

PENNSYLVANIANS FOR HUMAN LIFE

EDUCATION SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025

Another busy school year nears completion. PHL continues its primary goal of providing educational programs to schools, churches, community groups and engaging participants at various events throughout the year. Comprehensive pro-life education equips students to build a greater culture of life. A heartfelt thank you to speakers and volunteers who help PHL complete such a full year. PHL speakers and volunteers are young and old, from varied backgrounds, but all share the task of creating a clear picture of the unborn child in the minds of those to whom they speak. Their time and talent are irreplaceable. Speakers use fetal models that clearly show the development of the baby at eight, ten, sixteen, twenty and thirty weeks. It is beautiful to watch the expression on the students' faces as they are encouraged to hold the various models. Along with the 3-D images of the unborn that can be seen on the latest ultrasound videos, the baby's face and human characteristics are as clear as can be. Students are awestruck to see this and comment:

- "The information you provided us with made me think twice about abortion."
- "If not for this information and people like you, we would not hear this side of the issue and have questions answered. Thank you."
- "I found the statistics and the abortion pill method alarming."



John Williamson, Sr. presented the John P. Williamson Jr. Memorial Awards to high school leaders at PHL's Celebrate Life Banquet.

Lester Ruppberger, D.O. accepted PHL's Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Service.

Barbara Rose, Director of the Giana Center area received the Margaret W. Hoffner Award for Courageous Leadership in support of life. Pictured - Deacon Al Clay (left) and PHL President Charlie Waldecker (right).

PHL will continue to operate this summer. We keep our library current with new books, literature and videos through your generosity. For more information, call PHL at 6710-696-0780 or visit Paforhumanlife.org. Thank you!

“Assisted Suicide” Update

Pro-life physicians warned that some patients, including those suffering from dementia, being granted advanced requests by laws allowing them to make their own personal “medical assistance in dying” or MAID, drastically increases the premature deaths of such patients. We previously reported the Canadian Province of Quebec’s Law went into effect (December 2024) and just months later, Ontario’s MAID Death Review Committee reports studies of people who have died by euthanasia through MAID. Dr. Ramona Coehlo, family physician and Committee Member, reports that the quick approvals for euthanasia has Canada “rushing to death,” highlighting vulnerable individuals being coerced or unduly influenced to die, whether through financial abuse, caregiver burnout, or other pressures, reminding us of the high stakes of life or death. (Macdonald-Laurier Institute, April 2025). The inclination toward euthanasia increases as nations struggle to recognize and accept the value of lives with dependencies and vulnerabilities.

Dr. Coehlo urged that comprehensive care must be the proper response to these situations, not “guess work.” “If we truly value dignity,” Coehlo wrote, “we must invest in comprehensive care to prevent patients from being administered speedy death in their most vulnerable moment, turning their worst day into potentially their last.”

Born Alive Bill

The Born Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, designed to save abortion survivors, was recently blocked from a vote in the Senate by abortion lobbyists. This Bill would require doctors to administer lifesaving medical care to every baby surviving Abortions. The Bill (S.6/H.R.21) is now considered “provisionally dead” due to the failed cloture vote. Without significant change in content, the Bill will not move forward.

Recent Executive Orders

The sanctity of every human is defended through the signing into law of:

- Ending federal funding of abortion overseas through reinstatement of the Mexico City Policy

- Enforcement of the Hyde Amendment to end the use of Federal taxpayer dollars to promote or fund elective abortion.

PHL stands alongside over 150 national and state organizations from all 50 states urging Congress to defund taxpaying abortion, starting with Planned Parenthood, returning the issue of life to a vote by the people of each state.

The growing momentum to defund Planned Parenthood has focused recently on cutting Federal funds to abortion providers, most notably through Medicaid as the largest source of taxpayer funding of Planned Parenthood. Two current bills are considered by Congress. The Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2025 and the End Taxpayer funding for Abortion Providers Act.

NEW ABORTION WARNING

Research released by the Ethics and Public Policy Center (“EPPC”) mifepristone abortions (chemical) have a complication rate far higher than the abortion industry admits. Jamie Bryan Hall and Ryan T. Anderson, two EPPC researchers, looked at data from 865,727 insurance claims involving mifepristone abortions between 2017 and 2023. The results were staggering by those reporting only significant or severe complications. EPPC researchers found 10.93% reporting sepsis, infection, hemorrhage, hospitalization or some other issue that officially qualified as a “serious adverse event.” “Women are told that the complication risk for chemical abortions is minimal, but hemorrhage, infection and failure to identify rupturing ectopic pregnancies are the realities,” said Dr. Randall K. O’Bannon, Director of Education and Research of the National Right to Life Committee. These findings, the largest analysis to date, directly challenge the abortion pill mifepristone’s manufacturer, Danco Laboratories, as they market the drug as “very safe.” (The FDA allows easy access through mail order abortions.)

“I ask for a firm commitment to respect the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, so that each person may cherish his or her own life and all may look with hope to the future,” he said, using the terminology of the church’s opposition to abortion and euthanasia.” January 1, 2025

Pope Francis

PHL PRO-LIFE CHAMPION

An Unplanned Pro-Life Apologist

By **Marybeth Treston Hagan**



My rude awakening to the realities of “choice” came slowly. Even as I noted ongoing arguments about abortion, I sat on the fence over this divisive issue for decades.

During my freewheeling days as a single person, during a glamour girl phase as an NFL

cheerleader for the Philadelphia Eagles, during my married years, during pregnancies and miscarriages, while a stay-at-home mother and as a midlife college student completing a bachelor’s degree in journalism, I remained ambivalent about abortion.

Abortion’s truths first aimed at my heart in the 1980s. From earliest stirrings within to later kicks and arm extensions that produced bumps on my belly during pregnancies, there was no denying life in the womb. The rhythm of babies’ heartbeats during first trimester check-ups raised further awareness. Like works of art, newborns are the sum of their developmental parts.

Moreover, science smacked me with veracity during a sole sonogram test while pregnant. After the technician moved the cool tip of the ultrasound machine’s magic wand across my stomach, I spotted human contours on the screen. There was my daughter’s round head, her delicate profile, tiny limbs and curled body attached to the cord that connected us. This fragile life that I saw via ultrasound astounded me and forever changed my views about abortion.

Maternal loss taught me more. Four months into another pregnancy, I lost a baby to miscarriage. Medical attention was required to cleanse my reproductive system. The piece of equipment necessary for the procedure whirred like a vacuum cleaner. The sound sickened me.

Since I accepted miscarriage as God’s will and nature’s way of ending a pregnancy, I moved on with my life. Or so I thought. One September day – five years after that horrible miscarriage – I sobbed as I drove past my children’s elementary school when it suddenly occurred to me that my deceased baby would have entered kindergarten that year.

That’s when I started to wonder about post-abortive women’s feelings. I wondered what they thought as they drifted in and out of consciousness during the procedure. I wondered if they sometimes had delayed reactions to their losses, as I did. I wondered if they ever speculated about the child who might have been, as I did. I wondered but I never asked my friends who’d had abortions for fear that such questions would be too intrusive or hurtful.

Nearly five years later, I began writing. My freelance published newspaper commentaries, appearing in a variety of publications from 1999 through 2020, covered lots of topics, including abortion. For some unknown reason, that issue badgered me until I gave it my undivided attention. So I decided to back up my gut feelings about abortion with research.

A first stop on the road to this exploration was a lecture by Feminists for Life’s President Serrin Foster at Villanova University in 2003. There I learned genuine feminist history. I continued to dig up facts about abortion from other sources. Then I penned a book that I never planned to write about a subject that once meant little to me, a book published by Liguori.

After reading my “Abortion: A Mother’s Plea for Maternity and the Unborn,” Pennsylvanians for Human Life’s then Executive Directive Martha Short invited me to become a speaker for PHL. So I joined Martha, now a dear friend, in making pro-life presentations at area high schools for several years. Indelible memories remain from my time in those classrooms.

I can still picture the student in a Catholic school uniform who raised her hand and informed us that her father wanted to have her aborted, but her mother refused to do so. Another student spoke of her younger sibling whom
(continued)



Pennsylvanians for
Human Life
PAforHumanLife.org

590 Snyder Avenue
West Chester, PA 19382-5511

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
WEST CHESTER
PERMIT NO. 123

RETURN
SERVICE
REQUESTED

(continued)

her family adopted and how she could not imagine life without this beloved child. A female student in a public high school quizzed me after my presentation. “If one of your daughters got pregnant, would you force her to have the baby?” she asked. “No,” I replied. “But I would insist that my daughter have an ultrasound so that her decision would be an informed one...after all, that baby would be my grandchild.”

Eventually, I focused more on pro-life writing and created a website, “Mother May I...Be Born?” blogging there daily from February 2007 through June 2008. Next, I contributed weekly to the Pro Life Union of Greater Philadelphia’s “Facts of Life” blog from 2012 through 2014.

When Roe was overturned in 2022, I thought perhaps pregnancy centers and other organizations serving pregnant women might need extra help. So, for the past three years I’ve been a volunteer assisting in assorted ways with a dynamic force for life, the Sisters of Life.

The Philadelphia Sisters of Life are home-based at St. Malachy Convent in North Philly. Grounded in faith, hope and love, these Sisters tirelessly help pregnant women in meeting needs like food, clothing, shelter, education,

employment and more. They also counsel post-abortive women who have regrets. On top of that, the Sisters of Life offer a warm, family-like support system for pregnant moms. Sometimes the Sisters host fun events like baby showers or birthday parties for moms or children as one might do for a beloved family member. Plus, the Sisters host major Mother’s Day and Christmas celebratory events for mothers and their children.

Indeed, I’ve looked into many facets and faces of the pro-life movement over the years. I continue to count myself lucky to be in such good company.

*Marybeth T. Hagan is the author of **Abortion: A Mother’s Plea for Maternity and the Unborn**, a Liguori/Triumph publication. Her commentaries and stories have been published by: *The National Catholic Register, The Christian Science Monitor, The Catholic Herald [The United Kingdom], The Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Daily News, The [Philadelphia] Bulletin, The Philadelphia Tribune, The [Philadelphia] Catholic Standard & Times, The Delaware County Daily Times, WHYY’s SpeakEasy blog, Seven Mile Times [Avalon, N.J.], Sea Isle Times [Sea Isle City, N.J.]**

*Portions of this profile first appeared in **Feminists for Life’s The American Feminist** magazine in the Spring 2013 issue.*