

government to live up to its promises of aid to developing countries. Canada currently has no legislation on foreign aid even though all parties agree that it is long overdue.

The XVI International AIDS Conference is being held this week in Toronto. The Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign is a small yet important contribution to ease the pain of HIV/AIDS on caregivers and guardians of AIDS orphans. It is a campaign to raise awareness and mobilize support in Canada for Africa's grandmothers, who have become the heart of the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

One provincial resolution was forwarded to this standing committee directly for action. Saskatchewan Provincial Council requested that national council urge the federal government to ban the use of terminator/genetic use restriction technology. The material provided will be added to the file for Resolution 2005.03 Protection of Farmers' Rights to Save Seed and this standing committee will continue to monitor new technologies in this area.

## EDUCATION AND HEALTH



**Velma Harasen**

Just recently, the governing council of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research gave conditional approval for a controversial project to use "fresh" as well as frozen human embryos for stem cell research.

The project will use surplus embryos donated by people who have undergone fertility treatment.

The League, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and COLF made official submissions to Health Canada opposing pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. This controversial test analyzes a single cell to determine which embryos carry gene defects. It reveals the gender and may be able to pick out embryos destined to have high intelligence, blond hair and blue eyes. It was announced just last week that a U.S. embryonic bank has begun to create and sell embryos with specific genetic characteristics, matching to clients' preferences.

The League was represented at the Catholic Health Association of Canada National Convention 2006, as well as at the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute (CCBI) conference. Thanks to Life Member Carmel Rumleski who attended monthly sessions at CCBI where scholarly papers on current topics were presented and reviewed. The CCBI has developed an educational program entitled For People in the Pews: An Introduction to Current Issues in Bioethics

from a Roman Catholic Perspective. This four-part series is available by contacting CCBI.

A new oral contraceptive called Anya, developed to "... put women in control of when or if they want to menstruate," is expected to hit the Canadian market this year. Early findings report this drug is 98% effective in preventing pregnancy. A second prescription medication called Seasonale, already approved in the United States and under consideration in Canada, reduces annual periods. This drug saw millions of dollars in sales last year! No studies have been performed, and researchers worry about the long-term health effects these drugs may have, not to mention the moral and ethical issues. We must oppose the approval of such drugs, perhaps starting with a letter-writing campaign to the health minister.

Donations to the MaterCare National Voluntary Fund for the period July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006, increased again to \$35,453.38. MaterCare continues to expand and we are pleased that Executive Director Dr. Robert Walley was with us to provide an update.

Donations to the Coady National Voluntary Fund increased to \$29,086.68, providing for four scholarships.

The deadline date for national bursary fund applications was changed to May 31<sup>st</sup>. By teleconference call in June, 25 applications were reviewed and 21 bursaries awarded for a total of \$6,800.

B.C. & Yukon Provincial Council requested that members discontinue use of polystyrene disposable ware in favour of biodegradable cardboard products, and that parish councils encourage their parishes to do the same. A second resolution from B.C. & Yukon Provincial Council requested that members educate themselves and their families about obstructive sleep apnea. A resolution from Ontario Provincial Council urged members to become aware of the use and abuse of plastic bags, encourage reduction of single-use bags and start using alternatives.

My thanks to all the chairpersons of education and health at all levels for your untiring efforts, and I thank my sub-committee chairpersons.

## COMMUNICATIONS



**Lucille Partington**

I believe that the professionalism of national office staff and the quality of the work done by national executive members means that

the last magazines were the best ever. I believe the website is used more often and with more interest, especially with new additions such as standing committee reports, the Call to Action page for important issues, and spotlights. Remember that the website is for everyone. You are welcome to download any document you want.

When members relocate or pass away, please notify national office. It is very costly when magazines are returned by Canada Post, as postage must then be paid twice. After you have read your copy, if you don't plan to keep it, leave your magazine for someone else to pick up. We get new members that way!

Please take note of the article by Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Education and Health Chairperson Fran Lucas on immediate translation for the hard of hearing – CART (Communication Access Real-Time Translation) at my display table. Edmonton Archdiocesan Council has been using this system for two years to assist the hearing impaired.

*Stone Soup to Kindle the CWL Spirit* will be published later than originally thought. This means you can still send your stories to Manitoba Provincial Resolutions Chairperson Faith Anderson or to national office. We hope in the near future to compile a list of those who have submitted stories.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve in communications!

on its resolutions and described the action that was currently being taken by the government on each one. He encouraged us to call on all League members to write letters to their members of parliament to help get legislation passed. Throughout our meeting, he was open, friendly, attentive and informative.

In our meeting with the attorney general we were assured that the government would be working toward implementing stiffer penalties for operators of crystal methamphetamine laboratories. There is no question that the meetings with the federal government were productive, important and enlightening. We were listened to with respect. A special note of appreciation to Life Member Anida Simurda for making it happen.

I am pleased to report that we received 17 resolutions. Of these 17 resolutions, the national executive decided that six would come to the floor of this convention, six were forwarded for action, and five were not accepted. One was an existing resolution, one needed more information, two had already been dealt with by the government and one focused on a review which the government has not yet slated.

Much time, as well as careful and prayerful consideration, was given to each and every resolution received. These are gifts from the provincial councils and are treated with respect.

On Sunday afternoon the resolutions dialogue session was attended by over 400 members. It was wonderful seeing so many members taking the opportunity to examine the resolutions to be presented at the convention and to prepare amendments if they considered them necessary.

I would like to thank the members of the resolutions committee and especially Joleene Kemp of Ontario and Peggy Roche of Newfoundland and Labrador, who have been working tirelessly for the past five days.

What a journey it has been serving as your national resolutions chairperson. Thank you to my *companions on the journey*. What an honour! It was a delight to have conducted resolutions workshops. Very many titles develop when you get a room full of members brainstorming together. I urge councils at all levels to hold resolutions workshops. As we have seen, resolutions make a difference to so many people around the world. Resolutions on the death penalty and on the trafficking of children were both passed unanimously at the WUCWO General Assembly. Taking action at an international level indeed! Remember – resolutions are crucial and are an act of love.

There is no question that members will not sit on the sidelines in the fight for justice. As you all recall the song, "They will know we are Christians by our love." Well, our song could be, "They'll know we have love by our resolutions!"

## RESOLUTIONS



**Dr. Rayleen De Luca**

Pope Benedict XVI entitled his first encyclical letter *God is Love* and stressed that the church is deeply concerned in the promotion of justice. The Holy Father must be pleased with the good works of the League. Through resolutions, our love of God and neighbour is clearly demonstrated. Indeed these are exciting times – and resolutions are where it's at!

Congratulations to those councils who were able to meet with their local governments. Presenting League resolutions to Prime Minister Stephen Harper was an awesome feat. For the first time in 32 years, the League delegation to the federal government met with Canada's top official...and we certainly got a lot of press.

The prime minister personally commended the League