rodriguez in 1993. She applied to the British Columbia Supreme Court for an exemption from the criminal law which prohibited anyone from either assisting in the death of another person or consenting to be killed. Sue was supported by MP Svend Robinson, but ultimately denied by the Court, based on the Criminal Code.

In 2015 a new case was allowed by the BC Supreme Court. It was confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada on the basis of the Canadian Charter of Rights, with the required amendments to the Criminal Code being passed by Parliament in 2016.

The name of the law was changed from Physician Assistance in Dying (PAID) to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) to reflect the large role of nurse-practitioners, who often are women. Rob noted that

## FAMSS AGM 2023

Saturday April 1  
Mayfair United Church  
902 – 33<sup>rd</sup> St. W. Saskatoon  
**1:30-3:30**

Enter on East Side (Avenue I North)

**Guest Speaker:** Allan Rath is a Certified Financial Planner and Investment Specialist. He will discuss the different investment vehicles that can be used for saving for funerals, and ways on how to set up these funds so your executor will have access to the money. He will also discuss the pros and cons of making bank accounts joint with right of survivorship. As there are many different nuances specific to individuals, Allan will try to answer any questions related to estate planning. This is your opportunity to ask any financial questions you have! – Open to the public

**Break: Refreshments**

**AGM to follow** – for members only

no practitioner can be forced to act against his or her conscience.

The original Federal conditions for applying were:

1. Have a grievous and irremedial medical condition
2. Have intolerable suffering (including psychological)
3. Experience serious disability &
4. Reasonable foreseeability of death.

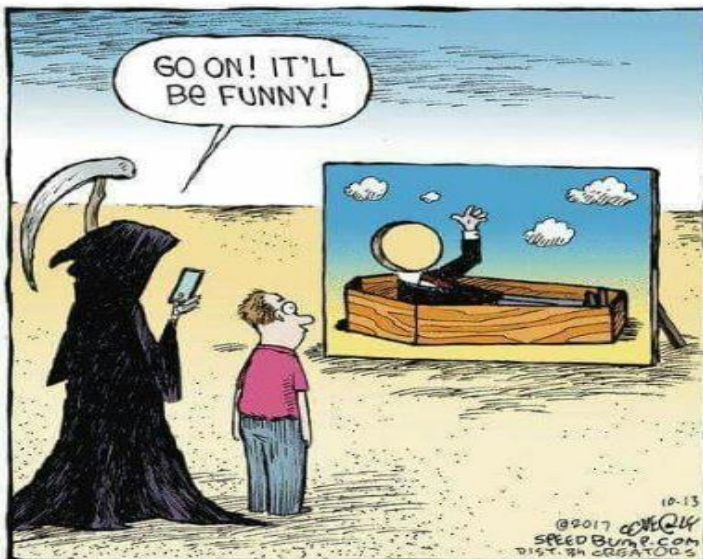
(Federal law was changed in 2021 – removing condition #4).

In Saskatchewan MAID is operated under the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Quality of Care Program. See [Medical Assistance in Dying | SaskHealthAuthority](#)

Access to MAID in Saskatchewan is via an 811 call. A total assessment is done including consultation with family members, not just a technical checklist. The patient must be over 18, be medical insured in Saskatchewan (to prevent medical tourism), competent to give consent and be fully informed. Because the legislation has to protect people from coercion, it requires that applicants know and understand all options.

The program is based in Regina but there are several professionals throughout the province who are involved. A program member is always present at the time of MAID being administered. The program also has an administrative manager who ensures reporting to the Federal government.

MAID deaths are currently called “unclassified” by the SHA, as in many cases they are not suicide, i.e., they are not driven by a desire to die but to escape suffering and an inevitable loss of control. However, MAID applicants are advised to check their life insurance policies, as they may still be denied coverage under suicide exemption clauses.



*“Let’s explore this feeling that people are trying to cheat you.”*

All aspects of the MAID program are patient-driven. The initial MAID application is only an assessment. The assessment interview may be done in-person or virtually. It must be done directly with the patient requesting MAID. It used to require two witnesses and a 10 day reflection period, but this has now been reduced to one witness and no reflection period for patients with a foreseeable death. Non-foreseeable deaths still require a 90 day waiting period. The patient is then required to complete a written request and to participate in an information session. The MAID Team will access and review their medical records. Federal law requires two independent medical assessments. If the patient does not want family informed much more consultation is needed.

Death is usually scheduled weeks or months in advance, but dates can change depending on the patient’s condition. The actual procedure usually occurs in the patient’s home and final consent is first given in private by the patient to the MAID representative to ensure there is no external influence on the decision. Consent can be withdrawn up to the last second. Sask MAID requires that two medical people be available to then witness final consent. The patient must have the capacity to provide consent at the time of the procedure, unless their death was deemed foreseeable and they established an “Advance Consent Arrangement”. Advanced Consent does not have to be re-affirmed at time of death. It carries the advantage of removing anxiety that the procedure may be withdrawn if the ability to affirm consent is lost before a date is set.

However, sometimes re-assessments must be done if a patient's condition improves or new treatments become available. The MAID Team has the right to refuse access to a request if they believe that MAID is not the right solution to a patient's condition.

The procedure generally involves the intravenous injection of a medication causing a loss of consciousness, and stopping of the heart and breathing. The physician will then pronounce death and complete the Medical Certificate of Death.

Rob noted that MAID is intended only for people who want to retain or recover the control that their disease has taken away. Just knowing that one has this option can greatly reduce anxiety. MAID applicants are a very select group. 95% of cases are "linearly" straightforward, with no change in consent.

He also noted that "intolerable suffering" is totally subjective, and even good palliative care is not perfect in pain management. Drugs used in such care may produce hallucinations, and being under care may still represent a loss of control to the patient.

There are two basic pathways for all terminally ill patients:

1. The natural process, with interventions towards maximal physical life extension
2. Processes ensuring maximal patient control, including MAID.



"The day after I died, the sun came up as usual and the world went on without me. I wasn't expecting that!"



Advances in medical care have changed attitudes towards death over the last 20 years, from "doctor knows best" to shared decision-making including the patient's family.

Dementia poses a difficult problem due to the gradual loss of ability to make decisions, including changing one's mind. Other hard cases which are being discussed at the Federal level are minors with terminal diseases, and patients with severe chronic psychiatric illnesses. Mental illness alone is currently excluded from eligibility.

Only 2% of deaths in Saskatchewan are by MAID, compared to 7% in Vancouver and 4% in the Netherlands. Neither Switzerland nor Oregon provide any medical assistance; the death must be self-administered. No other countries do MAID better than Canada; we are one of the most progressive.

There are many things to consider when preparing for death, such as preparing a will, distributing gifts and mementos, wrapping up technical and social media accounts, planning for the care of dependents, and saying final good-byes. Patients accessing MAID must also make arrangements for the disposal of their bodies after death. Organ donations can be arranged, but generally there is less chance of such a patient's organs being in acceptable condition. Costs of the procedure are not generally covered with the possible exception of the cost of transport to a medical facility.

Advanced Care Directives (ACDs) do not substitute for MAID even if legally witnessed, as lawyers are not authorized to register consent to MAID. The main benefits of ACDs are the pre-death examination of options and discussion with family and loved ones.

Notes by Roger Schmitz – Communications

"I want to thank you for giving us a start on funeral planning. God Bless you."  
Myrtle S.

## Christmas Raffle - Printer

For the past year, FAMSS has limped along with an old 2012 printer barely clinging to life. This is not the first printer we have worn out in operation of the society! You will be happy to know we got every penny out of the old printer as it complained vigorously through the last 100 envelopes this year!

FAMSS requires a printer for letters, forms, envelopes, manuals, newsletters and brochures. We send 300 newsletters by snail mail and almost 500 newsletters by emails. This goes to over 1000 active FAMSS members.

Our Board member, Karen Rath took the initiative to start a "Raffle Fundraiser". Members were encouraged to support FAMSS with a twenty dollar purchase of a square. Once the 100 squares were sold, we drew the winning numbers using a random number generator. Our draw was held in December, with the following prizes; first \$500, second \$300, third \$100 and fourth - a free FAMSS membership. We raised enough funds to purchase a new little workhorse printer! I want to thank Karen for all her work!



## Funeral Advisory and Memorial Society of Saskatchewan

Minutes AGM: April 2, 2022 at 2:00 PM

**Board Members Present:** Linda Smee, Roger Schmitz, Wynne Andrade, Celine Andrade, Karen Rath, David Millard, Susan Cross, Patricia Shabbits & Kathleen Weary

**Members Staying for the Meeting:** Lynn Oliphant, Bernadette Slager, Jean McKen

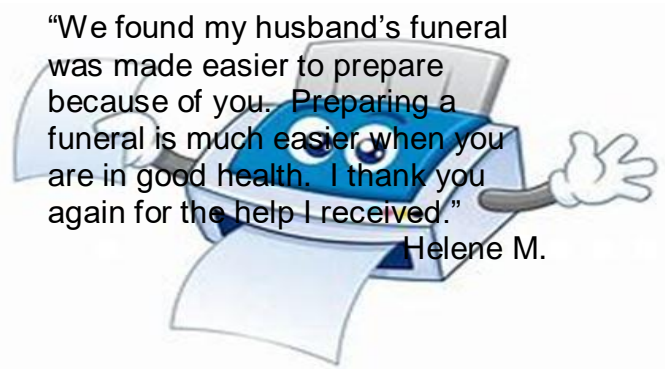
**Individuals attending the Presentation:** Barb Ames, Julie Gyoba, Allan Rath, Florence Quail, Jacqueline Quail, Elain Orvadahl, Alan Ryan, Dianne Peacock, Dr. Rob Weiler

**Total Members Present: 21**

Call to order: Kathleen called the meeting to order at 2 pm. She thanked everyone attending, appreciated the members that could not come, explained some housekeeping items, refreshments, and that we would try to be Live this AGM.

"We found my husband's funeral was made easier to prepare because of you. Preparing a funeral is much easier when you are in good health. I thank you again for the help I received."

Helene M.

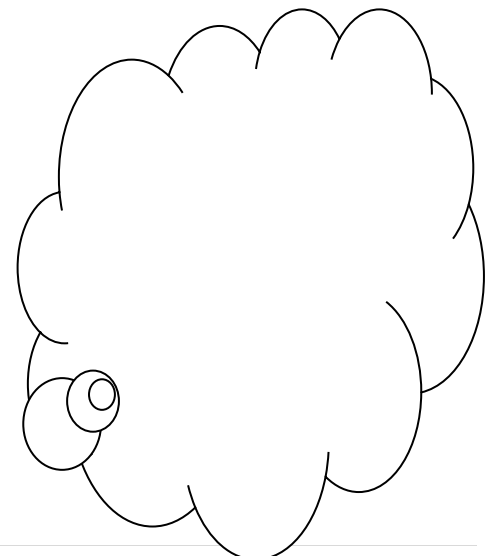


1. Adoption of Agenda: Motion to accept the agenda as presented Lynne, Wynne seconded & adopted by consensus.
2. Guest Speaker: **MAID: Dr. Rob Weiler**  
Very interesting discussion on how MAID evolved over the years, the assessment process, how death is labelled, and advanced consent. Discussion and questions followed. For further information, please see the Speaker on Facebook (April 2, 2022,) or email [infor@famss.ca](mailto:infor@famss.ca) and we will email the notes.

~meeting resumed 3:30~

3. Approval of the minutes: AGM, September 25, 2021, Motion by Lynne, Wynne seconded & Approved by Consensus.
4. **Reports:**
  - a. **Chair:** Kathleen gave a general discussion on FAMSS. Since Covid, this is the first time we have managed to be in compliance with the non-profit act for the AGM.
  - b. **Membership:** Susan mentioned that membership changes over the years, but we are averaging between 30-40 new members each year. 2021 saw 40 new members. She continues to send out new kits and replacement kits to our members. Of our 313 mail members, ten letters have been returned. We expect the mail members to slowly dwindle out.

- c. **Treasurer:** Dave remarked on the Profit/Loss and Balance Sheets. We are in a fairly



stable position. These numbers were presented as an additional handout due to some corrections. Kathleen provided some thought on the issue of dwindling funds. It is mainly the donations that keep the organization floating. We may need to consider an increase in our Lifetime Membership fee and perhaps charging a transfer-in fee. The Board will be evaluating these options.

**Moved** by Susan, seconded by Dave that we waive the auditor's review as our income is less than \$25,000., Carried Unanimously.

d. **Marketing:** Karen reported that slowly people are looking at Facebook and sharing our page. She reminded us to share and like in order to increase our presence on the web. She has just started with the Website. It is a work in progress.

**Moved** by Lynne, Seconded by Bernadette to adopt the reports as presented, Carried Unanimously.

5. **Election of Directors:** Dave Millard has resigned as the Treasurer. He is willing to become a Director at large.

#### **Elected by Acclamation for 2 year term 2024**

Chair: Kathleen Weary

Membership: Susan Cross

Director-at-large: Dave Millard

Director Communications: Roger Schmitz

Director-at-large: Linda Smee

#### **Terms continuing for 1 more year**

Vice Chair – **Open**

Treasurer – **Allan Rath** - elected by acclamation for a one year term.

Secretary – Celine Andrade

Director at large – Wynne Andrade

Director at large – Karen Rath

**Motion** by Wynne to change the signing authority to Kathleen Weary, Susan Cross and Allan Rath. Second by Roger, Carried Unanimously.

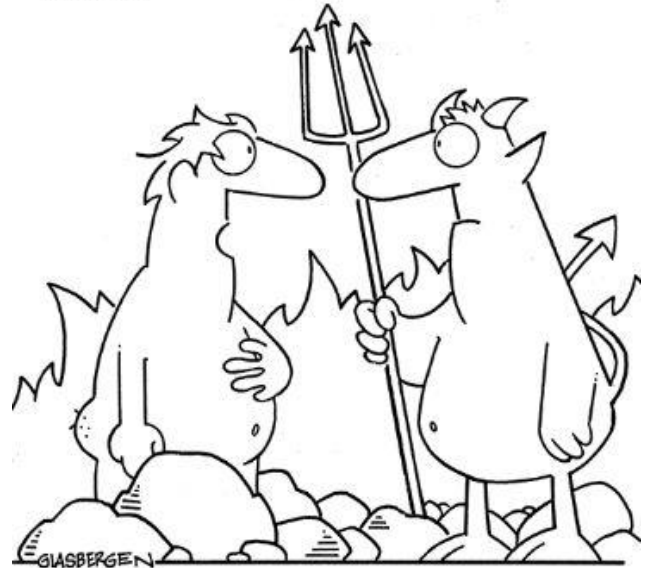
#### **Round Table:**

Big thanks for the wonderful guest speakers we have had over the past years.

Some Fundraising ideas were offered.

Thank you for the Directors of the Board for the hard work and time invested in FAMSS.

**7) Adjournment:** Lynne at 3:55



"I forgot I had voice-activated navigation when I told my stupid car to go to Hell."

#### **WANTED: FAMSS Secretary (Board Member)**

- ✓ Participates in and takes minutes of Board meetings monthly (except for July & December), as well as the Annual General Meeting (2 hrs/ meeting)
- ✓ Prepares and circulates draft minutes to other Board members for accuracy and files official minutes online (3 - 4 hours per month)

#### **New Life Time Membership & Transfer Fees**

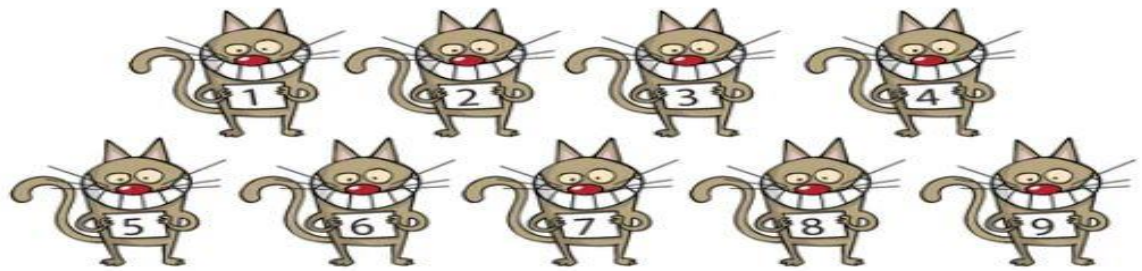
Membership fees have slowly crept up over the years. In 1967 the fee for a lifetime membership was \$5. For 2023, our membership fee has increased to \$50. This fee provides members updated kits, annual newsletters, extra forms and support from the FAMSS volunteers. We have members from 1975 that still enjoy our newsletters and donate to the cause! Thank you Pat B!

In 2023, FAMSS also implemented a transfer fee. When members move from another jurisdiction (BC/AB), they can transfer their memorial membership to our membership for \$25.00. Previously, this was a free service, but considering the increased costs of paper, toner, printers, and mailing, FAMSS was no longer able to offer this without a fee.

**Your Society depends upon  
Memberships and Donations as our  
primary sources of revenue.**

# Volunteers

FAMSS has volunteers that run the phone line, deal with membership requests, create membership kits, setup and send out newsletters, maintain our membership database, watch over the finances, execute raffles, prepare for the AGM, work publicity booths, update our materials and attend our Board meetings. This requires a dedicated team. I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone on the Board for their efforts in keeping FAMSS running so smoothly!  
K Weary: Chair



## Membership/Donations

**FAMSS,**  
P.O. Box 1846, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 3S2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

I require a printed newsletter

Life Membership (\$50 each) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

## Profit and Loss

January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022

Income	2022	2021	Difference
Donations	\$1,100.00	\$2,055.00	(\$955.00)
Square Raffle	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00
Memberships	\$550.00	775.00	(\$225.00)
Record Fees	\$450.00	300.00	\$150.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$3,200.00</b>	<b>\$3,130.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Service Fees	5.00	2.00	3.00
Room Rental	100.00	100.00	0.00
Office Supplies	106.64	348.00	(241.36)
Postage	732.89	825.17	(92.28)
Printing	278.99	378.00	(99.01)
Publicity	744.26	770.43	(26.17)
Telephone	626.64	625.91	0.73
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,594.42</b>	<b>3,049.51</b>	<b>(455.09)</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>605.58</b>	<b>80.49</b>	<b>525.09</b>

## Balance Sheet

Assets	2022	2021	Difference
Chequing	3,811.90	1,954.01	1,857.89
GIC	1,285.23	1,280.75	4.48
Shares CU	5.00	5.00	0.00
Prepaid Expenses	169.82	284.57	(114.75)
	<b>5,102.13</b>	<b>3,524.33</b>	<b>1,577.80</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accts Payable	1,160.56	0.00	1,160.56
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>3,941.57</b>	<b>3,524.33</b>	<b>417.24</b>

