



Life Matters

Discussing life matters,
because life matters

January 2016

Editor: Jim Burke

Contents

- Page 2 Upcoming Events
- Page 3 National March for Life
- Page 4 Government Update:
Caucus for Life
- Page 5 Midwest March for Life
- Page 6 40 Days for Life
- Page 7 Cedar Rapids March
for Life

**We welcome newcomers
to our meetings and
events**

For Life!

This year will be a pivotal year for life! January is loaded with marches for life. February begins 40 Days for Life. Nearly every headline in this month's newsletter includes "for life."

Good news from Dubuque could create greater challenges for us in Cedar Rapids. We explain this in more detail on page 6.

Marches for Life were each unique this year. Our bus to the Midwest March for Life helped bring many of our members to Des Moines for an extremely powerful event! Our local march became a motorcade. And the weather brought indirect attention to the National March for Life.

Upcoming newsletters will aim to break apart the false dichotomies many people are led to believe. Rather than an either/or argument, we will cast light on the additional dimensions to issues that should help reveal that we aren't as divided as abortion advocates try to make us believe.

- Coalition for Life of Iowa Board

Upcoming Events (for Life)

Tue, Feb 9

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Board Meeting

Get involved in the decisions that guide our organization!

Where: St. Patrick’s Common Grounds Coffee Shop
120 5th St NW, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Tue, Feb 23

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Working Meeting

Get involved in planning the activities for our organization!

Where: St. Patrick’s Common Grounds Coffee Shop
120 5th St NW, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Feb 10 – Mar 20

7 a.m. – 7 p.m. daily

40 Days for Life Starts

Join us in prayer!

Where: Sidewalk outside of Planned Parenthood
3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: http://lifeiowa.org/40_Days_for_Life.html

Tue, Mar 8

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Board Meeting

Get involved in the decisions that guide our organization!

Where: St. Patrick’s Common Grounds Coffee Shop
120 5th St NW, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Sun, Mar 20

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

40 Days for Life Closing Rally

Join us in prayer!

Where: Sidewalk near Planned Parenthood from 5 – 6 pm
3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA

Then Godfather’s Pizza
3647 1st Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: http://lifeiowa.org/40_Days_for_Life.html

Tue, Mar 22

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Working Meeting

Get involved in planning the activities for our organization!

Where: St. Patrick’s Common Grounds Coffee Shop
120 5th St NW, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Fri, Apr 15

9 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

4 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Going Natural: A Healthy Choice

A scientific analysis of the chemistry of sex, fertility and relationships

Where: Mt. Mercy University, Betty Cherry Heritage Hall
1330 Elmhurst Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Free open panel discussion from 4-6 p.m.

“I am appalled at how little women and men know about how sex really works in our bodies. As a woman, I am very angry that we have not been told the truth, and have in fact been lied to by the proponents of sexual freedom and free love.”

- Vicki Thorn



A snowstorm loomed in the minds of this year's marchers at the National March for Life.

Contingency plans were made before any buses left Iowa.

Iowans for Life organized 5 buses, and Dubuque County Right to Life organized 4 buses.

Two buses did not go. A bus from Cedar Rapids went to Washington D.C. containing students from Xavier High School and Mount Mercy University. The weather prediction led to the shortening of the trip by one day.

The night tour of the monuments was bumped up a day. The limitations on the number of hours a bus driver can drive in a day caused the night tour to turn into a walking tour. Normally the bus would drive us around. This was the main opportunity to see Washington D.C.

The next morning started early at the youth rally. The decision to return immediately was made

partway through the rally. Students saw the signs of what they were about to be told, so it was no surprise to many of them. But they were disappointed.

We made our way back to Union Station to board the bus and get as far away from the approaching storm as possible. We didn't stop until we were near Pittsburg, PA. Other buses from Iowa left after they finished the march. One car with some members of the Iowa Right to Life staff also left before the march.

It didn't take long before we found out that anyone who waited for the march to begin before leaving the nation's capitol was stuck in Pennsylvania. The bus from Cedar Rapids and the car from central Iowa made it home in the early hours of Saturday.

The buses that were stranded were not allowed to continue forward due to problems with trucks pulling out of a tunnel. They parked on the side of the road in a line-up of vehicles that they would later realize was 32 MILES LONG!

While the national media tended to avoid coverage of the national march, local stations across the Midwest created their own news stories about local pro-lifers who were stranded. While the national media uses the Associated Press's guidelines to replace "pro-life" with "anti-abortion," local stations in many cities referred to the event as the "March for Life" or "pro-life."

The setback in travel led to a boost in coverage mentioning the event. Everyone was able to get home on or before Sunday, as originally planned.



Government Update: Caucus for Life

Iowa Caucus

The Iowa Caucuses are coming up on February 1. Most people think of the Presidential preference portion of the event. But caucuses also offer the opportunity to introduce party planks that work their way into the county, state, and national party platforms. It's also where you should learn how to participate in the conventions that gather the planks to define your party's platform.

Show up at least 30 minutes before the caucus begins. Some precincts may choose to not let anyone in late. Please research the candidates within your party ahead of time. Consider writing some brief platform planks prior to going to the caucus. You will find it much easier to have the wording you want for issues that matter to you. It's too easy to forget about a plank or to phrase it poorly otherwise.

Iowa Legislature

January marks the beginning of the 2016 legislative session, and threats to life have already begun. It's our civil duty to communicate with our lawmakers, and the first amendment acknowledges the right to petition our leaders.

We predicted that a lawmaker would introduce a bill regarding assisted suicide. Sen. Bolkcom has introduced such a bill.

We should strive to protect the right to life. We should value the dignity of human life at all stages, rather than deny dignity by intentionally taking it. It is not good to send mixed messages, where the lives of suicidal teens are valued, but not the lives of people at most other stages of life. Life is not ours to take. Seek non-lethal solutions.

There could still be any number of other bills introduced in 2016. Many people wonder if a bill will cut funding to Planned Parenthood.

Federal Actions

The Supreme Court will hear a challenge of a Texas abortion law that requires abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals, and for abortion clinics to meet the standards of ambulatory surgical centers.

HR7 (No Taxpayer Funding for Abortions Act) still sits, waiting for the Senate to act.

The Senate voted to cut funding from Planned Parenthood. The President promised to veto such bills, and the House passed a budget that funded Planned Parenthood.

Texas

Texas will draw attention with the cases involving the videos the captured Planned Parenthood employees negotiating the prices for baby body parts.



Midwest March for Life

Everyone who rode the bus to Des Moines for this year's Midwest March for Life made it clear that they had an amazing time at the event! We hope to bring even more people next year!

The bus we chartered made transportation to and from Des Moines easier for our members. The bus left at 7 in the morning. This allowed Catholics within the group to attend a mass that was associated with the day's activities.

The march convened on the western steps of the Iowa Capitol Building. The speakers kept the outdoor speeches brief, and the march took the shortest route to reach the Iowa Supreme Court building. A few more

things were said at the end point in the march. Then everyone took buses to the indoor part of the event. It was a bit cold that day, but it was warmer than the Cedar Rapids March for Life. It was nice having our bus so near the event. No one needed to stay in the bus to keep warm, but it was an option.

If you haven't attended the Midwest March for Life, it's easy to overlook the main part of the event. It's not the march. We listened to speakers after the march. The indoor speaking event allowed us to relax in a warm, comfortable building. We sat down for a free lunch. The lunch was amazing, as always! The freewill collections to defray the costs should have done well.

The keynote speaker was Melissa Ohden. Many of us had heard her speak before, since she spoke at an event we helped sponsor in Cedar Rapids a few years ago. But each of us picked up something new in what she shared. No one could leave without having tears in their eyes at multiple times during her talk.

Melissa survived an abortion where she was chemically burned for five days, instead of just three. The remarkable story that followed that gradually connected her with various members of her birth family brings out very touching experiences.

Other speakers filled out the day with useful pro-life information.



40 Days for Life begins on Wednesday, February 10th. I've never felt more of a need to see us cover as many prayer vigil hours as possible. There is some great news that next month's newsletter might describe more. But the same great news will create a greater challenge for us in Cedar Rapids.

The Planned Parenthood abortion facility in Dubuque will close soon. They make it sound like they might bring webcam abortions back to Cedar Rapids and expand their hours to help absorb clients from Dubuque. So WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Can you invite some friends and family to join you during 40 Days for Life? Dubuque had people praying outside of Planned Parenthood EVERY HOUR they were ever open for the eight years Planned Parenthood tried to do business there. I would love to see us cover every hour the Cedar Rapids Planned Parenthood is open.

People see us praying, and it has done an amazing amount of good. We have seen several lives saved. We have seen the number of abortions drop by more than 40%. But 40 Days for Life also involves fasting.

Could you give up something in your life and fill that void with something that draws you closer to God? The Bible tells us that some evils can only be driven out by prayer AND FASTING.

We won't have a kick-off rally this time, but we will still have a closing rally on Sunday, March 20th. If you could recruit some new people to join you, we can show Planned Parenthood that we will step things up if they try to bring more business to Cedar Rapids. We can't allow abortion to victimize children, women, and even men.

Pro-Life Challenge



Pray & Fast!

Join us in prayer and fasting for 40 Days for Life from February 10 through March 20!



Help Us Recruit!

If you can help us recruit more members during 40 Days for Life, it would help us help women and children, while standing up to Planned Parenthood's attempt to grow!



Cedar Rapids March for Life

This year's Cedar Rapids March for Life turned into a motorcade. A few people chose to brave the extreme cold and wind, since we are accustomed to it after many years out on the sidewalk.

We started the journey at St. Matthew's Catholic Church. Vehicles followed a vehicle that pulled a trailer with a pro-life sign on it.

Upon arriving outside of Planned Parenthood, some people prayed outside on the sidewalk, while other people prayed inside their vehicles. We returned to St. Matthew's Church for refreshments inside.

People gathered inside to warm up. They had their fill of a chili dinner and other side items. We shared information about the upcoming 40 Days for Life effort.

We stand for life regardless of the weather. We do our best to look after the best interests of our members. We knew it was important to convert it into a motorcade for the safety of everyone involved. It's great to see people who are prepared for the elements and are able to carry out the march regardless of weather conditions.

The weather at every march for life created challenges. We thank everyone who perseveres for life. Thanks for making our march a success.

We look forward to a time when we don't have to march in support of life in opposition to so much of what goes on in the culture. But we will always have to remain vigilant and actively promote life no matter the culture.

CFLI Board

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Spread the Word!

Do you know other pro-life people who 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.

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Remember, Life Matters!

Request electronic copies by email: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Coalition for Life of Iowa

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