

Consistent Life Annual Report 2009

Spreading the Word

CL Board members and supporters attended the following conferences in 2009:

- Immediately following the CL Board Retreat, Ross Heckmann and Rachel MacNair attended the Mobilization to End Poverty, organized by CL member group, Sojourners.
- Richard Stith and Mike Garcher attended the USA conference of Pax Christi, also a CL member group.
- Consistent Life member group Democrats for Life of America annual meeting was attended by Tony Masalonis; Bill Samuel participated by telcon.
- Vicki Sairs and Sherry Thackrey represented CL at a Mennonite conference.
- Rachel MacNair and Tony Masalonis attended the annual Call to Action Conference and staffed a CL table.
- The 100th Anniversary of the Progressive magazine was attended by Rachel MacNair, Mary Krane Derr, and Stephen Zunes.
- Rachel MacNair and Richard Stith participated in the annual conference of University Faculty for Life. Rachel was keynote speaker.
- On the international front, Richard Stith participated in the Fourth Pro-life World Congress, Spain, and Rachel MacNair headed to Guatemala for the meeting of the Inter-American Congress of Psychology.

Member Group Activities

Feminists Choosing Life of New York, a member group of Consistent Life, display CL brochures at their events, which this year included college talks at Hobart William Smith College, the University of Rochester, and SUNY Oswego, and at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Day Memorial Ceremony. In addition, information is distributed on their visits to State Legislators.

Democrats for Life of New York does a “junk mail stuffing” project. All solicitations that come from Democrats/Republicans/peace/anti-abortion/anti-poverty/anti-capital-punishment groups get their return envelopes stuffed with a CL brochure and sometimes an accompanying letter.

Visit our website to subscribe to our New Weekly E-Newsletter:

Peace and Life Connections
www.consistent-life.org

Look for our subscription button located at the bottom of our home page!

IISA Report

Institute for Integrated Social Analysis
Research arm of Consistent Life

The results of the “Heated Debates” survey were presented at the conferences of University Faculty for Life and the Peace & Justice Studies Association (where the presentation was sub-titled “Evidence for Pro-Peace Arguments that Help Convince Pro-Lifers”). The study provides empirical evidence that the CLE is useful in reaching those who aren’t “consistently in favor of killing” as a problem solver, that is, those who support non-violence on at least one but not all issues. Attendee reactions at the conferences suggested that the linkages between violence issues, and the notion that progressives could be opposed to abortion, were new ideas to some.

A more comprehensive report of the study has been accepted to be published in *Life and Learning*, the journal of University Faculty for Life. Unfortunately, the report was not accepted by *Peace and Conflict: The Journal of Peace Psychology*.

Worcester Catholic Worker’s Peace and Pro-life Vigil

In June 2009, Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker community in Worcester, MA, a Consistent Life member organization, began a monthly witness comprising a vigil at a military recruiting facility followed immediately by another vigil at a Planned Parenthood facility.

Friends Witness Ads in Friends Journal

Friends Witness for a Pro-life Peace Testimony, a Quaker group, sponsored two more CL ads in *Friends Journal* this year. One advertised IISA-published books and the other challenged the American Friends Service Committee to re-think its abortion position. The latter ad led to an invitation to publish an article in *Friends Journal* in 2010, now available online at: www.friendsjournal.org



Past and Present Consistent Lifers “Meet” in New York

While statues that memorialize events are so often war-related, there are some that celebrate assertive peace. On the very site in Seneca Falls, New York where the event is believed to have occurred, stand life-size statues of Amelia Bloomer first introducing Susan B. Anthony to Elizabeth Cady Stanton. All three women were of course active in the movement to get women the vote, and were also anti-violence on multiple issues, espousing what would have been much like the Consistent Life Ethic of the time (if that term had existed).

Posing by the statues is Rachel MacNair, in the area to speak to colleges and local groups on the connections between violence issues, how the different brands of killing are all traumatic to those who do the acts, and how the human mind’s drive for consistency helps in opposition movements. Particularly noteworthy is that her University of Rochester symposium was co-sponsored by the pro-life student group and the anti-torture student group. This is the kind of excellent alliance which we hope to encourage happening more frequently.



New Endorsers

David P. Gushee and John D. Roth officially endorsed our Mission Statement in 2009. Dr. Gushee is Distinguished University Professor of Christian Ethics at McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University, serves a number of Christian social justice groups in leadership positions and various other capacities, and is a widely published author currently working on a book entitled *The Sanctity of Life: A Christian Exploration* (Eerdmans, 2010). Dr. Roth is Professor of History at Goshen College. He serves in leadership positions for several Mennonite literature and historical organizations. His numerous publications include *Choosing Against War: A Christian View* (Good Books, 2002).

Board Retreat

At the end of April, the CL Board, and two peace and life activists whom we later added to the Board, gathered for a weekend at the Peach Orchard Christian Retreat Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. An interactive feedback and idea-gathering session was also held that included representatives of local member groups. The retreat was facilitated by Denise VanEck of Deep Shift, a group started as an outgrowth of Consistent Life endorser Brian McLaren’s book, *Everything Must Change*.

The Board established committees to focus on specific areas such as outreach and educational resources. We discussed and planned ways to improve our Web site and use of social networks, conduct youth, campus and member group outreach, energize our speakers’ program, and develop new resources such as brochures and presentations, etc. We expect to implement our plans using some combination of volunteer efforts, consultants, staff, and collaboration with affiliated groups. Support and ideas are welcome, and needed, from new and old CL members and member groups!

Board Member Activities

Mike Garcher and Richard Stith, in addition to co-hosting a CL table at the aforementioned Pax Christi gathering, also did the same at Notre Dame University in November.

Richard also published a letter and essay in the First Things journal. His essay "Her Choice, Her Problem", showing how casting abortion as a women's rights issue is used by men to exploit and use women, was also presented at the University Faculty for Life annual conference, at Notre Dame and Ave Maria Universities, and as seen at right, at the Fourth Pro-life World Congress in Zaragoza, Spain (attended mainly by delegates from Hispanic nations).



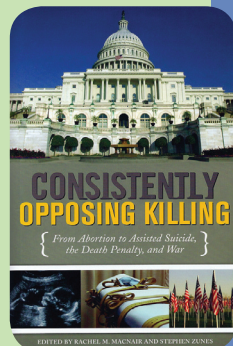
New Financial Team

In November, Consistent Life co-founder, current Board Member and former Executive Director Mary Rider (right) became Treasurer of CL. Simultaneously, former Assistant Director Debbie Biesack (left), whose degree is in accounting and who is currently the Treasurer of People of Faith against the Death Penalty, became our Bookkeeper.

Book News

Our book, *Consistently Opposing Killing: From Abortion to Assisted Suicide, the Death Penalty, and War*, published in hardcover by Praeger, continued to make sales throughout the year.

Arrangements for the paperback version have been made, and it's expected out in 2010.



Our Mission

We are committed to the protection of life, which is threatened in today's world by war, abortion, poverty, racism, capital punishment and euthanasia.

We believe that these issues are linked under a 'consistent ethic of life'. We challenge those working on all or some of these issues to maintain a cooperative spirit of peace, reconciliation, and respect in protecting the unprotected.

Our Purpose

We serve the anti-violence community by connecting issues, building bridges, and strengthening the case against each kind of socially-approved killing by consistently opposing them all.



Consistent Life

P.O. Box 9295
Silver Spring, MD 20916-9295
Phone 1-866-444-7245 (Toll free)
Fax 413-485-2881
info@consistent-life.org
www.consistent-life.org



Pro-lifers for Peace

Peaceworkers for Life



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