

LIFE NETWORK of Southern Illinois

A Pregnancy Resource Center

Fall 2025

From Executive Director, Debbie Geist

I've heard it said many times that the only constant in life is change. As I get older, I find that quote more and more true. Not only in my own personal life, but in the pregnancy center world as well. When I started my career with Life Network over 22 years ago, helping those facing an unplanned pregnancy looked quite different than it does today. Was it simpler then? I'm not sure I would go that far, but I can tell you this - HOW we fight that battle has definitely evolved over the years. Let me do my best to explain.

In 1973, pregnancy resource centers began to emerge throughout the United States as an alternative to legalized abortion due to the Roe v. Wade decision. At that time and up until several years ago, the brick-and-mortar buildings of Planned Parenthood were our biggest obstacle. While their main objective was to promote abortion as the only "answer" when faced with a crisis pregnancy, ours was to offer hope, truth, and support in a compassionate and safe place. We did not want girls to feel hopeless or to feel like an abortion clinic was their only option. We quietly went about the work of helping women find the courage to make an informed decision regarding their future and the future of their baby. Through the years we saw abortion numbers decrease resulting in the closing of many "physical" abortion clinics and in 2022, celebrated the Dobbs decision which gave power back to the states when it came to the legalization and restrictions to abortion.

Unfortunately, while the Dobbs decision was a "worthy goal," it did not come without its downside and challenges for organizations like Life Network. That decision led to unfounded attacks on pregnancy centers, increased funding for planned parenthood and seemed to energize the pro-abortion movement to find new and dangerous ways to continue their "life-ending" message – specifically chemical abortion or RU486 – ALL IN THE NAME OF WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE!

While the number of brick-and mortar abortion clinics has declined over the years, access points have exploded, especially telehealth. In 2020, only one in twenty abortions were done via telemedicine. Today, that number has increased to one in four! Women are obtaining RU486 (abortion pill), through anonymous websites or international distributors, with no clear understanding of what they are taking.

We have certainly experienced this scenario at Life Network over the last couple of months. Recently we had several girls

walk through our door that were not just abortion-minded but had already taken the RU486 and were desperately seeking help because the medication DID NOT work the way the instructions said it would. They had gone to Planned Parenthood only to be turned away because they did not have the money to pay up front. Therefore, they ended up ordering the medication via a website and had no recourse to fall back on. They were scared and confused!

My heart broke as I sat across from these girls and listened to their stories of how they had been deceived by the abortion industry and needed a shoulder to cry on. They had many questions and concerns: ***Am I still pregnant? Why didn't the medication work? Why didn't Planned Parenthood help me? If I'm still pregnant, what am I going to do? Is it too late for me to try to reverse the abortion?*** I carefully listened and did my best to answer each question with compassion and nonjudgment. We offered them an ultrasound and watched tears roll down their faces when they realized they were still pregnant. I prayed with them and let them know that God had not abandoned them and neither would we.

I understand that change is a fundamental part of growth and progress but what is happening with abortion procedures is extremely irresponsible and dangerous. **THIS IS NOT PROGRESS OR HEALTHCARE – IT IS ABANDONMENT!**

Life Network will NEVER abandon our clients and while abortion is expanding with FEWER safeguards, pregnancy help is expanding with GREATER care. We now offer a 24/7 pregnancy help center that provides hope to women in crises and connects them with their local pregnancy center; our parenting classes can be done virtually so that all our clients can be encouraged and confident in their parenting skills; we are part of the APR (Abortion Pill Reversal) network that offers hope to girls that regret their chemical abortion decision and want to reverse it. We will continue to explore every opportunity we can to build a culture that says to every woman: You are not alone – you and your baby are worth protecting.



MISSION STATEMENT

Life Network of Southern Illinois is a Christ-Centered

Waterloo Office

618.939.4224

722 N Market Street

Waterloo IL 62298

www.mylifenet.org

<https://supportmylifenet.com>

Red Bud Office

618.282.4225

324 N Main Street

Red Bud IL 62278

Client Story...

Michelle Schweiger, RN, Director of Client Services

With all the talk about the abortion pill lately, we don't hear much anymore about Plan B (the morning after pill). It is still out there, and women are still taking it. In fact, here's a quote straight from Plan B One-Step's website:

"And we're not going anywhere: Plan B remains legal and available in all 50 U.S. States – no prescription, ID or age requirement. We're committed to protecting and advocating for women's reproductive health, and will ensure continued access to Plan B, right off the shelf at all major retailers, clinics and advocacy organizations."

So, there you have it. The website goes on to say that Plan B is most effective when taken as soon as possible after an incident of unprotected sex. In other words, when the primary form of birth control has failed...that's when you need a Plan B. Thus, the name. Plan A being things like birth control pills or condoms. A failure of which could result in a pregnancy.

Imagine how surprised we were to learn, after discussing one of our cases with Dr. Lile, that Plan B may have saved a baby's life. A client came to us after taking Plan B **AND** RU-486 (the abortion pill). We fully expected to see a non-viable pregnancy when we did the ultrasound. But what we saw was a beautiful twelve week old baby with a thriving heartbeat!

Dr. Lile later explained to us that Plan B is basically a large dose of a synthetic progesterone, intended to prevent ovulation. RU-486 is a series of pills intended to end a pregnancy by, among other things, blocking progesterone and preventing the thickening of the uterine lining (nourishing the baby). Dr. Lile told us that, in this particular case, Plan B and RU-486 were working against each other and therefore, were ineffective. He saw no reason why the pregnancy should not progress normally. We learned that the client truly had not wanted to abort but was convinced by those around her that it was her only reasonable choice. Who would have ever thought that something like Plan B could save a baby's life?

***Jesus looked at them and said,
"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26***

Center Needs

MAM Pacifiers	Baby Car Sun Shades
Booster High Chairs	Partitioned Toddler Plates
Pull-Ups, 3T-4T (Girl Only)	Li'l Crunchers, Teething Wafers, Yogurt Melts
Newborn Socks	Dreft Laundry Detergent
Baby Wipes (Fragrance Free/ Sensitive)	Amazon & Walmart Gift Cards (used to purchase special formula/needs for clients)
NON-FLOURIDE Toothpaste	

MEDICAL UPDATE

Julie Stuart, RN, Nurse Manager

A letter to the Church...

Did you know that a significant percentage of abortions are done on Christian women that love Jesus, attend church regularly and are involved in the Church? And the number one reason given for choosing abortion...fear of judgement from the church. Ouch! Why is this? Isn't the Church supposed to show God's love to all? WE MUST DO BETTER! Could better decisions have been made? Yes, but we all have made decisions that were not biblical and/or right. None of us are above this.

So, I am asking the Church and all of us to do better. To welcome the single mom (or dad). Provide resources as needed. Welcome them to a small group where they can be uplifted and encouraged. Parenting is hard! And much harder for a single parent. Be a place where those who have experienced abortions can talk safely and start the healing process. Where they are not judged or ostracized, but encouraged and supported. Where they can heal from the trauma of the abortion. What better place to find healing and love than going to the one who made us—God—through the Church. **WE MUST DO BETTER!**

Therefore, be merciful, just as your father also is merciful.

Luke 6:36

What's Happening in Red Bud?

Peggy Buettner, Satellite Manager

Lazy days of summer! It seems everyone slows down a bit in the summer. Our Moms are spending time with their kids enjoying being together. Even though we might not see them as often, they are still in our thoughts and prayers. We believe God is with them in their daily lives and pray He is helping them with any struggles they may have. We reach out to them to let them know we are thinking of them. We check in with them to see if they need anything. That simple text can mean a lot to our clients. It lets them know someone cares about them and their kiddos. A lot of our moms have little support from their families.

We take for granted having family and friends in our lives that we can reach out to if we need anything. We strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we serve our moms and little ones. A little kindness and love goes a long way to someone who feels alone. I hope we all remember that as we go through our daily lives. We may never know the difference we make in someone's day by simply saying, "Hello! How are you today?" Let's all strive to make our world a better place by showing Jesus' love to those we meet when we are out and about.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way let your light shine before others, so that they may see the your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16

LIFE NETWORK OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS'

Trivia Night

Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025

Doors Open at 5P

Start Time 6P sharp

**WATERLOO HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
505 E. BULLDOG BLVD., WATERLOO**

\$250 TABLE FEE
Mulligans Included
10 FREE Drink Tix



**MAXIMUM 10
PER TABLE**

**RAFFLE BASKET
AUCTION**

**ATTENDANCE
PRIZES**

**PRIZE WHEEL
50/50**

TABLES LIMITED * RESERVE TODAY!
618.939.4224 OR VIA QR CODE

BRING YOUR OWN FOOD & DRINK
SODA & WATER WILL BE SOLD

**NO ALCOHOL, SMOKING/VAPING
ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT LIFE NETWORK

UPDATES...

2025 BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

(Runs from January 1—December 31)



RAISED TO DATE: \$26,478.64
THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE DONATED!!

It's not too late to fill a bottle!! Contact us or stop by one of our offices for more information! Or ask your church to get involved - they can call us, get the information and decide if they would like to participate.

2025 BANQUET

Many thanks to those who supported Life Network of Southern Illinois at our annual fundraising banquet April 3, 2025. Donors are the lifeline of this ministry and we are so grateful to our financial partners for their dedication to the pro-life cause. Thanks to you, the banquet was a wonderful success! Together we raised over **\$215,000** for the ministry! We give God all the thanks and glory for His continued faithfulness.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Dr. William Lile, our keynote speaker. Dr. William Lile gave a riveting and dynamic presentation on the "value of the pre-born". He shared from personal/medical experience and used simplistic and scientific evidence of why life begins at conception. "A person is a person no matter how small" and they deserve the best medical care available. His talk was not only informative but extremely entertaining.

SAVE THE DATE
2026 SPRING BANQUET, APRIL 9, 2026
KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Claire Culwell

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

It's with mixed emotions that we say GOOD-BYE to Georgia after almost 10 years of faithful service with Life Network. We are excited to celebrate this new journey with her, but sad to see her leave our family here at Life Network. We are so grateful for her hard work and dedication over these many years. This office just won't be the same without her!



Thank you, Georgia, for a "job well done" and we wish you much happiness in the next chapter of your life!

WELCOME

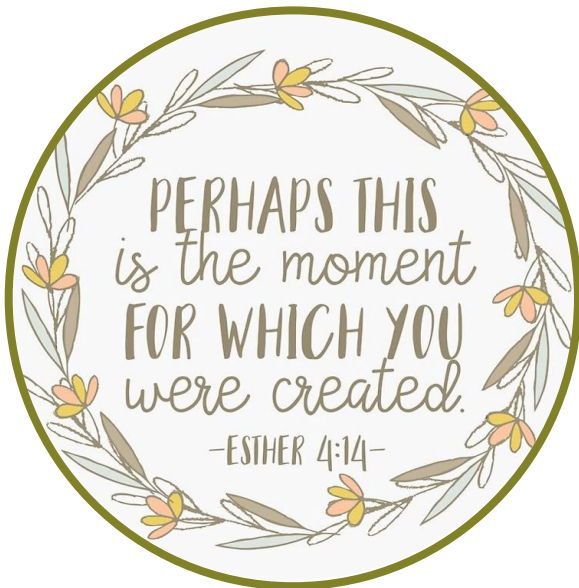
Please help us welcome Sara Duguay to the Life Network family. She will be taking over Georgia's position as Administrative/Financial Assistant and we are so excited to have her. She comes to us with over 30 years of experience in the administrative field and I know she will be a huge asset to Life Network.

Sara has been married to her husband Matt since 1996 and together they have one daughter. She attends First Baptist Church of Columbia and also owns her own



WE HAVE BEEN ABUNDANTLY BLESSED...

THANK YOU to all churches, organizations and individuals who donate to Life Network. Your generosity, prayers and encouragement are invaluable as we minister to those in need of our services.



Our Babies

Nova
Kahlani
Carsyn
Sianna
Colt

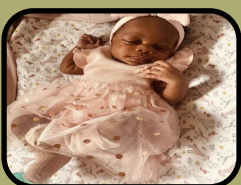
Vision
Denahi
Madison
Willow
Asher

Talon
Mercy
Robert Stella
Elijah

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

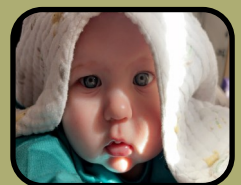
Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

Life Network is 100% donor funded. Thank you!!!



Gifts have been received
In Memory of

Mike Behnen, Renda Chase, Carl Gavach, Matthew Dannenberg,
Vernon & Jane Lucht, Ezekiel Brooks Neptune, Dennis Rodenberg, Nel Saul



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Waterloo IL 62298

LIFE NETWORK
of Southern Illinois

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Peggy Buettner
Satellite Manager, Red Bud

Sara Duguay
Financial Administrative Assistant

PARTNER WITH US

PRAY:

- Become a Prayer Partner! When staff or clients are in need of prayer, we'll send you an email. Sign up by emailing nursem@htc.net

DONATE:

- Website - <https://supportmylifenet.com>
- Mail, Call or Come Into the Office - We accept credit cards, checks and cash or use the QR code to donate online!



SAVE THE DATES:

*** LIFE TRIVIA NIGHT**

Saturday, 09.20.2025
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

*** LOCAL PRO-LIFE EVENTS**

United for Life:
WATERLOO 3rd Saturday of each
month from 10-11A
Meet at Rt. 3 & Moore St.
Contact Barb, 618.578.8697

RED BUD 2nd Saturday of each
month from 10-11A
Meet at 4-way Stop
Contact Robin, 618.792.1051