

**Board of
Trustees**

2004 Term

Arthur Snoke
Arville Stanley
Goldie Terrell

2005 Term

Marcia Bailey
Gary Schroeder
Jim Shotts

2006 Term

Alan Bayer
Isabel Berney
Darrel Clowes

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Cemetery survey completed

After more than a year of hard work our first cemetery survey is ready. It was extremely difficult just finding out what cemeteries there were in our five-county area since there is no comprehensive list of cemeteries published anywhere. We scoured the list maintained by the Virginia State Cemetery Board, examined the Internet, yellow pages of phone books, area funeral homes, and obituaries in local newspapers.

With our list in hand, our most difficult work was contacting the cemeteries. Knowing the location of a cemetery and finding out whom to contact were different

problems. We got a small response from our first mailing and had to make many personal calls and follow-up contacts. This only reinforces our resolve to provide accurate consumer information since it is evident to us that obtaining this information is no easy task.

Our published results are the best information we have. We will continue to update our files and we rely on you and others to help us maintain accuracy.

We appreciate all comments and information.

National FCA relocates

The national offices recently moved from Hinesburg, Vermont to South Burlington, Vermont. The new mailing address is 33 Patchen Road, South Burlington, Vt, 05403. The toll-free number, 800-765-0107, remains the same. Joshua Slocum is the newly appointed executive director.

If you belong to an organization that is looking for interesting programs, consider what the Funeral Consumers Alliance has to offer. We can deliver programs ranging from 10 minutes to one hour on various topics concerning end of life choices and how our organization benefits members.

Don't be surprised by obituary cost



We now include two obituary forms from *The Roanoke Times* with our new-member packets. The newspaper provides a short obituary for free and that form is clearly marked. If the other form is used or additional information sent, there is a charge per column line after the first five lines. Your local paper may have

a similar policy. Funeral homes usually provide obituary copy using the longer form and inform families that they will be charged accordingly. We want our members to be aware of the choices available. If you would like copies of the two forms, please call 540-953-5589 or e-mail us at fcvbr@bev.net

Thanks to our generous contributors



Our members continue with generous support. The September mailing carried a once-a-year request for contributions and our members responded. Now that we are a tax-exempt organization- 501(c)3, all of your contributions are tax deductible. We welcome them at any time. Our federal tax-exempt number is 17053227031002.

The Executive Board voted not to send individual letters expressing our thanks to those who contributed because the Board felt that our members would like 100% of their contributions to go to our work. We do want everyone to know that your contributions are appreciated and welcomed throughout the

year. They allow us to provide materials and resources to members and to our community. If you would like a letter or receipt for your donation, please request it.

Here is what one member wrote after receiving our spring newsletter. "I wanted to thank you for the mailing just received from the society, and tell you I decided to circle or highlight some of the items. The leaflets will go into a folder for my children, filled with information I intend to be helpful to them right after I have died."

We continue to honor requests from the public. Letting people know what choices are available is part of our tax-exempt mission.

"Our members would like 100% of their contributions to go to our work."

Highlights from the annual meeting

Dr. Clifton Bryant, noted author of the new two-volume work, ***Handbook on Death and Dying*** spoke on the Funeralization of America. Look for his informative chart on our web site.

President Isabel Berney reported on alliance activities during the past year. We have provided information for consumers in Botetourt, Newcastle, Floyd, Roanoke, Pulaski, Blacksburg, and Greenbrier, West Virginia. We also answered requests for information from Texas, Potomac Falls, Richmond, and Warsaw, Poland.

We applied for and were granted 501(c)(3) tax exempt status from the federal government and similar status from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

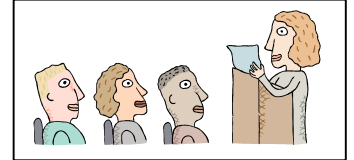
Here are some of our activities in a nutshell.

- An Episcopal church requested 30 of our pamphlets on grieving.
- An attorney ordered 24 pamphlets of *How to Plan a Memorial Service*.
- We distributed more than 100 pamphlets to participants of a "Planning for the End" program sponsored by AARP and the National Association of Retired

Federal Employees held in Blacksburg.

- We identified and surveyed cemeteries in our area. Results are included in this mailing.
- Three of our members presented at two sessions of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Blacksburg. The four-Sunday seminar was "End of Life Issues." Isabel Berney and Gary Schroeder spoke at the session concerning ceremonies. Isabel presented non-traditional options and Gary spoke on the role of the church. Marcia Bailey spoke at another session covering grief.
- We received positive feedback from our web site. "Thanks for opportunity to read your newsletter, you are ahead of Austin, TX in having it posted on website" and from FCA of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, "Something for us to aspire to"
- Membership continues to grow. We are 84 strong, 20 more than last year.
- The annual treasurer's report is available upon request.

For more annual meeting details, see our website.



"You are ahead of Austin, TX in having your newsletter posted on website."

**Funeral
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Alliance of the
Virginia Blue Ridge**

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.funerals.org/fcavbr

Executive Board elects officers



Marcia Bailey was elected president at the October board meeting. Marcia has been interested in funeral consumer issues for many years. She first joined the *Columbus Memorial Society*, an FCA organization, in 1968. Marcia, a retired social worker, moved to Blacksburg in 1993 and transferred her membership to the *Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Piedmont* in Charlottesville. When our affiliate was established three years ago, Marcia transferred her membership here. Marcia has been a Hospice employee and she authored our pamphlet, *When Someone You Care About is Grieving*.

Also elected were Alan Bayer, vice president; Isabel Berney, Secretary; and Darrel Clowes, Treasurer.

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