

## The Spirit of Adoption

By: Jenn Lee, SDRTL Executive Director



Hello, pro-life friends! I hope that you've taken the time to enjoy this (interesting!) South Dakota summer. If you remember from the last LifeFacts, I wrote about Gen Z's growing passion for the pro-life movement. Today, I want to reflect on another life-affirming topic: the incredible gift of adoption, and how we can present it as a healthy, hope-filled alternative to abortion.

Romans 8:15 tells us about the "Spirit of adoption" we receive through the Holy Spirit. It speaks of how we are adopted into God's family, coming to know Him as our loving Father. Some translations phrase it this way: "God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children." What a powerful image that is—one that reminds me of what adoptive families do here on earth.

They welcome a child who may have known fear, loneliness, neglect, or rejection, and bring them into the warmth and safety of a family. That child becomes part of something greater—a place where they belong. It's a beautiful reflection of God's own love and acceptance.

Abortion, sadly, often leaves deep emotional and spiritual wounds—scars that can last a lifetime. Adoption, by contrast, brings hope. It fosters healing, belonging, and growth. It strengthens society by creating loving, stable homes for children to flourish—and it expands our capacity to love beyond biology.

In Genesis 1:28, God commands His people to "be fruitful and multiply." We often think of that as bearing biological children. But isn't adoption also a kind of multiplication? It multiplies love. It multiplies family. It even multiplies the practical things—food in the fridge, shoes by the front door, appointments on the calendar! (I know some of our adoptive families are nodding their heads!) But more than anything, it multiplies blessings.

To our adoptive families: thank you. Your labor of love shows us what it truly means to be fruitful. You are living examples of God's grace in action.

### 2026 Annual Hour of Reflection and Walk for Life

Join us Sunday, February 1st at 12:00 PM with a walk around the State Capitol. The Hour of Reflection will commence after at 2:00 PM, featuring the winners of the 2025 Essay Contest and remarks from distinguished speakers.

*Save the Date*

### Annual Life Chain – Sunday, October 5, 2:00–3:00 PM

Held every first Sunday in October. Events are confirmed in Rapid City, Miller, Sioux Falls, and Yankton. Check with your local chapter for additional locations or date changes. Register your Life Chain at [lifechain.org](http://lifechain.org)

### It's Giveaway Time!

Who needs some new clothes for fall? SDRTL will be giving away a **\$200 SCHEELS GIFT CARD** to one lucky Convention registrant! All current and new registrants will be entered into the drawing, which will take place Saturday morning at the Convention. Register TODAY at [sdrighttolife.org](http://sdrighttolife.org)!

# What You Can Do: Part 2

By: Anne Hanson, SDRTL President



In the last edition of LifeFacts, we gave you a list of not-too-difficult ways to ease into sharing your pro-life values with others. Have you given any of them a try? How did it make you feel to step out of your comfort zone and help spread the pro-life message? And maybe you are completely comfortable talking about this issue already. In that case, we hope you found some new ways to share. Here are a few more ideas for you:

**1. Volunteer.** Find a pro-life organization (may we suggest your local Right to Life chapter?), attend meetings, step in and help wherever you can. It doesn't hurt to volunteer for other organizations either....and show up wearing your pro-life t-shirt! When you give your time and energy to others – whether it's a school, a pregnancy resource center, or an animal shelter – you are showing the world that people with pro-life values are people who care. We are people who are willing to put in whatever work is needed to help those in need.

**2. Show up.** If there's a pro-life event in your area, don't miss it! Everything from walking in a parade to attending the showing of a pro-life movie to being present for a pro-life candidate's meet and greet matters. Your presence at these events matters, every time. By the way....have you registered for our convention? We would love to see you there, and we are confident you will leave feeling even more equipped to help change hearts and minds. You can register right now on our website: [www.sdrightrighttolife.org/convention2025](http://www.sdrightrighttolife.org/convention2025)

**3. Share.** I mentioned this one last time....but it's a big one, and it doesn't take almost any time or energy. Find a pro-life page on social media and share their message to your page. You never know who might see it and what difference it could make.

Thank you for everything you do for the pro-life cause. We see you, we feel your support, and it means the world to us!

## National Right to Life

By: Dr. Fred Deutsch, NRTL Delegate



This year's National Right to Life conference brought together pro-lifers from across the nation. The conference spotlighted developments in the medical, scientific, political, legislative and grassroots efforts, including discussions of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Ten states, the most ever in a single year, had abortion on the ballot in the 2024 elections: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, and South Dakota.

Jon Hansen, South Dakota gubernatorial candidate and VP of the SD Right to Life board presented an overview of the successful battle he and Leslee Unruh led against Amendment G, the "Right to Abortion Initiative," that would have legalized abortion through all nine months of pregnancy. The Initiative would have enshrined abortion in the state constitution. The voters decided the measure was too extreme. The final vote was 41.41% in support and 58.59% against.

Unfortunately, not all fights have gone our way. But the victory in our state was meaningful beyond our borders, giving hope to other states that are fighting the same fight.

Beyond the ballot measures, ideas for future legislation were discussed, with input from leaders across the country. This was probably the highlight of the conference for me. One bill I want to investigate further for development in South Dakota is the Abortion Pill Provider Liability Education Act, otherwise known as the APPLE Act.

Currently, abortion pills are being mailed into South Dakota from blue states and overseas. Efforts to turn this around are ongoing. One tool in the fight is the APPLE Act. This act provides women the right to sue the manufacturer, distributor, providers, and prescribers of chemical abortion pills for death, injury, failed or incomplete abortion, and requires abortion providers to explain the dangers of chemical abortion pills. This is just one small but important step in protecting women and unborn babies against a diabolical abortion industry.

Phone 605.220.8678

[southdakotarightrighttolife@gmail.com](mailto:southdakotarightrighttolife@gmail.com)

[www.sdRightToLife.org](http://www.sdRightToLife.org)

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*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.*

# In Transition...And Going Strong!

By: Dale Bartscher, SDRTL Associate Director

*“When we are ready to make a new beginning, we will shortly find an opportunity.”*

— William and Susan Bridges



As Fall quickly approaches, many of us may find ourselves in seasons of transition. You may well be aware that on April 1st of this year Jenn Lee, of Sioux Falls, and I flipped positions with SDRTL. With Jenn as your Executive Director and me as your Part-Time Associate Director in Rapid City, we have the State of South Dakota bookended for the ‘Cause of Life’!

Transition is not just a nice way to say change. It is the inner process through which people come to terms with a change, as they let go of how things used to be and reorient themselves to the way that things are now and in the future. SDRTL is currently in her 6th month of transition and today she is stronger, and more focused than she has ever been.

You may have heard that I am running for a SD Legislative House Seat in District 35. It is true! This I will do alongside my responsibilities with SDRTL. My Campaign is up and running and you may follow it more closely by going to [www.DaleForSD.com](http://www.DaleForSD.com). As for SDRTL – be encouraged as our work continues through our Chapter affiliates, our State Convention and our Legislative efforts to mention a few of our LIFE endeavors.

## SDRTL’s Board of Directors Adds ONE

By: Dale Bartscher, SDRTL Associate Director



The SDRTL Board of Directors met in session on Saturday, June 14, for their annual all-day Board Summit in Chamberlain. They unanimously approved the two-year-term of Mary Weinheimer as a ‘Member at Large’. Currently we have three OPEN SEATS just waiting for the right person to ‘Step-Up-To-The-Plate’ and serve: Region One (Northeast SD), Region Nine (Northcentral SD) and Region Eleven (Northwest SD). If interested please contact Jenn Lee at: [Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com](mailto:Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com).

Mary Weinheimer is a lifelong resident of Pierre, a local business owner, and a full-time farmer with her husband and five children. She is a passionate advocate for life, dedicated to protecting the most vulnerable. Committed to upholding the sanctity of life from conception to natural death, Mary actively promotes pro-life values in her community and at the state capitol.

Mary writes, “Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to serving on the board with all the other exceptional individuals. I’m honored to have been asked.” Welcome Mary!

## Matching Gift Campaign in Full Swing!

By: Dale Bartscher, SDRTL Associate Director

Friends of SDRTL - securing and keeping a “Culture of Life” in our great state takes ALL OF US doing our part. Antoine De Saint-Exupery said it right: **‘A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH’** We have a **PLAN** and with your help we’ll reach our **GOAL** of raising **\$20,000** dollars during the months of September/October to assist us with this Fall’s added expenses.

A generous donor has stepped up to double **your** gift to SDRTL today. Please take advantage of this opportunity to see your donation matched dollar for dollar, up to **\$10,000** dollars. Don’t put this off – the matching grant ends on Oct. 31.

**Please Make a Matching Gift to SDRTL in the Months of September/October.**

Here are two ways for you to donate:

**#1 - ONLINE:** Use our SDRTL Donor QR CODE (simply hold your camera over the graphic and it will automatically take you to our donation page). Once there begin to make your donation and write in the ‘Comment Box’ these words...**‘Matching Gift’**.  
**#2 – CHECK:** Write your gift to either SDRTL Education Trust Fund (tax-deductible) or to SDRTL (non-tax-deductible) and mail it to: SDRTL, 1107 Mt. Rushmore Rd., Suite 1-b, Rapid City, SD 57701. Write in the ‘Memo Line’ these words...**‘Matching Gift’**.



# SDRTL Will Honor Two of Their Pro-Life Champions at Convention

By: Dale Bartscher, SDRTL Associate Director

SDRTL's Annual State Convention will be held September 26-27 in Pierre, SD. During the Convention they will be honoring two long-time Pro-Life Champions as our **2025 Humanitarians of the Year**. Join us in Pierre as we honor these two amazing Ambassadors for LIFE.

## Valerie Johnson (Mitchell, SD)



Valerie is blessed to be married to the miraculous love of her life, Rick, who has survived two hemorrhagic strokes. She's a proud mom to six wonderful children, a mother-in-law, a grandma to three little ones (one currently in-utero), as well as a daughter, sister, and friend.

Mitchell has been her home since returning to South Dakota in 2008. She was raised on a farm near Hoven and has been a member of South Dakota Right to Life since 1984 (the year The Silent Scream film was released and the year President Reagan announced that babies could feel pain inside their mother's womb).

Over the years, she's remained actively involved in the right-to-life movement through a variety of efforts and by serving in several board positions. Valerie currently serves as Vice President of the Mitchell Right to Life Chapter. She had the great honor of being the SDRTL delegate to NRLC and was elected as an at-large member of the NRL Executive Committee for several years.

## Dan Hargreaves (Stickney, SD)

In the mid 80's, Dan's wife, Marlene, took it upon herself to contact Leslee Unruh for help to start a local Right to Life chapter, thus Aurora-Douglas RTL was born. At that point they had no kids, so after about 7 years of marriage they decided to become foster parents and put their name on list for adoption. Social services gave them a brother-sister pair from Mitchell just as the kids were done with 5th and 7th grade. Long story short, they adopted the girl and at same time, God blessed them with 2 boys, born 13 months apart, so today they have 3 kids, 8 grandkids and 2 great grandkids.



Dan was raised on a dairy farm, he and Marlene milked cows for years, until they sold the milk cows in 2001, so Dan decided to get involved in different organizations. In 2003 he joined the state board of South Dakota Right to Life and served on the board for over 20 years. While on the board he served as vice-president 4 years, president from 2010 to 2014, then past president for 6 years.

Dan says that in the time on the board, he saw change in the board, but the issue of abortion goes on. Even though the supreme court has overturned Roe and given states the power to outlaw abortion, more drug induced abortions are happening. So the fight goes on. Dan is currently chair of the Tri-County RTL chapter because he believes the local chapters are so important! God has blessed us with so much! Luke 12:48 says "for unto whoever much is given, of him shall much be required". He strongly encourages anyone that appreciates life and wants to make a difference in the fight against abortion, to please consider getting involved.

## Gift Basket Auction

A highlight of our Convention is the always-popular Gift Basket Auction! Visit "Basket Row" during the event to browse and bid on creative baskets. We welcome all types of basket donations—food, baby items, home décor, jewelry, and more.

To contribute, please contact Jenn at [Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com](mailto:Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com). Please bring your basket to the convention if attending. Thank you for helping make this year's auction a success!

## Diaper Drive

Please consider donating to our Diaper Drive during the 2025 SDRTL Convention, which will benefit Birthright of Pierre, the Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Shelter, and Pierre Area Referral Service, all located in Pierre, SD.

Bring any size diapers or cash donation to the Convention on Sept. 26-27 at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pierre.

## Convention Childcare

New this year at the SDRTL Annual Convention: **FREE CHILDCARE** for kids under 12! Sponsored by our hosts, Pierre Area Right to Life, childcare will be available at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church.

To register, email Jenn at [Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com](mailto:Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com) with the names, ages, and number of children. Thanks to Pierre Area Right to Life for this generous service!

*Support Her*



*Protect Them*

## SD Right to Life Convention Sept. 26-27, 2025

Pierre Area Right to Life is excited to host the 54th Annual SD Right to Life State Convention Sept. 26 - 27 at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pierre.

## Have you registered?



**Peter Northcott** is the Director for State Strategies with the National Right to Life (NRLC). He oversaw the organization's successful efforts to defeat extreme ballot initiatives in three states: Florida, Nebraska and South Dakota. Peter's convention topics will be "How to Win (and lose) Pro-Life Battles" and for the Youth session, "Made for Greatness."



**Joelle Maryn** is an award-winning actress, speaker, and TV Host who has been featured on TV shows including "The Journey Home" on EWTN. She recently starred in the film "Fully Known" and is playing the role of "Mary" in the upcoming film "The New Manna. Her Friday evening talk is entitled "Master of the Pieces" and Saturday will be "Man of God - Brave Heart." Joelle will speak to the youth session Saturday on the topic: "Real Love, Real Life." *Joelle is sponsored by the Catholic Community Foundation & Sioux Falls RTL.*



Ian Fury serves as Director of Communications in the Governor's Office and as the Governor's Unborn Child Advocate. He served as policy advisor, then as communications and policy strategist, for Governor Sam Brownback in Kansas, himself a pro-life champion. He also served as communications director for Congressman Jim Jordan from Ohio. Ian lives in Pierre with his wife Hannah and their two wonderful kids.

**Looking for  
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**Super 8**  
605-224-1617  
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**Quality Inn**  
605-224-0377  
\$115  
through 9/18

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# SD Right to Life Convention Sept. 26-27, 2025

## Convention Schedule

### Friday, Sept. 26

Open and Free to the Public

6 pm - Doors open

(Registration, refreshments, exhibit hall browsing)

7 - 8:30 pm - Program

(Keynote Speakers, introduction of SD Elected Officials)

### Saturday, Sept. 27

Open to Registered Convention Guests

8 am - Doors open

(Registration, breakfast, exhibit hall browsing)

9 am - 4 pm - Program

(Keynote Speakers, lunch, youth breakout session)

### Youth Breakout Session - Saturday

Leader: Olivia Hanson

Middle School - High School Students

Saturday, Sept. 27 from 10:45 am - 1:45 pm

Hear from our keynote speakers, pizza, and more!

Interested in a sponsorship or having an  
ad in our convention program?

Visit our website for options:

[www.SDRightToLife.org](http://www.SDRightToLife.org)

**FREE CHILDCARE AVAILABLE: PLEASE LIST # OF CHILDREN AND AGES BELOW.**

Name(s) of adult attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee: \$40 - adult (by Sept. 5); \$50 (after Sept. 5) # of adults: \_\_\_\_\_

Register with form or  
at [www.SDRighttoLife.org](http://www.SDRighttoLife.org)

Young adult (18 - 22 years old) - FREE if registered by Sept. 5, \$10 after Sept. 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Youth (7th - 12<sup>th</sup> grade) - FREE!! # of youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### FREE Childcare:

Day(s) needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Ages of children: \_\_\_\_\_

### CHECK PAYABLE TO:

SDRTL Convention

### Mail check & form to:

SDRTL

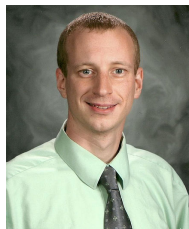
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# SDRTL Remains a Faithful Steward of Dollars Donated

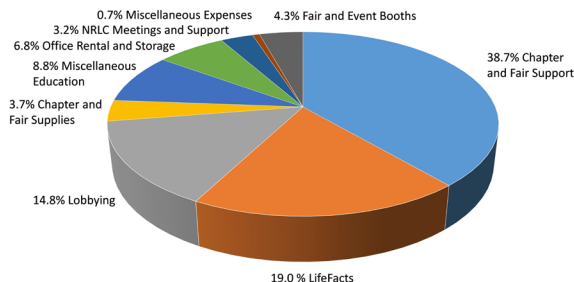
By: Spencer Cody, SDRTL Treasurer



As we continue through fair season and prepare for an exciting state convention in Pierre this fall, 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 in 2025. So far in 2025 approximately 38.7% 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. This expense includes two staff members-- one full-time and one part time-- that crisscross the entire state, tirelessly, advocating for LIFE. Lobbying for pro-life legislation each session in Pierre has taken up another 14.8% of our budget. The LifeFacts that you receive goes to more than 18,000 households and makes up 19.0% of this year's budget.

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 in 2025!

Where Your Donations Have Gone in 2025



## Donations in Memory of:

|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| LEOTA GOETZ.....               | KEVIN & EDANE BOWMAN     |
| MARY LOU KUNNARI.....          | DAVID & NANCY CUTSHALL   |
| DEBBIE PEASE.....              | MARK & MARIE DAHLHOFF    |
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| JERRY VOELKER.....             | DOUG ENTRINGER           |
| CASEY WILSON.....              | DOUG ENTRINGER           |
| MARIAN GUSTAFSON.....          | DOUGLAS & JULIE EPPARD   |
| BOB CLARK.....                 | DOUGLAS & JULIE EPPARD   |
| JERRY MARKOVETZ.....           | RAY & KAREN GEDITZ       |
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| DEBBIE PEASE.....              | JOSEPH HOERNER           |
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| JERRY MARKOVETZ.....           | PAM HOLT                 |
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## Submitted By:

## Donations in Memory of: Submitted By:

|                                |                                                 |
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| SCHMIDT.....                   |                                                 |
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| SISTERS TERESA & FRANCINE..... | SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE |

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SOUTH DAKOTA RIGHT TO LIFE PRESENTS

# 2025 VIDEO CONTEST

SUBMIT YOUR ORIGINAL PRO-LIFE VIDEO FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A CASH PRIZE & HAVE IT FEATURED AT THE 2025 SDRTL CONVENTION IN PIERRE ON SEPTEMBER 26-27!

- Ages 15-25
- Videos 30 sec – 3 min long
- Deadline: September 13th

- 1st Place: \$400
- 2nd Place: \$300
- 3rd Place: \$200
- 4th Place: \$100

WATCH THE WINNING VIDEOS ON [SDRIGHTTOLIFE.ORG](http://SDRIGHTTOLIFE.ORG)

**SEND VIDEOS TO:**  
[Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com](mailto:Jenn.SDRTL@gmail.com)

**WINNERS RECEIVE FREE REGISTRATION TO THE 2025 SDRTL CONVENTION**

**Must Include:**  
-Full name  
-Address  
-Phone #

*If under the age of 18, include parent name and school currently attending.*

[sdrighttolife.org](http://sdrighttolife.org)



NOW ACCEPTING ENTRIES!

2025 SDRTL YOUTH

# ESSAY CONTEST

**JUNIOR DIVISION:**  
GRADES 6-8

**SENIOR DIVISION:**  
GRADES 9-12

ESSAYS MUST BE 300-500 WORDS AND ARE JUDGED ON:  
\*ORIGINALITY  
\*CONTENT  
\*ACCURACY

**EACH DIVISION WINNERS:**  
1ST PLACE: \$400  
2ND PLACE: \$300  
3RD PLACE: \$200  
4TH PLACE: \$100

**DEADLINE:**  
NOV. 1, 2025

**THEME: WHY I'M PRO-LIFE!**

[sdrighttolife.org](http://sdrighttolife.org)

EMAIL ESSAYS & ANY QUESTIONS TO: [JENN.SDRTL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JENN.SDRTL@GMAIL.COM)