



Dubuque County  
Right To Life, Inc.

# LIFETIME

OCTOBER 2025 VOLUME 28 NUMBER 10



*Pro-Life*

## AWARENESS WEEK



is Right Around the Corner!

We are so excited to host Serena Dyksen as our speaker for our fast-approaching Pro-Life Awareness Week! She will be in Dubuque October 6th through October 8th to share her story “From Regret to Redemption after Abortion” with local schools and the community.

Serena had an abortion experience at age 13 as a result of sexual assault. She will discuss her journey towards healing and restoration from these experiences, and we invite you to come hear her story while she is in Dubuque. You will have two different opportunities to see Serena:



INTRODUCING OUR PL  
WEEK KEYNOTE  
SPEAKER...

AUTHOR OF  
*She Found His Grace*



SERENA  
DYKSEN

Serena will speak at our annual Pro-Life Awareness Week Luncheon on Wednesday, October 8th at the Dubuque Golf and Country Club. Doors open at 11:30am, and lunch and the talk begin at 12pm. Requested donation is \$30. You can pay at the door, or when you register. Call today at 563-556-5960 to register!

On Wednesday, October 8th, Serena will also be speaking at Loras College, beginning at 6:30pm in the Alumni Campus Center Ballroom. This event is free and open to the public.

Serena’s story offers a narrative of hope and redemption in the midst of heartbreaking circumstances. It’s one that you can share with your family and friends to change the narrative around abortion and sexual assault. We hope to see you there.

# October 2025

Volume 28, Number 10  
Published Monthly

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### Office Hours:

Mon - Fri: 9am - 4pm  
Weekends: Closed

### Dyersville Office:

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Dubuque County Right to Life, Inc. is a non-profit, non-sectarian, education organization dedicated to preserving and fostering respect for human life from conception to natural death. We educate the public about the dangers of abortion, euthanasia and infanticide.

## October 2025

Thursday, October 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipped for Life Course, Week 1 DCRTL Office 10-11:45am</li> </ul>
Sunday, October 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life Chain Sunday:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:30-2pm in Dubuque</li> <li>3-4pm in Dyersville</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
October 6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLA Week</li> </ul>
Wednesday, October 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLA Luncheon - October 8<sup>th</sup> - 11:30am - 1:00pm Dubuque Golf &amp; Country Club</li> </ul>
Wednesday, October 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"From Regret to Redemption After Abortion" Serena Dyksen at Loras College in the Alumni Campus Center Ballroom - 6:30pm - Open to the Public</li> </ul>
Thursday, October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of Directors meeting</li> </ul>
Saturday, October 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecumenical Prayer Service for the Unborn - 11am - Mt. Olivet Cemetery at Memorial</li> </ul>
Thursday, October 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Hour for Respect Life - 7pm St. John the Baptist Church, Peosta</li> </ul>

## November 2025

Thursday, November 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership Meeting &amp; Board of Directors Elections - 6:30pm</li> </ul>
Wednesday, November 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q &amp; A on Abortion: Answering Your Questions on Moral, Legal &amp; Cultural Issues with Art Gilloon - 12:00pm - DCRTL Office</li> </ul>
Thursday, November 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of Directors meeting</li> </ul>
Thursday, November 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Hour for Respect Life - 7pm St. John the Baptist Church, Peosta</li> </ul>
Thursday & Friday, November 27 & 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Happy Thanksgiving! DCRTL Office closed</li> </ul>

## WISH LIST

Tissues / Kleenex



## A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“



“When people stop talking, really bad stuff starts. When marriages stop talking, divorce happens. When civilizations stop talking, civil war ensues. When you stop having a human connection with someone you disagree with, it becomes a lot easier to want to commit violence against that group. What we as a culture have to get back to is being able to have reasonable disagreement — where violence is not an option.”

— Charlie Kirk — from a campus Q&A clip widely shared after his death

”

America and the ideal of free speech that it stands for came under attack with the assassination of Charlie Kirk on September 10th – the day before we annually remember another terrorist attack that happened 24 years earlier.

Beyond politics, Charlie was a Christian who spoke openly about Jesus. He was a husband, a loving dad to two little children below the age of four, a friend to many, and a young American who was passionate about his country.

Regardless of your political beliefs or how you feel about the people he politically supported, Charlie was gunned down while participating in an open debate and encouraging the discussion of ideas on a college campus. That should give everyone a shock.

I was impressed that Charlie talked to people who disagreed with him on politics. Not just on college campuses, he openly debated leaders who disagreed with him. He debated Chris Cuomo last November. Governor Gavin Newsom of California interviewed Charlie on his podcast in early 2025. Last Spring, Charlie appeared on Bill Maher’s podcast show, which covered topics from drug policy to Christianity. These podcasts collectively reached millions of viewers with different beliefs because he was willing to engage with those who disagreed with him.

After his death, I saw many longer-form videos from his time on college campuses where he was actively engaging people with questions about their beliefs. Asking questions to further understand someone’s point of view is an effective way to have a great conversation on matters where you disagree.

In two different circumstances when Charlie was talking to people from divided families, he encouraged them to ask questions out of curiosity to learn more about why someone believes what they believe, to read about what both sides think, and to come to their own conclusions.

Who else in the political arena is telling people to ask questions, seek to understand both sides, and pursue the truth?

Charlie wanted to win you over to his side through the power of persuasion. Not a fist fight or through violence. Replay videos surfaced of people wanting to fight him. Charlie so eloquently stated that a fist fight or violence is not the way of the West, and it is not the way of civilized society to handle a clash of ideas.

In a free society, we answer speech with speech, never with bullets or violence. Cheering for it and calling for more of it will destroy our country.

# MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS



*In Honor of:*

St. Therese.....Donald & Carla Averkamp

*In Memory of:*

Marilyn Berning.....John & Ellen Markham  
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 Ed Conlan.....Bill & Kerri Takes  
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 Catherine Heaven.....Ken Reimer  
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 Mark Westhoff.....Angela Kruse

*When a gift is given in memory or in honor of a loved one, an acknowledgement card is sent to the person or family you designate. With gifts of \$250 or greater, their name is engraved on our memorial plaque, displayed in our office. Simply send us, along with your gift, the name of the person you are honoring and the name and address of the family to whom you'd like the acknowledgement sent. We'll be happy to send a card.*

## NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*...continued from page 3*

In the wake of the horrible killing of Charlie Kirk, Charlie would want us to continue to pursue compassionate dialogue over violence. He saw dialogue as the way forward to keeping this country unified and in pursuit of the truth.

It is justice to be angry at what happened - an innocent young American was gunned down for defending his beliefs in public. What we must decide is whether we will channel that anger into doing good and speaking out, as Charlie would, or to channel it into pursuing vengeance, which will lead to our nation's destruction. Nothing will bring Charlie back to this earth. It is we who can continue his legacy.

Prove to the assassin and those who celebrate the death of Charlie that they are wrong, and that America is greater. Charlie sincerely believed and lived by the quote at the beginning, that if we stop talking to people we disagree with, that's when civil war happens. To continue Charlie's legacy: 1. Talk to people who disagree with you. 2. Seek to understand people's beliefs through asking questions. 3. Live your faith openly and pursue the truth.

Thanks to your support, we have expanded our outreach to those who disagree with us in recent years. We have also been blessed with a dialogue training that is effective at changing hearts and minds when it comes to the issue of abortion. If you would like to take the Equipped for Life Course, it is not too late to sign up. Let us change our culture by showing that every human life has value. Do it for Charlie, and for our country.

May Charlie Kirk rest in the peace of Christ. May his wife, children, family, and friends, experience a peace from God that surpasses understanding. And may our country increase in the open debate of ideas while pursuing truth.

*Augustine*



## PRO-LIFE LEGISLATIVE, COURT, AND OTHER LEGAL NEWS

by Arthur F. Gilloon, DCRTL Board Member & Attorney



Dear Friends for Life-

As we celebrate Respect Life Month, here is a shorter column highlighting news about three life issues which give us cause to celebrate.

As long ago as July 2019, the Trump administration had banned federal funding for human fetal tissue research and created an ethics board to review all new HFT (human fetal tissue) policies. In August 2020, the Health and Human Services ethics advisory board rejected 13 separate requests for taxpayer-funded contracts because they were too interwoven with the practice of abortion and lacked justification as to why they needed to use the body parts of dead babies for this kind of research. For example, scientists at the University of Pittsburgh took full-thickness human skin from dead babies killed during second-trimester abortions and grafted it on the humanized mice. In other words, dead babies were scalped so that mice could be given a Staph infection on the skin to presumably study how the organs in the mice responded. In addition, spleens and lymphatic tissue were harvested from dead babies. Images obtained during a federal investigation literally show patches of baby hair growing on the backs of mice.

The Biden administration reinstated fetal tissue research with federal funding in 2021, and thus, more dead babies were once again used in federally funded research projects. Now, the good news. In September 2025, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), under the new Trump administration, announced that 17 separate grants involving human fetal tissue research initiated under the Biden administration will not be renewed. The NIH statement was as follows:

*“NIH takes this issue very seriously and remains committed to the highest ethical standards in research. The referenced grants, initiated under the Biden administration, will not be renewed. NIH is guided by a commitment to valuing human life and ensuring that federally funded research is conducted responsibly and transparently.”*

The 17 projects that will no longer be funded had received nearly \$22 million in the 2024 fiscal year in furtherance of this grisly work. Pro-life legislative efforts resulted in the congressional investigation, which culminated in this new NIH position. You can read more of this at the following link: [liveaction.org](https://liveaction.org)

In other celebratory national news, the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit issued a ruling on September 11, 2025, that allows the federal government to defund Planned Parenthood (PP) of its Medicaid payments while a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood continues through the courts. The law only takes away PP's Medicaid money for one year, so it is a huge deal that the appeals court let the law go into effect rather than blocking it while the lawsuit proceeded. If the appeals court had not overruled the lower courts, the one-year law defunding Planned Parenthood would've had no force or effect at all, because it's certainly going to be debated in the courts for more than a year.

And finally, the Texas State Senate approved a bill in early September 2025 entitled the “Texas Woman and Child Protection Act.” This law allows Texans to sue abortionists and others who make or distribute abortion pills in and outside of the state of Texas. The sponsor of the bill states it is meant to protect babies and their mothers from “poisonous, illegal drugs.” The bill was signed into law by Texas Governor Greg Abbott on September 18, 2025.

That's all for now. Thanks for reading and staying informed! DCRTL will help you do just that.

Arthur F. Gilloon





## Q & A ON ABORTION:

*Answering YOUR Questions  
on Moral, Legal, and Cultural Issues*

Do you have questions about issues related to abortion? Are you seeking clarification on pro-life beliefs or current events? Is there a moral argument about abortion that you wish to understand better?

We are excited to announce an opportunity for you to discuss any and all questions you have with attorney Art Gilloon on **November 12th at 12pm at the DCRTL office (2205 Carter Road)**. Bring your own lunch and participate in a Q&A discussion with other pro-lifers!

If you plan on attending, RSVP by Friday, November 7th by calling the office (563-556-5960) or emailing Naomi Weiss at [nweiss@dcrtl.org](mailto:nweiss@dcrtl.org). We hope to see you there!

## Ecumenical Prayer Service of Remembrance for the Unborn

Dubuque County Right to Life invites you to join us in honoring the unborn babies whose lives were lost through stillbirth, miscarriage, or abortion on Saturday, October 18th at 11am. The service will be at Mt. Olivet Cemetery at our Memorial for the Unborn. We will gather to pray for the lives lost, as well as for healing for the parents and relatives who grieve the loss of their child. Following the service, we will have a potluck lunch in the parish hall at St. Joseph parish in Key West. Please bring a dish to share! Doors to the parish hall will be open at 10:30am if you would like to store your dish prior to the service. Please join us for all or part of this event as your schedule allows. We hope to see you there!



## THANK YOU !!!

- To Sue Lansing for helping in the office!
- To Alice Ostwinkle and the Women of Service for adding stickers to our Life Savers!
- To our members who travel down to Iowa City on Thursdays to pray outside the Emma Goldman Abortion Center!

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 - LIFE CHAIN SUNDAY

Join us on **Sunday, October 5th** at one of our local Life Chains (or both) to witness to the inherent dignity of sanctity of all human life! A national event, the Life Chain is the perfect opportunity to become a voice for the pre-born babies losing their lives to abortion. We will pray for the millions of victims of abortion and all women in unplanned pregnancies, that they receive the good help that they deserve. We will also pray for all public officials, and for a deeper respect for the ill, the handicapped, and the aged. Signs will be provided.

**We will witness in Dubuque from 12:30pm to 2pm, and we will witness in Dyersville from 3pm to 4pm. You are welcome to join us at one or both locations! See below for where to meet. We hope to see you there!**

**Dubuque:** Highway 20 at Bluff Street (Proceed on Bluff St towards Rt 20 and you will come upon a little gravel lot on your right side where you will pull into to park. (Staff will arrive at 12pm so you should see others there already). For those who will plug it into their phones, it is directly across the street from 22 Bluff St, Dubuque, IA. Please call the office if you have questions.

**Dyersville:** Highway 136 at Beckman High School, 1325 9th St SE, Dyersville, IA 52040

### New Approach to Life Chain Signs

Dubuque County Right to Life (DCRTL) is looking forward to witnessing alongside you to the humanity of our pre-born brothers and sisters at the annual Life Chain Sunday on October 5th. Participating in the national event provides a unique opportunity to reach a vast amount of people with the pro-life message.

Our goal is to share the truth that abortion violates the dignity of the pre-born. We want to do it peacefully, boldly, and effectively. Your continued support and generosity not only allows us to assess how to accomplish this, but provides the resources to do so as well.

This year, after we carefully considered our approach to the Life Chain, our Digital Outreach Associate, Molly Strohmeyer, used her talents to create new signs for the event. Molly combined visual design with pro-life messaging that we are confident will impact drivers-by.

*What to Expect:* We have enlarged the signs this year (as seen in the picture) to ensure the words are both easy and quick to read for drivers. Moreover, DCRTL plans to repeat messaging by arranging signs with the same message in a row. The more a person encounters a message, the more likely it is to take root and remain with them. There will be opportunities for people to take breaks and switch out with another volunteer to hold the sign if needed.



*The Messaging:* The signs will emphasize the human rights of the pre-born. Our society and culture places great importance (as it should) on human equality and equal rights. It is vital that we point out that these rights begin in the womb. We must remind people that the pre-born deserve protection, and abortion is an egregious violation of human rights.

Though we will have new signs, you are still welcome to bring your own if you prefer.

Again, we are excited to share the truth with our community. Together, we can impact hearts and minds to see the evil of abortion. Together, we can remind people that our pre-born brothers and sisters possess dignity and rights. Together, we can make abortion unthinkable.

**Please join us this Sunday, October 5th, for this annual witness to Life.**

## 5TH GRADE POSTER CONTEST!

Dubuque County Right to Life is looking forward to our annual 5th Grade Poster Contest, an opportunity for 5th grade students to show their care for Life and promote pro-life awareness in their school communities.

**This year's theme is Human Life: Precious at Every Stage.**

All participants will receive a precious feet lollipop for participating. Additionally, we will select a first place winner from the community (which includes homeschool students, or students from schools that do not participate), as well as a first place winner from each participating school. The prize for first place is a pro-life t-shirt. There will also be an overall tri-state area first, second, and third place winner who will receive a monetary prize (\$100, \$75 and \$50 respectively).

If participating as an individual student from the community, please drop off your student's poster at the office (2205 Carter Rd) by Friday, October 24 at 4pm.

The poster should treat the theme in a positive way and should be either 11" x 17" or 12" x 18". It must be original and may not be submitted to any other publisher or contest. Be creative! Students may use words, phrases, line drawings, and/or artwork, and they may use multiple colors for the project. On the back of the poster please include the student's name and contact information. We look forward to seeing all the beautiful posters!



**ARE YOU CALLED TO SERVE THE PRO-LIFE CAUSE  
AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS?**

Dubuque County Right To Life (DCRTL) is governed by a board of directors consisting of 9–12 persons nominated and elected for staggered three-year terms by the members of DCRTL. Do you want to make abortion unthinkable? Are you a current member of DCRTL? Are you called to take that commitment deeper? Call our Executive Director, Augustine Payne, at 563-556-5960 if you are interested! **To be added to the slate of candidates in the November newsletter, please contact Augustine by Monday, October 13th.**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Our nominating committee will present a slate of candidates to the general membership at the November 6th membership meeting (held at our office – 2205 Carter Rd., Dubuque, IA). Doors open at 6:30pm, with speeches presented by candidates from 6:45 to 7pm and voting to follow. Nominations from the floor by any current DCRTL member will also be accepted during the meeting. All DCRTL members are eligible to vote, but must do so in person at the meeting or by calling the office on November 6th between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

After voting, members are welcome to stay to socialize and play games. We will have light refreshments and playing cards (Euchre anyone?). Feel free to bring your favorite game!

 <p><b>PARK FARM WINERY</b> BANKSTON, IOWA</p> <p><b>ENJOY LIFE!</b></p>	<p>"If people spent an hour a week in Eucharistic Adoration, abortion would be ended." +Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta</p>  <p>If you would like to know more about being a regular adorer at the <b>Power of Prayer Adoration Chapel</b>, or if you are willing to sub occasionally, please contact Melissa Noel, 563-564-6365 or powerofprayerchapel@outlook.com</p>	<p><i>Catholic Parishes of the Emmaus Pastorate:</i> </p> <p><small>St. Patrick, Colesburg; St. Mark, Edgewood; St. Joseph, Elkader; St. Mary, Strawberry Point; and Sacred Heart, Volga.</small></p> <p><i>"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you."</i> <small>Jeremiah 1:5</small></p>
 <p><b>Rondinelli Music/Audio</b></p> <p>(563) 583-8271</p>	<p><b>BEHR'S</b> Funeral Home</p> <p>1491 MAIN ST ~ (563) 582-3297 ~ www.behrfuneralhome.com ~</p> <p><i>Honoring the Sanctity of Life Since 1936</i></p>	 <p><b>MOTHERS PRAYERS</b> United in prayer we save our children</p> <p>To join or start a group contact: usa@mothersprayers.org <b>LIZ CUSHMAN</b> USA Coordinator</p>


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Jesus exclaimed to St. Faustina,  
"How very much I desire the salvation of souls!"



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Jer. 1:5

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**In Loving Memory of:**

**Bud Portz**

**&**

**Mary Mormann**



*"It is the right of every pregnant  
woman to give birth...and the right  
of every child to be born."*

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