



Life Matters

Discussing life matters,
because life matters

January 2018

Editor: Jim Burke

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We welcome newcomers
to our meetings and
events

Another New Year!

This year is off to a great start! We had a well-attended March for Life in Cedar Rapids. The last of the four Planned Parenthood facilities closed last year finally closed its doors at the end of the year. Late-breaking news from Planned Parenthood reveals that Cecile Richards is stepping down from leading the national Planned Parenthood business.

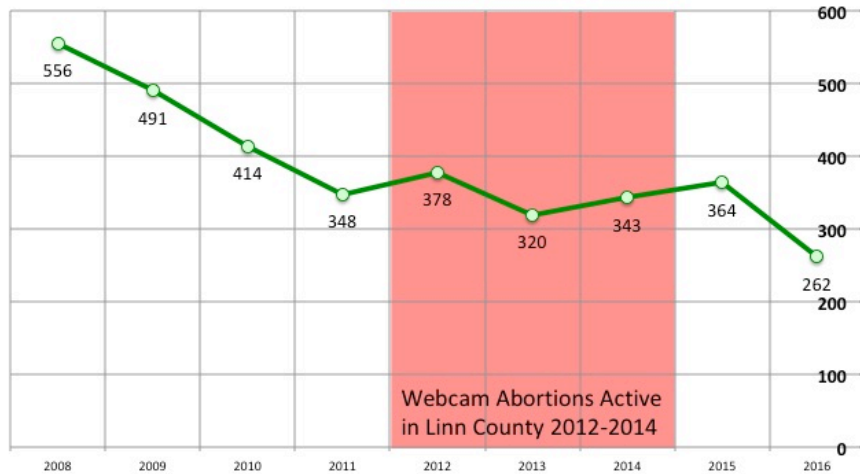
We are about to kick off our 40 Days for Life campaign again this spring with new leadership, although I will still plan to be heavily involved. I'm grateful for the additional help of others. The pro-life movement is so fulfilling and rewarding. It leads me to dedicate much of my time to it. But I always wish more people knew what many of our members know—this is one of the most rewarding things a person can do.

- Jim Burke

Upcoming Events

<p>Second Tuesdays 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p>CFLI Board Meeting (2nd Tuesdays) 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</p>
<p>Fourth Tuesdays 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p>CFLI Working Meeting (4th Tuesdays) 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</p>
<p>Sat, Feb 10 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. \$7 (free under age 5)</p>	<p>29th Annual Birthright Celebration Come to the Knights of Columbus's annual benefit for Birthright! Where: St. Pius X Church Parish Hall 4949 Council St NE, Cedar Rapids, IA More info: http://lifeiowa.org/Dance_for_Life.html</p>
<p>Feb 14 – Mar 25 24 hours / day</p>	<p>40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil Join us in praying for an end to abortion in a peaceful prayer vigil! Where: Sidewalk outside Planned Parenthood 3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA More info: https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/cedar-rapids/</p>
<p>Sun, Mar 25 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.</p>	<p>40 Days for Life Finale Rally Join us to conclude our 40 days of prayer and fasting! Where: Sidewalk outside Planned Parenthood 3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA More info: https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/cedar-rapids/</p>

Abortions on Women Living in Linn County, Iowa



Declining Abortion Numbers

It's always great to start off the year with a report that suggests our efforts are having a wonderful effect. The state of Iowa released the latest abortion statistics, which are from 2016.

The report includes the numbers of abortions performed in each of the districts they define for the state. Fortunately, Linn County is large enough to get a district of its own. So we are able to track quite closely the number of abortion performed on women who live in our county, even if they get the abortion in other cities.

The numbers were steady or increasing leading up to 2008, when we first prayed for 40

days, mimicking 40 Days for Life. We prayed in churches at the time, but we saw abortions drop and an abortion facility close as we were about to begin. The drop remained steady for several years.

But then webcam abortions came to Cedar Rapids, and the abortion numbers remained relatively steady for a couple of years. We saw 2015 continued to remain steady, even after abortions were discontinued, but we wondered what would happen after abortions were gone for more than a year.

The latest report revealed a tremendous drop! The number

of abortions dropped by more than 100. Dropping from 364 to 262 means there was a 28% drop in a single year! Our 40 Days for Life flyers typically include the numbers we saw roughly a decade ago so we don't have to change it often, and because rates fluctuate back and forth sometimes. But it's getting to a point where we may need to update with much smaller numbers.

Since we started, abortions are down more than 50%! Although there are multiple factors that cause this, we know our presence has saved multiple lives, as told by mothers and grandmothers. Thank you all! Thank God!



Government Update: New Session Begins

Iowa

It's January, so the Iowa legislature is back in session. This session could see some pro-life bills again.

House File 2163 ([HF2163](#)) will protect life once a heartbeat is detected in a preborn child. It's an election year, which makes it harder to pass controversial laws, and other states have been unable to enforce their laws yet.

[HF2162](#) prioritizes abortion providers lower than others for educational grants, which would get them out of most schools. Planned Parenthood has been very busy in our schools in Linn County. So this is important, and it gets businesses that profit from

the failures of bad sexual education programs away from our children.

Senate File 335 (SF 335) and House Study Bill 569 (HSB 569) seek to reinstate the death penalty for certain offenses. Iowa has not had the death penalty for more than 50 years. Some of our past newsletters have addressed some of the concerns with the death penalty. In addition to those, we've seen so many states gradually add many other circumstances in which death could be imposed.

Great injustices have occurred, leading to innocent people being sentenced to death. Although the bill is unlikely to pass, it would be nice to avoid having another life issue to address in the future.

Nation

The Pain-Capable Bill that would have protected lives 20 weeks into development in the womb and later failed to get enough votes to end debate. Rather than keeping the debate going on without end, debate ended for now.

Sadly, taxpayers continue to fund Planned Parenthood, due to the inability of the Senate to take action on the matter. It fails for the same reason as the 20-week abortion ban.

Most pro-life advances in the past year are credited to the President, not Congress. We need to get more success in the US Senate in order to get the results pro-lifers expect.



March for Life & 40 Days for Life

Our annual March for Life in Cedar Rapids had a fantastic turnout. We had more than 100 people in the march, and even more took part in other aspects of the event. The photo above shows how impressive it is when we get long lines of people.

For Catholics, we started the event with a rosary and mass. Both went very well. Then we had a break before going outside for the march itself.

We pushed the pro-life updates and announcements to the beginning of the event to make it easier for everyone to gather around and hear. It also allowed more time for prayer outside of the Planned Parenthood facility. The rain held off nicely. The food at the end was delicious.

We made sure people knew of the upcoming 40 Days for Life, which begins Wednesday, February 14th and runs through Sunday, March 25th. We typically have a kick-off rally, but it's always harder to do that in the spring, and it's so near the March for Life that we will not have a kick-off rally this time.

But we will pray and fast for an end to abortion as we have done so successfully in the past. We could always use more people participating so we can cover more hours, especially while they are open. But any time works.

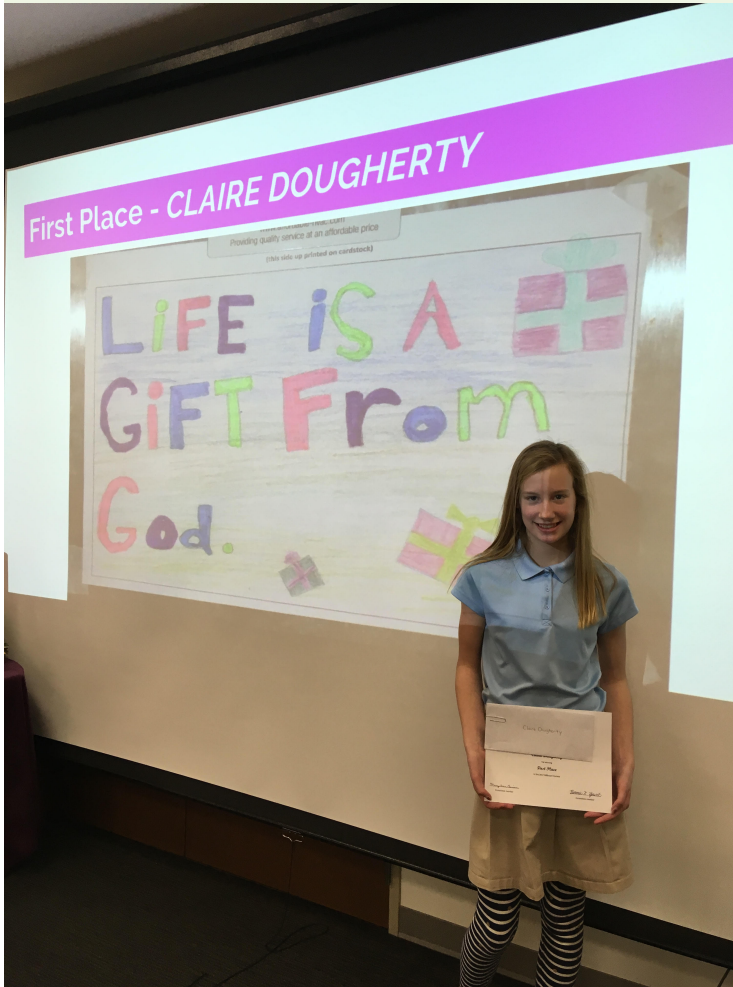
Pat Semelroth will lead 40 Days for Life this spring with the help of a few members of our board. We know Planned Parenthood is facing greater challenges than ever. This

could be a critical year to get out there, to be visible, and to pray. We've seen abortion numbers drop so much already. Just imagine what might be possible this year!

As usual, we will conclude the 40 Days for Life with a rally on Sunday, March 25th, starting at 5 pm. We update everyone with how things went. We make some announcements about pro-life activities. We get in some prayer. Then at 6 pm, we head to Godfather's Pizza to share a meal together. We provide the pizza and non-alcoholic drinks. We always accept a free-will donation, and are grateful for everyone's generosity.

Come pray with us. Bring friends and family!

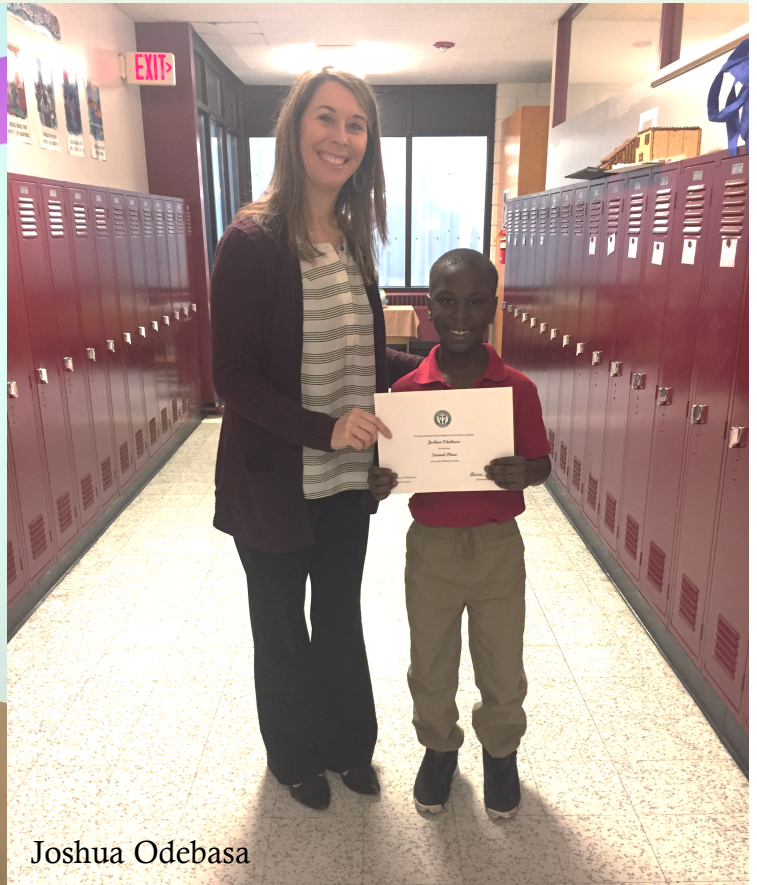
Billboard Contest Winners



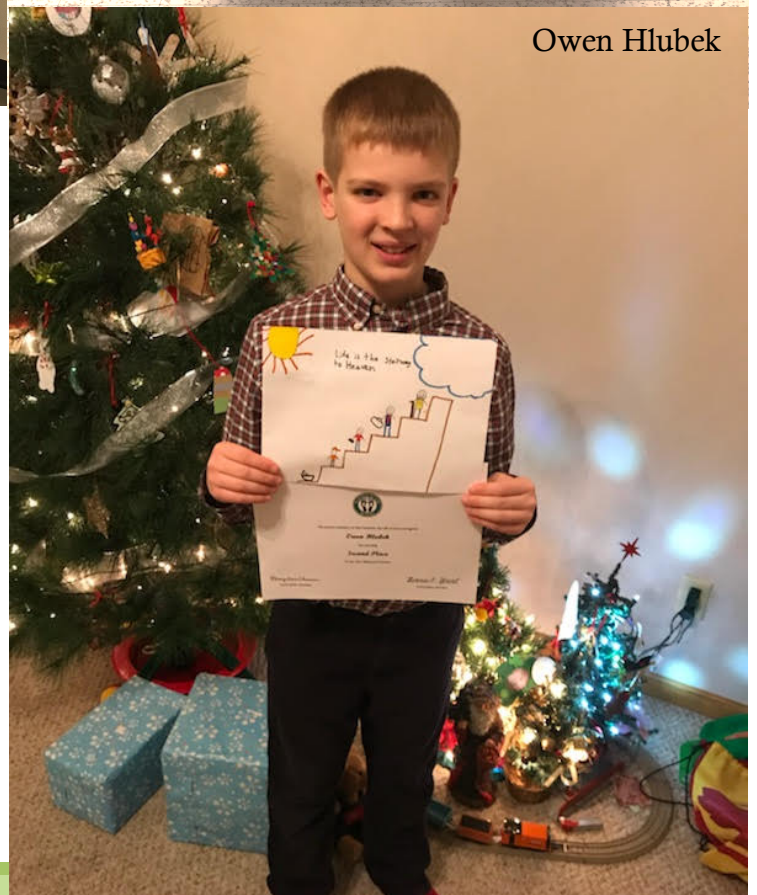
In this past year, many of you saw our pro-life billboards in various parts of town. We had a contest this past fall among some local students. The winning billboard design is presently up on Williams Boulevard, about a block east of Edgewood Road, facing west.

The first place winner is Claire Dougherty. So it is her design that towers over Williams Boulevard.

We had a tie for second place with Joshua



Joshua Odebasa



Owen Hlubek

Odebasa and Owen Hlubek. We also had a tie for third place with Sawyer Peterson-Frett and Riley Hoover.

We presented the awards to each of our great designers. We're dedicating the rest of this page to the first and second place winners. Third place winners are on the last page.

We loved the designs. Great work!

Pro-Life Challenge

VOLUNTEER



Help us out!

The pro-life movement is experiencing greater success than we've seen in the past several decades. But with success comes an even greater need for help. Please help us build a culture of life! Volunteer!



Invite Friends!

Invite friends and family to attend our events. Invite them to help us out. There are many needs. The harvest is plenty; harvesters are few. Many hands make for light work!



Is Cedar Rapids Next?

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the Planned Parenthood facility in Bettendorf closed at the end of 2017. While it's hard to imagine Planned Parenthood closing in Cedar Rapids, since it's the second-largest city in the state of Iowa, there are some important things to think about.

Sure, the population of Cedar Rapids is larger than Bettendorf. But the population of the metro area of the Quad Cities is nearly 80% larger than the population of the Cedar Rapids metro area. So technically, the facility here draws from a smaller population.

The Cedar Rapids Planned Parenthood tried to implement webcam abortions

in 2012, after a history of not performing them. But they discontinued webcam abortions in Cedar Rapids less than two years later. Communities much smaller than ours continued webcam abortions longer than the PP here. The Bettendorf facility provided nothing but abortions in recent months, and abortion is a very profitable business. So a site that offered the service with the highest profit margin closed, and the site in Cedar Rapids hasn't made that work long-term.

The number of clients in Cedar Rapids has continued to fall throughout the past year and over the past few years. With no government funding for their services, this could offer us the best chance to see the local facility close!

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.

We welcome advertisers for a reasonable price.

Remember, Life Matters!

Request electronic copies by email: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

3rd Place Billboard Contest Winners

