

About Living Wills . . .
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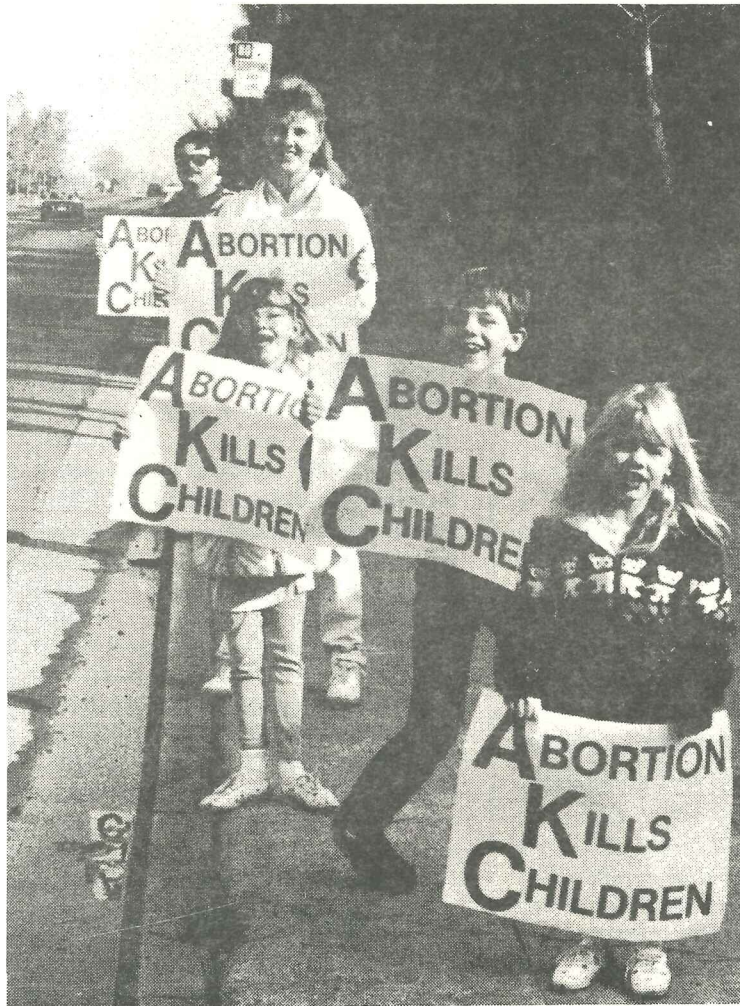
Lifespan *news*

Volume 12 Number 8

Serving Southeastern Michigan Since 1972

September - October 1990

Life Chain comes to Metro Detroit!



by Jill Slater

"In the largest display of unity in Michigan history, thousands of people are lining miles of sidewalk along Woodward Avenue holding up signs which proclaim, 'Abortion Kills Children.' There is a joyful, buoyant spirit among the participants as thousands place themselves on record as being prolife. This is something new. Organizers call it a Life Chain and you can tell from the feeling in the air that something good will come from this. . ."

At least this is how we hope the news broadcasts will sound on the afternoon of October 21, between 2:00 - 3:30 pm, as Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit and the Christian Activist Network co-sponsor Metro Detroit's first Life Chain!

A Life Chain is hundreds and thousands of individuals standing 6 to 8 feet apart from each other along a pre-determined route for an hour-and-a-half on a Sunday afternoon after. The task: to hold up signs bearing the solitary message "Abortion Kills Children." It is that simple. It is also quite effective at generating enthusiastic participation which fosters ongoing prolife activism.

Consider the phenomenal numbers who have turned out for the initial Life Chains, all held in California:

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Chain

(continued from page 1)

- 28,000 came out March 18 for the second San Diego Life Chain, which stretched 15 miles. 20,000 people had turned out one month earlier for the first one.

- 17,000 people stretched across several Orange County, Cal. communities in a Jan. 21 Life Chain. Fresno reported 10,000 in their Life Chain on the same day.

- Half the churches in Yuba and Sutter counties in California sent 2500 participants to the first Life Chain, held in Yuba City. The Life Chain and comprehensive distribution of prolife literature helped reduce Yuba-Sutter abortions by 60%!

The first Metro Detroit Life Chain will take place along Woodward Avenue, stretching from McNichols (6 Mile Road) in Detroit to 13 Mile Road in Royal Oak. Groups and

individuals will be assigned specific sections of Woodward to man on the day of the Chain.

Some things Life Chain is *not*:

It is not illegal. No laws are broken. Life Chain participants do not go to jail. It is not a political gathering. And it does not burn up a lot of time or energy.

Giving babies a chance

"I think this is a great opportunity for all prolife organizations, churches and people to come together to make a visual statement of solidarity that we are opposed to the killing of unborn children," said Ann Thomas, president of Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit, a co-sponsor of the event. "And we are especially hopeful that the Life Chain will actually save babies' lives!"

Indeed. A man told members of a counseling group at his church how he had planned to have his illegitimate child aborted. But then he drove past the Fresno Life Chain on

Sunday afternoon, January 21. After that, he just couldn't get out of his mind the image of all those thousands and thousands of people holding signs saying, "Abortion Kills Children." And he did not go through with his plan to have his child killed.

A woman drove by a Life Chain in California, rolled down her car window and told Life Chainers she was thankful they were out there. Six weeks previous she had been about to have an abortion when she drove by the San Diego chain. But seeing the signs had an impact and she changed her mind. She said, "It just hit me that I was going to kill my baby," and then she drove off.

Jan Opris of the Christian Activist Network, co-sponsors of the event, said, "Some think since abortion is legal, it's right. We believe the Life Chain's message is a call to repentance for killing children in Metro Detroit."

An estimated 25,000 babies are killed annually by Metro Detroit abortionists. A powerful Life Chain on October 21st offers strong encouragement and hope for reducing that number. With your firm support, we are confident of reaching our goal of 10,000 Life defenders.

Please plan to stand with us on Sunday afternoon, October 21st. Won't you invest one hour to save a lifetime? □

For more information on how you can participate in Metro Detroit's first Life Chain, or how you can help organize a group from your church or organization, please call Right to Life - Lifespan at 261-2757, or the Christian Activist Network at 754-6498.

Nurses for Life to start Metro Detroit chapter

Calling all prolife nurses - RN's, LPN's and nursing students! If you are interested in being part of a new chapter of Nurses for Life, please call the office at 261-2757.

Great News!

Meijer, Inc. ends Planned Parenthood funding

Thanks to your faithful phone calls and letters, Meijer, Inc. has ended their policy of giving corporate funds to Planned Parenthood! Thank you phone calls and letters are now in order!

Meijer, Inc. (chain of "one-stop shopping" stores)

Jennifer White
Meijer Public Relations
2929 Walker NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
1-800-543-3704

AFL-CIO remains neutral on abortion

With only three dissents, the AFL-CIO's 35-member Executive Council overwhelmingly voted to remain neutral on the abortion issue.

"Our position remains as it has been for time immemorial, which is to say that we take no position on the issue of reproduction choices," AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland told reporters at an August 1 press conference. "The overwhelming view of the Council was that this was a matter of deep personal conviction, conscience and religion, and one's individual moral views are not likely to be influenced by any stand that the trade union movement at large would take."

This was a tremendous win for the pro-life cause. But keeping the AFL-CIO and other unions neutral will be an ongoing struggle. "We must be vigilant - particularly at the local level and within international unions - to ensure that pro-abortionists are unable to get pro-abortion resolutions adopted," said Dr. Jack Willke, president of the National Right to Life Committee. "I encourage all pro-lifers who are members of union households to write NRL News to be placed on a special action list so that they can be kept up to date on the latest ploys of pro-abortionists to win tomorrow what they lost today."

Labor for Life
c/o NRL News
419 7th Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20004

To send a letter of congratulations to Lane Kirkland on the Federation's wise decision, write:

Lane Kirkland, President,
AFL-CIO
815 - 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

American Bar Association rescinds pro-abortion resolution

Less than six months after adopting a pro-abortion resolution, the American Bar Association has reversed itself.

By a vote of 200-188, the ABA's House of Delegates passed a new resolution which stated that abortion is so "extremely divisive" that the ABA should take no position on it.

Attorney General Dick Thornburgh had advised the ABA that its pro-abortion platform, adopted in February, jeopardized the Association's privilege of screening federal judges. This, along with the fact that nearly all of the ABA's leadership opposed the pro-abortion resolution and supported neutrality, led to the eventual turn-around.

Pro-life television show available on cable

For those who want to know the truth about abortion and related issues, there is a half-hour cable television show called "Life Matters." "Life Matters" is produced every two weeks at Wyandotte Cable TV. It is aired in over 20 Michigan communities. Copies of the show are available for cablecast to any cable facility. For more information about requesting this show in your community, contact "Life Matters," P.O. Box 645, Wyandotte, MI 48192.

The Caring Corner

Update on 'Sally', the 17-year old pregnant girl with cancer who refused a therapeutic abortion: 'Sally' gave birth to a healthy baby boy in mid-July! She had the support of her fiancé and her mother during labor. The baby is home, gaining weight and doing well!

However, the prognosis for 'Sally' is not as good as that of her baby. During the pregnancy 'Sally's' cancer progressed from stage 1 to stage 4. She was in critical condition for a time, but is now at home, and undergoing chemotherapy. The next six months are crucial for her as they try to stop the spread of the cancer.

'Sally' and her mother send a heartfelt thanks to all those who sent cards of encouragement and gifts during her pregnancy. 'Sally's' mom said they seemed to come at just the right time to really help both of them. "It was wonderful," she said. "People that don't know you and are out there saying a prayer - that's really something." They intend personal notes to each of you sometime in the future.

You may continue to send cards to 'Sally', c/o Right to Life - Lifespan, 27578 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

Voter's Guides

The next issue of Lifespan News will contain the results of a candidate questionnaire which was sent to all candidates running for office. This is a questionnaire, not an endorsement of any particular candidate. Please call your local Lifespan office as soon as possible to place your order for these newsletters for your church community. We want to print enough for everyone.

Educational Center for Life
presents

LIFE ACTIVIST SEMINAR with Mark Crutcher

YOU WILL LEARN...

- ... the right answers to the tough questions
- ... the questions they can't answer
- ... the practical application of sales and debating strategies
- ... how to handle the sales tactics used by abortion advocates
- ... how to discuss abortion on our terms
- ... how to survive against a hostile media
- ... how to work with prolife politicians
- ... much more!

Saturday, October 13, 1990
8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Oakland Community College
Orchard Ridge Campus
27055 Orchard Lake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331

Registration: \$ 30, including lunch
and prolife manual

You **MUST** pre-register to attend -
no walk-in registrations will be accepted.
Registration must be received by October 5, 1990.

To register or for more information,
call ECL 338-1910 or Right to Life - Lifespan 261-2757

Office manager needed

The Educational Center for Life is looking for an office manager to work at least 20 hours per week. This person would be responsible to answer the phone, place orders, ship educational materials, and other office duties. Please send your resume to Phyllis Sullivan, Educational Center for Life, 909 Woodward, Suite 19, Pontiac, MI 48053-3015.

Century Club

The following is a continuing list of the charter members of Right to Life - Lifespan's Century Club. These people have all donated \$100 or more to the Annual Fund. This list contains only those charter members whose contributions were received between July 1 - July 31.

Lost your yellow envelope? You can still contribute to the Annual Fund by simply indicating "Annual Fund" on your check. A hearty thanks to ALL who have already given so generously! We couldn't do it without you!

Mr. Marc A. Wiliford
Mr. and Mrs. William J. Tarnacki
Mr. Bernard Currier
Mr. and Mrs. Sterling Garrett
Mr. and Mrs. Jerome L. Flanagan
Dr. and Mrs. Edmund Starrett
Ms. Marguerite A. Kelly

Donate Your Appetite!

Bill Knapp's recent coupon contributors: Ervin, McLaughlin, Kreft, Freda, Carroll, Cunningham, Quilty, Druskinis, Sassone, Wilhelm, Lenze, Lee, Kornacki, Bullion, Simpson, Panowicz, Deja, Roy, Fr. Philip, Queen, Kleinbrook, Bradley, Szuba, Aloe, Werner, Gaynor, Nye, Zello, Lupien, Kowalski, Doyle, Davidson, Fessler, Dalence, Halfpenny, Lohrengel, Kamrath, Oblates of St. Benedict, Lindeman, Tippman, Armbruster, Hutchinson, Mannor, Pipoly, Wagner, Burke, Tschirhart, Martin, Brockwell, Gavilinski, Aiton, Griffin, Astalos, Radwick, Smith, Nizol, Plank, RLM-Macomb, Radzialowski, Lajoie, Ptaszenski, Cenker, Schmid, Bowker, Sterbenz, St. Theodore's Over-50 Club, St. Mary's of Royal Oak, Seefeld, Paczkowski, Church of St. Clare, Barkay, Purcell, Knights of Columbus - Holy Cross Council #2739, Polgar, Bracken, Mowery, Dadabbo, Macshane, Langan, Kubik, Prewitt, Shortt, McCarthy, Miller, Hoefer, Bosley, O'Connell, Thomas, Brown, Ellefson and others whose names we do not have.

Thanks to all of you, our current collection of coupons totals 40,442! We are saving for a copier for the Detroit Chapter office.

When you present your check to the cashier at any Bill Knapp's Restaurant, ask for a Community Support Coupon. The cashier will indicate on the coupon how many points are awarded. Points are awarded based on this formula: 1 point equals \$ 1.00 on the total amount received by the cashier for meals, bakery items, take-out orders or purchased gift certificates.

Please keep sending the coupons to us at 27578 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. We love you!

About Planned Parenthood

Part 3 of an ongoing series on the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Past articles discussed the life of Margaret Sanger, PPFA founder.

by Jill Slater

"What's so bad about Planned Parenthood? Don't they just provide birth control information to those who need it?"

This question, from an active Lifespan volunteer, echoes the sentiments of many. Isn't Planned Parenthood the group which advocates low-cost, counseling and health care services for women? Don't they provide social services for the needy, and sex education programs? What's all the fuss about that?

Indeed, Planned Parenthood's participation in the multi-million dollar abortion business, in coercive population control, in harmful curriculum development and more, seems to be a well-kept secret to all but the most committed pro-lifers. When a Lifespan member phoned a Meijer's official this spring to protest Meijer's financial gift to a local Planned Parenthood group, the official was surprised anyone would object to this. "Oh no, Planned Parenthood does not perform abortions. It is purely an educational organization." (Meijer has since discontinued giving financially to Planned Parenthood.)

An even bigger secret is that Planned Parenthood's activities are funded by our tax dollars. In 1986 and 1987, Planned Parenthood publicly reported receiving \$106 million and \$111 million respectively of government support. Yet during a recent radio talk show on Detroit's WMUZ, a woman claiming to have worked for years at a Planned Parenthood clinic called the open line. "Planned Parenthood does not receive a dime of tax money," she claimed. "They are funded entirely by the fees charged for services rendered."

What and who is Planned Parenthood exactly? These excerpts from George

Grant's book, *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood*, provide the answer.

"Planned Parenthood is the world's oldest, largest, and best-organized provider of abortion and birth control services. From its humble beginnings around the turn of the century... it has expanded dramatically into a multi-billion dollar international conglomerate with programs and activities in one hundred twenty nations on every continent. In the United States alone, it employs more than twenty thousand staff personnel and volunteers in over eight hundred clinics, nearly two hundred affiliates, and more than fifty chapters in every major metropolitan area, coast to coast.

"Utilizing this considerable wealth, manpower, and influence, Planned Parenthood has muscled its way into virtually every facet of modern life. It now plays a strategic role in the health and social services community. It is actively involved in both advertising and programming in the mass media. It exerts a major influence on public and private education. It carries considerable political clout through lobbying, legislation, advocacy, campaigning, and litigation. It is involved in publishing, research, medical technology, judicial activism, public relations, foreign affairs, psychological counseling, sociological planning, demographic investigation, curriculum development, pharmacological distribution, theological reorientation, and public legal service provision."

Because of this incredible intrusion into family, church, state and culture, pro-lifers must continue to learn the truth about Planned Parenthood. This column will focus on one of the above mentioned areas of influence each month. Please contact Lifespan News to relate any experiences you have had with Planned Parenthood. □

1 George Grant, *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, 1988), pp 23-24.

Immediate Action Needed

Dayton-Hudson, a longtime corporate supporter of Planned Parenthood, recently announced its decision to end funding for the controversial organization. Since this announcement, however, they have received so many boycott threats from abortion supporters that they are reconsidering their decision.

They are taking a poll about the funding decision. Pro-life response is needed immediately. In an internal memo to employees, Dayton-Hudson stated they are renegotiating with Planned Parenthood to reach "mutually agreed upon solutions." Pro-lifers should ask Dayton-Hudson to also meet with pro-lifers to discuss the issue.

Mr. Duane Scribner, Program Director, Dayton-Hudson Foundation, 777 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55402 (1-612-370-6553)

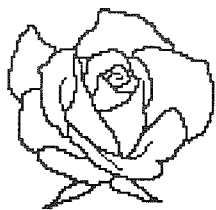
Clarification

The July, 1990 issue of Lifespan News contained a list of some of Planned Parenthood's corporate sponsors. We encouraged Lifespan members to write to these companies, asking them to stop donating to the controversial organization.

Some members who wrote to Scott Paper received a response which stated that Scott had not made any donations to Planned Parenthood for several years. While this is true, it is also true that Scott Paper refuses to say that they will not donate to Planned Parenthood in the future. For this reason, Scott Paper and other corporations who have also refused to make this commitment remain on the list.

We regret any confusion this may have caused.

- Editor



Chapter

oakland

Problem Pregnancy Center needs volunteers

Mother and Unborn Baby Care, Inc. is seeking volunteers to staff the PROBLEM PREGNANCY CENTER in LAKE ORION. There is an immediate need for receptionists, office assistants and counselors. Or perhaps you could offer your services as a babysitter for the children of the volunteers.

Interviews, workshops and on-the-job training are now being scheduled for the Fall. Those interested in

helping teens and women faced with the dilemma of a crisis pregnancy may call the Pregnancy Center at 693-9309 to get more information.

Paid position open

The Oakland County chapter of RTL - Lifespan is seeking a secretary. This paid position is part-time, although the possibility exists for fulltime hours.

Interested parties should call Diane Fagelman at 674-3388 for further information.

October events

Please call the office at 545-8088 for further information about participating in either the Life Activist Seminar with Mark Crutcher on Saturday, October 13, or in the Life Chain (see pp. 1-2) on Sunday, October 21.

Oakland County Chapter
203 Washington Square Plaza
Royal Oak, MI 48067-3845
(313) 545-8088

wayne west

And the Grand Prize winners are...

Seventy bowlers including men, women, children and even five residents from an area group home showed up with bowling balls, shoes and smiling faces to participate in Lifespan's 8th Annual Bowling for Life FUNdraiser. Everyone had a great time and the grand prize winners are:

Most pledge money turned in by 8-28-90:

1st (\$100 Savings Bond)	Matt Bradley	\$ 824.81
2nd (\$ 75 Savings Bond)	Ben Bradley	769.89
3rd (\$50 Savings Bond)	Pastor Mike Panich	348.28

The following bowlers each received a \$50 Savings Bond:

Men's high game with handicap:	Jerome Miller	262
Women's high game with handicap:	Cathy Carpentri	247
Children's high game with handicap:	Wayne Bowers	287
High series with handicap:	Chuck Staples	721

Because of your love and dedication for all defenseless human life, **YOU ARE ALL WINNERS!** We thank you for your hard work in soliciting and collecting pledges.

Westland Mall craft bazaar booth

Lifespan is counting on you for some lovely crafts to sell at our booth at Westland Mall on Sept. 28-30. Please bring them to the Lifespan Office the week before the sale begins, or at least by Sept. 26.

Also, we will need willing workers to staff the booth in 2 hour shifts, so please call 422-6230 and let us know when you are available to work. See you at the Booth! Those who can't meet this deadline should continue to make crafts for future booths.

Carmen and Bev

We have not moved!

As a follow-up to the "We Have Not Moved" postcards recently sent to Lifespan's Wayne County West Chapter members, let me try to explain. Some of our members notified our office that someone called them requesting they send their membership dues to a P.O. Box. This person does not represent Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit. Please do not be misled. **OUR ORGANIZATION DOES NOT SOLICIT MONEY BY TELEPHONE.**

Your membership dues and donations are needed for our continuing educational projects. Educational materials including literature, films, videos, books, tapes, etc. are part of our lending services. Free of charge, we supply grade, high school and college students as well as other interested parties with materials which cannot be found in public libraries or in the media.

If you have recently received your annual membership renewal letter signed by me, Pat Holscher, Chairman, Wayne County West Chapter, please respond as we rely on these contributions to continue our prolific activities. Every donation is vitally important!

Wayne County West Chapter
(313) 422-6230

Work-study position available

The Detroit Chapter has a work-study position available for a Wayne State student. Up to 20 hours per week. Candidate must have a prolife philosophy, good phone skills, etc. For further information, call the office at 874-0432.

Volunteers honored

On October 6, the Detroit Chapter is hosting a luncheon to honor its church representatives for their service during the year. Many thanks for your hard work!

Detroit Chapter
5930 Woodward Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202-3516
(313) 874-0432

Christmas cards

There is a large variety of Christmas cards available for purchase and/or distribution. If you are interested in cards either for yourself or your church community, please call our office for details. The cards are a great way to share a prolife message with your Christmas greetings to friends and family. We especially need volunteers to be distributors in various communities to make it convenient for those who wish to purchase cards.

Resources available

Please let us know if your church or organization would welcome a prolife speaker or educational booth. We have many excellent speakers, including doctors and nurses, available to talk on various prolife subjects. We also have fetal models, videos, books, and pamphlets for your use. Please call the office for information.

Downriver Chapter
21649 Goddard #125B
Taylor, MI 48180-4247
(313) 374-5111



Booksale scheduled

RTL - Lifespan has scheduled its annual booksale on November 3-4 at Shrine of the Little Flower Church, Royal Oak. Shrine is located at the corner of Woodward and 12 Mile Roads. Please call the Lifespan office (261-2757) if you have any books to donate for the sale.

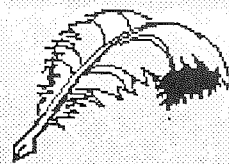
Lifespan News

Sept - Oct 1990 Vol. 12 No. 8

President/Publisher Ann Thomas
Editor Jill Slater

Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit is a non-profit organization, and is funded entirely by membership dues, private donations and fundraisers. Donations are not tax-deductible.

Main Office
27578 Schoolcraft
Livonia, MI 48150
(313) 261-2757



From the President's desk

I hope you all had a good summer - such as it was with so many cool and rainy days. I always hate to see the summer end and the kids go back to school. Why can't the winter pass by as quickly as the summer always does? My two youngest children went back to school yesterday. While this is of no considerable interest to you, one important fact should be. One out of every three unborn children is killed by abortion.

Which means that for every two children who went back to school there is one child missing. One child who had NO CHOICE. One child who will never run or laugh, never catch a snowflake on his tongue or play in the sprinkler, never share with us her ideas or hopes for the future. No matter what the news media or the politicians say, the truth here rings loud and clear - CHILDREN ARE DYING. Abortion kills children - one every 6 seconds - one out of every three. Now the question is, what are YOU going to do about it? Will you join with the thousands of other proliferators in the LIFE CHAIN on October 21st (see pages 1-2 for details)? Will you spend an afternoon to save a lifetime?

There is a story going around about Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Most people are aware of her great work with the poor all over the world and especially her compassion for those who are dying and those with AIDS. In the story she prays and beseeches God to send someone to find a cure for AIDS. God answers her saying, "I did, but he was killed by abortion."

This is a simple story, but the meaning is all too clear. Let me ask you again, will you spend an afternoon to save a lifetime? CHILDREN ARE DYING...

Ann S. Thomas





Freedom of Choice Act (HR 3700, S1912)

Co-sponsors of the bill from the metro-Detroit area are John Conyers, Jr. (D-Detroit, District 1), George Crockett, Jr. (D-Detroit, District 13), Sander Levin (D-Southfield, District 17).

ACTION: Write or call your Congressional representatives in Washington urging them to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Family Planning Act (S110, HR 930)

Although Lifespan takes no position on contraception, we do oppose federal funding of organizations which promote abortion as a family planning option. Planned Parenthood affiliates currently receive about \$30 million a year under Title X of the Public Health Service Act. These bills would extend the Title X program for 4 more years at increased funding levels.

ACTION: Urge your Congressional representative in Washington to oppose these bills unless they are amended to protect the prolife Title X regulations, and to prohibit the use of Title X funds for school-based clinics and for research on abortifacients (such as RU 486).

Patient Advocate Bill (HB 4016)

Due to extensive media coverage on the "right-to-die" this summer, this bill is expected to see vigorous floor action during the four weeks the state legislature is in session this fall. A version of the bill has already passed the state house.

ACTION: Urge your state senator to add the prolife protections for food and fluids for incompetent patients, as well as protection of inborn children of incompetent patients. Medication for existing situations (such as insulin for diabetics) should not be withheld from incompetent patients.

Citizens for Parents' Rights

GOOD NEWS!

On September 8, 1990, the state Board of Canvassers completed verification of the thousands of signatures on the petitions which were distributed throughout the first half of 1990. The initiative, which requires that a minor obtain the consent of one parent before an abortion can be performed on that minor, was sent to the legislature.

Lawmakers had 40 days to act on the bill. But members of both the House and the Senate moved quickly to pass the measure on September 12, 1990. It is expected to go into effect in April of 1991.

ACTION: If appropriate, write or call your state legislators in Lansing, thanking them for acting quickly in support of this bill. Call your local Lifespan office for the roll call of the vote.

Living wills

continued from the back cover

Who can foretell the future?

A Living Will is, by nature, a very general document. It must be, for it cannot possibly provide specific instructions about an unknown future condition or situation. Consider Ida Wikberg's case. Sixteen years ago, Ida signed a Living Will asking that no "heroic means" be used to save her life. This July, only nine days after she lost consciousness due to a stroke, her family interpreted "heroic means" to include food and asked officials at her nursing home to stop feeding her. She died 10 days later.

Would Ida have considered 9 days a reasonable amount of time to allow for recovery from a stroke? Did she consider the delivery of food and water to be a "heroic means" of caring for her? We'll never know.

Change is inevitable

Secondly, a Living Will cannot reflect an individual's changing situation and attitudes. Perhaps now, to a completely healthy individual, the thought of being dependent on a respirator is unbearable. But were the individual ever to be placed in the situation in which he were dependent on a respirator for life, he might feel very differently about the matter. "Resilience is one of the great qualities of the human being. Life often requires changes in attitudes and thinking," reminded the National Legal Center for the Medically Dependent and Disabled, Inc. A Living Will would not allow an individual to rethink his former position, since the once-dreaded care would have been withheld.

Carrie Coons is a case in point here. Mrs. Coons was 86, and had been in an "irreversible coma" for 4-1/2 months. Her sister petitioned the court to have Carrie's feeding tube removed, saying Carrie had indicated during her lifetime that she would not have wanted to be kept alive in this way. The court accepted her testimony as proof of Mrs. Coons' wishes, and ruled that the tube could be removed. Several days after the judge's ruling, however, Mrs. Coons woke up and began speaking and eating. When questioned about removal of the tube, Mrs. Coons responded, "These are difficult decisions." To her lawyer she said she'd

"like to wait." If indeed Mrs. Coons had ever dreaded the thought of being kept alive by machines, once actually in that position, she changed her mind.

Similarly, a recent Detroit Free Press poll found that those least likely to support 'right to die' measures were those already in poor health. Surely they have come to appreciate medical procedures once thought to be intrusive.

Hope for the future

Additionally, a Living Will signed today completely disregards the medical alternatives which may be available in the future. As reported in the July 1990 issue of Lifespan News, a man who had been in a coma for 8 years regained consciousness after receiving valium for routine dental work. What if his Living Will had read "No heroic measures?" He would have starved to death only 7-10 days after his initial injury, long before his body had had a chance to recover. Even if his Living Will had had the foresight to provide for 6 months or even a year of extraordinary care before terminating it, it still wouldn't have been enough time for him to recover. Who can say what knowledge about the brain and strategies for its recovery following injury will be discovered in the days ahead? A Living Will exterminates all hope for the future.

Compelled to die?

Finally, will the day come when people are compelled to refuse treatment as well as nutrition and hydration, actually forced to call for measures which would lead to the end of their own lives? That day is not so far away. Legislation is pending which would require that states have Living Will legislation as a requirement for Medicaid and Medicare participation. Can a requirement that each individual have a Living Will be far behind? With the rising costs of Medicare and Medicaid lawmakers are struggling to find ways to curb medical expenses. Former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm stated that certain individuals have "a duty to die and get out of the way." How many senior citizens, nursing home residents and incapacitated patients including those with AIDS will receive that very message?

"We have to go stage by stage, with the living will, with the power of attorney, with the withdrawal of this; we have to go stage by stage. Your side would call that the 'slippery slope,'" said Derek Humphry, executive director of the Hemlock Society, whose goal is to legalize euthanasia. Perhaps the current push toward Living Wills is not intended so much to ensure death with dignity, but merely to ensure death. □

Hospice Care: Helping patients live the end with comfort and dignity

Founded on the premise that death is a part of life, the Hospice of Southeastern Michigan provides active treatment of pain and symptoms for the terminally ill.

The hospice concept addresses the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of patients and their families. Recognizing that each patient is a unique being, an interdisciplinary team of doctors, nurses, social workers, clergy and volunteers provide an individualized program of care based on the specific needs of each patient.

In this way the patient is able to live the final stage of his/her life with as much control and dignity as possible. At the same time, an individual can prepare for death in his/her own way knowing that support is always available when needed. Thus, both the patient and the family can receive the positive benefits of this care during this most stressful and sensitive time.

Hospice of Southeastern Michigan is one of the largest and most comprehensive programs of its kind in the country, and currently services Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. Since opening in November of 1980, thousands of patients have been assisted to live with a sense of personal worth and dignity.

*For more information call
(313) 559-9202.*

Special Events

Sept. 28-30 WESTLAND MALL CRAFT BAZAAR BOOTH

(Wayne County West Chapter)

Call 422-6230 for more information

Oct. 13 LIFE ACTIVIST SEMINAR 8:00 - 4:00 pm

Oakland Community College

Orchard Ridge Campus

27055 Orchard Lake Road

Farmington Hills, MI 48331

Call 338-1910 or 261-2757 for more information

Oct. 21 LIFE CHAIN 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Woodward Avenue

Call Right to Life - Lifespan (261-2757) or

Christian Activist Network (754-6498) for more information

Nov. 3-4 RIGHT TO LIFE - LIFESPAN'S BOOKSALE

Shrine of the Little Flower Church

Corner of 12 Mile and Woodward, Royal Oak

Call 261-2757 for more information

Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit Membership Form

Right to Life - Lifespan believes that innocent human life has value in all stages of development from conception until natural death, and is committed to speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves - the unborn, the aged, the incapacitated. Won't you please help in our struggle to preserve respect for human life? A contribution brings you the monthly newsletter as well as educational materials and special mailings.

_____ Annual Membership \$ 12.00

_____ Student/Senior Member \$ 5.00

_____ Monthly pledge

\$ _____

_____ Other

\$ _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Please detach at the dotted line and return to Right to Life - Lifespan, 27578 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150

Donations are not tax deductible.

Debunking the myths

Will a living will ensure death with dignity?

Try to picture this scene: *an unconscious patient lies motionless in a hospital bed. Clear fluids flow continuously into his body through tubes. The room is quiet save for the rhythmic pulsing of a respirator which breathes for the patient. The days turn into months, the months years. Still, there is no obvious change in the patient's condition, and he lives on, a mere shell of his former self.*

It wasn't too difficult to bring that image to mind, was it? In fact, this scenario has become all too familiar. Since the Supreme Court's June ruling on the Nancy Cruzan case, the media has pelted us with these case studies, the only significant difference in each being the identity of the main character. "Here lies Jack," we are told. "The 83-year old comatose woman," begins the next story. "Nancy, a young woman in a coma for 7 years," another continues. Masterful strokes in a carefully painted campaign to influence public opinion, to convince us that we not only have a 'right-to-die,' but an obligation to assist in the deaths of those whose lives are deemed to be not worth living.

William B. Smith, dean at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York, describes the strategy. "As with abortion, the anti-lifers have made their case gradually. Their

first step was to confuse the terminology. They refer to mercy killing as the 'right to die' in the same way killing unborn babies is passed off as a woman's 'right to choose'. Then they make sure the public, through a sympathetic media, is bombarded with hardship cases to establish a disposition to accept mercy killing ... Finally, after this gradual buildup of

Before rushing to your "Right-to-Die" office, consider this

support comes the push to solve the hardship cases by legalizing killing, while making opponents of euthanasia look like cold, compassionless people."

It is precisely at this place which we in Michigan find ourselves. State representative David Hollister is pushing hard for 'right to die' legislation which would include allowing removal of an incompetent patient's nutrition and hydration, causing them to starve to death.

"My hope is that now that public opinion has built to this point, legislators will be confronted with the issue..." he recently told the Detroit Free Press.

Indeed, many courts have appealed to the legislatures to provide them with some guidance when faced with these cases. Living Will legislation has been one response. Although Michigan does not yet have such legislation, local 'Right to Die' offices report a run on Living Wills since the Cruzan decision, in which the U.S. Supreme Court would not allow removal of an incompetent patient's feeding tube since there was no convincing evidence that the patient would have wanted this. Many have become convinced that a Living Will is their key to 'death with dignity.'

What exactly is a Living Will? It is a written statement in which you inform doctors and family members what type of medical care you wish to receive should you become terminally ill or permanently unconscious, and unable to make or communicate decisions about your continued care. Sounds straightforward enough. But before joining the rush of humanity on the way to a "Right to Die" office, a few additional points ought to be considered.

Please see "Living Wills" on page 10

Right to Life - Lifespan of Metro Detroit

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