

FREE SPEECH IS CRITICAL TO THE RIGHT TO DEFEND LIFE

Alicia Martin, WVFL Program Director

Babylon Bee CEO Seth Dillon was insightful and humorous in his keynote address at the 28th Annual Rose Dinner on Friday, April 17, in Morgantown. Seth built an excellent case for the fact that freedom of speech is foundational to the ability to publicly defend (and some cases, exercise) every other right guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution – including the right to life. As a part of the introduction, the audience observed Dillon masterfully doing exactly that on a clip from Joe Rogan's show.

Dillon is acutely aware of the pressure exerted by those who wish to obscure truth and censor evidence. He encouraged attendees with a poignant illustration of the reality that a lone voice for truth can have a significant impact. Citing the Asch Conformity Study, Dillon related how, when everyone in a group gave an obviously incorrect answer to a question, approximately 75% of those studied would adopt and repeat the incorrect answer at least once. Most of these individuals indicated afterwards that they knew the answer was incorrect, but were seeking to avoid ridicule or standing out. However, conformity to a wrong answer dropped all the way to 5-10% if only one other person in the group gave the correct answer.

West Virginians for Life President Lacey Evans recounted the numerous successes of WVFL over the decades, with a special emphasis on the "big three:" a 2018 constitutional amendment

proclaiming that there is no right to abortion in West Virginia; the 2022 Unborn Child Protection Act, which effectively ended nearly all abortions in the state, with rare exceptions; and, the 2024 constitutional amendment which protects against medically assisted death. Many sitting legislators, along with several 2026 pro-life candidates, were recognized – some of whom had helped to pass those very laws.

Evans then laid out current threats: West Virginia women are being lured into out-of-state

Advertising provided generous discounts, and the cost of several boards is now covered for six months.

Going forward, the audience was given practical, boots-on-ground examples of how to be the voice for truth that Dillon exhorted them to be. They were encouraged to visit DontSwallowTheLie.com, and to share it. Those who wanted their own mini-billboard were encouraged to take free lawn signs as they left, and to purchase additional ones at the site's store. Attendees were reminded that, thanks



Keynote speaker Seth Dillon combined a passion for truth with laughter, helping to make the event, according to one supporter, "The best Rose Dinner yet."

Photo by Dale Sparks

abortions, where they are explicitly denied recourse in the event of malpractice. Also, abortion pills with very serious risks are illegally entering the state. To counter the danger, WVFL launched an educational campaign entitled "Don't Swallow the Lie." Evans highlighted DontSwallowTheLie.com – an excellent website with life-saving information. The goal was to raise enough funds at the event so that key billboards advertising the site could be retained, and additional ones purchased. Significant progress was made towards that goal. Micro Outdoors

to LifeVote.net, it is free and easy to learn what candidates in your district are endorsed by WVFL in the upcoming election.

West Virginians for Life wishes to thank Kyle Wiggs for a spectacular job of MCing the event, and Dale Sparks, of All-Pro Photography & Framing, for excellent service. Much appreciation is also extended to Bishop Mark Brennan from the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, and Pastor Wayne Wilson from Trinity Assembly of God in Fairmont, who respectively offered the Invocation and Benediction.

*The reality is that a lone
voice for truth can have a
significant impact*

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A publication of



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Newspaper**

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From the President



The Heart of the Issue

Dear Friends,

The election cycle is in full swing, and statements from our opponents have been predictable. One argument seems to be on constant repeat: the claim that if we truly cared about children, we would prove it by caring for them after birth—by fostering, adopting, or advocating for various public policies to improve their lives.

This critique is nothing new, but it does appear to be growing more common. So, I want to take a moment to respond to the familiar charge that the pro-life movement is merely “pro-birth.” (And as an aside—if the alternative to “pro-birth” is that a baby does not make it out of the womb alive, then yes, we are unapologetically pro-birth.)

1. Focus Is Not Hypocrisy

The pro-life movement, like many other social movements, is intentionally focused. Trying to tackle every single issue that negatively affects quality of life would stretch time, finances, and manpower so thin that little meaningful progress would be made anywhere. I sometimes wonder whether those who raise this objection would criticize the American Diabetes Association for failing to fund cancer research, or fault them for not investing in Alzheimer’s studies. Most advocacy organizations concentrate on a central mission. That focus is not callousness—it is practical wisdom.

2. A Movement’s Mission vs. Individual Action

At the same time, the fact that the pro-life movement, as a whole, concentrates on abortion does not mean the individuals within it are indifferent to other concerns. Our churches, our communities, our government institutions, and we as individuals are capable of protecting life and promoting policies that enrich and improve the lives of humans at every age.

I’m reminded of the humorous line from an Old El Paso commercial from the early 2000s, when a child trying to decide between hard or soft tacos asked, “Why not both?” That same logic applies here. Many of you reading this likely donate to food banks, volunteer in your communities, support charitable organizations, contact your elected officials about economic issues, or serve at local pregnancy resource centers. Commitment to unborn children does not prevent engagement elsewhere.

3.) Real, Tangible Support

It is also simply inaccurate to suggest that the pro-life movement disappears after delivery. Pregnancy resource centers across the country provide diapers, formula, clothing, counseling, ultrasounds, parenting

classes, and sometimes even housing—at no cost to women and families in need. These efforts are substantial and ongoing, even if critics prefer to overlook them.

Additionally, advocacy for life does not stop at the beginning of life. The pro-life movement is also dedicated to protecting our vulnerable populations from euthanasia and assisted suicide, reflecting a consistent ethic that values human dignity at every stage.

4.) Fostering and Adoption

Multiple studies have shown that Christians—particularly evangelicals and Catholics—are significantly more likely to foster and adopt than those who are not religiously affiliated. These same groups are also among the most likely to hold pro-life views. Therefore, it is hardly unreasonable to conclude that many pro-life families are, in fact, opening their homes to children in need.

5.) The Moral Question Remains

Even so, an individual’s choice about fostering or adopting does not determine whether abortion is morally right or wrong. If someone never becomes a foster parent, that fact alone does not resolve the ethical question surrounding abortion. We do not generally insist that those who oppose homelessness must personally house the homeless, or that advocates against domestic violence must shelter victims in their own homes.

Similarly, the suggestion that we should only focus on children who are “already here” rests on a flawed premise. Women’s wombs are not portals to some alternate dimension where unborn children exist in a state of non-being until birth. They are living human beings developing in the same world as you and I.

6.) Abortion and Foster Care

Abortion was legal nationwide for nearly fifty years following Roe v. Wade, yet that legalization did not eliminate the need for foster care. In fact, foster care numbers reached historic highs in the late 1970s. As my math-teacher husband likes to remind me, correlation does not equal causation—so we cannot claim that Roe caused the increase. But we can clearly say that abortion did not fix the foster care system either.

And once again, this is not an either/or scenario. Our laws and policies are capable of protecting unborn children while also improving foster care and strengthening support systems for families.

Continued on p.11

Contributors: Bethlyn Baker, Mary Anne Buchanan, Cheryl Carr-Brown, Lacey Evans, Wanda Franz, Ph.D., Patricia Johnson, Madison LaClare, Alicia Martin, Dale Sparks

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1337 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515
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Abortion Pills Figure Prominently in Legislative Updates

FEDERAL UPDATE:

Madison LaClare, NRL Director of Federal Government Affairs

In late April, the fifth circuit stopped all mailing of the abortion pill and reinstated in-person dispensation. But a week later, the Supreme Court reinstated mail order abortion pills for the time being. They promised to review the case, and opinions should follow soon. It is too quick to try and speculate, but the pro-life community is hopeful for a decision that will limit abortion pills by mail.

Early in April, *Louisiana v. FDA* was put on hold pending an FDA review of the abortion pill. A federal judge declined to immediately block the mailing of abortion drugs, allowing current distribution practices to continue while the FDA conducts further review. This case sets up continued litigation over the safety standards and distribution of chemical abortion drugs nationwide.

Throughout April, lawmakers and pro-life advocates urged the administration to reinstate prior protections within the Title X program that prevented taxpayer funding from going to entities involved in abortion. At the same time, the administration began moving forward with future grant planning, signaling potential long-term restructuring of the federal family planning program.

The Senate and House passed a bipartisan bill that funded most of DHS without border patrol. A reconciliation bill that would fund republican priorities is in the process of being passed, but despite much efforts from pro-life groups, has yet to include an amendment which would extend the defunding of big abortion providers. The provision expires in July and there are still options to extend the defund measure; all options are being explored.

STATE UPDATE:

Alicia Martin, WVFL Program Director

During the 2026 Legislative Session, West Virginians for Life supported the efforts of the state's pro-life lawmakers on four specific fronts:

1) Improve healthcare provider access to education on abortion pill reversal. The goal was to require emergency room training on abortion pill dangers and how to identify complications when the patient does not disclose that she's taken the abortion pill. The teeth of this bill were extracted by opposition in committee, defeating the purpose.

2) Expand access to abortion pill reversal (APR) through the Support for Mothers & Babies program by making APR reimbursable through public funds. SB 805 would have accomplished this goal, but it was prevented from getting to the House floor for a vote.

3) Clarify that foreign/out of state senders of abortion pills are violating existing state law. SB 173 would have accomplished this goal, but it was prevented from getting to the House floor for a vote.

4) Increase funding for the Support for Mothers & Babies program. This goal was accomplished. Funding was increased from \$3 million to \$4 million.

Pro-Life Candidates Still the Majority in WV Primary

Mary Anne Buchanan, WVFL Office Manager

The West Virginians for Life Political Action Committee (WVL-PAC) endorsed in 108 races in the May 12 West Virginia primary. Of the 108 races where the WVL-PAC made endorsements, there were 83 victories (77%). In the 25 cases where the WVL-PAC-endorsed candidates did not prove to be successful, at least 10 winners are pro-life based on voting records and surveys. When adding those 10 winners into just the total of Senate and House races in which the WVL-PAC endorsed, the percentage becomes 88% who would be willing to pass lifesaving legislation.

To no one's surprise, Shelley Capito is the U.S. Senate nominee with 88% of the Republican vote. Her nearest competitor in a crowded field of six, was State Senator Tom Willis with 19%. Incumbent Carol Miller won the U.S. Congressional District 1 race by a 72% to 28% differential. U.S. Congressional District 2 incumbent Riley Moore was unopposed in his primary reelection bid.

With the election of Supreme Court Division 1 winner H.L. "Kirk" Kirkpatrick and Division 2 winner Bill Flanagan, the SCOWV will still have a family-friendly majority of 3-2.

The following quote can be attributed to Wanda Franz, Ph.D., president of West Virginians for Life PAC: "The PAC works to support pro-life candidates from both parties. The overwhelming pro-life successes in this election are, in part, due to voters' desires to elect legislators at both the federal and state levels, who reflect their values regarding the dignity of each human life. However, several endorsed candidates lost by the tiniest of margins (as small as 2 votes). These are heartbreaking losses that should remind us of our constitutional responsibility to vote in November."

Special Thanks

from West Virginians for Life to all who voted in the Primary and helped to make the outstanding election results a reality.



Thank You!



ROSE DINNER

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Doug & Dana Leech

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Dr. Jacob & Janaya Conjeski

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Monroe County Chapter, WVFL

Ice King, LLC Heating & Cooling

Riley & Sadie Keaton

Claire & Mark Mey

Steve & Beverly Riffon

John Wassick III

Alan and Liza Zuccari

14th Annual
**GOLF FORE
LIFE**
TOURNAMENT

Saturday, July 11th
Registration & Lunch at 11:30
Putting Contest 12:30 pm • Tee Time 1:00 pm
Dinner/Informal Awards Ceremony 5:30 pm
Preston Country Club, Kingwood, WV

Registration
Form

There are several ways to participate in the Golf FORE Life Tournament, including playing in the tournament, sponsoring a hole, donating tournament prizes or gifts, or doing all of the above!
Please complete this form and send back to us. Please contact us with any questions.

Company Name: _____
(as you would like it to appear on signage if sponsoring a hole)

*Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City: _____ *State: _____ *Zip: _____ *Phone: _____

*Email: _____

* = Required, if available

- ☐ **Individual Golfer** - Quantity: # _____ \$95 each (Golf registration includes lunch, BBQ & one gift bag.)
- ☐ **Team Registration** - \$380 each (Golf registration includes lunch, BBQ & one gift bag per team player.)
- ☐ **Platinum Sponsorship** - \$2,000 each (includes 1 foursome, lunch & BBQ for 4, a plaque, name on Banner & T-box)
- ☐ **Gold Sponsorship** - \$1,500 each (includes 1 foursome, lunch & BBQ for 4, name on Banner & T-box)
- ☐ **Silver Sponsorship** - \$1,000 each (includes 1 foursome, lunch & BBQ for 4 & name on Banner)
- ☐ **Snack Cart Sponsorship** - \$250 each (need 2, signage on both sides of cart)
- ☐ **Putting Contest Sponsorship** - \$250 (only one sponsor needed - includes name on Putting Contest Banner)
- ☐ **Hole Sponsorship** - \$200 each (includes a sign on a hole - does not include golf registration)

Proper golf attire required - No sleeveless shirts or jeans permitted - Soft spikes mandatory

My foursome includes: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

If using check, please make payable to WVFL Ed Trust Fund. Mail, with this form, to
WVFL, 25 Canyon Road, Morgantown, WV 26508. If by credit card, please complete the following:

**Donations for tournament prize items and players' gifts
are also needed - contact us for more details.**

All proceeds benefit the WVFL Educational Trust Fund,
a 501(c)(3) organization. 1-304-594-9845.

Amounts are tax deductible less goods and services received.

West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial
documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305.
Registration does not imply endorsement.

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD
☐ DISCOVER ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS

Credit Card #: _____ - _____ - _____

Exp. Date: ____/____/____ CVV: _____

PLEASE COPY AND DISTRIBUTE

Registration forms are downloadable at www.wvforlife.org/events



Please
consider
sponsoring
our
**Golf FORE
Life Event!**



28th Annual ROSE DINNER

Keynote speaker Seth Dillon was entertaining and inspiring.

Presenters



WVFL President Lacey Evans summarized the “Don’t Swallow the Lie” campaign, which benefited from the event’s proceeds.

Clergy

Bishop Mark Brennan (top left, center) gave the Invocation, and Pastor Wayde Wilson (top, right) performed the Benediction. Other clergy attendees included: retired Pastor Kay Lowther, pictured with Mary Anne Buchanan and Sherry Lowther (bottom, left); Pastor Nathan Williamson with daughter Samanitha (bottom, center), and Pastor Sean Wightman with wife Amy (bottom, right).



Spectacular Volunteers



Rebecca Aylsworth and Helene LaFata



Marion County chapter leader Sandra Costello registers with Heidi Cook and Barb Dunn.



Acting WVFL Executive Director Wanda Franz at the registration table manned by Debbie Lemley and Carol Straight.



Attendees register with Heather Akers and Elizabeth McQuaide-Parlock.

Pictures with Seth



The Leech (left) and Day (right) families were very special event sponsors.



Several West Virginians for Life Board members, with their spouses, with Seth Dillon: WVFL President Lacey Evans and husband Josh (far left); WVFL Vice President Riley Keaton and wife Sadie (center); WVFL Treasurer Doug Joseph and wife LaDonna (far right).



Several supporters and public servants enjoyed the privilege of a picture with Seth.



Wonderful Supporters and Special Friends



Several people, including Mark and Vicki Burke, bought whole tables.



In Loving Memory of



Dr. Wanda Franz with Congressman McKinley and Karen Cross.

Congressman DAVID MCKINLEY

By Mary Anne Buchanan

If you saw Congressman McKinley, you frequently saw his wife Mary at his side. Together, they attended many WVFL State Conventions and spoke to West Virginians at March for Life congressional meetings. As friends and supporters, WVFL loved gathering with the McKinley couple at many an election night watch party. Congressman McKinley's pro-life support and commitment was truly unwavering and should be emulated by ALL elected officials.



Mary Anne Buchanan, Congressman McKinley, Wanda Franz, and Karen Cross



Karen Cross and Congressman McKinley



Congressman McKinley attended and spoke at many West Virginians for Life Events.

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A Mother's Loss

Editor's Note: The following essay won the 7th-9th grade division of the Erie People for Life essay contest in 2026.

By Bethlyn Baker, age 13, formerly of Morgantown

Often when answering the question of why abortion should be illegal, our reason is a human life is lost. An answer to this question that is often ignored is the mother's loss.

Numerous studies and meta-analyses have shown that abortions have a negative effect on women. These sources show that approximately 81% of women who have an abortion develop some sort of mental health issue due to feelings of grief, guilt, and regret. According to the Coleman meta-analysis, mothers who have abortions are 37% more likely to develop depression, and 43% more likely to develop some sort of anxiety disorder, in comparison to mothers who did not have abortions. Other studies such as the Bodunde meta-analysis and a 2025 study by Auger show similar results.

According to a study funded by the Charlotte Lozier Foundation, 35% of women who have had abortions have confessed suicidal thoughts or feelings. This is especially true for women who have been coerced into getting an abortion, which consists of two-thirds of women who have abortions. These women have an even higher attempted suicide rate of 46% percent.

While mental issues are a serious problem, abortions can also cause physical issues. Minor side effects of abortions such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and bleeding occur often. Abortions can also cause major medical issues. For example, if the abortion is incomplete, meaning the fetus has not fully evacuated, surgery may be needed to remove it. (This is a possibility with both the abortion pill and surgical abortion.) If not removed, the leftover fetal tissue can block the cervix and fill the uterus with blood, a medical condition called hematometra.

Additionally, tools used to perform the abortion can puncture the uterus, resulting in continual, heavy bleeding and extreme abdominal pain. Pain medication does not help, and surgery will be necessary to attempt to fix the perforation. Both hematometra and uterine perforation are very serious matters. If not treated, they result in infections, infertility, and/or even death. Another extreme risk of abortion is Asherman's syndrome, which occurs when a wound on the uterine lining covers with scar tissue. If left untreated, this can cause infection and infertility.

Given that there have been over 64 million abortions in the United States since Roe vs Wade (1973), millions of women have suffered both physically and mentally. More women like these will suffer as long as abortion remains legal. As Femen stated in The Feminist Case Against Abortion, "In all its forms, abortion has masked – rather than solved – the problems women face. Abortion is a failed experiment on women."

MONONGALIA COUNTY WALK FOR LIFE



More than a dozen people participated in the Mon County Chapter Walk for Life on Saturday, April 2nd.



Jeanne, Carol, Regina, and Tanya



WV Senate Candidate Toby Heaney



Karl Marion and Fr. Gary



Jill with MaryAnne Buchanan, and chapter leader Wanda Franz



WVFL Vice President Riley Keaton with wife, Sadie



NORTHERN PANHANDLE

The Northern Panhandle Chapter hosted a “Celebrate Life Walk” on Saturday, May 2nd. Twenty-five people walked from Wheeling Park to St. Michael’s Angelus Center, where they were welcomed to a luncheon hosted by St. Michael’s Pro-Life Group. Various signs were carried during the walk, including “DontSwallowTheLie.com, Abortion Pills Harm Women” and “Pregnant women need support, not abortion.” A few signs said “Defend Life.” Ten of the participants were first-timers.

Although it was a cold morning, we were caught up in the warmth of loving them both - mommy and baby. Through encouragement and support, we are dedicated to making the Northern Panhandle a safe place for pregnant women and their babies.

For those looking to get involved with WVFL in the northern panhandle, the chapter meets on the first Monday of every month at 6:30pm. You can call or text Judi Varner Meyer at 304-639-3041 for more details.

President’s Letter, Continued from p.2

7.) The Core Disagreement

Finally, for many who use this argument, it would not truly matter if every one of their concerns were resolved. If foster care operated flawlessly, if no child lacked a home, if every pro-life family adopted, if childcare were free, and if our schools ranked first in the world—would it then be acceptable to them for abortion to be illegal in those ideal conditions? Realistically, the answer would still be no.

That suggests the heart of the disagreement is not about social programs or charitable involvement. It is about whether abortion itself is morally permissible.

Overall, I believe the argument is an attempt to discredit our pro-life convictions by appealing to our supposed hypocrisy. And while we can decidedly say that the pro-life viewpoint is logical, backed by science, and backed by action, even if we were hypocritical, hypocrisy does not negate truth. It does not transform wrong into right. And it certainly does not make abortion any less tragic or heartbreaking than it is.

For Life,
Lacey Evans
Lacey Evans, President

West Virginians
for Life Tote
Bags Are
Now Available



Cost per tote: \$15 (includes shipping), or One tote bag at no additional cost is an optional gift with a donation of \$50 or more.

Please send me _____ WVFL Tote Bags

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

2026 Calendar of Events

June 6	WVFL Board Meeting
June 12-13	NRL Convention, Arlington, VA
July 11	WVFL Golf FORE Life Tournament
Sept 19	WVFL Board Meeting
Oct 3	WVFL State Convention
Oct 4	Respect Life Sunday
Nov 3	General Election
Nov 7	WVFL Board Meeting



Please Help Us Defend Life!

Would you please consider becoming a regular supporter of West Virginians for Life? You can use the coupon printed here, or go to WVforLife.org/donate/



25 Canyon Road - Morgantown, WV 26508 (304) 594-9845
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- ☐ YES! You can count on me to help save unborn children from abortion. Enclosed is my BASIC state membership contribution of \$35.
- ☐ YES! You can count on me to help save unborn children from abortion. Enclosed is my GOLD membership contribution of \$50.
- ☐ I wish to support the work of the Political Action Committee* with a contribution of:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$_____
- ☐ I wish to support the educational work of WVFL with an additional tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$_____
- ☐ I wish to join the Rose Society with a monthly pledge of: *(Rose Society members receive a monthly update from the President and do not receive other fundraising mailings, except for those from the political action committee.)*

☐ \$10 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$_____

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ Occupation/Employer* _____

Because in addition to educating, we are involved in trying to change the law, contributions to West Virginians for Life, Inc. are not deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes. "West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement."

*A maximum donation of \$1,000 per person per election cycle is allowed to the PAC. Please include occupation and employer when donating to the PAC. Corporate and church contributions to West Virginians for Life PAC are prohibited by law. Contributions to West Virginians for Life PAC are voluntary. Please disregard if you are a public employee or not a WVFL member.

14th Annual
**GOLF FOR
LIFE**
TOURNAMENT

See Page 5
for Details

**Saturday,
July 11**

Non-Profit
Organization

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Life
Summer 2026

Matters
Vol. 48, Number 2

Keynote speaker Seth
Dillon, from the Babylon
Bee. Photo by Dale Sparks

28th Annual
ROSE DINNER

Approximately 300 people attended the 28th Annual West Virginians for Life Rose Dinner .