

Pro-Life Vigil: January 21, 7pm

Right to Life's annual Candlelight Vigil will be held Thursday, January 21 at 7pm at the courthouse in Sidney. Please join us for this meaningful time of prayer and reflection in observance of the 42nd anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

The vigil begins in the basement of the courthouse (enter from the southeast corner). There will be an outdoor procession, so please dress appropriately and bring a wind-protected candle or other luminary. Participants are asked to park across the street from the court square so as to maximize visibility of the procession.

Immediately following the vigil, the Shelby County bus will depart for the March for Life in Washington, D.C., which will take place Friday afternoon.



2016 Pro-Life Speech Contest: \$300 Grand Prize!

The 2016 Shelby County Pro-Life Oratory Contest for high school juniors and seniors will be held Monday, February 15 (President's day), from 6:30-9:00 pm at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sidney. Prizes for 1st through 3rd places are \$300, \$150 and \$100 respectively. The winner will continue to the state contest (Saturday, April 30, in Columbus).

The contest is open to any junior or senior who resides in or attends high school in Shelby County. Contestants are to research, write, and present an original pro-life speech—5 to 7 minutes in length—on abortion, infanticide, euthanasia or stem cell research.

Registration deadline: Friday, February 12, 2016. Contact Anne Schmiesing: 937-492-5584 or aschmiesing@woh.rr.com.

For rules and more information, see: www.shelbycountyrctl.org/OratoryContestInformation.htm. We are grateful for past donations that have funded the oratory prizes and we would welcome donations for the 2016 contest as well. (Please send check to RTL and denote "oratory prize.")

Membership Letters Coming Soon

Please watch for your 2016 Right to Life membership letter, which will be in the mail soon. We ask that you complete the form and return it with your dues as soon as possible. This enables us to continue to interact with members as effectively as possible, and lessens the labor and expense of reminder communications.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to your membership renewal and for your valued partnership in our efforts to advance the cause of life!

Thrift Shop Report

October

282 Customers
63 Work-to-Earn certificates
18 Free units (diapers, formula)

November

177 Customers
35 Work-to-Earn certificates
7 Free units (diapers, formula)

Abortion Clinic Numbers Continue Decline in 2015

The total number abortion clinics in America continues to decline, following a nationwide trend extending back to 1991. In 2015, abortion clinics closed at a rate of more than one per week with 53 abortion clinics shutting down or halting all abortion services.

Operation Rescue directly surveyed all abortion facilities in the U.S. from December 1-15, 2015 and found the following: 42 Surgical abortion clinics halted all abortion services; 11 Medical abortion clinics halted all abortion services. In addition, a number of abortion facilities reduced services: 16 abortion clinics halted surgeries and now offer only medication abortions; 12 abortion clinics stopped dispensing abortion drugs and now only offer surgical abortions, noting that the abortion pill was “ineffective” or “too dangerous.” In all, 81 abortion clinics closed or reduced services in 2015.

Currently, there are 517 surgical abortion clinics and 213 medication abortion clinics remaining active in the U.S., the lowest numbers in decades. In 1991, which is considered the high water mark for the number of abortion clinics, 2,176 surgical facilities offered abortions. Since then, 81% have closed.

In 2015, 21 new facilities began selling abortions. This includes 7 new surgical abortion clinics and 14 medication clinics that opened or converted from referral offices. Several other abortion facilities reopened after struggling with location issues or having been shut down by the state as unsafe. This represents a net loss for the Abortion Cartel of 9 abortion clinics nationwide and 219 since 2013. The reduction in abortion clinic numbers coincides with a report released by the Centers for Disease Control earlier this month, which announced that the number of induced abortions decreased to the lowest since 1990.

There were a number of factors that resulted in the 53 abortion clinics going out of business or otherwise halting abortion services, including: the retirement of abortionists due to advanced age and declining health; new state laws that have flooded state houses, especially in the wake of the Kermit Gosnell murder/illegal abortion case of 2013, which have flushed out many substandard and dangerous operators; declining demand for abortions, per the CDC; continued strong public pro-life support as evidenced in recent polling suppressed by the pro-abortion news media; and public exposure of abortion abuses by pro-life groups, including Operation Rescue, which have rightfully eroded public trust in abortion providers.

Certain trends were evident in the data collected this year. Medication abortion clinics increased as surgical clinics decreased. Planned Parenthood is continuing a reorganization that involves adding money-producing medication abortions to many of its referral clinics. There is also a trend for abortion clinics that have been shuttered by state health departments to reopen as medication abortion clinics. This allows substandard abortionists to continue profiting from abortions without having to comply with licensing requirements that usually apply only to surgical facilities.

An emerging trend seen in a dozen clinics this year, is to drop medication abortions altogether. Over and over, Operation Rescue callers were told that the reason for dropping the abortion pill was because it was “too dangerous” or “too unreliable.” Also, abortion clinics were closed because facility licenses were revoked due to inability to comply with state laws. Other abortion clinics have halted abortions temporarily while they remodel their offices to comply with new safety standards. In all, abortion safety and accountability laws are closing clinics that were too dangerous to operate in the first place.

A live count of abortion clinics in the U.S. can be found at AbortionDocs.org, along with documentation related to abortion abuses within the Abortion Cartel.

By Cheryl Sullenger, *LifeNews.com*, December 22, 2015. Edited for space.

For the success of our local and national pro-life observances of Roe v. Wade. May our political leaders find the courage to remove the scourge of legalized abortion from our nation.



Gianna Jessen to Speak in Wapakoneta

Petersburg Respect Life Committee proudly presents internationally-renowned speaker Gianna Jessen. Gianna has shared her story of survival and triumph with Mother Teresa, President George W. Bush, and many other leaders, along with thousands of ordinary people like us!



Gianna Jessen is an abortion survivor. While in the womb, she was bathed in a burning saline solution, but instead of dying, she entered the world. Join us to hear her powerful story!

Jessen's presentation will be January 29, 6:30pm at St. Joseph Church, 101 W. Pearl St., Wapakoneta.

Donations to defray the costs of Gianna's travel and presentation expenses can be made by calling Joyce Platfoot at 937-693-6251.

Pregnancy Centers Saved an Estimated 300,000 Babies in 2015

A group of children a year old and younger matching the size of cities like Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Tempe, Ariz., are celebrating their first Christmas in 2015 thanks to the work of local staff and volunteers at pro-life pregnancy centers, according to statistics released by Heartbeat International.

The numbers, published in the first-annual *Life Trends Report*, draw only from Heartbeat International's 1,300 locations in the U.S., but point to 160,000 lives rescued from the threat of abortion in 2015 alone. Overall, there are 2,500 life-affirming pregnancy help centers and medical clinics in the U.S., including those who affiliate with Heartbeat International, Care Net, National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA), Life Matters Worldwide and local organizations who do not affiliate with broader networks.

Adding in the number of mothers who have chosen life for their babies in 2015 at pregnancy centers and medically licensed pregnancy clinics not affiliated with Heartbeat International, the number of lives saved would jump to 300,000—the size of Pittsburgh or Cincinnati.

"It is such a joy to witness the power of God's people championing the gift and the Giver of Life every day," Jor-El Godsey, Vice President of Heartbeat International—whose first involvement at a pregnancy center was in Fort Lauderdale in 1988, said. "No woman should ever feel so alone, coerced, or so hopeless that she ends her child's life through abortion."

"What's incredible to me about the overall numbers is how quickly we can overlook the value of each individual life in the context of 160,000 or 300,000 saved from abortion," Godsey said. "Staff and volunteers at local centers, clinic, maternity homes and nonprofit adoption agencies are concentrated on just one person at a time. If we can reach that one person—that mom—with the practical help and compassionate support she deserves and is oftentimes without, we know the impact that can make."

Other highlights from the report include the combined annual budget of U.S. pregnancy help centers—totaling \$400 million—almost all of which is drawn from donors and foundations at the local level. Centers averaged 38 volunteers and served 531 clients per location in 2015.

By Jay Hobbs, LifeNews.com, December 29, 2015. Edited for space.



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An Easy Way to Help RTL: Garage Sale: April 7-9

The Russia Garage Sale, Right to Life's biggest fundraiser, will be held Thursday-Saturday, April 7-9, at St. Remy Hall in Russia. Hours will be 9 am-7 pm on Thursday and Friday, and 9 am-12 pm on Saturday.

There are many ways to help: donate items, attend and buy items, volunteer to work. An appeal for volunteers will be going out over e-mail. If you are not on e-mail or you are not contacted and would like to help, please call Karen Rosenbeck, 937-526-5814.

Thank you for your generous donations year after year. We ask that you kindly remember to donate only clean and salable items. It's also extremely helpful when clothes are sorted by size and bagged/boxed accordingly. To donate items: 1) Drop them off at the RTL office; 2) Your church may have a drop-off site; or 3) Deliver items to St. Remy Hall on Tuesday, April 5 from 7-8 pm and Wednesday, April 6 from 9 am-6 pm. For any questions, please contact Maria Hoehne at 937-526-5008.

There is a bake sale and 50/50 raffle held in conjunction with the garage sale. (Raffle tickets will be included in the March/April newsletter and will be available at the RTL web site.) Baked items may be brought to the garage sale on Wednesday, April 6, from 9 am to 6 pm. Additional baked goods will be accepted throughout the sale.

MAY 2016 BE FILLED WITH LIFE AND LOVE FOR YOU AND YOURS