President’s Message: Big Government or Self-Government

In the recent Virginia election, Republicans lost control of both houses of the Virginia General Assembly. Republican messaging failed to answer the Democrat talking points on guns, abortion, ERA, and welfare, among other issues.

There is an answer, and it was stated by Attorney General William Barr in remarks presented at Notre Dame on Oct. 11, 2019. The problem of government is that while people are capable of great good, they are also capable of great evil. A free government depends on individuals restraining and governing themselves. Barr quoted Edmund Burke, who stated, "Men are qualified for civil liberty, in exact proportion to their disposition to put chains upon their appetites."

This restraint comes only from a religious people. Barr also quoted John Adams, who said, "We have no government armed with the power which is capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion."

John Adams’ son, John Quincy Adams, further stated, “The laws of man may bind him in chains or may put him to death, but they never can make him wise, virtuous, or happy.”

The Founding Fathers, who were Christian, relied on the Judeo-Christian faith to check men’s appetites, by providing rules of behavior, by turning men’s hearts to do good instead of evil, and by providing strength to comply with those rules. That faith created the freest and richest nation on earth, a nation whose freedom and opportunity attract believers of all faiths from all over the world.

Barr has been criticized for espousing Christianity as a public official, but where is the criticism of his logic? Moreover, his critics misinterpret Thomas Jefferson’s letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, referring to a “wall of separation between church and state.” Jefferson was saying that the state should not interfere with the church. He was not saying that Christianity should be banned from the state.

Government, fundamentally does not reside in legislatures; it resides in families. Where families fail, nations fail. Family is based on marriage; marriage is based on virtue; and virtue is the product of faith.

Faith and family answer many Democrat talking points. Most gun violence, by far, occurs as a result of family breakdown. Family regards children as a blessing, not an inconvenience, which eliminates the need for abortion. Since strong families raise self-sufficient children, abortion wouldn’t be needed to thin the welfare rolls. The major cause of federal deficits is the aging society that does not have enough young people to pay for the care of the longer-living elderly. With the ideal of family and child-rearing restored, there would be more children to care for the elderly.

Regarding equal pay for equal work, there are biblical cautions against defrauding laborers of their just wages. Regarding poverty, there are many biblical injunctions to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick.

With the family restored, taxes would fall as welfare rolls are depleted and jails emptied.

William F. Buckley, Jr. stated that “the duel between Christianity and atheism is the most important in the world ...” The Democrat party is the party of atheism. When Trump, in a State of the Union speech, acknowledged dependence on God, Republicans cheered while Democrats sat silent. However, Republicans, while giving lip-service to faith, have, like the Democrats, spent the last half-century looking for secular solutions. When the Supreme Court banned the Lord’s Prayer from public schools, the Republican Party should have made reversing that decision the Party’s lead issue. Instead the Party walked away from it.

The Republican Party has become the salt that has lost its savor and is “… good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”

To win elections and cut taxes, the Republican Party needs to become the champion of the Judeo-Christian faith, the faith that created a nation that believers in other faiths flock to. As faith grows, families, not legislatures, will govern the nation, and self-government of individuals by individuals will render the big government, secular welfare state and its high taxes, unnecessary.
### Your Safety in Greater Jeopardy

Fairfax County’s Sheriff Kinkaid, recently re-elected, will continue to release of more criminal aliens sought by ICE. In 2018, Kinkaid terminated the agreement with ICE.

Notice to thieves: the new Commonwealth Attorney won’t prosecute property crimes under $1500 as felonies — only as misdemeanors. So control your greed and the law will go easy on you.

### Look for More Traffic Congestion

Fairfax Forward, the County’s plan for future development, calls for greater residential and commercial density, with almost no improvement in roadways. In fact, the county is converting many road lanes into bike lanes that will also be used for 10 mph scooters. Bikes and scooters may use the center of the lane, decreasing the average speed from 35 mph to 10 mph. The few roadway improvements will be toll roads and toll lanes.

### Virginia’s Budget Problems

Aubrey Layne, Virginia’s Secretary of Finance, has worries about the budget: Medicaid growth is at the top of his list, followed by the mandatory recalculation of the state’s contribution to local schools. He listed transportation funding as a potential budget problem, along with the growing concerns that the Virginia Retirement System will not meet its investment projections and will need additional state infusions (i.e., taxes).

The state lottery is now creating worry, with reports that an explosion of unlicensed and untaxed gaming machines is deeply cutting into the state’s monopoly on exploiting the wishful. State legislators likely will shut that competition down or shake down that industry for a cut, but not before next year.

Are you amazed that these worries come when the state will have a $1.6B surplus this year? Even the paltry rebate that taxpayers received in 2019 will be missing in 2020. There will be no surplus.

### Circumventing the 2nd Amendment

Incoming Majority Leader in the Senate, Richard Saslaw has already pre-filed bill SB-16 and three other gun bills. S-16 expands the definition of so-called “assault weapons” and bans, as a felony, the possession, sale or transport of assault-style weapons and larger ammunition magazines, semi-automatic pistols with more than a ten-round magazine, or shotguns that hold more than seven cartridges - none of which would be grandfathered to protect present owners in the legislation. The bill would also prohibit the importation of specific parts.

Yet another gun bill, SB-64, as introduced, could be interpreted as making traditional firearm safety and shooting instruction - and even skilled self-defense training - illegal under the rubric of preventing "paramilitary" training.

Governor Northam is contemplating using the National Guard to confiscate guns and withholding funds from jurisdictions that refuse to enforce gun-control laws.

### Sources for the Bulletin Articles

The sources for the information contained in this bulletin can be found at: [www.fcta.org/Pubs/Reports/2019-12a-fac.html](http://www.fcta.org/Pubs/Reports/2019-12a-fac.html)

### Crime

In general, crime rates are down in Fairfax County — substantially; however, crimes related to pornography, prostitution, and drugs are up. Suicides, especially among children, are also up. More young children die from suicides than from mass shootings or community violence. The School Board’s FLE program is complicit in the suicides and crimes. It destroys the natural innocence and modesty of children because of its graphic and casual treatment of sexual stimulation. To decrease suicides and these crimes, children need to trust God in good times and in bad. Such trust can be engendered by stable families, including stable extended families, that have high moral values and standards. They also need an FLE program that teaches them how to have good, stable families, linking sex and love.

### Maldistribution of Funds to School Systems

Virginia distributes tax revenues to the schools in accordance with Local Contribution Index (the LCI). An LCI of 1.0 means that the local jurisdiction can afford to pay for the full cost of its education system. The LCI ranges across the state from 0.1692 to 0.8000. The average is 0.3978. Fairfax County has an LCI of 0.6541. The LCI is computed by formula based on the revenue sources, the school population, and the general population of the jurisdiction. In counting the school population, it fails to distinguish between regular students and ESOL or Special-Education students or economically disadvantaged students. Fairfax County has large and generous programs for ESOL and Special Education. If the number of equivalent regular students were used in the LCI computation, Fairfax would get a larger share of the state funding. We see no proposed bills that would have the LCI based on the number of equivalent regular students.

Notice that no school system can afford to pay all of the costs - the maximum LCI is 0.8; therefore, while paying only approximately 16.5% of the education bill, as it does in Fairfax County, the state can control in every district the content of what is being taught.

### Middle-Income People Moving Out of Fairfax

IRS data shows that middle-income people have been moving out of Fairfax County. Middle-income people suffer the most when real-estate taxes increase. The population continues to increase somewhat because low-income people are moving in and people are having children. The county estimates that residential assessments will increase 2% this year and would need to increase the real estate tax rate another 3 pennies to pay for a 3.5%-to4.0% raise for school and county employees. Expect the Democrat-controlled board to raise real estate taxes at least 6% next year. The County is also considering increasing the real-estate tax rate by another 0.9%, ostensibly to have more money to subsidize affordable housing.

### Next FCTA Board Meetings

**Tuesdays: January 14, 2020 and February 4, 2019**

7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Only Board members may vote; but all FCTA members are invited.

Location: To be determined

Send an email to purves@fcta.org if you want to attend
Bureaucrats Playing Doctor

The Virginia Board of Medicine, consisting of unelected state regulators, is moving forward with their sweeping proposal to ban “conversion therapy” with a vague and broadly worded “Guidance Document.” They intend to ban any counseling or therapy that “seeks to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to . . . reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of any gender.” Such a regulatory ban would infringe the fundamental right of parents to care for their children and violate freedom of speech and free exercise of religion. Moreover, the Board has proposed banning such counseling not only for minors but also for adults. We can expect more sexual confusion, especially among minors and more taxpayer funds to pay for the results of the social disorder.

Global Warming/Climate Change

Jim Bacon, in his publication Bacon’s Rebellion, reported on a recent survey of Virginians as conducted by MassInc. The survey leads to the conclusion that Virginians support the government’s Transportation and Climate Initiative Framework (TCI). The TCI calls for reduction in greenhouse gases by taxing “companies that sell and distribute gasoline and diesel fuel.” Most people do not know the pros and cons of the TCI; however, the survey shows all of the benefits that taxpayers would realize. It fails to estimate the impact of the taxes on the fuel distributors, including the increase in fuel prices to the taxpayer. The survey was designed to support the TCI by taking advantage of taxpayer ignorance. MassInc apparently is not as unbiased as it claims to be. The Virginia government is now poised to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a cap-and-trade mechanism for reducing the carbon output of electric utilities, which will cost electric rate payers in Virginia multiple billions of dollars. Bacon and the FCTA try to combat such bias by publishing the facts, as Bacon did in exposing the illegitimacy of the survey.

Broken Promises or More Taxes

As Don Rippert has explained, many of the winning Democratic candidates promised deeper and broader social benefits from the state: namely, expanded Medicaid, more money for K-12, more money for higher education, more money for green initiatives, etc. Few of the winning Democratic candidates spent any time describing just how these expanded social benefits would be financed. Politics as usual. Regardless of their expressed political philosophy, the vast majority of Virginians do not want to pay higher taxes.

Democrats gambled that their “hate Trump” campaign, including the impeachment hearings, would be enough to win the Virginia legislature. It seems to have been, especially among the young and the older women. These same two groups might not be so happy with higher taxes — or broken promises.

FCTA’s New Monthly Newsletter

To see what the FCTA is doing for you, besides reading our quarterly Bulletin and the frequently updated newsworthy web site (www.fcta.org), we send a brief monthly message to members for whom we have email addresses. Send your email address to purves@fcta.org to be added to the list.

An Attack is the Best Defense

In April 2016, an attorney for Hillary Clinton’s campaign and the DNC separately hired Fusion GPS to investigate Donald J. Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, to try to unearth damaging information about him. Fusion GPS compiled research memos written by Christopher Steele that alleged a multifaceted conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russian government to help Mr. Trump defeat Mrs. Clinton. This collusion between the Democrats and Russia was subverted when the Democrats and the main-stream media made unsubstantiated claims, and much clamoring, that Mr. Trump had colluded with the Russians. The Mueller Investigation of Mr. Trump completely drowned out the outrage that should have resulted from the Clinton-Russian collusion. The attack was more effective than a defense of the Clinton campaign.

The then Vice-President Joe Biden was found colluding with the Ukrainian government to end an investigation of Hunter Biden and his suspiciously lucrative position with Burisma, a Ukrainian gas company. This action was subverted by the Democrats and the main-stream media with the accusation that President Trump colluded with the Ukrainian government in a quid-pro-quo arrangement. The Democrats ignored the transcript of Trump’s telephone call and replaced it with fiction generated by Adam Schiff. He hypothesized that Trump threatened to withhold military aid if the Ukrainian government did not investigate the Bidens. Hunter Biden was soon forgotten.

A similar strategy is being used by current presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg. His preemptive strike claims that being pro-life is being against science. The truth is that being pro-abortion is being against science. DNA science proves that human life clearly begins at conception. Abortion kills a human being. Buttigieg ignores this science. By claiming pro-life is anti-science, he has fired the first shot and hopes there is no return fire. “No, you are anti-science” is a weak response. Of course, Buttigieg says he has a husband. He is clearly confused about science.

At the state level, a similar strategy was used by Governor Northam. He stated his approval of infanticide, causing justifiable outrage by the electorate. The outrage was short-lived, drowned out by the discovery of his use of blackface in his college days. Blackface could be offset by apologies and denunciations supporting black causes; infanticide had no possibility of being offset. It was inadunate by blackface. The same blackface story also was used to obscure rape charges against Lieutenant-Governor Fairfax and blackface charges against Attorney-General Mark Herring.

We must beware of these strategies and not lose sight of the facts that are being obscured.

Social Services

President Trump is taking a major step to battle food stamp abuse by including a work requirement for many able-bodied Americans to receive food stamps. The requirement of 20 hours per week will affect 680,000 people, out of 36,000,000 people receiving food stamps. Our Governor Northam has countered Trump’s step by removing work requirement for Medicaid. California has tried programs similar to Northam’s. The results are illustrated in the five-minute video Hotel California (https://vimeo.com/373532022).
**Infanticide and You**

Governor Ralph Northam has restated his legislative agenda, which includes removing third-trimester abortion restrictions, including infanticide, expanding Medicaid, increasing gun control, and raising the minimum wage. Abortion and Second Amendment issues are being lined up for early legislative attention. The Democrat majority intends to move ever further left. Congressional Democrats 80 times blocked a vote to stop infanticide.

The rush to kill babies in the third trimester right up to birth and shortly thereafter will be on the legislative fast track again, following up on the early 2019 "Tran" bill that laid down the marker for the radicals. The only question is, will this new group of extremists publicly push for post-birth infanticide or simply allow the regulations to turn a blind eye when the killing of live birth babies inevitably happens? Will our tax dollars be used by the government to fund these abortions and the accompanying infanticide? Do we want to be complicit in infanticide?

Beware you older folks. If killing a human being — a baby — is permitted for convenience or costs, will you be next? Many are already advocating euthanasia. In some countries, euthanasia was introduced for patients who requested it for themselves. Gradually, relatives could ask. Now it is applied without the permission of the person to be killed or of relatives. It is totally the doctor’s choice.

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**Marijuana Legalization in Virginia**

Colorado gradually legalized marijuana, starting in 2000. In 2018, Colorado’s Division of Criminal Justice reported that court filings regarding organized crime’s involvement in marijuana increased from 31 in 2012 to 119 in 2017. Legalization was supposed to reduce organized crime’s presence.

At New York’s Mid-Hudson Forensic Psychiatric Institute, home of 300 criminally mentally ill defendants judged not guilty by reason of insanity, every inmate smoked marijuana. Studies show that:

- marijuana, like alcohol, is too weak to be a painkiller;
- the medical uses of marijuana are very narrow;
- teenagers who smoke marijuana heavily are three times as likely to develop schizophrenia;
- marijuana use is associated with increased opiate use;
- psychotics who use marijuana have a 50% chance of violence;
- marijuana is associated with a high rate of infant death due to neglect and abuse;
- marijuana is associated with increased violence by non-psychotics; and
- increased marijuana use is associated with increased murders.

Reporting of violent crimes does not include the offender’s drug use, but we do know that some gruesome murders were associated with marijuana but none of which were reported as associated with marijuana. Perpetrators of crime should be tested for drug use, to provide data on the role of drugs, including marijuana, in crimes.

So the data indicates the marijuana should not be legalized. Its use should be penalized. Possession, distribution, and cultivation of small quantities could be misdemeanors, expunged automatically after five years. Those who cultivate and distribute large quantities of marijuana should be charged with felonies.

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**Mountain Valley Pipeline**

The Mountain Valley Pipeline is a joint venture project of Mountain Valley LLC partners and Equitrans LP, to construct a 304-mile 42-inch natural gas pipeline. An additional 8 miles will help to connect new and existing pipelines throughout the region. The MVP project extends from southern Virginia to northwestern West Virginia retrieving its natural gas supply from the Marcellus and Utica shale sites to expectedly provide two billion cubic feet of firm capacity per day that can be used in commercial buildings in the Mid to the South Atlantic areas of the United States. The pipeline is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission because it is an interstate obligation.

The MVP website suggests the project has the potential to bring in state and local tax revenue along with jobs and economic growth to Virginia and West Virginia, a region where the impacts from a decline in the coal industry has caused a ripple effect that spans across the entire coal industry ecosystem. And if coal resources are not to be tapped, clearly expansion of Marcellus natural gas is the prudent alternative, since equivalent capacity from wind and solar is not practical and, even if implemented, would leave a horrible environmental footprint.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is the principal force opposing this pipeline. This organization has worked with Mountain Valley Pipeline officials in an effort to minimize mainly the environmental impacts along the Appalachian Trail, but ultimately remain staunchly opposed to this pipeline.

A more convincing opposition argument is espoused by the Virginia Mercury, which claims that: "While MVP is not the first pipeline to cross unstable terrain, nor the first pipeline to be located in landslide-prone Appalachia, MVP has the notoriety of crossing more miles of high-risk terrain (74% of its total length) than any other major natural gas transmission pipeline in the past two decades."

The pipeline's developers claim the work is 90% complete, but the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in October halted construction of the 303-mile, interstate pipeline in October, pending the outcome of a series of court challenges launched by environmental groups. Pipeline work in any event was due to be suspended during the winter months to prevent environmental damage.

Now given that the so-called environmental groups detest any form of fossil fuel, and given that their allies in the Democrat Party have taken over the Virginia legislature, completion of MVP will depend on the outcome from court rulings, and authorization by FERC. Any encouragement from Virginia will have to await a change in leadership.

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**Lower Life Expectancy**

Life expectancy has been decreasing over the past few years. The decreases were largely attributable to increases in mortality in midlife (ages 25 to 64). Major causes included increases in fatal drug overdoses, alcoholic liver disease, suicide, and hypertensive disease. If you want to live long, you now know what to avoid.

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**Welcome to Our New Members**

New and existing FCTA members can now enjoy the nifty FCTA gift: the tax history for their own real-estate property. See the sample at [http://fcta.org/Pubs/MonthlyMsg.html](http://fcta.org/Pubs/MonthlyMsg.html), after scrolling down to July 2019. Email your street address to Fred Costello (fac@facinc.com) and he will email you your properties’ history.
Fighting for Businesses
The FCTA’s Bill Peabody and Mike Albin spearhead the FCTA’s fight to make and keep the County business friendly. They write:

The recent increases in Department of Defense spending may have many feeling smug about Virginia’s economy. But just remember, that during recovery years 2010 - 2017 Virginia and Fairfax lagged behind many states and counties. If the next administration reduces DOD spending, local and state economic growth may stall. To prevent this, FCTA supports these measures:

1. Protect Right to Work (RTW). Virginia politicos and businesspeople alike have supported RTW, but this is about to change. Democrat majorities in Richmond will try to kill this golden goose. Virginia has been the epicenter of RTW and the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is headquartered right here in Fairfax County. The numbers prove our point: Private sector employment grew by twenty-seven percent in RTW states between 2001 and 2016 vs. 15% in union states... an 80% difference!

2. BPOL TAX – This tax is levied before a business makes a profit. Because it is unfair and regressive, most states have discontinued it. Candidate Terry McAuliffe offered to end it in his 2012 campaign, but he never made good on his promise. New companies and those companies considering moving need relief, not punishment. We want new fast-growing companies to move to Virginia.

3. Since the 1970's services performed that added up to $600 or less fell under the rule of “casual labor”. Adjusted for inflation that amount today would be over $2400. Raise the casual labor ceiling from the current amount of $600 to $2000. This benefits workers by raising their compensation and employers by eliminating bureaucratic red tape. The small companies, especially the self-employed, need hiring flexibility.

4. GREEN Energy - Virginia gets approximately 30% of its electricity from nuclear power. By completing the existing complexes at NNSA and NNSA we could almost double our nuclear power. Electricity from nuclear power. By completing the existing complexes at Anna and Surrey we could almost double our nuclear power.

5. Sick leave can kill your business. Recently Maryland passed the Healthy Working Families Act. The Act requires businesses with at least 15 employees to offer paid sick and safe leave. Smaller businesses must provide unpaid sick and safe leave. It’s heading our way. We’ll work to head it off.

School Busing and Racial Quotas
The Democrats divide the country into many groups: Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, Afro-American, Hispanic, White, Lesbian, Gay, Highest 1%, etc. They then cater to each group’s self-interest. They have made the U.S. a tribal nation, rather than the traditional melting pot – despite the much greater frequency of intermarriage. We have already seen evidence of tribal warfare in the hate-filled, street demonstrations.

Fairfax County’s One Fairfax program seeks to mix the tribes, not dissolving the tribal boundaries, not integrating them, just making them sit side-by-side. The School Board postponed until after the elections the redrawing of school boundaries. They did not want the redrawing to upset the voters. We are now stuck with the new School Board for four years. They will redraw the boundaries, even if more busing is required. Only when all high schools average the same in the SAT will the program be deemed successful. The School Board hypothesizes that putting poorly performing students with highly performing students will result in better performance by the currently poorly performing students. The School Board never mentions why some schools perform poorly. They do say that highly performing schools perform well because the wealthy parents hire tutors. They have never taken a survey to determine if that statement is true. They never mention home life or IQ as factors. But the Board wants to be able to claim it is doing something to narrow the racial gap between SAT scores – no matter the inconvenience to the parents and the greater cost to the taxpayer.

Exploiting the Poor
The Virginia government is considering allowing gambling companies to operate in the Commonwealth. One major objection is the competition with the Lottery that would result. The state should require all gambling institutions to show and publicize the estimated dollar value of the prizes per ticket — the prizes multiplied by the probability of winning. The Virginia Lottery does not require this of itself.

Because the poor frequently gamble, gambling takes money from the poor so the government has more to spend. Including the probable value of the lottery ticket would level the playing field for the poor. Only the wealthy have the time and knowledge required to evaluate a ticket. We dare not expect the government to introduce transparency into its gambling monopoly.

Taxing Convenience – The Bag Tax
Have fun at your upcoming grocery-store checkout – especially at self-checkout. The Virginia government wants you to pay five cents for each flimsy plastic bag you use. The checker or you at self-checkout must keep track of how many bags you use and which are exempt from the tax (e.g., those used for wine or fish). The store gets one cent and the government gets four cents. You get the expense and the inconvenience. The emotional appeal is that plastic bags are bad for the environment; however, science shows that they are better for the environment than paper bags. Oh, well, but plastic bags fly into streams and onto trees. Nobody has traced the sources of flying bags, but some at least come from the back of pickup trucks on their trip to the dump. Requiring that these trucks be covered, however, will not increase state revenue.

Don't Cry for Me Fairfax County
Our own review of recent election results reveals that those under the age of 30 vote overwhelmingly for liberals. These are new college graduates and reflect what they were taught. We suspect that they are taught socialism and communism as outstanding and equitable systems of government and economics. We ask our readers to educate them on the economic aspects by having them watch the following YouTube video, with its beautiful music, “Don't Cry for Me Argentina”, sung by Madonna: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33i_BAhuiE0.
What FCTA Has Been Doing on Our Members’ Behalf

Much has transpired at FCTA since the previous bulletin. For a complete list of the reports generated since then, go to http://www.fcta.org/Pubs/archivelist.html. The list of files will be of interest to many readers. To see only what FCTA has done, type into the search box the word blue. FCTA actions have the date and category in blue, so the search will result in the FCTA actions only. You will see the texts of presentations, letters to our politicians, reports on meetings, opinion articles, and research reports. Click on the title of the article and you can read the full report.

(Re)Join the FCTA and invite a friend to join too!

The Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance analyzes Fairfax County, Virginia, and Federal budgets. We publish the FCTA Bulletin, which explains budgets, exposes excesses, and offers solutions. We also maintain a website (www.fcta.org) with much commentary. Use this form or join online at www.fcta.org. We need your help to reach more taxpayers. For additional memberships, simply enclose a check with the new member’s name, address, and email.

Current members: Please renew if the date on your mailing label is before July 1, 2019. Thank you!

Enclosed is my annual FCTA membership dues of $25 ($10 for first year for new members).

Mail to the return address, above.

I’m enclosing an extra contribution of $ ________

I would like to volunteer. Please contact me.

Name(s) ______________________________________

Address ___________________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip _______________________________________________________________________________

Telephone ___________________________________________________________________________________

Email ___________________________________________