



CHRISTIAN AWARENESS REPORT

Community Issues Team

Bell Shoals Baptist Church

www.bellshoals.com/cic

February 2009 Newsletter

2009 Leadership Team

If you have any questions about the Community Issues Team please let us know. Contact any one of us and we will be glad to help.

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Mission Statement

To keep our congregation and the community informed about the issues that may have an affect on our ability to live according to our Christian values and to encourage and facilitate appropriate actions relative to those issues.

Monthly Meeting - Sunday, February 15th

Are you looking to get involved? Join us for our monthly meeting. We will meet in the MPC building following the last worship service. Lunch will be provided.



Annual Tallahassee Trip

The Community Issues Team announces that it will take its annual trip to the state capitol on April 7-8. The state legislature will be in session and we plan to visit some of our local officials and also visit some committee meetings. If you are interested joining us on this trip, please contact us as soon as possible.

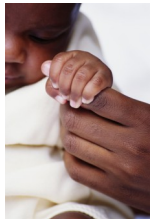
Pro-Life Congressmen Get Active In The House



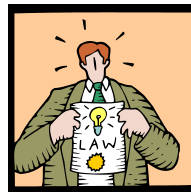
Rep. Paul Broun, R-Ga. has introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives to define life as beginning at fertilization. The bill lays the foundation for further legislation protecting the reborn. "It says this is a human being, and that human being has all the protections under the law," said Broun. "It gives that one-cell human being the constitutional protections all of us have."

The bill has 51 co-sponsors, but, with Democrats in charge, it faces an up hill battle to get out of committee. Broun said he's not discouraged and will introduce the same bill during every session of Congress until it passes or he retires.

In addition to this new legislation, led by House Republican Leader John Boehner, more than 80 House Republican legislators signed a letter to President Obama asking him to withdraw his pledge to sign the "Freedom of Choice" Act (FOCA). This legislation would overturn virtually all pro-life laws nationwide. The letter was presented to the president on January 22nd, the eve of the 36th anniversary of the tragic *Roe v. Wade* ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court.



Here is a portion of that letter: "You have expressed a desire to be a president for all Americans, and to use your presidency to promote initiatives that bring Americans together, rather than drive them apart. We recognize it will not always be easy for you to do this. However, too much is at stake for this divisive and destructive legislation to move forward and life-saving laws to be rolled back. We respectfully urge you to withdraw your pledge to sign FOCA, and that you pledge not to sign legislation that incrementally enacts FOCA by rescinding existing pro-life laws and legal protections."



Among the 80 Representatives that signed the letter, 5 were from Florida. We congratulate our Florida Representatives that had the courage to stand up for their pro-life values. They are:

Thomas Rooney (Stuart), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Miami), Gus Bilirakis (Palm Harbor), Adam Putnam (Bartow) and Cliff Stearns (Ocala).



Option Ultrasound Program Celebrates 5 Year



Since the inception of Focus on the Family's Option Ultrasound Program (OUP), as many as 63,000 babies have been saved. The program, which is celebrating five years, has provided more than 400 grants for ultrasound machines and professional sonography training to Pregnancy Medical Clinics (PMCs) in 49 states.

"To all the women who have been impacted by the Option Ultrasound Program, may God bless you for choosing life for your babies," said Dr. James Dobson, founder and chairman of Focus on the Family.

According to OUP research, when a woman considering abortion receives an ultrasound and counseling, she is twice as likely to express her intent to carry her baby to term than a woman who receives counseling alone.



Strong Marriages Florida Campaign



The Florida Family Policy Council along with other pro-family groups and supporters from around the state have announced the launch of "Strong Marriages Florida," a new state-wide campaign to help strengthen marriages in Florida. Many of the same groups and leaders that passed the Florida Marriage

Protection Amendment, to protect the definition of marriage as an institution, will appeal to the same network of church and community groups to continue to serve families and couples by working to strengthen existing and future marriages.

The Strong Marriages Florida is a three-year campaign to start a movement to encourage strong and stable marriages, assist those in crisis marriages and reduce the divorce rate by 10%. The effort has both a cultural and community component, as well as public policy components.



"Today we are launching an initiative to serve the children, families, communities of Florida," said John Stemberger, president and general counsel of the Florida Family Policy Council. Florida has the highest annual number of reported divorces--more

than any other state in the country." "The breakdown of families in our state brings not only high social costs to children whose lives are often devastated, but there is an enormous economic cost to taxpayers and to businesses. This is overwhelming social issue that deserves our focused and strategic attention."



The 5 goals of the campaign include:

- 1) Increasing the number of couples receiving pre-marital preparation,
- 2) Strengthening existing marriages and restoring crisis marriages.

- (3) Reducing the divorce rate in Florida by 10%,
- (4) Save taxpayers the costs of family breakdown by approximately \$100 million dollars annually
- (5) Creating community awareness and a positive culture of marriage which celebrates and respects the institution of marriage for the benefit of children, families and the common good of society.

For more information on the campaign or to become involved visit the newly transformed website, www.Yes2Marriage.org. The Florida Family Policy Council, the organization leading the Strong Marriages Campaign, is a non-profit, pro-family and pro-life organization that is associated with Focus on the Family. The organization's mission is to Strengthen Florida's Families through public policy education, issue research and grassroots advocacy.

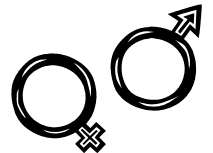
Pepsi Pushing Homosexual Agenda



Pepsi is supporting the homosexual agenda through its advertising and by its financial support to homosexual organizations seeking to legalize homosexual marriage. Pepsi gave \$500,000 to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the largest and most powerful gay lobbying group in America. The company also gave \$500,000 to Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). The total gift of \$1,000,000 to the two

homosexual activist groups was to help promote the gay lifestyle in the workplace.

Pepsi also forces its employees to attend sexual orientation and gender identity diversity training, where they are taught to accept homosexuality.



Diet Pepsi was my soft drink of choice. BUT NO MORE!!! Please join me in boycotting Pepsi products.

LifeCare of Brandon



Brandon Care Pregnancy Center, which began in 1987, changed its name to LifeCare of Brandon about a year ago. This center is a non-profit, non-denominational, non-political organization that is committed to

providing compassion, information and support to women, couples and families facing the challenge of an unplanned pregnancy. Since its beginning, it has served nearly 45,000 people.

LifeCare offers support to women during a critical time of life-changing decisions. They strive to provide women with factual information about their pregnancy and their options. They also offer support programs and counseling for women after they have their baby, all free of charge. The facility's staff, volunteers, counselors, mentors and coaches are all passionate in their pursuit to assist families in making positive life choices.

Please pray that LifeCare will continue to meet the needs of so many women in our community. To find out how you can help log on to www.LifeCareOfBrandon.com or call (813) 654-0491.