



Pro-Life Waco 2015 Year in Review



Introduction & Preview

On July 14, the Center for Medical Progress (CMP) released the first undercover video that sent shockwaves through the battle over abortion. The videos showed Planned Parenthood's deep, heartless, and brutal involvement in the market for fetal organs. **PPSellsBabyParts** is used here as an abbreviation for this controversy. CMP videos were the most significant pro-life development of 2015—perhaps of this century. As a result, this review is dominated by Pro-Life Waco's dynamic response to PPSellsBabyParts.

Pro-Life Waco held a rally on the steps of the County Courthouse, delivered the first-in-the-nation Dawn to Dusk interstate overpass outreach, and launched and continues Protest Bank of America. Finally, John Pisciotta managed his Hometown Pro-Life Action group on Facebook to be a catalyst for combatting PPSellsBabyParts around the nation.

This year's review begins with our reaction to PPSellsBabyParts.

Women Betrayed Rally

Pro-Life Waco (PLW) delivered a **Women Betrayed Rally on the beautiful grounds of the McLennan County Courthouse** on the morning of July 28. The event was co-sponsored by Righteous Remnant—a new pro-family organization headed by Jessica Weatherby. Students for Life of America coordinated nationwide to mobilize pro-lifers in over 70 cities.



The 150 attending heard local pastors Joe Geleney, Ramiro Peña, and John Guzaldo. Jessica Weatherby was emcee. The final speakers were Belton Texas State Representative Molly White and Pro-Life Waco's John Pisciotta. Representative White spoke about

her own tragic abortions and the need for strong investigations of Planned Parenthood by Texas government.

Local CBS, NBC, and ABC affiliates covered the story.

I-35 pedestrian overpass outreach: from Dawn to Dusk

Waco may have the only enclosed pedestrian overpass for Interstate-35 in Texas. This location adjacent to Baylor was the site of Pro-Life Waco's first overpass outreach on January 22, 2015. In spite of brutally cold weather, this new arrow in the PLW quiver was successful and has continued each month.

With the success and experiences of monthly overpass events, we were ready to "supersize" in response to PPSellsBabyParts in September.

On Tuesday, September 22, Pro-Life Waco delivered the nation's first-ever **Dawn to Dusk Overpass Outreach**. This unprecedented event featured PPSellsBabyParts signs for both southbound and northbound traffic.

The 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. event brought participation from Round Rock to Hillsboro, with an estimated 100,000 travelers throughout the day.

People near the busy I-35 took to Twitter to express views according to the SAYNSUMTHNS blog. One student tweeted, "I wish the antiabortion protesters would take down the honk if you agree sign over 35. Some of us have to study..."

Another tweeted: "When there's a sign outside ur window telling everyone on I-35 to honk if they're against abortion :-)) !!! #blessed".



Over 150 pro-lifers ascended to the overpass during the 12-hour event. Spirits were high. Doel Garcia helped set up and stayed up on the overpass for virtually the whole 12 hours.

Press coverage included Waco Tribune-Herald, Baylor Lariat, two local television stations and the SAYNSUMTHNS blog.

In collaboration with Pro-Life Waco, ProtestABQ of Albuquerque held their own Dawn to Dusk overpass outreach over Interstate 25.

Protest Bank of America

Soon after PPSellsBabyParts erupted, Bank of America was listed by *Daily Signal* as one of 38 major corporate donors to Planned Parenthood. Pro-Life Waco discovered that BOA support was in the form of including Planned Parenthood in their matching grants for employee donations.

The first weekly protest was delivered at the BOA branch on Valley Mills Drive on September 1, from 11 to 1 p.m. We named this campaign **ProtestBOA**. What began as a brief wake-up call for BOA has continued from the hot sun of summer to the cold of winter and into 2016. Weekly protests soon developed in downtown Austin, Albuquerque, and Dallas. We are working to get new cities and states on board for January and February. **Our demand of ProtestBOA is that Bank of America drop Planned Parenthood from its national matching grant program, as is done by many other corporations.**



ProtestBOA is a success no matter the decision of Bank of America. We have made BOA pay dearly for their alliance with Planned Parenthood by many depositors closing their accounts and with negative publicity at the steps of their branches. Our public square protests send powerful messages to other corporations about current or potential support for Planned Parenthood. Weekly protests offer the opportunity to spread the word to

travelers and pedestrians about PPSellsBabyParts and other abortion issues.

News coverage included SAYNSUMTHN blog and Armed for Battle radio (Jim Sedlak).

PPSellsBabyParts yard signs

PLW wants to give everyone an opportunity to be a part of the proclamation that Planned Parenthood's callous actions must stop. An option for households to display a yard sign created and distributed by Pro-Life Waco.



Hometown Pro-Life Action group on Facebook

In July 2014, Pro-Life Waco director John Pisciotta launched the Facebook group **Hometown Pro-Life Action (HTPLA)**. The vision was to build a network allowing community foot soldiers worldwide to "show and tell" about their hometown actions.

HTPLA was well-established when the PPSellsBabyParts broke out in the summer of 2015 and was an effective network to build robust opposition to Planned Parenthood. Albuquerque joined the Dawn to Dusk overpass outreach because of HTPLA. HTPLA helped spread the word on Women Betrayed Rallies across the nation. Pro-Life Waco promotes ProtestBOA on HTPLA and other foot soldier organizations promote their initiatives on HTPLA.

At the end of 2015, HTPLA had over 6,000 members. About 10% of members are international—from Ghana to Germany. Hometown Pro-Life Action is the 5th largest of about 30 pro-life groups on Facebook.

Wow! That's a brief look at PLW's response to PPSellsBabyParts. Read below about other new challenges and our repeating weekly, monthly, and yearly initiatives.

The "Battle of Target"

In 2015, PLW engaged in multiple "David versus Goliath" battles. The first was with Target department stores.

In January of 2015, **Target stores began marketing a line of products promoting and profiting from the Fifty Shades of Grey movie.** This movie demeans women through portrayals of sexual bondage, sadomasochism, and more. The sex toys in the product line included handcuffs and a blindfold.

Internet news articles called Target out for this betrayal of its family-friendly image. **Pro-life Waco was the single organization in the nation to respond to Target with action.**

Through the Hometown Pro-Life Action group on Facebook, PLW called for phone and email complaints to Target. John Pisciotta personally visited with Waco Target managers on Feb. 13 about the problem. Within two days, the store removed the Fifty Shades of Grey display.

Pisciotta then checked out other Target stores along Interstate 35. The Georgetown store carried

the objectionable display and refused to remove it. PLW organized a demonstration at Georgetown Target for March 2.

Four Wacoans and three friends from Round Rock delivered the demonstration at the street entrance to Target.

In about an hour, a Target manager came out and told us the display had been removed (which we confirmed). Additionally, the entire Target region that includes Georgetown removed Fifty Shades of Grey promotions.



News coverage of the victory included LifeSiteNews, Jane Chastain's Politically Incorrect column on World News Daily, American Life League STOPP Report, SAYNSUMTHN blog and Armed for Battle radio (Jim Sedlak).

The "Battle of Walmart"

"Did you know Walmart is marketing the Fifty Shades of Grey movie with displays at all their checkout lanes?" This message from a frustrated mother of pre-teen children triggered the **Battle of Walmart**-- another David versus Goliath skirmish.

Using our experience with Target, we created 4'x4' signs for our first protests on June 1 at Walmart stores on Franklin Avenue and Hewitt Drive. Two of the messages were:

Walmart is disgracing the memory of Sam Walton. Walmart is selling a pornographic DVD: 50 Shades of Grey.

Vehicle-entrance protests were supplemented with phone calls to national headquarters and in-store visits with store managers.

On the first day, the Franklin Ave. manager agreed to remove Fifty Shades of Grey from checkout lanes. Management at the Hewitt Drive store would not budge. Weekly protests and phone calls continued into July at the Hewitt Drive store.

Eventually, newer movies replaced Fifty Shades of Grey at Walmart checkout lanes.

Our victory was partial, yet significant. Walmart did not capitulate. Still, we made Walmart suffer for their family **unfriendly** marketing. They may think twice about how they will market the sequel to Fifty Shades of Grey. Additionally, other businesses saw that pro-family Central Texans will respond to such marketing of pornography. Thousands saw and heard about our challenge to Walmart and were encouraged by our public stance. When pro-life, pro-family people stand up in the public square, success is assured.

Strategies to Protect Your Teenager's Innocence

PLW organized and promoted the **Strategies to Protect Your Teenager's Innocence** seminar for the evening of January 26th at Knights of Columbus (#1358) Hall. The presenter was Dr. Sandra Hapenny of the Reicher Catholic High School faculty. Dr. Hapenny drew on her vast experiences as a teen, a mom, grandmother and successful teacher to help parents and other adults with their responsibility for guiding teens.

The foundational assumption of the program was that parents are the primary moral educators. The 50 attending loved what Dr. Hapenny delivered and look forward to the sequel.

Pro-Life Waco is a 501c3 non-profit.

Contributions are tax deductible.

Your financial support is vital for 2016

Donations go directly to pro-life outreach with not a dime for salaries.

You can donate online at ProLifeWaco.com

Or send to:

PLW, 4200 Grim Ave., Waco, TX 76710

Billboards: 24/7 Outreach

Billboards are great way to reach out to pro-lifers and to those who have not yet developed reverence for life in the womb. PLW has its **largest billboard on Franklin Ave.** at 16th Street. Our second largest is on South 11th street, just a block from Planned Parenthood Waco. What's new for 2015 was the rental of six junior billboards with messages and locations rotating throughout the Waco area. The rotations make it seem like we have many more than the six billboards.



One hostile *Waco Trib* letter writer suggested that we take down this billboard and give the money our donors provide to Planned Parenthood to "serve" women. Don't hold your breath.

Second Sunday Pro-Life Gathering

All of PLW's action agenda is planned and promoted at **Second Sunday**. This is a luncheon/meeting at St. Mary's Parish Hall. We begin with a noon-hour meal prepared under the direction of Chef Giovanni.

Half of the meeting from 1 to 2 p.m. is frequently devoted to a speaker. Our speakers in 2015 included: Agnes Bayer, Fr. Steven Imbarrato, Juda Myers, Carole Novielle, Dr. Joe Pojman, Ellen Staniszewski, and Honorable State Representative Molly White.



Space limitations do not permit elaboration on these outstanding persons and their presentations.

First Sunday Life Chain

The first Sunday of each month is **Life Chain Sunday** from 2-3 p.m. at the intersection of Valley Mills Drive and Waco Drive. We hold "G-rated" signs to bring pro-life messages to the Waco community. In October, we joined International Life Chain Sunday along with over 1,500 communities worldwide.

Sidewalk counselling at Waco Planned Parenthood

Planned Parenthood Waco operates an everything-but-abortion facility, which refers moms for abortions in Austin & Dallas. **Sidewalk counselling teams** spend 2-3 hours a week

counseling women coming for appointments. Topics and flyer materials include sexual morality, realities of abortion, other options available for health care, Christian evangelization, and whatever develops in discussion. Pro-Life Waco would like expand this ministry in 2016. With Planned Parenthood's growing Hispanic clientele, the need for bi-lingual counselors is great.

Booth @ HOT Fair: 40+ years

October brings the Heart of Texas Fair to Waco. PLW provides a pro-life booth each year. This public square outreach is now in its 4th decade. Smiling children received over 2,000 "Choose Life" balloons. Thousands of fairgoers enjoy the materials, photos, and models of life in the womb. The pro-life booth sows seeds of respect and support for the preborn and their moms. Thanks to Doel Garcia and all his volunteers for delivering this powerful outreach.



With materials distributed, beautiful visuals of preborn life, and many conversations, the pro-life booth sows seeds of respect and support for the preborn and their moms.

Billboard truck is "forever young" with new messages

For over a half decade, "**Carolyn**" the **pro-life billboard truck** has been deployed strategically in Life Chain, at Planned Parenthood during business hours, and more.

The truck has held up well since 2009 and is a familiar icon of Pro-Life Waco.



Pro-life 30 -- Pro-abort 14

No, this is not a football score. This is the number of **letters printed in the Waco Tribune-Herald** on life issues. Thanks to all who wrote, whether you got printed or not. We dominated the editorial page again. Something new in 2015 was **two attack letters** directed at PLW and the PLW director. With no substantiation, we were called haters, bullies, liars, cowards, and hypocrites. We responded with 10 letters refuting the baseless allegations.

Komen Race for Cure & PP

PLW did not ignore the Waco Komen Race for the Cure in September, which makes annual grants to Waco Planned Parenthood. No space to write about it. Look for 2016 PLW Year in Review.

Thank you to all who have

- prayed • worked • and financially supported the Gospel of Life in Waco in 2015.

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