

The Rose



THE PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER FOR ALBERTA PRO-LIFE

JUNE 2002

Human embryos for research

By Joanne Hatton

After a ten-year wait, the federal government finally introduced its reproductive technology bill. Canada has no law to cover such practices as cloning, surrogate parenting, sperm and egg donations, and a host of other rapidly expanding technologies to aid in producing babies. If passed, Bill C-56 would allow embryonic stem cell research (ESCR), which results in the destruction of living human embryos. Health Minister Anne McLellan has banned cloning, but hints that she thinks so-called "therapeutic" cloning might be acceptable in the future.

Both ESCR and cloning involve serious ethical and moral violations of the sanctity of

human life. Both would allow experimentation on living human beings. Minister McLellan says the embryos for stem cell research would come from "spare" embryos, left over from in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures. Doctors routinely create more embryos than required for IVF because the process of extracting eggs is painful and costly. Those not implanted are chemically frozen and either implanted later or thrown out. The minister justified the use of these embryos by pointing out that they will "just go in the garbage" if not used for research.

Scientists and researchers say ESCR holds great promise to

cure diseases like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes and others. However, to date, there have been no successes in treating human beings or animals with embryonic stem cells. There have, however, been a number of successful human treatments using adult stem cells, which have no ethical complications. Adult stem cells are available in many parts of the body and their use avoids the problem of rejection. Bill C-56 pays almost no attention to the use of adult

stem cells. The Alliance Party has called for a three-year moratorium on the use of embryonic stem cells to allow the very promising research on adult stem cells to advance. Rob Merrifield, Alliance MP for Yellowhead, told the House of Commons that embryos are human beings with intrinsic value and using them for experimentation reduces them to commodities. He supports the idea of adopting out the "surplus" embryos to couples who want to have children.

There are several other troubling aspects to the new bill. It bans the creation of embryos for research but allows it for instructional purposes. It would also allow creation of human-animal hybrids for research. The bill gives tremendous power to the minister by creating a new agency to

oversee these technologies. The agency would report, not to parliament, but only to the minister of health and the minister can give the agency policy direction without reference to parliament. The agency does not have to report its activities.

The bill has passed second reading and will go to committee for possible amendments. There are many MPs from all parties who oppose this bill. There are people who support abortion who oppose the use of human embryos for experimentation. It is crucial for voters to tell their MPs what they think of this bill. Take the opportunity this summer when your MP is in the constituency to tell him or her where you stand on this destructive technology. If we allow researchers to experiment on living human embryos, who will be next? As Rob Merrifield repeated in the House of Commons, "Just because we can do something, doesn't mean we have to." Or ought to. Talk to your MP.

If passed, Bill C-56 would allow embryonic stem cell research

Courage to Serve Award

Every year Alberta Pro-Life seeks to honor a pro-life Albertans to show appreciation for their efforts towards restoration of respect for human life in the province of Alberta. The board of Alberta Pro-Life is very pleased to announce this year's recipients:

Ed & Iona Hutzal,
Drayton Valley

Barbara Halma, Cranford

Honorable Mentions
go to the other exceptional nominees:

Mark Isinger, Sherwood Park
Cindy Malaka, Three Hills
Lisa Flickinger, Edson

Ed and Iona Hutzal



Barbara Halma



Membership Renewals

If your membership is close to expiring (check expiry date on mailing label) we would like to encourage you to send in your renewal!

Some groups need to mail membership renewals directly to their local pro-life group. Please check info on coupon on back page.

Look Inside

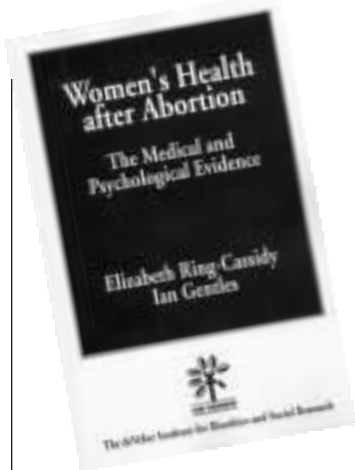
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Women's Health after Abortion

Dr. Will Johnston,
President of Canadian Physicians for Life

This book will save lives. I know that, with the kind of unresearchable good cheer which sweeps over me every time one of my close-call patients brings a happy baby into my office. Close-call patients need encouragement, sometimes lengthy encouragement, to carry on with a dodgy pregnancy but to their eventual joy, and mine, they trudge onward to the finish line and claim their prize. Anecdotes have their place, but we can now add the distilled conclusions of over 500 relevant research papers and books when counseling pregnant women about the abortion option.

Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy and Ian Gentles laboured mightily to update the 1985 survey entitled, "Abortion's Aftermath" and have produced a handbook readable by anyone who cares about the health of women and children. Recent insights into the risks of breast cancer and future premature delivery are concisely summarized, and the myth that abortion is ultimately safer than completion of pregnancy is laid to well-deserved rest. A high profile (depressed, coerced, very young, and other factors) is described where the psychological morbidity risks alone ought to result in encouragement, even from an



abortion provider, to continue the pregnancy.

The deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research deserves congratulations for sponsoring a project, which helps to close the disclosure gap between women and the facts about abortion. Ideological forces have obstructed women's access to true informed consent before abortion procedures. This situation would not be tolerated for any other medical or surgical act, and there are encouraging signs, this book not least, that this selective denial can be overcome.

Call the Alberta Pro-Life office for details on getting a copy of this new book at 1-877-880-5433 or visit www.deveber.org to order a copy online.

JOIN OUR "CIRCLE OF LOVE" \$1/4 MILLION CAMPAIGN

Alberta Pro-Life and Gail Adams, world-renowned Canadian wildlife artist, will present a numbered, signed and certified 20" x 27" Sponsor's Edition Lithograph to 500 Champions who donate \$500 or more to our work as a "Voice for the Vulnerable" – the unborn, the disabled and the elderly.



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Your donation of \$500 will make a difference.

- Empowers pro-life youth, training them to confidently defend their pro-life position
- Supports pro-life groups in their communities
- Works to end tax-funded abortion on demand
- Provides a voice of reason for society's most vulnerable – the unborn, the elderly and the handicapped



Gail Adams and her husband, Dave, are parents of two grown adoptive children.

Gail says, "Children are a gift from God that should be cherished, not destroyed. We need organizations like Alberta Pro-Life to see that all children have a chance at life. My family would not exist without the pro-life message."

Contact: Alberta Pro-Life
Box 11470 Edmonton AB
T5J 3K5
Toll Free 1-877-880-5433
Phone: 780-421-7747
www.albertapro-life.com



Alberta Pro-Life is not a registered charity and thus cannot issue tax receipts for donations.

Psalm 139:14
I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.
KJV

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What is Alberta Pro-Life?



Alberta Pro-Life represents the pro-life position at the provincial level. We inform citizens, lobby politicians and work with local and national groups to effect change in our society.

Our members include individuals who have joined Alberta Pro-Life and local groups throughout the province who are either affiliates or amalgamated with us.

If you wish to become a member or would like more information about our activities, call our office at:

Phone (780) 421-7747 Fax (780) 421-7749 or
toll free at: 1-877-880-5433
e-mail: apl@albertapro-life.com Website: www.albertapro-life.com

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mismith@telusplanet.net



Email update from U of C Campus ProLife

April 2002

Dear APL,

Hi, it's Andrea. I just wanted to let you know how our club has done with the brochures you gave us. This past week (our last full week of university) CPL rented a table at lunchtime in "Mac Hall", our campus hub building, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. We had a bit of our usual stuff set up there, but our main focus was giving out the brochures on tax funded abortions. We made a mini version of the Abortion in AB fact sheet and stuck it inside many of them.

This effort was quite a success. We got the opportunity to talk to a few people, gained five new members and got a lot of positive comments (along with a few evil looks). One student came by who works at the Pregnancy Care Centre and gave us a baby bottle for their fundraiser, so we had that at the table too. I counted up the brochures we had left when we took down on Friday, and we have about 80. Subtracting a few that went to our churches, that means that we have given out close to 400 Myths and Facts brochures directly into the hands of U of C students and other people around the university. Wow! It kind of blows my mind, even though that's not much of a dent in the 25,000 students there actually are here. But info spreads, too.

Our club has now had its election. I've been reelected as Pres, Lyle was re-elected as Vice pres, and Kelty Cusack was elected as Secretary. Our previous secretary, Katherine is graduating. We'll miss her, but I think she'll keep up the pro-life work through CYFL. We've got high hopes for next year. It's a blessing to have the talented and enthusiastic people on team that we have. With a lot of hard work and God's blessing, CPL has grown up from nothing but a name last year to a club that's having an impact and gaining a public image on our campus. Oh yeah. So I just wanted to share the celebration with you. Be encouraged.

Praise God - Andrea Kettle

life digest

Parliament will not discuss protection for the unborn

Alliance MP Garry Breitkreuz introduced a motion in the House of Commons last month urging members to allow the Justice Committee to review the legal status of the unborn and to decide at what point the developing fetus should be protected. The motion was defeated. Even before it reached the House, a Commons committee had decided the motion would be unvotable, that is, there could be one hour of debate but members would not be allowed to vote to send it to committee. Mr. Breitkreuz, who represents Yorkton-Melville, was told that the Prime Minister would not allow issues like abortion to come to a vote. The MP, who has tried several times to introduce similar motions, had circulated a survey asking for input on when human life should be protected. He received over 5,000 responses to his survey.

Pro-choice on the defensive

Joyce Arthur, director of the Pro-Choice Action Network, has written to Alliance MP Jason Kenney, copied to Report Magazine and The Interim, objecting to references reported by all three that pro-abortionists have admitted that abortions are performed for socio-economic reasons and therefore, they cannot be considered medically necessary. Ms. Arthur says in her May 27 letter that this is "untrue and a misunderstanding of what Marilyn Wilson of CARAL [Canadian Abortion rights Action League] said." Where's the misinterpretation? What Marilyn Wilson said to the pre-budget Finance Committee in Ottawa was that women seek abortions, "for socio-economic reasons. Sometimes it is [the result of] a desire to complete their education and become financially independent. [In] many cases, couples with children wish to restrict their

family size in order to provide adequate financial support. Often, choosing abortion is a conscious decision not to become a socio-economic burden on society." Mr. Kenney and others, including Alberta Pro-Life, have cited this quotation as evidence that abortions should not be publicly funded because they are not medically necessary. Abortion cannot be both a "choice" and "medically necessary."

Do your kids a favour—buy this book

Dr. Stephen Genuis and Shelagh Genuis have just released their new book and video, *Teen Sex Reality Check*. It is an informative, if at times frightening, update on sexual behaviour and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The book is easy to read, full of short, snappy quote boxes and statistics. It is the kind of information that teens

should be getting from parents and schools. It serves as an antidote to the safe sex and safer sex message that it typically directed at teens. The chapter on condoms and their ineffectiveness at preventing pregnancy and STDs, is a particularly important message. This book is not a preachy opinion tract. Teen Sex pre-



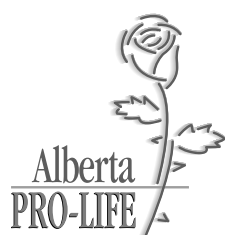
sents medical evidence and surveys to support the information given. Buy one for your kids and maybe one for their sex ed teacher. To order visit www.winfieldhouse.com

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LIFE 2002

PROVINCIAL PRO-LIFE CONFERENCE

This year's conference brought to our members new information, discussions on tough issues, and special times together to get to know prolife people from all over Alberta. This year's conference also had a record attendance of 200 people, with over 50 of them being youth!



*Very Special
Thank You's go to...*

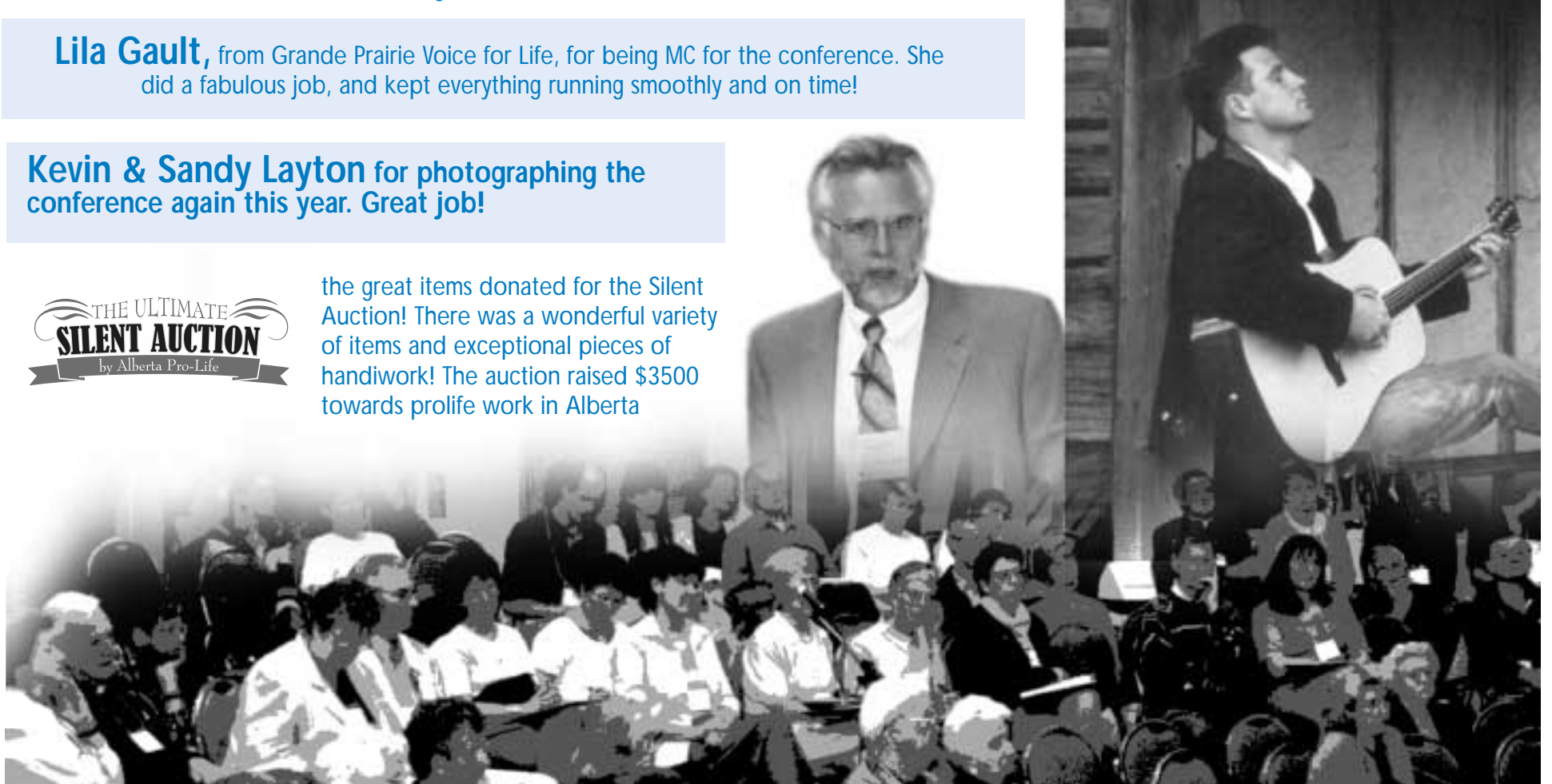
the Life 2002 Planning Committee, Irene Vanderveen, Pat Hansard, Bonnie Bredo & Kevin Layton. They volunteered many, many hours of their time to make this conference come together.

Lila Gault, from Grande Prairie Voice for Life, for being MC for the conference. She did a fabulous job, and kept everything running smoothly and on time!

Kevin & Sandy Layton for photographing the conference again this year. Great job!



the great items donated for the Silent Auction! There was a wonderful variety of items and exceptional pieces of handiwork! The auction raised \$3500 towards prolife work in Alberta



TAX-FUNDED ABORTIONS UPDATE

By Patty Nixon

When the last issue of *The Rose* went out, we were expecting to hear about the provincial government's appointments to the Expert Advisory Panel. This panel was the result of one of the recommendations of the *Mazankowski Report*. According to the May 21st news release, "The panel will review all services currently funded by the public health system and make recommendations to the Minister this fall about which treatments and procedures should continue to be paid for with public dollars. Members will also be responsible for developing criteria to determine which new procedures and treatments should be publicly funded." The government has appointed 11 members to this panel, and Robert Westbury of Edmonton will chair it. If you would like a list of all the members of the panel, just give us a call toll free at 1-877-880-5433 or visit www.gov.ab.ca/can/200205/12379.html

Where do we go from here?

APL has been encouraging its members for several months to write, phone and visit their local MLAs on this issue, and we know that many of you have been doing just that. Your continued involvement is very crucial during the upcoming summer months and here's what we need pro-life Albertans to do:

1) Get petitions signed and arrange personal visits to their MLAs during the summer.

Petitions will be inserted to the June issue of *The Rose*, and are also available on the website www.albertaprolife.com. It is important that you gather the signatures of people living in the constituency of the MLA that you are arranging to visit. The MLAs typically spend more time in their local constituencies over the summer as well. The more visits to the local MLA, the better!

2) Distribute "Myths & Facts" brochures in your local churches.

We have already distributed 15,000 copies of this small brochure, and we have just received another 10,000 copies in the office. This brochure gives individuals the tools to be able to meet with their MLA and know the typical arguments that will come up. If you can help distribute these in your local churches, please give us a call and we'll send them to you.

TAX-FUNDED ABORTIONS
THE FACTS

Albertans are being asked to consider alternate forms of healthcare delivery due to escalating costs. Abortion should be deinsured because women choose to have abortions for personal reasons, not medical reasons. Polls consistently show that the majority of Albertans (and Canadians) support deinsuring abortions.

- Why are Albertans paying for abortion-on-demand?
- How many are we paying for?
- Who decides whether abortions are paid for?
- Is abortion healthcare?

What will APL be doing

Presentations to the Expert Advisory Panel

Earlier this year the Minister of Health indicated that there would be opportunities for input into this panel, but due to the delays in announcing the members of the panel, we do not yet know what the exact format for presentations will be. It is our goal to bring to the attention of the committee all of the relevant statistics, health related concerns associated with abortions, and the moral objections of pro-life Albertans in having to pay for abortions.

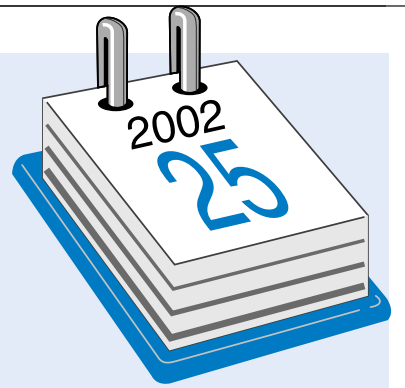
Educating the Public

Each and every time that this issue comes up, we soon discover just how few of the general public realize that they are paying for abortions - all abortions - and for any reason. The radio ads that ran early this year will be updated and ready to go as soon as funds are available to air them.

Tracking the MLA Visits

We will be tracking the visits to each MLA and contacting people to help us coordinate visits in their constituencies. We want to be certain that no MLA is missed, and our goal will be to have each MLA receive 10 or more visits from local constituents this summer! We very much need the help of volunteers to help us in this area, so if you're interested in being involved, please call the office at 1-877-880-5433.

calendar of events



June 1st—Three Hills & Dist. Pro-Life will have a concession booth in Three Hills Cruise Night. Give us a call if you're interested in helping out. We are also entering a float in the Linden Parade on the same day. Ph: 403-443-5356

June 21st - Grande Prairie Voice for Life's Youth Walkathon. We will begin walking from Faith Lutheran to Christian Fellowship Church at 6:00 pm. Call 780-538-3344 for more information.

June 22nd — Dancing with Zoe by Grande Prairie local playwright M.B. Mitchell - Friday, June 21 @ 8:00 pm, Saturday, June 22 @ 8:00 pm Tickets: at the door (1st come 1st serve) Cost: \$5.00 per person \$15.00 per family — Christian Fellowship Assembly

July 1st —Three Hills & Dist. Pro-Life will be entering a float in the Trochu parade as well. Please give us a call if you're interested in participating. Ph: 403-443-5356

July 15th - Deadline for submissions for the Elsie Alexander ProLife Scholarship for Lethbridge & Southern Alberta students. For more information please call 403-320-5433.

Sept. 19th — Project Rachel Training: For clergy and counselors in our community we are offering training in counseling of Post Abortion Syndrome. Call Lila at Grande Prairie Voice for Life for more information 780-538-3344.

Sept 21st—Three Hills & Dist. Pro-Life is having our walk-a-thon in Three Hills.

Sept. 21st - Edmonton ProLife is hosting the walkathon on this Saturday. We have booked Rundle Park once again. Please meet at the Rundle Family Centre on or before 9.00AM. For more details or to receive your pledge form, please call the office at 780-425-1637.

Oct. 5th - Taber Pro-Life is holding their Life Chain on the Saturday. Please give them a call for location details 403-223-8452.

October 6th—International Life Chain Sunday. Check with your local group for the closest Life Chain happening near you.

Oct. 19th - Drayton Valley Youth for Life Conference. Details are still being worked out, but mark this date on your calendars! Call Anne Pinkoski for more information at 780-542-4085.

Oct. 25th - LifeCanada Annual General Meeting in Toronto, Ontario.

November 2nd-Grande Prairie Voice for Life's Fall Fundraising Banquet with Reverend Mark Miller, an ordained Redemptorist priest. He is a teacher of ethics and has been published extensively. Along with his Redemptorist Bioethics consultancy work, Fr. Miller is a Bioethicist for St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon.

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NEWS FROM GROUPS

Airdrie & Dist. Pro-Life Ph: 403-948-4341

nvandergugten@cadvision.com
We at Airdrie Pro-Life are taking a break over the summer. We are meeting Tuesday the 4th of June and making the final arrangements for our walkathon, the Life Chain and our September info meeting. Two of our members went to the Provincial Conference in Edmonton and learned a lot. We took with us a young fellow from the Knights of Columbus, who also learned a lot and who we might see a lot more of. This year in our fund raising efforts we raised about \$ 5000, of which \$3000 went in some way or another to Alberta Pro-Life. We helped pay for the radio ads which resulted in an interview from Global TV. We also helped pay for Scott Klusendorf speaking at the YC event in Edmonton.

Calgary Pro-Life Assoc. Ph: 403-243-0691 pro_life@telusplanet.net

Camrose Pro-Life Ph: 780-672-7110 brwilson@ccinet.ab.ca

Choose Life Athabasca Ph: 780-675-4442 rvgoptl@telusplanet.net

We were pleased to have APL President, Don Lee, attend our banquet in March. We were pleased with the turnout and several new members signed up.

C.H.I.L.D. (Citizen's Helping in Life's Defense) Ph: 780-963-0271 tjwill@telusplanet.net

It has been a quiet year for C.H.I.L.D., but we do have a small

group of youth who we would like to support a bit financially for their presentations in schools. We also hope to continue to send a few youth to the Drayton Valley Youth Conference in October.

Drayton Valley Respect for Life Ph: 780-542-7546 mlsmith@telusplanet.net

Edmonton Pro-Life
Ph: 780-425-1637
epl@albertapro-life.com
Klondike Days are fast approaching: 18th to 27th July. We need volunteers to fill 60 slots to help man our pro-life booth. Please call Ethna at 425-1637 for more information or to sign up.

Fort McMurray ProLife Association Ph: 780-791-7777

We have had a great spring. We have continued on with our Precious Feet presentations, and had very strong positive response from the churches we have visited. We collected close to \$600 at one church alone. Also, we had the first annual "Celebrate Life" benefit concert on Saturday May 4th, which included music provided by local church groups, praise and worship bands, and talented soloists. We raised \$1000. This we did in place of our usual "Bike and Hike for Life". Our response was good, and the musicians really liked it too. Already there are plans ahead to make next year's concert even better. We are already in the separate schools with our Grade 6 and 8 presentations. These include a short introduction, a video, question and answer, pamphlets, and of course the fetal models. We received cheques from the Knights of Columbus to help keep our "Celebrate Life" transit shelter ads up for another year - and it looks positive so far we should be able to keep at least two of them up, if not all three. As our president is moving to southern Alberta, our board is open to more volunteers to help with our pro-life efforts in this community. Anyone interested in finding out more, please leave a message on the pro-life phone line 780-791-7777. Thanks!

Fort Saskatchewan Pro-Life Ph: 780-992-1507 donald140@hotmail.com

Grande Prairie Voice for Life Ph: 780-538-3344 vfl@telusplanet.net

We are very pleased to be hosting Dancing with Zoe by Grande

Prairie local playwright M.B. Mitchell. A mentally handicapped woman polarizes a family and the townspeople of Welcome, Alberta by her outrageous, yet childlike antics. She naively lavishes kindness and affection on everyone, even to those who berate her. When the town is about to be visited by a CBC documentary film crew, a vocal minority goes through the paces of temporarily ridding itself of this embarrassing town "mascot" during the week of the filming. She unwittingly becomes the catalyst in the healing of some relationships and in the revelation of a family secret. Friday, June 21 @ 8:00 pm, Saturday, June 22 @ 8:00 pm
Tickets: at the door (1st come 1st serve) Cost: \$5.00 per person \$15.00 per family. Christian Fellowship Assembly.

We are also having the Youth Walk-a-Thon on Friday, June 21st. The walk is focusing on Youth and Youth Groups this year but all are welcome to attend. We're going to marshal together, holding banners high, celebrating LIFE and walk from Faith Lutheran to Christian Fellowship Assembly. If you're in charge of youth group and haven't received a package, please let us know and we'll send you one. Minimum Pledge (includes supper and Dancing with Zoe ticket) = \$10.00 for each participant.
Schedule of Events:
6:00 pm - Registration for Walk at Faith Lutheran
6:15 - Supper and Fellowship
7:00 - Marshalling of walkers
7:15 - Walk to Christian Fellowship Assembly
8:00 - Awards to participants and viewing of the Dancing with Zoe play (Free for youth)

High Prairie Pro-Life Ph: 780-925-2014 rrjkjbeaudoin@yahoo.ca

High River Pro-Life
Ph: 403-395-2106
rayfree@telusplanet.net
We wanted to report on the success of the High River Trade Fair. We never had the success that we had this year! One of our lady members came up with the idea of handing out The Rose and put all kinds of pro-life pamphlets in with it and handed it out to all who showed a little interest, but if not approached would walk by. Previous to this approach we waited by the pro-life booth for those stopping in. We had 3 real outgoing teenage girls helping us for a session giving out suckers and pamphlets. We had the fetal models

sitting out which attracts a lot of children along with 3 draws for two pizzas (locally donated) and a plant. Those who qualified for the draw were those who answered the skill testing question, "At what age can an unborn baby be aborted legally in Canada?" We feel the trade fair is educating the public. To get more publicity in the local newspaper we gave \$100 to the mother giving birth on or around Mother's Day. We presented it last week to a mother of her sixth, born on Mother's Day evening. We went to see our MLA, Mr. Don Tannas for Highwood, concerning deinsuring abortion and he gave us some advice and ideas as to how to be more effective on the issue.

Lakeland Pro-Life Ph: 780-639-3601 rlirette@telusplanet.net

Leduc & Dist. Pro-Life Ph: 780-986-1917 lauren@quixnet.net

Lethbridge & District Pro-Life Association
Ph: 403-320-5433
lprolife@telusplanet.net
Elsie Alexander Pro-Life Scholarship — Attention: Lethbridge and Southern Alberta Grade 12 Students - Application forms are now available. This scholarship is available to grade 12 graduates entering their first year of post secondary education who have fostered leadership in respect for all human life in their home, church and community. \$1000.00 will be awarded to the applicant who is selected. Call the office for an application form at 320-5433. Application deadline is July 15, 2002.

Medicine Hat Pro-Life Ph: 403-527-6743 hortence84@hotmail.com

Pembina Pro-Life Ph: 780-674-2952 bdening@telusplanet.net

Red Deer & District Pro-Life
Ph: 403-340-2229
llouiseo@telusplanet.net
We had our Annual General Meeting on May 30, with the election of new officers. For Westerner Days, or our annual summertime Red Deer Fair, we will have a booth again this year. We will answer questions, and pass out smiles and information. We plan on having another Life Chain later this year in October.

St. Paul Pro-Life Ph: 780-635-3922 cadrin@mcsnet.ab.ca

Taber Pro-Life Assoc.
Ph: 403-223-8452
emoedt@theboss.net
We are currently working on a membership campaign. We held a respect for life week which involved giving roses to the new mothers in the hospital and mini-concerts in two of the local senior's lodges. We are planning a Life Chain in our area, which will be done the first Saturday in October, the 5th, and we'd like to encourage pro-life people in the Taber area to come out. We were very pleased to have 4 of our board members attend the Life 2002 Provincial Pro-life conference in Edmonton and participate in giving Barbara Halma the Courage to Serve Award! Congratulations Barbara!

Three Hills & District Pro-Life Society Ph: 403-443-5356

bruby@telusplanet.net
We made donations as follows, \$500 has been donated to each of the following: Lethbridge AB Teen Ed, Calgary Pregnancy Centre, Central AB Pregnancy Care Centre in Red Deer, Three Hills Health Care Centre, Saint Mary's Hospital Extended Care in Trochu, S.T.A.R.S. Ambulance, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition & \$1,000 to Rehoboth (Three Hills, AB) with \$500 to be given to Youth for Life Conference this fall. Our society also ordered the Pam Stenzel pro-chastity video, 'Sex Has a Price Tag' from the Team that Binds Rosary Society of Edmonton.

Wainwright Life Matters Ph: 780-842-6135 kdcam@telusplanet.net

A very big thank-you to Doreen Connelly for all the work with the Mother's Day, Father's Day & garage sale events! We are planning on doing a float soon, and watch for plans being made for the fall Grandparent's Day in our area. If you're interested in being involved, you'd be welcome. Give us a call.

Wetaskiwin & Dist. Pro-Life Ph: 780-352-6893

ESSAY CONTEST 2002 CONTINUED

Continued from page 5

**Junior High — 1st Place -
Garnett S. Genuis, Edmonton,
Alberta**

Embryonic Stem Cell Research: Taking the Pro-Life Position into the Public Sphere

The pro-life community is constantly being challenged to address current scientific developments in a way that the general public can understand. This is often difficult because the majority of citizens no longer accept the concept of absolute truth. In order to convince others of the value of human life in all its forms, one must convey ideas using secular language and images.

Mr. Michael J. Fox, famous actor and advocate for Parkinson's research, is, to my knowledge, not a follower of any organized religion and does not hold the view that life begins at conception. What reason, therefore, would he have for not promoting embryonic stem cell research? If I were asked to outline to Mr. Fox why embryonic stem cell research is problematic, I would do so using a secular perspective. It is much simpler to justify a pro-life position from a faith perspective; however, there is no point in using religious arguments when talking to individuals outside of a given faith.

It is important to understand Mr. Fox's perspective prior to engaging him in a discussion about this issue. Donating millions of dollars to embryonic stem cell research, Mr. Fox has stated, "If you're dealing with embryonic stem cells, which are not fetal stem cells; [it has] nothing to do with abortion. They have to do with vitro fertiliza-

tion, that because every time a couple does this, they create many more [embryos] than they need. Researchers should be able to use the extra embryos that would have been discarded. Their potential for life is gone because they're thrown away. So the reasoning is if they can save lives, and improve lives, that's research worth looking into" (Everyday adventurer 2001). Michael J. Fox is obviously of the opinion that embryonic stem cells research is acceptable as unwanted embryos that are currently frozen could be used to save lives. Mr. Fox has also quoted former Republican Senator Bob Dole, who said that supporting stem cell research was "the pro-life position to take" (Actor Michael J. Fox says election will have 'dramatic bearing' on stem cell research 2000). When talking to Mr. Fox, I would attempt to directly address his position, by discussing the scientific facts which suggest that embryonic stem cell research is concerning.

I would begin our discussion by clarifying to Mr. Fox that embryonic stem cell research is not isolated from the issue of abortion. In the technical sense of the word, this research is not abortion, the willful destruction of a continuing intrauterine pregnancy; however, discussion of this topic inevitably raises complex questions about the point at which life begins. Many different people have tried to find an answer to this divisive question. The official position of the Supreme Court of Canada is that life does not begin until a child has completely proceeded, in a living state, from the body of its mother (Preliminary Version 1991). This is, however, by no means undisputed. Around the same time as the Supreme Court

handed down this judgment, a subcommittee of the Canadian Medical Association stated that a fetus becomes a person at twenty weeks gestation (Rich 1991). The typical pro-life position is that life begins at conception; however it is more than pro-life people who hold this view. For example, a noted abortionist wrote in the Canadian Medical Association Journal that, "The question of when life begins, however should not be an issue in the abortion debate, and to say that it is is both dishonest and biased. It is akin to arguing the case about capital punishment on the issue of whether hanging really destroys life. Of course it does, and of course life begins at the moment of conception. To argue otherwise is to waste time" (Green 1988). Based on the evidence, I have concluded that life begins at conception. It is at this point that the unique genetic thumbprint, with 46 chromosomes, is initiated and the tiny embryo contains all the qualities of a distinct human person.

Given the widely varying perspectives about when life begins, I would encourage Michael J. Fox to look at the potential that non-embryonic stem cells have for curing diseases such as Parkinson's. Mr. Fox has stated to lawmakers that, "stem cell research offers the chance of a medical miracle" (Subcommittee hears testimony 2000). This medical miracle is still possible within an ethical framework. The federal government of the United States has spent \$250 million on researching the usability of stem cells from placenta, umbilical cord, adult, and even animal sources. A recent study shows that adult stem cells may not only work as well as embryonic stem cells, but possibly

much better. In this particular study, researchers at Whitehead Institute tried to correct immune deficiencies in mice using stem cells. After being unsuccessful with embryonic stem cells, the researchers managed to cure the mice by using bone marrow stem cells. In an even more recent study, researchers at the B.C. Cancer Society discovered how to multiply adult blood stem cells by injecting them with a specific gene. Ultimately, using adult stem cells is the best alternative, for three reasons. First of all, adult stem cells have just as much, if not more potential for curing illness as do embryonic stem cells. Second, by using adult

stem cells, one circumvents the divisive issue of when life begins. And finally, adult stem cells offer the same opportunity for a medical miracle, within a moral context.

When talking with Michael J. Fox, I would speak in a gracious manner, listening to his concerns and presenting scientific truth. Regardless of its amazing possibilities, science cannot exist in a moral and ethical vacuum. I would try to come across simply as one who has done some research and found an alternative way to explore the potential of stem cells within a context that is ethical from all perspectives.

YC 2002



By Patty Nixon

As many of our members have likely heard before, this event is one of the highlights of the many exhibits that Alberta Pro-Life does during the year. The event continues to attract over 12,000 youth from all over Alberta and the exhibitors are kept extremely busy! It was a pleasure to share our space this year with Rock for Life, Mark Isinger, Joanne Pollock & Co. It was also great to see Scott Klusendorf at YC this year and his pro-life talks were very well attended. A couple of them had standing room only! The organizers enjoyed having Scott there, and they want him to come back again. We gave our pro-life pins again this year, as well as pro-life tattoos, and ran out as usual. Everyone who received a pin was asked to fill out a short survey, and this helps us collect information on this age group, but more importantly it helped to initiate hundreds of conversations about pro-life issues. We are still following up on the multitude of requests for information as a result of this exhibit.

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