

Winter "Angel" Column

Through the eyes of those who work at FirstChoice...

As 2007 drew to a close, a few of the "angels" working at FirstChoice, took a moment to reflect on what they do. Our staff shared some of their thoughts about the amazing things they've observed, the most rewarding part of their job, and what they would want others to know about what they do. Here's what was said...

Amazing things...



"The most amazing things I see coming out of the clinic would have to be the changes in the emotional, physical and spiritual growth that our clients achieve throughout their pregnancies. It is a joy to see them transition from being confused and scared to the beaming, more confident and knowledgeable selves they become when they know they've made a good decision to carry their pregnancy." **Patti Killoran, RN**

"Often, when clients come in the clinic, they are very nervous, afraid, hesitant, and in desperation not knowing how to deal with their situation. I'm not sure exactly what happens in the counseling rooms, but when they leave, their demeanor has completely changed to calm, collected, with a plan, HOPEFUL, and almost always with a smile on their face."



"The sacrifice that volunteers and donors make so that mothers, fathers and their children can be helped. Volunteers have donated entire days and still come back to help the following day. People in our Golf Marathon and Walk have gone above and beyond to make sacrificial gifts of time and dollars." **Susan Richard, Special Events**

"I feel the increased numbers of those in crisis have surprised me. I see us reaching many more women who likely would have just gone to the abortion clinic for their info."

The rewards for me are...

"Being able to provide these young women and men dealing with an unplanned pregnancy, hope - and helping them realize that it does not mean the end of their world."

"I want them to know we are professional, medical and provide needed education. I do wish more could be done on college campuses but don't know how this can happen so I pray. I think young college women have the most need. I also believe we can do what we do because of working here. It's a great place to be and that message is felt."



"Greeting clients and encouraging those that call to set up an appointment to come in, knowing they will be given accurate, helpful information, and supported through their pregnancy. Working with wonderful professional staff and serving them by helping with all the administrative details."

Dorothy Flood, Office Manager

"Being a part of something that serves those who need our positive message of help and genuine support to help them make informed, healthy decisions. Connecting with the people in our community - informing them of the materials and resources we have that can educate in regards to sexual integrity issues."

"Knowing that we're making a huge difference in the lives of women and their families. For me, I feel I receive so much more than I give when working with clients - this appears to be selfish but it's true. The relationships I build with clients are what I'd hope for if it were me or my daughters."

I'd like others to know that...

"We are a starting point, we can help in many different ways- no matter the reason they first chose to come here and we will continue to help them as long as they need it, be it by one visit or many."



"The nurses and staff are wonderful and very supportive. If you or anyone you know has any concerns regarding pregnancy, especially an unplanned pregnancy, please come and visit with our staff."

Vicki Larson, Family Life Coordinator

"The most likely way that new clients find their way to us is by word of mouth - which tells us that former clients found something good here that really helped them! And, FirstChoice truly cares about women, as well as their relationships and their children. We truly are love in action!"

Rena Setter, RN

Our clinic is so blessed to have these dedicated people doing the many wonderful things they all do. Their care and love of the young women and men we see is so very obvious. All that our clinic does is summed up by that last line... "We truly are love in action!"

FirstChoice Clinic is an affiliate of:



**Expanding our Territory –
A note from the
Executive Director**

by Pauline Economon,
Executive Director



We have much to celebrate at FirstChoice Clinic! As you read this newsletter I think you will agree. Our Make a Sound Choice youth development program is on track to reach 3,000 students with 8-12 hours of positive character education for 12-18 years olds. This program is presently in 34 North Dakota schools!

FirstChoice is now serving the mission field right here in our own region. We have added a new clinic location to serve those vulnerable to abortion in the Lake Region (Devils Lake) area. This added site will not only increase our impact, it will also be very effective in bringing our ministry to the families in that area as we offer them our services and programs of sexual integrity and positive youth development.

Finally, we continue to be encouraged and amazed by the generous support from all of you for helping us build a culture of life! Thank you for being a part of reaching the hearts and lives of those we serve.

“Each child is sent into this world by God with a unique message to deliver, a new song to sing, a personal act of love to bestow.”
John Powell, S.J



**A quick look at the past
two years!**

	2006	2007
Total client visits	1866	2088
Pregnancy Tests	371	381
Pregnancy options counseling	519	579
Ultrasounds for abortion vulnerable clients	95	172
Earn While You Learn parenting sessions	396	449

Client comments from exit surveys:

“I really appreciated the Godly counsel I have received here as well as the kind, loving atmosphere.”

“You guys were very nice and respectful. I would definitely come back.”

“Great and welcoming place to visit. I was so nervous and was instantly comforted.”

“I found my visit very helpful and it was a huge stress reliever.”

“First Choice Clinic has helped me greatly. The Earn While You Learn program has taught me many useful things about my pregnancy, delivery, and a newborn baby. It also has lessons for dad-to-be which makes the program educational for both parenting roles.”



**Satellite site in Lake Region
(Devils Lake, ND)**

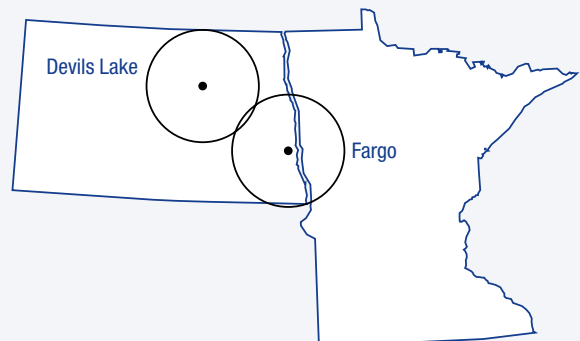


We at FirstChoice are proud to introduce the latest member of our professional family, Pam Kenner. Pam is from Devils Lake and is the new Director of FirstChoice – Lake Region, our new satellite site located in Devils Lake.

Pam has worked as a staff and admissions nurse at Heartland Care. Additionally, she farms with her husband Roy and has two daughters, Angela and Lindsay and a granddaughter Chloe born August 24, 2007.

When asking Pam why she chose to join us, she said: “I feel God has put this job in my path; I am drawn to working with youth in a job that is grounded in faith and supports life issues. I am really excited to be a part of FirstChoice Lake Region.” We warmly welcome Pam and know she will help bring our clinic’s life-changing services to the Devils Lake region. The FirstChoice Lake Region satellite site is located at:

1031 7th St. NE, 4th Floor, Mercy Hospital, Devils Lake, ND 58301
Phone 701.662.2229



Christmas Cherub Update...

“My name is Linn Viola. Thanks for choosing me to be the 2007 FirstChoice Clinic Christmas Cherub! I love being the center of attention! I had a fabulous Christmas but must admit that I loved all the bows and boxes pretty much more than the gifts. I’m a happy girl! I just turned six months old and my favorite activities include singing, taking a bath and playing in my jumperoo.”

My mommy works as an office assistant with the ND Humanities Council and my Daddy is a full-time student at Bismarck State College. They work hard at juggling their schedules so one of them is always home with me. Got to tell you – even though I was a bit of a surprise, I’m one of the best things that ever happened to them. I am so glad my parents chose to give me life!

I hope you all have a wonderful New Year – I plan to start talking very soon and that will add some fun to our household.”

P.S. “My mommy and daddy will celebrate their 6th wedding anniversary this summer.”



Linn Viola, age 6 months

In Celebration and Thanksgiving of...

To honor special individuals, the following gifts were sent to FirstChoice Clinic

Bromschenkel Daughters
Given by: Gib and Doris Bromschenkel

Len and Marion Braun's 50th Wedding Anniversary
Given by: Jim and Alvina Latt

Breanna Brown's 8th Birthday
Given by: Friends of Breanna Brown

Lisa M. Duppong
Given by: Larry and Linda Odegaard

George and Pauline Economon's Wedding Anniversary
Given by: Pat and Val Kelly

Msgr. Mike Foltz
Given by: Erin and Kris Gillett

Tony and Jennifer Green
Given by: Duane and JoAnn Loewen

Rev. Xavier Ilango
Given by: Erin and Kris Gillett

Harold and Marlyn Kertz
Given by: James and Elizabeth Kertz

Birth of Chole Haven Kramer
Given by: Larry and Judy Huotari

Vicki Larson
Given by: Paul and Bette Vandersteen

Little Lights Teachers
Given by: Lynn and Patricia Nelson

Zachary and MacKenzie Martin
Given by: Joe and Jennifer Martin

Art Mildenberger's 80th Birthday
Given by: Art and Odell Mildenberger

Thomas Newman's 1st Birthday
Given by: B.J. Newman

Kelli Pallansch
Given by: Karen Pallansch-Beutler

Pam and Rob Ressler's Pregnancy
Given by: Rev. Richard Fineo

Amanda Strom's 7th Birthday
Given by: Dennis and Kristi Strom

Ron Wiisanen's Birthday
Given by: Bill and Diana Christianson

In Loving memory of...

The following individuals made memorial donations to FirstChoice Clinic in loving remembrance of...

Jeremy Anderson
Given by: Dwight and June Anderson

Caroline Arth
Given by: Dale and Marlene Neuschwander

Catherine Mjogdalen Bartholomay
Given by: Gordon Bartholomay

Nancy Beckstrom
Given by: Dean and Lisa Roberts

LeRoy Bergen
Given by: Anonymous

James Wyatt Brooks
Given by: Tina Klugh

Donald Brown
Given by: Wilford and Wilda Brown

George and Sylvia Calkins' Parents
Given by: George and Sylvia Calkins

Randy Christianson
Given by: Pastor Dave and Kim Wagner

Pat Cruz
Given by: Jerel and Shelly Wieser

Helen DeCrans
Given by: Mike and Monica Sigerud
Given by: Donna Young

Anthony Joseph Deichert
Given by: Sean and Susan Deichert

Fred Desautels
Given by: Doris Desautels

Joan Desautels
Given by: Doris Desautels

Leo J. Dufault
Given by: Diana Bourque

Madeleine Hase
Given by: Adrian Richard

Edward Herald
Given by: Anonymous

Matthew Hiestand
Given by: Thomas and Anna Hiestand

Dalles Henning
Given by: Michael and Melody Helfand
Given by: Jo-Ann Logan

Tristan Hesch
Given by: Linda Hesch

Dorothy Horstmann
Given by: Wilford and Wilda Brown

Helen Hoss Hurd
Given by: Marguerite Hammerschmidt

Jake
Given by: Jerry and Judi McDonald

Donald Johnson
Given by: Rev. Marvin and Joyce Schoenfish

James Lee
Given by: Robert and Joyce Lee

Baby Martins
Given by: Betty Kiser

William Nilles
Given by: Marguerite Hammerschmidt
Given by: Mark and Jennie Rivard

Palmer Nymark
Given by: Phyllis Nymark

Robert and Bonnie Petrich
Given by: Terry and Cindy Petrich

Dick Rayl
Given by: Jean Rayl

Hazel Richard
Given by: Adrian Richard

Ellen Risovi
Given by: C.H. Risovi

Husband and Godson of Veronica Rode
Given by: Veronica Rode

Duane Rust
Given by: Irene Rust

Herman Schlesselmann
Given by: Ed and Deb Didier

Justine Schoenfish
Given by: Rev. Marvin and Joyce Schoenfish

Andrew Lawrence Spiesz
Given by: Curt and Donna Noll

Paul Strand
Given by: Kathleen McMerty

Unborn Babies
Given by: KK Luiten Morehead

Becky Wald
Given by: Wilford and Wilda Brown
Given by: Larry and Susan Richard

Mary Wilhelmi
Given by: Peter and Ann Lewis

Martha Williams
Given by: John and Betty Moraghan

Ted Zimmer
Given by: Peter and Ann Lewis

Special Thanks to...

It's so good when we are sent little reminders of God's constant care...in the kindness of people like all of you! Special thanks to...

Those who made donations to our boutique for baby and mom: Elizabeth Conkins, Wanda Fischer, Jane Grage, Holy Spirit Church of Fargo, Brenda Hansen, Hornbacher's, Kay Kiefer, Morken Lucky Leaf 4-H Club, Eric and Patty Nystrom, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, St. Joseph Middle School Youth Group, St. Mark's Church of Bottineau, Laurie Stromme, Pam Wohwend, and numerous anonymous donors.

Kairowan Moffet for organizing the Baby Bottle Boomerang project at St. John's Catholic Church in Wahpeton - thank you to Kairowan and St. John's for raising over \$1,000!

All our volunteers who helped assemble several recent LARGE mailings - you are the best!

Heather and Dan Butler for hosting the Clinic's Prayer Dessert on January 15th and Karen Willis at K's Pastries for the delicious donation of desserts!

Mission

FirstChoice Clinic is a nonprofit Christian clinic providing education and health services to empower individuals to make life-affirming choices.

Values

The mission rests on a foundation of Christian values and guiding principles that drive our actions and influence the choices that we make in our day-to-day business operations:

- We uphold the **Sanctity of every Human Life** which is core to our ministry.
- We uphold **Sexual Integrity** throughout life; saving sexual expression for marriage and faithfulness within marriage.
- We maintain a **Respect for Marriage and Family**, recognizing this as a God-given institution.
- We reach out to those in need with love and **Compassion**.
- We demonstrate **Integrity** through professional, confidential and trusting relationships with our clients, the community and each other.
- We seek to demonstrate our **Faithfulness** by being true to God in our day-to-day ministries.

Clinic hours

Monday 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Tuesday-Thursday 9:00am - 5:00 pm
Friday 9:00 am - noon

FirstChoice Clinic (founded in 1984) is a 501(c)3 charitable organization, all contributions are tax deductible.

Board of Directors:

Jerry Kensok, President; Marilyn Loegering, Vice President; Jim Dunkel, Treasurer; Joy McCormick, Secretary; Spencer Berry, M.D., Tracey Frei, Rev. Jim Levitt, Ellen Sondreal, Wade Sandy

Clinic Medical Director:

Richard Vetter, M.D.

Professionals:

George Economon, Special Projects Director

Ultrasound Imaging:

Jan Carson, M.D.; Margo Ames, RDMS, RVT; Kim Rayl, RDMS; Jane Stein, RDMS

Staff:

Administration

Pauline Economon, RN, MSN, MA - Executive Director
Kim Wagner - Outreach Director
Susan Richard - Special Events
Vicki Larson - Family Life Coordinator
Dorothy Flood - Office Manager

Client Services

Patti Killoran, RN - Nurse Manager
Renae Setter, RN - Staff Nurse
Renee Johnson, RN - Fertility Care Nurse
Tracey Frei - Client Educator (volunteer)

Lake Region Center

Pam Kenner, LPN - Director

Make a Sound Choice

Kay Kiefer, RN - MSC Director
Lora Miller - Administrative Assistant
Roberta Johnson, MSW - Resource Coordinator
Heather Bjur, MA - Educator Field Supervisor

Make a Sound Choice - Year in Review



Kay Kiefer,
Director MSC

On October 1, 2007, Make a Sound Choice (MSC) stepped over the threshold into the second of a five-year federal Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) grant. As we look back over the first year, the best gauge of how we are doing is listening to what is being said. The comments listed are a sampling of individuals impacted in Year I – including educators, students and parents. To date, 34 schools and youth service organizations have partnered with MSC by participating in a two-day training and implementing (or planning to implement) our positive youth development materials with students.

Negotiations were completed in the fall of 2007 with the College of Education at North Dakota State University to provide an independent evaluation of the MSC program impact on students' knowledge, attitude and behavioral intent. We are happy



to report that, along with exceptionally positive anecdotal program feedback, student surveys indicate positive impact has been made on those students who received the educational program. Each of the benchmarks set was exceeded by a significant margin! This testifies to the commitment of each educator who works hard to encourage positive decision-making in their students and who truly believes that this is the healthiest choice for our children.

Participant's Comments:

"I expected the abstinence workshop to be about kids pledging purity and other sappy talks. Completely changed my thinking. I realized I was [cheated] in my high school education."

Male educator, after two-day training

"I was in a relationship where sex was almost a must for the guy and I did it just to make him happy. My decision changed my life forever and I became pregnant. Now, I am choosing to say no to this stuff to make myself more emotionally happy. Your information helped a lot."

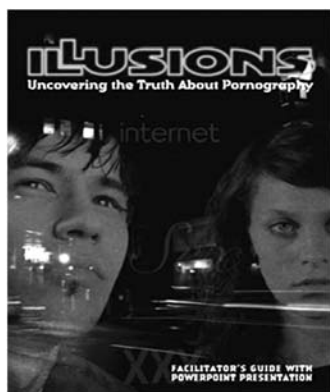
Female student, after speaker presentation

"Excellent, excellent talk. Thank you for being involved and making a huge difference in our society." **Parent, after Community Parent empowerment Event**

Upcoming "Illusions" events

Uncovering the truth about pornography and keeping our kids safe.

"After viewing ILLUSIONS, my students have skills to protect themselves". I am very impressed with the quality and response... every teen needs to see this presentation."
Peggy McNabb, High School Teacher



Leading experts say a "social tsunami" is coming! The first generation of young people that grew up with the Internet and the resulting easy access to pornography is approaching adulthood, getting married and starting families. How serious is the problem? How does pornography affect men, women and children? The following presentations will review how rapidly the pornography industry is growing, how to keep kids safe and give them the tools to help protect themselves from this "social tsunami."



Upcoming Events

National expert, **James Grenfell**, founder of the Illusions program (www.illusionsprogram.net) from Vancouver, Washington, will be in the Fargo/Moorhead and Lake Region areas for the following events:

- Sunday, April 6, 7:00 PM **Parent Empowerment - Illusions**
Ramada Plaza Suites - Fargo
Free and open to the public
- Monday, April 7, All Day..... **Certified Educator Booster Training**
Ramada Plaza Suites
For educators who have attended previous Make a Sound Choice Educator Training
- Monday, April 7..... **Faith-Based Leaders' Training (\$50.00)**
Ramada Plaza Suites
(see box for details – open to religious leaders, parish nurses, counselors)
- Monday, April 7 – 7:00 PM..... **Parent Empowerment – Illusions**
Sports Center - Devils Lake
Free and open to the public
Co-sponsored by the *Lake Region Safe Communities Coalition*

For more information on the above events call 701.297.7458 or www.makeasoundchoice.com

**Illusions Workshop -
Uncovering the Truth about Pornography**
for Pastors, Youth Directors, Parish Nurses and Faith-Based Leaders

Monday, April 7, 9:00 Am – 1:30 PM Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo

Space is limited. **Cost \$50** (includes meals and Illusions curriculum/program).
Call 237-5902 or vicki@firstchoiceclinic.com for details or to register.

Make a Sound Choice - Year in Review cont'

CHAMPION of YOUTH AWARD – Angela Hill

Angela Hill, Kindred, was presented the first annual **Champion of Youth Award** by Make a Sound Choice in 2007. This award is in recognition of Angela's commitment to the promotion of positive health for youth and for helping young people attain success in relationships, school and life.



Kay Kiefer, Angela and Tim Hill

Angela has spoken to over 20,000 students, parents, and professionals across our state and region in the past several years. Her high-energy message provides impact for today and hope for the future by encouraging youth to avoid all risk-taking behaviors (i.e. drugs, alcohol, sexual activity). Response to Angela's message has been overwhelmingly positive from all audiences.

The *Champion of Youth Award* is an annual presentation, with individuals chosen by Make a Sound Choice staff based on commitment to positive health outcomes for all youth. Complete program information for Make a Sound Choice can be obtained by visiting their website: www.makeasoundchoice.com.

Outreach

Golf Enthusiasts & Golf Balls Wanted

The 14th Annual Golf Fore Life Marathon is set for June 3, 2008, at Rose Creek Golf Course. We are always on the lookout for new golfers to join the team! As you clean out your garage and closets this spring, consider donating your used golf balls to us. We'll make good use of them as we "chip away" on June 3rd! Watch for additional information on the Golf Marathon this spring.



A New Donors Perspective



Breanna Brown

Most eight year old girls celebrate their birthday by eating cake and opening gifts. The gift might be a Barbie doll, new book or game. Not so for Breanna Brown of Sabin, Minnesota. Breanna asked her 15 invited guests to bring a cash gift to her party that she, in turn could donate to FirstChoice Clinic. A nice sum of money was collected and Breanna delivered the gift herself. "I feel really proud about giving my money to FirstChoice Clinic," Breanna says. "There are so many babies that need my money for diapers, booties, bottles, and all the things that babies need. I think God wants me to help other people who have needs."

Many thanks to Breanna and we praise God for the philanthropic values instilled in her which are clearly evident so early in her life. Although Breanna's family has supported the clinic for years, Breanna first heard about our services from someone in her 4-H club. If an eight-year old can understand the needs of a young woman experiencing an unplanned pregnancy, it is obvious that the culture of the region is changing – one young heart at a time.

Convenient online giving is now available at
www.teamfirstchoiceclinic.com.

If you have included FirstChoice Clinic in your will, or would like information about supporting FirstChoice through a Charitable Gift Annuity, please contact Kim Wagner, Outreach Director at 701.237.5902.

FirstChoice Clinic is recipient of State Bank's "Paying it Forward" gifts

FirstChoice Clinic made national news recently! A snippet of the video taken at the Clinic, as State Bank employees, Linda Wigdahl and Bill Russell, presented us with their checks, was shown on the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric on January 11th.



Kim Wagner, Bill Russell, Linda Wigdahl and Kay Kiefer

This past Christmas, each full-time State Bank employee was given \$1,000 with one catch. They had to "pay it forward" by giving their gift to people in the community in need. When giving the check away, the employees were asked to film the transaction. In addition, Linda Wigdahl and Bill Russell had written a personal check to match the State Bank gift. To really get a "bang for their buck", all checks were written to Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) to secure matched dollars through DMF. **Thank you to State Bank & Trust & DMF, and especially to Linda and Bill who chose to give their gifts to FirstChoice Clinic.**

Very limited seating. Please call for details.

FIRSTCHOICE CLINIC INVITES YOU TO A FUNDRAISING BANQUET

PUTTING LIFE FIRST

WITH FEATURED SPEAKER CAL THOMAS

Monday, March 3, 2008

Great Hall, Holiday Inn of Fargo

Dinner and Program, 7:00-9:00 pm

Seating begins at 6:30 pm

Pre-dinner entertainment – Fargo South Pizzazz Choir

- An opportunity to make a financial gift will be extended.

- Dinner is complimentary.

- R.S.V.P. before February 18, 2008

701.237.5902 or enclosure.

Reservations are required.

Adults only – as seating is limited.

FirstChoice Clinic

1351 Page Dr., Suite 205
Fargo, ND 58103

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Address Service Requested

www.teamfirstchoiceclinic.com

Client:

701-237-6530
Toll Free: 1-888-237-6530

Administrative:

701-237-5902
Fax: 701-237-0363

Make a Sound Choice:

701-297-7548

Fertility Care Services:

701-237-5902

Mark Your Calendars – details in the newsletter!

Monday, March 3rd - Dinner banquet – the regions' largest life dinner!
Thursday, February 14th - Dakota Medical Foundation's Giving Hearts match program
April 6th & 7th - Illusions...uncovering the truth about pornography

DMF's Giving Hearts Day Online Campaign – Valentine's Day!

On February 14th, Dakota Medical Foundation wants to inspire individuals to share their hearts with others in need. For one day only, Dakota Medical Foundation will match online contributions of \$25 or more made to qualified Giving Hearts Day nonprofit organizations or named funds. To have your donation matched, simply go to www.impactgiveback.org, click on "Give Your Heart – Donate Now" and select your favorite Giving Hearts Day nonprofit organization or named fund. GiveBack with Impact!

P.S. We hope you will designate your Giving Hearts Day charity as FirstChoice Clinic – help us put life first on Valentine's Day!

CHECK OUT

www.teamfirstchoiceclinic.com
www.makeasoundchoice.com
www.firstchoiceclinic.com

*Showed
with
Love*

A Huge Success!



The Valley's Largest Baby Shower...
Helping Moms and Dads in Need!

life 97.9 *Hornbacher's* **faith 1200**

Fargo/Moorhead
Leevers County Market & Wally's Supermarket
Devils Lake, ND

Valley's Largest Baby Shower

**Our baby shower was a huge success!
Over \$5000 in donations were collected for the
FirstChoice parenting program (Earn While You Learn).
Thank you to the community for supporting this effort!**