# 111ehacts Right to Life From conception to natural death



A publication of South Dakota Right to Life | Fall 2023 | www.sdRightToLife.org

## If There's Ever Been a Time to Fight for Women and Children, the Time is Now.



We have been fighting around the clock to stop petition circulators who are working to gather the needed 35,000 signatures to make abortion legal for up to nine months in our state. If they win, come November 6, 2024, parental notice for a minor undergoing abortion will be gone. Basic medical and safety protections for women will be gone. The requirement for abortion doctors to be licensed will be gone.

We desperately need your help. We've seen what has become of Minnesota and we do not want to be a haven for abortion evils in South Dakota.

Our wonderful front-line volunteers have been working to tell South Dakotans the truth about the radical abortion amendment. They have loyally spent their Saturdays at the Farmer's market, their weekdays at the courthouses and universities, showing up anywhere and everywhere they find petitioners advocating for abortion. These pro-life

fighters have done a tremendous job and I'm incredibly grateful for their strength and resolve. But we need more of them. We need you. We need to see the grassroots involvement in a much more personal and active way than ever before. Prolife friends, we need to get to the front line and stop them from getting the signatures. For every pro-life volunteer we currently have, there are ten pro-abortion petitioners. They are well-funded and well-organized, but here's the deal, we can beat back their radical agenda if we band together.

> Everything from donating to the Life Defense Fund, to volunteering, to passing out flyers, to spreading the word in your churches and communities is essential if we're going to win this fight. We're a team.

When Nehemiah and his comrades began rebuilding Jerusalem's city walls, their enemies tried to divide them, deceive them, hurt them, and even kill them. What did they do in response? They kept BUILDING. They didn't pretend the threats weren't real or turn a blind eye to reality. No. They held a tool in one hand and a sword in the other.

We must do the same.

I won't sugar-coat this request for reinforcements. I'm asking you to step into the line of fire. You might be yelled at - you might have nasty things written about you on social media, but I know this movement and I know who you are: you are tireless fighters who are passionate about mothers and babies, and you won't be intimidated into silence.

November 6, 2024, will be too late, but today isn't. If we say we are pro-life, then let's rise to the occasion. Our South Dakota women and children need us. Let's show pro-abortion petitioners who we are and what we are made of. Let's not back down. Let's not give up. Let's not lose heart.

When you are ready to join us in this fight for precious little souls and amazing mothers, contact us at lifedefensefund.com or (605) 951-5582.

Thank you for what you do for the unborn and women across our state.

Leslee Unruh

Co-Chair, Life Defense Fund

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Non-Profit STD Rapid City, SD US Postage PAID Permit 202

South Dakota Right to Life Committee Rapid City, South Dakota 57701 1107 Mount Rushmore Road



Phone 605.220.8678 southdakotarighttolife@gmail.com www.sdRightToLife.org

Mt. Rushmore Rd, Suite 1-B, Rapid City, SD 57701

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dale Bartscher

#### **OFFICERS**

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> Jon Hansen Vice President

Anne Hanson Secretary

Spencer Cody Treasurer

Valerie Johnson NRLC Delegate

LifeFacts Editor

April Dusek

South Dakota Right to Life is a non-profit, non-denominational organization whose philosophy is that all innocent human life is inviolable and is to be guaranteed protection from conception until natural death.

## "We Are Living in a C.A.P. Day!"

By: Dale Bartscher, SDRTL Executive Director



In the summer of 2021 my Grandchildren, Joshua and Grace, sent me this photo of them wearing their newly acquired Pro-Life CAPS. They knew, and rightly so, that this photo would make their Grandpa SMILE – and it did – numerous times over.

Their photo reminded me once again that we stand in the trenches of the Pro-Life Movement and fight for the Sanctity of Human Life for this and the next generation. I was also reminded that "We Are Living in a C.A.P. Day!" Let me explain:

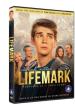
C.A.P. - "Commemorate, Anticipate and Participate"....

- 1) We **Commemorate** 52-Years of SDRTL's advocating for LIFE from conception to natural death. Donald L. Hicks wisely wrote, "We must learn that when people devalue any one Life, they devalue all Life."
- 2) We **Anticipate** the day when abortion is not only illegal but unthinkable. At SDRTL, we will never stop working to fight against all that devalues and degrades our most basic human right: the right to life. With abortion and physician-assisted suicide gaining a foothold in our nation, we at SDRTL promise that we will keep defending all life until these attacks on life are abolished in our beloved State and Country. We vow to continue to protect and defend the innocent until all are welcomed throughout life and protected in law.
  - 3) We will **Participate**...By living out-loud our Three P's as we:
    - **Pray**...for mothers and fathers who are dealing with unplanned pregnancies. As we...
    - **Promote**...the Pro-Life Message with a sense of grace and love. And, as we...
    - **Pitch-In**...discerning how to use our time, talents and treasure as we find ways to get in volved in the Pro-Life Movement!

WHY? So, **no more** mothers and fathers are wounded and **no more** babies cry in a mother's womb!

#### You and Your Friends are Invited to SDRTL's 52nd Annual State Convention September 22-23 in Aberdeen, SD

Register **TODAY** (Early Bird Registration ONLY \$30)! Students (7th – 12th Graders) may Attend FREE! College Students may Attend for ONLY \$10!



Producer Kirk Cameron and the Kendrick Brothers have gifted the 2023 SDRTL State Convention with '60' DVDs of the Pro-Life movie: LIFEMARK. This is the true inspirational story of Melissa Coles, one of this year's Convention's Keynote Speakers. HURRY: The first '60' families (includes couples/singles) to register for the Convention will receive a complimentary DVD upon arrival in Aberdeen, Sept. 22-23. (See PAGE 8 for Convention details.)

## Fair Volunteers and Donors Help Share Critical Information

By: Debbie Pease, SDRTL President and Field Coordinator



As we finish up another busy fair season, we want to recognize the many volunteers and donors who make it possible for South Dakota Right to Life to educate thousands of fair goers every year with a positive pro-life message. Without their generosity of time, talent and financial resources, we would never be able to have such a positive impact.

Besides the traditional educational quiz game to win a prize, information about upcoming events and local chapters, we also distributed educational materials from the Life Defense Fund about the reasons to **DECLINE TO SIGN** the petition that would add the radical abortion amendment to our 2024 ballot allowing abortion up to birth in our state.

It is incredible how many people still have not heard about this petition and are vulnerable to the misinformation of the groups who are pushing for it. Please read the article by Leslee Unruh on page 1 and share the information with your family and friends.

We were also thrilled to share with fairgoers the expanding network of pregnancy help centers in the state. Since last year, the Haven Center in Watertown is getting ready to open its doors, and ZoeCare in Yankton is expanding services to Vermillion and the surrounding region with their mobile unit. We are so grateful for all the love and support that are being

offered all year round in these centers of hope.

We are excited to be hosting a panel discussion featuring representatives from many of our States' 10 Pregnancy Help Centers (PHCs) at our 52nd Annual State Convention being held in Aberdeen on September 22 & 23. This will be an opportunity to highlight the important of the PHCs and practical ways that we can help them with their mission. Please join us for this motivational and educational event!

#### **Pregnancy Resource Centers in South Dakota**

Brookings Option 1

605-692-1600 option1.org

Huron Plus One Guidance Center

605-554-3330 plusonehuron.org

Rapid City Black Hills Pregnancy Center

605-341-4477 blackhillspregnancycenter.com

Sioux Falls Alpha Center

605-361-3500 alphacenter.org

Our mobile center helps clients anywhere in the state.

Spearfish Bella Pregnancy Resource Center

605-642-4140 bellapregnancy.com

Watertown Haven Center

Coming Soon! HavenCenterSD.org

Yankton/Vermillion ZoeCare

605-655-4967 zoecarepregnancy.org
Our Vermillion mobile clinic helps clients in the region.

Birthright of South Dakota 1-800-550-4900

Pierre 605-224-6828 birthright.org/pierre/
Rapid City 605-343-1732 birthright.org/rapidcity/
Sioux Falls 605-809-8409 birthright.org/siouxfalls/

These centers provide FREE help to anyone experiencing an unplanned pregnancy or in need of post abortion counseling.

### Life Chain 2023

Stand with tens of thousands of pro-life individuals throughout the USA and Canada, in honor of the millions of babies whose lives have been lost to abortion. Pray for people in unexpected pregnancy situations, for women who have been hurt by abortion and for our nation.



#### WHEN & WHERE

Sunday, October 1st 2:00 - 3:00 PM

SIOUX FALLS

W. 41st St. between S Western Ave. and Sertoma Ave.

RAPID CITY

Along Mt. Rushmore Road

YANKTON

2700 Broadway Ave.



## SDRTL Prepares to Welcome Jenn Lee to Their Staff



Saturday, September 16, 2023, will be A 'RED LETTERED DAY' for SDRTL and it cannot come soon enough. On that day Jenn Lee, of Sioux Falls, will initiate her part-time position with SDRTL as their new Associate Director. Take a moment here and acquaint yourself with this remarkable, Pro-Life lady:

Jenn is proud to be a farmer's daughter, originally from Alcester-Hudson, SD. After graduation she moved to Sioux Falls to attend Augustana College, where she graduated with a BA in Communications and was very active in music. Jenn and her husband, Darren, met while doing musical theater, and were married in 2001. They now have three (wonderful!) teenage sons. She was a full-time mom for many years, and then in 2015 began her own worship and teaching ministry. Jenn began songwriting and released her first original album of Christian music in 2015, entitled,



"Secret Place." In the years following she began teaching and leading worship at various conferences, churches and events.

She and her son, Dawson, released their first album together in late 2022; a collection of classic Christmas songs called,

"The Key to Christmas." Jenn has been an active volunteer for both 40 Days for Life and SD Right to Life.

Jenn will be supervised by SDRTL's Executive Director, Dale Bartscher and will work alongside SDRTL's Chapter Coordinator, Debbie Pease.

You will have an opportunity to get better acquainted with Jenn Lee and hear her minister in song during the 52nd Annual SDRTL State Convention in Aberdeen, September 22-23.



# MUSIC will Highlight the 52nd Annual SDRTL State Convention







Music inspires and lifts and that's exactly what those attending this year's Convention, September 22-23, will experience when they listen to our invited musical guests. Each of our Main Sessions will be preceded by the talent of the 'New Life Fellowship Praise Team' (center photo) led by their Worship and Youth Pastor, Gregory Fred. Bookending the Convention in Music will be Katie Wagner Washnok (photo left) of Aberdeen singing our 'National Anthem' on Friday evening, and Jenn Lee (photo right) of Sioux Falls closing out our Convention in song on Saturday afternoon. You won't want to miss a moment of this year's Convention!

#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

#### 51st Annual Hour of Reflection "The Sanctity of Human Life"



Sunday, January 28, 2024, 2:00 pm (CST)
State Capitol Rotunda, Pierre, SD
Keynote Speaker: Bishop DeGrood (Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls)
Invited Guest Speaker: Governor Kristi Noem

#### ~ Walk for Life ~

Sunday, January 28, 2024 12:00 – 1:00 pm (CST)

State Capitol Grounds, Pierre SD Leader: SD Representative Jon Hansen

Grand Marshalls: SD Pregnancy Resource Centers





#### Humanitarians of the Year

During the 2023 SDRTL State Convention we will be honoring two South Dakotans who have served as Ambassadors for the 'Sanctity of Human Life' with an exemplary flare of excellence. Come join us as we celebrate and recognize the LIFE achievements of:

# Roxie Johnson (Spearfish, SD)



Roxie Johnson became a second-generation pro-life advocate in 1986 when her parents, who were active in the Tri-State Right to Life group in Belle Fourche, invited her to a series of meetings to discuss avenues of intervention for unborn babies who were being aborted nearby in a facility in Rapid City. Her passion for women and their unborn babies was ignited at one of the meetings

where, for the first time, she heard the heart-wrenching testimony of a woman who had had a second trimester saline abortion. From that point on, Roxie knew it wasn't enough to just say she was pro-life; she needed to find a way to intercede.... [Hear the rest of her amazing 'Life Story' at our Convention!]

# Eugene Billingsley (Rapid City, SD)

Gene Billingsley was born in Northern California in 1952 and grew up in a suburban community in the Santa Clara Valley just south of San Francisco. He is a faithful member of the Rapid City Area Right to Life Chapter and volunteers countless hours in the SDRTL State Office. Gene graduated high school in 1970 and later enlisted in



the Army in 1971. He spent nearly three years serving as a human-resource specialist in West Germany, where he met his future bride, Kathy Hedrick. They later got married in 1976 in California, while Gene was going to college. Gene joined the Air Force and made a career of it, rising to the rank of senior master sergeant (E-8) with two more overseas assignments and several deployments including Desert Fox in 1998.... [Hear the rest of his amazing 'Life Story' at our Convention!]

#### Pro-Life Youth

By: Kassidy Peters, SDRTL Youth Outreach Coordinator

Middle and high schoolers, I have a stat for you. Did you know that 29% of Gen Z believe that abortion is wrong? That is a decrease from 33% of Millennials. This is great news because it means that we are making an impact and your generation is starting to believe more and more how wrong abortion is. However, it is still not enough. There is still work to do and still people to reach!



On September 22 - 23, South Dakota Right to Life is having our annual State Convention in Aberdeen and I want you to get signed up and bring your friends! There will be a separate youth session led by me and it will be for 7th - 12th graders. Each year we learn a lot, have fun playing games, and

get to meet others across the state. It is for all students whether you go to public school, private school, or home school. So head over to our website, get signed up, and I will see you there!

### They Say...

By: Valerie Johnson, NRLC Delegate

Cultures change. The right to life movement's mission has been to change our culture and promote the human right to life. There is still great need for change in our culture; Dobbs is just one goal realized. How are societies truly changed? Most people's hearts and minds are changed by education. No matter what we do - booths, letters to the editor, school visits, Church bulletins, signs, etc., we can help frame the issue with our words.



Find additional information, including rules, at www.sdrighttolife.org

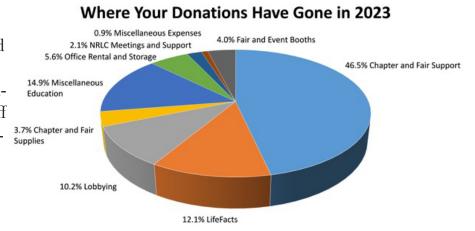
Questions? Call Debbie at 605-929-4933

"When They Say...You Say" is an excellent resource. You can find it at: <a href="https://www.nrlc.org/wp-content/uploads/WTSYS.pdf">https://www.nrlc.org/wp-content/uploads/WTSYS.pdf</a>

#### SDRTL Operates With a Flare of Financial Integrity

By: Spencer Cody, SDRTL Treasurer

As we continue advocating for LIFE in 2023, let us take a look at how South Dakota Right to Life has worked to ensure that the most is made of every contribution that we have received this year and hope that you will partner or continue to partner with us as a sustaining member this year. So far in 2023, approximately 46.5% of your donations have gone toward providing staff in support of chapters, pro-life outreach, and coordinating exhibits and booths at fairs and other events including the convention coming up in Aberdeen this September. Lobbying for pro-life legislation each session in Pierre has taken up another 10.2% of our budget. The LifeFacts that you receive goes to more than 16,000 households and makes up 12.1% of this year's budget.



remaining 14.9% of donations are spent on miscellaneous education outreach, which includes fighting the abortion-until-birth petition. Every dollar that you donate gets fully and meaningfully utilized in the most impactful way possible. Thank you so much for supporting South Dakota Right to Life!

Cut & mail to: SDRTL, 1107 Mt. Rushmore Rd, Suite 1-B, Rapid City, SD 57701

Name	Mailing Address
CityStateZipPhone	Email
My Special Gift in Support of Life: \$	I would like to donate by: (check one) Online bank transfer or Bill Pay (I will contact my bank for this option) Credit Card- (costs us 3% of your gift) Card Number:Card Month: Card Year:Card CVV Number: Check (Make out to either - SDRTL, non tax deductible; or SDRTL Ed Trust Fund, tax deductible)  How Often May We Anticipate This Donation?Once;Monthly
*Due to IRS regulations donations to SDRTL and the SDRTL PAC are not deductible. If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation, then please donate to the SDRTL Education Trust Fund.  *A donation may yet also be given "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" of a loved one upon request.	This Donation is made (check one if it applies)  "In Memory of": "In Honor of": "In Honor of": If you wish to donate electronically please visit sdRightToLife.org

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Aug. 31 - Sept. 4: Huron - SDRTL's Booth at the SD State Fair (Family Life Center).

Sept. 1: SDRTL's 52nd State Convention "Sponsors/Booklet Ads" Deadline.

\*Sept. 7: Rapid City - John Witherspoon College Convocation.

\*Sept. 7: Sioux Falls - Lifeline Children's Services Banquet (Sioux Falls Convention Center).

Sept. 7: SDRTL's 52nd State Convention "Early Bird Registration" Deadline.

Sept. 9: Rapid City - Black Hills Walk to End Alzheimer's (Founder's Park) www.alz.org/walk

\*Sept. 9: Rapid City - Freedom's Journey Fundraising Banquet (The Box Event Center).

Sept. 11: Statewide Every Mon. - SD Intercessor's Prayer for America Call, 6:00 am (MST).

\*Sept. 14: Rapid City - Black Hills Pregnancy Center's Fall Dinner (Best Western Ramkota).

Sept. 16: Sioux Falls - Walk to End Alzheimer's (Levitt at the Falls) www.alz.org/walk

Sept. 16: Statewide - Trail Life & Heritage Girls Pro-Life Activities Day.

Sept. 22-23: Aberdeen - SDRTL's 52nd State Convention (New Life Fellowship).

Sept. 24: Aberdeen - Walk to End Alzheimer's (Anderson Park) www.alz.org/walk

Sept. 28: Rapid City - Passages Women's Transitional Housing, Pies/Plus (Open Bible Church).

Oct. 1: Rapid City - Annual LIFECHAIN (Mt. Rushmore Road) 2:00 – 3:00 pm.

Oct. 1: Sioux Falls - Annual LIFECHAIN (41st Street) 2:00 – 3:00 pm.

\*Oct. 5: Rapid City - SD Kids Belong Gala (Downtown Holiday Inn).

\*Oct. 5: Spearfish - Bella Pregnancy Resource Center's Annual Gala Dinner, 6:30 pm.

\*Oct. 7-8: Life Runners National Half/Full/Relay Marathon & 5K/1K (Crazy Horse Monument).

\*Oct. 11: Sioux Falls - Call to Freedom's 8th Annual CommUnity Breakfast, 6:45 am.

Oct 15: Faith and Eagle Butte - Dale Bartscher to give a SDRTL Mission's Moment and Preach.

\*Oct. 22: Rapid City - SD Kids Belong Gala (Dahl Arts Center) 6:30 pm.

\*Oct. 24: Rapid City - Family Heritage Alliance Stand Banquet.

\*Oct. 30: Sioux Falls - Family Heritage Alliance Stand Banquet.

\*Nov. 9: Sioux Falls - Real Presence Radio Fundraiser (Best Western Ramkota).

\*Nov. 28: Rapid City - Real Presence Radio Fundraiser (Best Western Ramkota).

(\*) Indicates SD Pro-Life Coalition Partners

Have you signed up to receive SDRTL's Executive Director's once-a-week only 'SDRTL Email Update'? Several thousand Pro-Life friends have and YOU CAN TOO by going to sdRightToLife.org and click on the Subscription Box.

Please sign-up today and be weekly Pro-Life informed!



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Donations in Honor of:	Submitted By:
MEGAN MERSCHEIM	BRANDON MERSCHEIM

"You may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you did not know."
- William Wilberforce

# **SD Right to Life Convention**

September 22 - 23, 2023 New Life Fellowship 619 8th Ave NW, Aberdeen, SD





Friday, September 22, 2023

• Open and Free to the Public

**6 pm -** Doors open (Registration, refreshments, exhibit hall browsing)

**7 - 8:30 pm -** Program (Keynote Speaker & Introducing of Pro-Life SD Elected Officials)

#### Saturday, September 23, 2023

Open to Registered Convention Guests

**7:45 am -** Doors open (Registration, breakfast, exhibit hall browsing)

**9 am - 4:30 pm -** Program (Keynote Speakers & Adult & Teen conventions)

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Melissa Coles
Actress and Executive
Director, Life Stories
Matter

Name(s) of Attendees:



Camille Pauley
Co-Founder and
President of Healing the
Culture



Ingrid Duran
State Legislation
Direct National Right
to Life Committee



Jon Hansen
SD Representative, SDRTL
Vice-President and Co-Chair
of the Life Defense Fund



Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_

REGISTER AT: SDRightToLife.org or with form below.

# MUSIC FROM NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP PRAISE TEAM!

To register online: Scan QR code or visit www.SDRightToLife.org

	Mailing Address:
City/State/Zip:	Email/Phone:
Registration Fee: \$30 - Adult (by Se	ept. 7); \$40 (after Sept. 7) # of Adults:
\$10 - College Student	
Youth - FREE!! # of Youth:	Mail check & form to: SDRTL * 1107 Mt. Rushmore Rd, Ste. 1-B  * Rapid City, SD 57701