

Life Voices

A Newsletter of the Pregnancy Support Center of Alternatives. Yes

Winter 2013



**Pregnancy Support Center of
Alternatives. Yes**

***Empowering Women to
Choose Life***

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Happy to get an "F"

I'm never satisfied with anything less than an 'A', but for once in my life I'm happy with a big, fat "F". That's right, NARAL (also known as "Pro-Choice America"), one of the nation's largest anti-life/pro-abortion groups, gave Pennsylvania an "F" on access to abortion and choice. The grade was based on the following:

- 82% of PA counties do not have an abortion provider (*Glory be to God*)
- Pennsylvania has an anti-choice governor and an anti-choice house majority (*we call them pro-life*)
- Minors must have the consent of at least one parent prior to an abortion (*unreasonable...really?*)
- Pennsylvania has the nerve to require that the abortionist offer the woman information about the gestation of her baby, the development of the preborn child, the physical dangers of abortion for her health, and alternatives available to her, including financial assistance if she bears the child. The mother is allowed under the law to refuse any or all of this information, but the law requires the abortionist to make it available. The woman then must take 24 hours to reflect on her decision before the abortion can be done. (*is it really too much to ask considering this is a decision that will end a life and a decision she will live with the rest of her life?*)
- Though legal for any reason during the first six months of pregnancy, abortion is restricted after 23 weeks gestation only to cases when the life of the mother is seriously threatened or when pregnancy would result in irreversible impairment of a major bodily function.
- Pennsylvania further restricts access to abortion by now requiring extra administrative regulations for facilities that perform abortions, including a mandatory site-inspection once a year; and lastly,
- Abortion facilities must be within 30 minutes of a hospital emergency room that has agreed to take emergency cases from the abortion facility. (*the nerve of our state.....not wanting to see another house of horrors like the Gosnell abortion mill*)

Yep, I'm proud to live in an 'F' state. Maybe we'll never see a reverse on Roe v. Wade, but states do have the power to implement some actions that help protect life and make it difficult for pseudo-doctors to open abortion 'clinics' in every town. That's why it is still so very important to elect pro-life candidates and let them know how you feel on the topic.

In closing, I am wishing a beautiful little girl a happy birthday. Her mother could have easily caved in to the pressures of a culture of death when faced with an unplanned pregnancy. When this child was conceived, her mother had just graduated college and was single, under-employed, in an unstable relationship, and scared to death to tell her strict, old-fashion parents that she was pregnant. Her mother courageously chose life. There have been many struggles along the way, but the mother has never regretted giving birth to this child. She believes abortion is too readily available and too often encouraged to women in her situation as the best and easiest way out. This beautiful little girl will be six soon, and she is the apple of her mother's eye. She thanks God that she didn't take the 'easy way out'. This little girl is also the apple of her grandparents' eyes and is the heart of the entire household!

Happy Birthday Bella!



Marge Ripepi Retires After 25 Years

Alternatives Yes was saddened last fall with the announcement of Marge Ripepi's retirement from the board of directors. She stated, "I want to express my gratitude first to my Heavenly Father for His direction. There was a need in the Connellsville area for pregnancy support, and those of us so many years ago followed His lead. We were a unique group, all wanting to help, all very naive and young and eager." Marge helped begin and build our pregnancy support center, and her determination and persistence was fundamental to the growth of our organization. Her volunteer roles over 25 years included serving as director, counselor, trainer, and board president. Thousands of lives have been touched, and many babies have been saved, because of her dedication. She has been an angel and a blessing to us and to many. We thank you, Marge, for all your service. Good luck in your relocation. Enjoy your family, your new counseling practice and your grandchildren.



WINNERS FROM THE 2013 PRO-LIFE CONTEST

6-8th Grade Essay Contest

1st Place: (see essay next page)

Marissa Pellis, 7th Grade, Greensburg Central Catholic

Two Honorable Mentions:

Kaeleb Lehman, 6th Grade, Conn-Area Catholic School

Abbey Sitko, 8th Grade, Geibel Catholic High School

9th - 12th Grade Multimedia Contest

1st Place: (see our website to view winner)

Vayda Farino, 9th Grade, Southmoreland High School

2nd Place: TIED (Both groups from Geibel Catholic)

Group 1: Kyle Kozura & Haley Hutchinson

Group 2: Gabi Omatick, Julia Alvarez, Joanna Medofer, Rachel Elias, and Angela Ehrhardt

3rd Place:

Livia Molinaro, 9th Grade, Murrysville

THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED!

Contest sponsored by Board of Directors

NEWS AT THE CENTER

- Last year was a record-breaking year with 1277 client visits.
- 90% of visits included an education session on either pregnancy health, parenting, or abstinence.
- Seven volunteers kindly donated 340 hours of time serving at the center.
- Our site audit from the state regulator was in full compliance with required standards
- Welcome to new volunteer Barb Mulich. Barb is a nurse practitioner who lives in Uniontown and works at Ruby Memorial. She will be with us one to two Fridays each month.
- Our main counselor, Lori Kooser, was just announced as the 2013 *Counselor of the Year* by Real Alternatives. She was selected from a pool of over 500 counselors statewide. She will be honored next month at a banquet in Harrisburg. Congratulations!

2013 Pro-Life Contest Winners



The Miracle of Life

by Marissa Pellis, 1st Place Winner, Middle School,
7th Grader at Greensburg Central Catholic Junior High School

There are many life miracles that happen all around the world every day. I was fortunate enough to experience two firsthand, the first one occurring before I was even born. My mom got salmonella and was prescribed Cipro. After going for a checkup, she got a phone call from the doctor asking if she knew she was pregnant. Not knowing this, she made an appointment to find

out how far along the pregnancy was and if the medication affected her baby. When the test results came back, my mom was asked to return to the hospital. She met with a specialist who questioned the accuracy of the first test and recommended that she go to see a gastroenterologist for a second opinion. My parents made an appointment with this new doctor, who quickly jumped onto the topic of whether the pregnancy was "planned or wanted." Not liking where this conversation was headed, my mom left his office, confident that she would love the baby the same with or without a birth defect. Eight months later, the doctors were proven wrong. I was born perfectly healthy. All life is precious and deserves a chance in this world, with or without an "abnormality."

My second, and most recent miracle, happened when I was eleven years old. My mom asked us what we wanted from Dairy Queen. When my dad came home with it, my brothers and I sat down at the kitchen table, and my mom said, "We have something to tell you guys." My reaction was to make a joke out of a serious situation by saying, "You're not pregnant, are you?" My parents both had the same facial expression until my mom asked, "Why do you say it like that?" I shrugged, and she continued telling us that she was indeed pregnant. Several months prior to that, I woke up, sat up in my bed and prayed that God would bless me with a baby sister. I had wanted a baby sister ever since I could remember.

A month passed before finding out the gender of the baby. I was, as always, outnumbered three-to-one on what everyone wanted the baby to be. My parents went to the doctors receiving constant phone calls from me, eager to know if I may have a potential little sister! Of course, I had to wait until they got home to hear the big news! I wasn't going to be daddy's only little girl anymore, but I was totally okay with that and prayed she would be healthy. Because my mom was over forty, the doctors were concerned. Seven months later, they were again proven wrong by my beautiful baby sister, Mia Rose. My life and the lives of my family have changed greatly since her birth. She is truly a miracle being the first baby in our family in over seven years. Both of my stories prove that even when all odds are against you, but God isn't, you can be given a miracle.

Marissa is shown here with her
brothers and baby sister, Mia Rose.



GROUNDBREAKING HELD

We broke ground in August for the long-awaited addition to our building. First the footer, then the concrete pad, then the walls, and then roof. The next set of guys moved in to start work on the interior, turning a big shell into the rooms our design engineer mapped out. As with many well-planned projects, we ran into some snags with wiring issues and heating/air conditioning issues, and then came the cold weather. The last two pictures show where things stand at the moment, but hopefully things will start picking up again now that warmer temperatures are in sight. Thank you to our landlord and all who are making this project happen!



Between the addition and remodeling of the old space, this new design will give us....

- an entry / waiting room for clients
- private receptionist office
- a much larger pantry for all our clothes and baby items
- a large multi-purpose room for group classes and meetings
- a kitchenette
- storage area
- a better sense of protection with security doors, cameras, and improved client flow
- room for more volunteers

A special thank you to Glenn Wolfe for his designing help. Thank you in advance to Steve Conko who is going to build the shelving in our new pantry. Lastly, thank you Dave Panzella for your kindness and faith.

THANKS, WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU.....Gifts Received from July 6, 2012 to February 1, 2013
What a Blessing From God. Truly, THANK YOU!

Special Memorial Monetary Gifts Received

- In Memory of Janice Dillon (mother).....from Brian & Amy Dillon
- In Memory of Alexander Wisniewski (father) on his birthday.....from Maryann Chury
- In Memory of Rose Wisniewski (mother).....from Maryann Chury
- In Memory of Jeffrey Chava.....from John & Danielle Daley
- In Honor of Marsha Callaro.....from Your Family at Christmas
- In Honor of the March for Life.....from Maryann Chury
- In Memory of Rose and Alexander Wisniewski (parents).....from Kathleen Schurer
- In Memory of Miscarried Grandchild.....from Kathleen Schurer

Other Miscellaneous Gifts

Baby Shower, Giving Tree, and Special Collections Baby Gifts
 Connellsville Catholic Churches Combined Christian Mothers Advent Party....St. John's and Trinity Lutheran Churches Ladies Group.... Conn-Area Catholic School..... Jacob's Creek United Methodist Church.... Everson Evangelical.... Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Uniontown.... Wesley United Methodist Church.... Catholic Daughters of America Court Lambing #314

Homemade Baby Blankets & Hats....Pam Remaley....Carolyn Shelky & Friends.....Hearts and Hands Quilt Guild..... Church of Jesus Christ LDS Women

Other Unique Giving.....

- Connellsville Presbyterian Church - Children's Bibles
- Bob and Bernie Edwards.....Masses, Prayers, Special Dolls, and Large Basket of Candy for Clients at Halloween and Christmas
- Connellsville Church of God Women....Bibles and Spiritual Books

**Grants & Financial Gifts
 \$11,280 Received**

- The Marilyn K. Kiefer Foundation Grant - \$2000
- Board of Directors Essay Contest Fund - \$450
- Anonymous - \$5,000
- Buchanan Church of God - \$100 Monthly
- Everson Evangelical - \$50 Monthly
- Rotary Club of Connellsville - \$250 grant
- Connellsville Church of God - \$161 October Tithing and \$109 December Tithing
- Everson Evangelical Women, Ladies Missionary Group - \$125
- Connellsville Presbyterian Church - \$100
- Calvary Assembly of God Women - \$100
- Catholic Daughters of America, St. John's Scottsdale - \$85
- St. Joe's Youth Group, Everson - \$50
- Good Search - \$28
- 11 Other Individual Donors

BABIES ON THE MOVE..... Sometimes our babies get invited out to some really fun activities around the area. Thanks to St. Joe's Youth Group and to the Diocese of Greensburg's Youth March for Life Group. Thanks also to the ladies from the Catholic Daughters at St. John the Baptist in Scottsdale for having us at their annual baby shower.



