

# Life Matters

Discussing life matters,  
because life matters

July 2012



Editor: Jim Burke

## Upcoming Events

Saturday, July 21 Iowans for LIFE's Annual Benefit Dinner; more at: <http://iowansforlife.org>

Tuesday, August 14 Coalition for Life of Iowa Monthly Meeting

Ongoing Join us on the sidewalk outside of Planned Parenthood!

Summer Enjoy the summer!



## Helping Us Take the Heat

It's been hot in recent weeks. We've had a few reports from people who have continued the vigils outside of Planned Parenthood that said people stopped by and helped them out.

In one case, a woman stopped by and handed the group money to buy bottled water. In another case, a man we knew handed a group enough bottles of cold water that everyone had one.

People remain supportive of our efforts. We thank them for their generosity.

People notice when we take a stand on the sidewalk. They really take notice when we aren't fair-weather activists. When it's scorching hot, freezing cold, raining hard, or a blizzard strikes and we remain out there, people know we stand for something.

Thanks for continuing the effort. Your efforts are appreciated.

### Pro-Life Walk Across America

Even in the heat of this summer, pro-lifers spread the pro-life message as they walk across America



## Two More Iowa PP Facilities Close!

Two in March + Two in July = Four this Year...So Far!

Back in March, Planned Parenthood (PP) closed two facilities. One closed in Storm Lake, after Sue Thayer led 40 Days for Life outside the facility she once managed. The other closed in Knoxville, Iowa.

By July 19, PP will close two more facilities. One will close in Newton. Again, they announced that they will merge the facility with the one in Ankeny, as they claimed other closures were their way of merging, which somehow gets passed off as growth.

When facilities don't grow, it's hard to claim growth. It's also interesting that they would close facilities before opening new locations. A while back, PP announced their intention to open 5 new facilities in Iowa. They hoped to open one in Marshalltown and one in Ottumwa. It would have been easy to close Newton if they had opened one in

Marshalltown and then call that part of their growth strategy. The same is true for Knoxville closing without opening in Ottumwa.

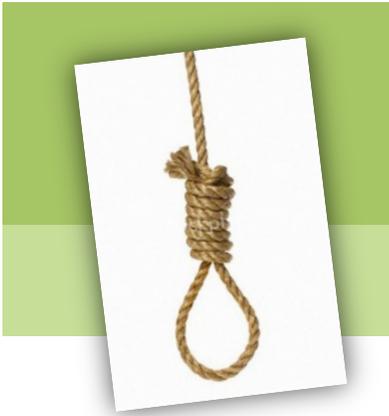
A Des Moines facility very near one of their other abortion facilities will close. Of all the claims of merging, this one makes sense.

These facilities faced 40 Days for Life and similar activities. We see great progress, as this amounts to four closures in just four months! As facilities close, we face different challenges.

For one, where there is demand, people will seek the same products and services. It's important to raise awareness of alternatives. In Cedar Rapids, we have Birthright and Bridgehaven for pregnancy support and other services. The city also has two clinics that offer free or low-cost medical services.

The other concern we face is

overconfidence. PP appears to retreat when they close facilities, but they bought the Cedar Rapids facility last year, and they have opened a new location in Dubuque. They raised over \$7.5 million in 9 months as part of their 5-year, \$11.5 million capital campaign. Funds like that made it possible for them to purchase what they used to rent, and move into more modern facilities elsewhere. We can't afford to underestimate their resources. We hope to continue to grow our 40 Days for Life efforts and point people to alternatives. We also aim to continue to educate people about life issues. Abortion often takes center stage, since an entire industry profits from it and promotes it. But there are many life issues we try to cover in our educational forums.



# The Death Penalty

Support for the Death Penalty Continues to Drop,  
Perhaps for Good Reason

In Iowa, we live in a state that does not use the death penalty, but we live within a nation that does use it. So we rarely engage the issue as often as people living in certain other states.

Reasons people support it include:

- “Eye for an eye” penalty
- Revenge
- Cost savings
- Deter/prevent crime

**Penalty:** But many people don’t realize some of the flaws in these justifications. For one, scholars generally agree that the Biblical passage that mentions “eye for an eye” was not a prescription for justice, but a way to limit the response to injustice as to prevent revenge, which is a form of injustice. For instance, if someone murdered one person, someone might use the passage to justify killing the murderer. But if someone murdered 10 people, it’s not so easy to kill the murderer 10 times to pay for the crimes.

Compared to other forms of punishment, there is no way to compensate anyone wrongfully punished, since death is irreversible.

**Cost:** For people believing the death penalty yields cost savings, since we won’t have to pay for their incarceration until their natural death, they are wrong. To minimize the number of wrongful deaths, the government requires mandatory appeals, which span many years. Inmates facing the death penalty spend enough years in prison, that the costs of their incarceration and the legal costs of the appeals exceed the cost of life imprisonment. At least 120 people have been found not guilty after having been sentenced to the death penalty. Fortunately, their fate changed before the sentence was carried out.

**Deter/Prevent Crime:** Both sides of the debate either promoting or opposing the death penalty can point to statistics that suggest that it either raises or lowers crime. When

examining the evidence suggesting that crime rates drop when the death penalty exists, the graphs look good. But if one looks at the graphs of crime rates in nearby states or nations, a very similar graph emerges. This suggests broader trends independent of the more localized change in punishment.

On the other hand, the analysis that shows that crime rates are higher where the death penalty exists shows much stronger correlation, rather than coincidence. Even when adjusted for population densities, the crime rates appear higher where they implement the death penalty.

**Alternatives:** Crime rates tend to remain lower in areas that institute restorative justice, where the justice system seeks to resolve the issues that often remain unaddressed by tougher crime programs. Such restorative justice programs bring good results for the families of the victims, families of the offender, plus the offender

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and anyone else involved.

Some family members of the victims of crimes where the criminal was sentenced to death have even said that the death of the offender doesn't solve anything, and it doesn't make up for their loss. They often prefer life imprisonment.

In severe cases that often lead to the death penalty, alternatives

exist. Life imprisonment is always an option. We all die anyway, so some people suggest that living out one's life in prison and thinking about what they did is more of a punishment than just ending it prematurely.

**Religious Perspective:** None of us are perfect—we all sin. We all violate God's laws, and could face eternal imprisonment or

death. But Jesus paid the price for our sins. The Bible guides us to repent—to change our thinking. Even if criminals spend the rest of their lives in prison, it's good to allow them a chance to repent, and seek the redemption of their souls.

**Conclusion:** With all of this, most of the justifications for the death penalty seem baseless.

## Crossroads Pro-Life Walk Across America

Each summer since 1995, a group of pro-lifers cross the nation, starting at the Pacific Ocean, and ending at our nation's capitol. Each participant wears a shirt that says "PRO LIFE" in the largest letters that fit on the shirt.



They gradually add new routes, and now have four routes across the US, plus one route through Canada. Other nations have even begun similar walks.

The nearest route passes through Southern Minnesota, and another passes south of us,

passing through St. Louis, Missouri.

The people who take part are usually college students, although some young adults participate. They start in mid-May and end in mid-August.

In the past week, all of the US routes faced triple-digit temperatures at the same time. It's one of many challenges they face. But like us, people offer them cold water and other forms of encouragement.

They take turns walking, sometimes during the day, and sometimes during the night. They go to churches every day and promote the pro-life movement. Sometimes, they allow some to walk while others drive to locations off their path to spread the message there.



Last year, they visited Dubuque County Right to Life, and several years ago, they visited Cedar Rapids. We may not be on their route, but sometimes we get a chance to encounter them anyway.

Participants conclude that America is VERY pro-life, and they suggest that the experience is life changing. One who walked even suggests it's a way to grow more deeply in faith than anything else he knows.

The website for the group is: <http://crossroadswalk.org>

## Pro-Life Challenge



### Use Goodsearch to Help Raise Funds

As Marty explained, it's very easy to raise money for our organization by going to [goodsearch.com](http://goodsearch.com) and designating the Coalition for Life of Iowa as your charity. Then use it for your searches and using the GoodShop part of the site when shopping online. Funds help us spread the pro-life message and host events.



### Problems Setting Up?

If you'd like to help us raise money, but need help setting up GoodSearch, just contact us at the following email address:

[coalitionforlife@gmail.com](mailto:coalitionforlife@gmail.com)

## Fundraiser Search

By Marty Lammers  
Treasurer

As treasurer for the Coalition, in considering fundraising opportunities available to us, I thought of one we often overlook. It's a very simple one.

When there is information which we need to access on our computer because we just don't know the answer, we just "google it". I have changed my "google it" habit to a "goodsearch it" habit. The Coalition earns \$0.01 for every search you do. There are a few of us in the Coalition who have begun to do this. We receive payment from Goodsearch annually. There are also affiliated sites GoodShop, GoodDining, etc. All of these have many member retailers (Amazon, BestBuy, Apple, Staples etc. (over 2500+)) who extend contributions to our organization for purchases which we make through the GoodDining, GoodShop, and other affiliated websites.

Although it may not have the initial draw of the "Roses for Moms" event, it, with very little Coalition involvement, made over \$65 for us just last year, and over \$180 total! There are some organizations that are making more money, annually, than we make with the "Roses for Moms" project. Let's begin to "GoodSearch it"!

You simply go into [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), setup an account, identify the Coalition for Life of Iowa as the organization that you support and start to "goodsearch it" when you are looking for information online.

Be honest with the site. If you try to rack up lots of searches just to raise money for us, they will wipe out the money earned by you, and may even block your computer from future searches.

When you use their website to search, you'll earn money for our group. It can keep you logged in, but make sure it remembers you, since sometimes it may log you out. If you're not logged in, the search may not

count. It's one of the easiest ways to raise money. Remember to GoodShop when doing online Christmas shopping or planning travel.





## Spread the Word!

Do you know other pro-life people that might like to subscribe to this newsletter?

- Tell them about it
- Forward a copy to them
- Print a copy to hand to friends

Do you have ideas you want discussed in future issues? Contact us with your suggestion. We may consider including your article if you prefer to write your own.

Did you spot some issues with this newsletter that really bug you? Then perhaps you'd like to help edit it. Contact us to see how you can help.

We welcome advertisers for a reasonable price.

## Remember, Life Matters!

### Coalition for Life of Iowa

P.O. Box 864  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

### To: Anyone Interested in Life Matters

Only available electronically

Request by email: [coalitionforlife@gmail.com](mailto:coalitionforlife@gmail.com)