Special Interest Articles:

- Gov. Abbott’s Priority list
- Message from Senator Kolkhorst
- Congressman McCaul’s update
- FCRW’s 2017 Projects and Events

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“INFLUENCING TEXANS THROUGH EDUCATION”

From Deborah Frank, FCRW President

FCRW Members, although many of FCRW’s activities during this first quarter have been behind the scenes, we have accomplished a lot. We started with our board meetings on January 12 and February 13 where we lined out our objectives for the year. These include our annual Literacy projects, our scholarship program - increasing our scholarship amounts to $800 per recipient, and scheduling a fundraiser in the fall. More details on these activities are in this newsletter. Additionally, our VP/Program Chair, Cindy Rodibaugh lined up excellent speakers for our first three general meetings. Throughout the year, we’ll continue our efforts to keep our members informed of critical legislative issues and the actions of our elected representatives, and engaged in our support of conservative causes.

GOD BLESS TEXAS.
GOD BLESS AMERICA.

Deborah Frank

Revisiting our 1st Quarter Monthly Meetings

Jan. 19 meeting—Held at Holman Valley Steakhouse. Our speakers were law enforcement officers from La Grange, Flatonia, Schulenburg, and the Fayette County Sheriff’s office. With the proceeds from last fall’s Trump sign donations, FCRW will contribute $2,000 towards the purchase of protective vests for law enforcement officers in Fayette County.

Feb. 16 meeting—Held at the Fayette Public Library in La Grange. Our speaker was Fayette County Elections Administrator, Terri Steinhauser-Hefner.

March 16 meeting—Held at Holman Valley Steakhouse. Cindy Rodibaugh and Jeanne Raley discussed the “hot topic” bills filed and being debated in the Texas legislature.

NEXT MEETING: Apr. 20, at La Grange City Hall. Speaker: MerryLynn Gerstenschlager, recently retired VP from Texas Eagle Forum, whose topic was School Choice. 6:30 PM

SAVE these Dates: Sep. 16: “Boots & Bling” fundraiser at the historic Casino Hall in La Grange.

Dec. 8: Christmas party and 2018 officer induction, 6:30 PM at Frisch Auf! Country Club.
WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS by Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst

In May of 2016, President Obama issued an edict that all school children could declare their own gender and use the restroom, locker room and shower of their choice. Thankfully, the newly-appointed Attorney General has since rescinded that order, saying it was done "without due regard for the primary role of the states." I agree, which is why I've been joined by over a dozen of my fellow state senators in authoring the Texas Privacy Act (SB 6). The bill codifies what most Texans already expect. The act designates separate showers, locker rooms and restrooms for males and females in public schools, colleges, universities, and government facilities.

Let's be clear, when we talk about a child declaring their own gender, we are talking about allowing male students to enter the female restroom and locker room. Unless we define boundaries, young men who are "curious" or hold more nefarious goals will be free to experiment, while girls and parents are left legally powerless. Schools will face lawsuits, and pit parents against school boards, as we have already seen in Fort Worth, Dripping Springs, and Pearland. Texas must set a sensible, non-discriminatory gender policy, or someone else will do it for us. We must put safety, and dignity ahead of social engineering that is disguised as civil rights. The Texas Privacy Act is inclusive, allowing personal accommodations for special circumstances while also respecting those who do not consent to a male entering a female restroom.

Let's remember that parental rights and women's rights are indeed human rights. Victims of sexual abuse often say that predators will seek any opportunity. The media has painstakingly ignored this point, instead framing the issue in every other context imaginable.

Some have made predictions that our economy may suffer if our state passes SB 6. The opposite is true. SB 6 allows private businesses to make their own decisions, while providing clear direction to public schools and government buildings, which will bolster our economy. A superb example is Houston, where voters supported a pro-privacy policy, then went on to successfully host the NCAA Final Four and the Super Bowl. Or look at North Carolina, which posted a $425 million budget surplus and announced 5,000 new jobs after addressing the issue.

Much has been made of the claim that our state may lose an entertainment or sporting event if SB 6 is passed. By this logic, where exactly does the boycott threat end? Do sports teams and Hollywood stars next decide our healthcare policy? Texas is the tenth largest economy in the world. We cannot sell our children's safety for thirty pieces of silver, or any price quoted by political shakedown operatives. As a former NCAA athlete, I am a product of Title IX and the advancements made in women's athletics. Since Title IX began in 1972, we have seen a 600% increase in college women's sports. Unless we act, those advancements may erode into a gender-fluid swamp of litigation. If males can instantly declare to be female, then what becomes of female athletics, or women's rights for that matter?

The Obama order was based on an idea that Washington D.C. can tell us that gender boundaries no longer exist. Unfortunately, anyone who disagrees may be labeled as intolerant or bullied into silence. This bill is about more than bathrooms; something much deeper is at stake. Texas was built on a moral foundation. Sam Houston spoke of "doing right," and risking the consequences. Houston's words still ring true, but incredibly today we risk consequences for the high crime of defending a woman and child's safety. Out-of-state activists have arrived to derail SB 6, but we won't be deterred. My job is to protect everyone's rights and tell the truth, even if I draw the wrath of liberal elites or agenda-driven journalists.

And the truth is that we need, and deserve the Texas Privacy Act.
Allen Neil Burns was the husband of former FCRW Treasurer, Billie Burns. He went to be with the Lord on Sunday, February 26, 2017. Allen loved life, family, playing softball, Texas Aggies, and serving the Lord. (Not necessarily in that order). After retiring in 2009, Allen and Billie moved permanently from Houston to Fayette County. They were active members of the First United Methodist Church in La Grange. Allen’s love of softball was a constant throughout his life. He played Senior softball for 28 years traveling to play on teams across the U.S, plus in London, Paris, and China. Allen in survived by his loving wife, Billie, of La Grange; his son, Brent A. Burns; a daughter, Catherine Burns, and her husband Jim Riviera; Patricia Long; grandchildren: Raul Hinojosa; Alyssa Calhoun and husband Jacob; Catherine Long; Austin Long; Rachel Burns; and Jordan Burns; great grandson, Logan Calhoun; his sister Glenda Minniece and her husband John, along with many cousins, nieces and nephews, and brothers and sisters in Christ. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Allen’s memorial service was held March 11 at the First United Methodist Church in La Grange. It was a wonderful celebration of Allen’s life full of service to God, family, and friends.

FCRW will be hosting another “Boots & Bling” fundraiser on Saturday, September 16, 2017. This time it will be held at the newly-renovated historic Casino Hall in downtown La Grange. Be sure to save the date. This is going to be a great event!!
Wednesday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m. ET
Homeland Security Committee, Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), Chairman


- **H.R. 1302**, Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel Exercise Act of 2017, introduced by Rep. Martha McSally (R-AZ), requires an exercise related to terrorist and foreign fighter travel, and for other purposes.


- **H.R. 1372**, Homeland Security for Children Act, introduced by Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ), amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to ensure that the needs of children are considered in homeland security planning. # # #
2017 FCRW Scholarships

As part of FCRW’s annual literacy efforts, we award scholarships to one college-bound graduating senior girl in each of the five high schools in Fayette county.

This year the board unanimously approved to increase the scholarships to $800 each. Scholarship application information was distributed to all the high schools in February. All submissions must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2017. The Scholarship Selection committee has been recruited with representation throughout the county. The committee consists of: Suzanne Ellis (Round Top-Carmine), Judy Cook (La Grange), Barbara Appelt (Schulenburg), Virginia Tripson-Huffer (West Point area) Brenda Fietsam (La Grange) Pat Schmidt (Fayetteville), Cindy Rodibaugh (Flatonia), and, of course, Carole Bourlon (La Grange). They will be meeting to select the five winners on Tuesday, April 18th.

LaMorris Thompson has volunteered to present in Schulenburg on May 17th. Round Top-Carmine’s awards ceremony is May 11th. No dates yet for the rest of the schools. Pat Settle has volunteered to present at La Grange. Any member who would like to be a presenter at Round Top-Carmine, Fayetteville, or Flatonia high schools should contact Carole at cbourlon@aol.com or 979 250-3634.

Thanks, again, to Carole Bourlon for her dedication to our annual scholarship project.

Scholarship criteria and application forms can be downloaded from our web site: www.FCRWTX.org.

Feb. 6, 2017  Report from FCRW Secretary Ursula Higgs RE: Meeting with Legislators

This past week I went to the State Farm Bureau Leadership conference with the Young Farm and Ranchers group. We met with our SD 18 representatives to discuss issues that are facing Texas farmers and ranchers. Below are some of the things we discussed with Senator Kolkhorst and Representative Schubert.

It is highly likely that the school choice bill will be favorably voted on within the Texas House and Senate. It has the Governor’s and the Attorney General’s support. Children should, at the end of this year, be issued funds to attend the school of their choice including homeschool options. Agriculture educators in Farm Bureau were worried how this would affect funding among smaller school districts if children choose to switch to a private school.

One big issue is water capture rights. Bills are being filed that protect our water capture rights as private citizen if the water is underneath our land. They recognize the difficulties big cities face in gaining access to needed water but agree that should not impinge upon a farmer or rancher’s right to their water.

Another issue is protecting the landowner in terms of Eminent Domain. Our legislators and Farm Bureau feel that citizens in our state are not being fairly compensated for their loss of land when eminent domain takes it and, if taken, the state should be responsible for ensuring the land is used for the originally-stated purpose. For example, the land outside San Antonio, where the Toyota manufacturing plant is, was taken by eminent domain for the Applewhite Reservoir. That reservoir was never completed. Additionally, we were told that a landowner does not have to take the first offer and that the eminent domain entity should pay all legal fees, including your retained lawyer. Also discussed was the rollback tax. I discovered this issue this year when I was taxed incorrectly by a county in which I own property which does NOT have a well pad site on it. Currently, if you get a well pad site on your property, that property’s tax value is changed from agricultural to commercial use and you are charged 5 years plus 7% back taxes on that land. It is important to note that, if a drilling company puts a well pad on your site, your contract should include that the company is responsible for all taxes associated with that pad site. Otherwise, you will be hit with a big tax bill. The proposed change within the state is to change that tax from a 5 year plus 7% rollback tax to 3 years plus 7% rollback tax. If correct, I would have had to pay 6 years of commercial tax with five of those years having an additional 7% added onto the bill on 5 acres of land; a HUGE amount of money for me. Fortunately, the error was corrected after I protested my tax bill.
Each spring, as part of FCRW’s literacy programs, one youth book and one adult book is donated to each of the four
gpublic libraries in Fayette County. Barbara Appelt, FCRW Literacy Chair, reported on the books that were selected by
each library. All four libraries – Schulenburg, Flatonia, Fayette County (in La Grange) and Round Top – selected “Rush
Revere and the Presidency” by Rush Limbaugh and Kathryn Adams Limbaugh as their youth edition book. For the adult
selection, they chose as follows: Schulenburg and Round Top selected “Three Days in January: Dwight Eisenhower’s
Final Mission” by Bret Baier and Catherine Whitney; Flatonia chose “Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker: The Unlikely
Friendship of Elizabeth Keckley and Mary Todd Lincoln” by Lynda Jones; Fayette County Public Library chose, “Martha
Jefferson Randolph, Daughter of Monticello: Her Life and Times” by Cynthia A. Kierner. As of mid-March, the book
presentations to all four libraries were complete. (Summaries of all these books were sent to FCRW members via email).

Additionally, Barbara gave 38 encyclopedic dictionaries, leftover from our 2012-2016 dictionary projects to St Michael
Catholic School and Weimar Elementary. They were very happy to get them.
I’m proud to report the State of Texas is exceptional. We didn’t get here by accident. We’re strong because of good folks like you who work, sacrifice, and give generously to ensure that liberty continues to guide Texas’ path to prosperity.

Can you possibly imagine the great things ahead of Texas today if our government in Washington, D.C. just keeps its promise to get its foot off of our throats? Or, better yet, decides to follow our lead?

Regardless, I have bold plans for this session of the Texas Legislature for 2017.

During my State of the State I named four emergency items:
1. Reforming child protective services
2. Banning sanctuary cities
3. Implementing meaningful ethics reforms
4. Passing a resolution for a Convention of States

Along with these emergency items we are hard at work to reduce taxes, defend our constitutional rights, protect the unborn, empowering parents with school choice, standing with our law enforcement, and many more.

It’s going to be a busy 2017. It’s going to be a lot of work. But with your continued support, I believe you’ll like the results you see.

During this session, please continue praying for me as I continue fighting to prove conservative principles — and tried-and-true American values — still work.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Greg Abbott

Food for Thought...

Quote of Year:
“I don’t know (nor do I care) how many attended Trump’s inauguration, but I can tell you exactly how many people attended Hillary’s inauguration. Zero. And that’s the only number that matters”.

(Author unknown)

“Too much of what is called “education” is little more than an expensive isolation from reality.”

Thomas Sowell

“The next time some academics tell you how important diversity is, ask how many conservatives there are in their sociology department.”

Thomas Sowell
And in closing… All I can say is: Thank you, Lord.

The Fayette County Republican Women organization is affiliated with the Texas Federation of Republican Women, and the National Federation of Republican Women, a body of over 100,000 women who support Republican candidates and causes at all levels of government.

FCRW is open to all Republican women and men who care passionately about the conservative cause. Education is a very important aspect of our mission. In support of that goal, we have several activities which involve residents throughout the county. We held our first Tribute to Women brunch in July 2010 and continued this event annually through 2014. This is a non-partisan event with nominations accepted for any deserving volunteer in Fayette County. Our 2015 fundraiser was a dinner event at The Weimary with very special key note speaker Congressman Michael McCaul. These fundraisers support our annual literacy projects and scholarships. We donate select books to the five public libraries in the spring and give an encyclopedic dictionary to each third grader in Fayette County in the fall. In 2011, we

initiated our annual FCRW scholarship program which is awarded to one graduating senior girl in each of the five high schools in Fayette County. Initially offering $250 scholarships, in 2017 we are offering $800 scholarships. Beginning in 2013, we offer pocket-size copies of the U. S. Constitution to everyone stopping by our Republican booth at the four-day Fayette County Fair, held over Labor Day weekend.

Please join us as we work to bring our Country back to conservative values and restore American freedoms!

God Bless Texas. God Bless America.

For more information about our organization, visit our web site: www.FCRWTX.org.

““The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.””

Thomas Jefferson