

Right to Life Newsletter

of Shelby County

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Volunteer Corner

We continue to need additional volunteers to staff the clothing center. If you could assist with one 4-hour shift per month, please contact Cassy at the office, 498-1812.

Mark your calendar

- 2011 March for Life in Washington D.C.: Monday, January 24.
- Deadline for submissions to the December newsletter: November 25.
- Board meetings: November 2, December 7, 7 pm.

Clothing center report

We served 105 people during the month of September, of whom 58 received free items, 10 took literature, and 4 were referred to the Women's Center.

Remember RTL

Please remember the pro-life cause when planning your estate or making funeral arrangements for a loved one. Remittance envelopes for memorial donations to Right to Life are available at the office.

Right to Life of Shelby County is a 501(c)(3) educational and service organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

40 Days Observance Draws to Close

Thank you to all those who participated in the 40 Days events. It was a wonderful period of reflection and action in the cause of life. See page 3 for a remarkable story to emerge from the participation of one of our members in a 40 Days for Life witness.



Life Chain

We had a nice crowd of one hundred pro-lifers at the Life Chain, where one of our Oratory Contest awardees, Jean Goette-moeller, presented an outstanding speech outlining a number of arguments against abortion. We are grateful to Jean, as well as to Deacon John Holthaus of Holy Angels Church, who offered the opening prayer.

Clergy Luncheon

The Sidney Daily News ran a great article on this event, at which area nurse Michelle Dieperink offered her post-abortion testimony of forgiveness and healing for the pastors and lay church leaders in attendance. A free-ranging discussion of the pro-life cause was followed by a prayer service. RTL connected with a number of clergy and churches and we look forward to cooperating with them in the future. Thank you to Pastor Jon Schriber and St. John's Lutheran Church for hosting this event, and to David O'Leary and Dan Jock for their assistance.

Rita Marker

Rita Marker's presentation, "Back Off, I'm Not Dead Yet" was also a success. An attorney and executive director of the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, she gave two talks on October 15, one at the American Legion Hall in Maria Stein, the other at Lehman High School.

"If a legal document can be misinterpreted, then you can be sure that, sooner or later, someone will misinterpret it," Marker warned. She spoke to attendees about the need for advance directives to guide their medical care, especially at the end of life. She stressed the need for clear language that cannot be open to legal challenge. So-called "living wills"—one form of advance directive—are inadequate, she explained. The typical living will is vague and open to interpretation. The durable power of attorney—another form of advance directive that grants power over end of life decisions to an individual of the patient's choice—is better, but in Ohio it can be overturned by a living will.

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Report Shows New Abortion Low in Ohio

Abortions have reached an all-time low in Ohio, according to a report released by the Ohio Department of Health. The 2009 Report on Induced Abortions in Ohio shows a continued downward trend in the total number of abortions performed. The report shows 28,721 abortions were performed in 2009. This is a three percent decrease over the 2008 number of 29,613. The number of total abortions performed in Ohio has seen a decline annually since 2000 and a decrease of over 40% from the all time high number in the 1980s.

"We are winning the fight against those who push abortion as the first and sometimes only choice for women in crisis," Ohio Right to Life Executive Director Mike Gonidakis said. "We continue to witness a trend of Ohioans moving towards a firm respect for life. One of the reasons for the continued decline in abortions has been the enactment of new laws which help young women make positive decisions for themselves and their babies. Whenever you have even the slightest legislative gain that protects women and defends her baby, it will make a difference," said Gonidakis.

The report detailed demographic information regarding women obtaining abortions. Those statistics include: 18% of women were less than 20 years old; 34% were between 20 and 24 years old; 83% were unmarried; 41% were black; 64% of women having abortions had only a high school education or less; and, 36% of all abortions were reported in Cuyahoga County, the highest in the state.

"Ohio Right to Life is grateful for the annual decrease in Ohio abortions despite the state's severe economic crisis," Gonidakis said. "We will continue to promote life-affirming options including adoption and will work to increase awareness of the more than 130 pro-life pregnancy centers throughout Ohio."

The 2009 abortion report can be reviewed in its entirety by visiting www.ohiolife.org.

Adapted from Ohio Right to Life press release, October 14, 2010.

Abortion Affects Shelby County, Too

The Ohio Health Department's report cited above also provides information more specifically on our area. Although there were no reported abortions performed in Shelby County in 2009, there were 2088 in Montgomery County (Dayton), the site of the nearest abortion clinic.

The report also gives numbers of abortion by zip code of residence of the mother. There were 35 abortions performed on women from Sidney (zip code 45365); 3 from Anna; 4 from Botkins; 3 from Maplewood; 1 from Ft. Loramie; 1 from Jackson Center; 2 from Houston; none from Kettlersville or Russia.

This is why it's so important that we supply the support and welcoming environment necessary--right here in our communities--or women to see that there's a better choice.

High School Essay Contests Approach

The National Right to Life 2011 Pro-Life Essay Contests are approaching. There are two contests: a Senior Essay Contest for Grades 10-12 and a Junior Essay Contest for Grades 7-9. Essays should be submitted between December 20th, 2010 and January 22, 2011. They must be postmarked by January 22nd, 2011.



Prizes are awarded in each contest: First Place - \$200, Second Place - \$150, Third Place - \$100.

Essays should address the question: What does abortion mean to you and your peers?

For more information please e-mail Michelle Fischbach at michellefischbach@yahoo.com, or visit the NRLC website at www.nrlc.org, under the "Special Events" tab. (See second page for essay guidelines.)

You Can Make a Difference

The following is an edited account of the experience of one of our members. There are many different ways each of us can and do contribute to the pro-life cause; this is one great example.

While peacefully praying at the Kettering Abortion Clinic this afternoon, I noticed two young ladies sitting under a tree. This struck me as odd because NO ONE is allowed to set foot on the property of the clinic unless you are a patient there. It appeared as if they were praying, so I wondered if they were protestors who dared to cross the lines and pray so close to the entrance. I soon learned that the young ladies were in fact patients who had just come out from their consultation appointment. Now, I know from experience, that most of these girls come out of the clinic with their heads down and quickly get in their cars and speed off as to not make eye contact with any of the peaceful protestors.



Fortunately, I had our 2-year old, “Emmie”, with me, because, as I pushed her in the stroller up and down the sidewalk and prayed, I noticed the one girl in particular staring at her. Finally, when I saw that they were done praying or talking, I asked them if they would like to hold her. The younger girl smiled and said no, but told me that she thought Emmie was absolutely beautiful. Well, to make a long story short, this opened up an hour-long conversation about her and the life of her companion, who turned out to be her older sister.

The older sister had 3 children already, and, unfortunately, 3 abortions. The older sister was just along for “moral support.” The younger girl is 18 years old and 10 weeks pregnant. She knows that abortion is wrong, but she doesn’t know how (or if she even wants) to raise a child. When we talked about adoption, ironically, she said, “Oh no, I could never just give a baby away.” So I told her about our little Emmie and that we are just watching her so that her young mother can finish school. No strings attached. When Emmie’s mom gets her schooling done, she will get her daughter back. I also explained that we have in the past taken pregnant teens into our home as well.

After all of this, I could tell her interest was really sparked. The older sister even joked that she could tell her younger sister was actually considering some of it. The younger sister asked for my name and number and said she would contact me if she needed help. She also told me that she has an appointment on Friday to have the abortion.

This member immediately sent out an e-mail asking for prayer support for the young woman planning to abort her child. It was Wednesday before the scheduled abortion. The following Thursday, she sent another e-mail. Her message says it all:

I just received word that the young girl I asked you to pray for last week DID NOT have the abortion and has chosen life for her baby! Thank you so much for your continued prayers . . . keep them coming (her due date is around the end of April)! This is such a beautiful reminder of the awesome power of prayer . . . we really can make a difference!

RTL Welcomes New Office Manager

A warm welcome to Cassandra Weaver, recently hired as Office Manager of Right to Life. Cassy lives near Sidney with her three children and husband, John. A member of Holy Angels parish, she has long wanted to work for the pro-life cause and is excited about cooperating with our members and volunteers.

We also bid farewell to Ann Stidd, who contributed so much to our organization during her time as office manager. Thank you, Ann!



Marker on Advance Directives continued from page 1

Instead, Marker recommended use of the Ohio Protective Medical Decisions Document, which designates an agent who shares the patient's values to make medical decisions in the event that the person is not able to do so. This kind of protection is increasingly important, Marker explained, because of the spread of assisted suicide and the mentality that undergirds it. She pointed to the legalization of assisted suicide in the states of Oregon (1994) and Washington (2008).

"Once assisted suicide is considered medical 'treatment', it becomes the cheapest form of treatment," Marker said. She cited the story of Oregon resident Barbara Wagner, who had a recurrence of cancer and the opportunity to be treated with a relatively new drug with the potential to prolong her life without adverse affects. Because of the cost difference, the state of Oregon's Medicaid plan declined to cover the pharmaceutical therapy--but it would have covered the cost of assisted suicide.

"Anyone over the age of 18 needs [the Medical Decisions Document]," Marker said. "Although we tend to think of such documents in term of the aging, the reality is that college students and young people can be involved in accidents or medical situations which require that someone make decisions about their health care."

In addition to the Protective Medical Decisions Document (PMDD), a variety of books and other material on end-of-life issues such as pain management, disability rights, and advance directives, are available from the International Task Force (www.InternationalTaskForce.org). The PMDD is also available from Right to Life of Shelby County.

Many thanks to Jen Bohman and the other volunteers who organized Marker's visit to the area.