

# In Defence of Life

## Edmonton Prolife's Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 4

'educating for life'

Fall

2006

### Mission – Education

*Edmonton Prolife's aims and objectives are to promote respect for all human life from conception to natural death, to uphold and defend the right to life, the basic right on which all other rights depend. Edmonton Prolife contributes to the understanding of the people of the Greater Edmonton area, by education, that society has a duty to protect this right. We are committed to peaceful actions to fulfill our mission*

With the start of a new school year, Edmonton Prolife thought it would be a perfect time for a little educating on the roles of the various prolife organizations in Edmonton, Alberta and the rest of Canada.

We have also included a couple of educational articles, to help get your brain thinking of the prolife issues with some critical thinking. Do we realize what we read may not be what it appears to say? Have we become too desensitized to the anti life messages that we no longer question their rhetoric, or that we find ourselves agreeing with their point of view especially when it seems so compassionate? It is like we are walking around in a bit of a daze and we need to shake ourselves up and really challenge what we are hearing.

Edmonton Prolife is hosting the ASLAN prolife youth conference in October. Lead the Followers- Instilling leadership qualities in our prolife youth is the theme for this year's conference.

WE are trying to teach kids to think beyond the rhetoric to challenge the sound byte messages they receive every day in just about every media available today.

WE need to see our youth there and we need adults to encourage them to attend and to assist with events during the day. From registration to snacks and meals we will need lots of hands. A big thank you to the ones who have volunteered already.

Please call the office if you are able to help by attending that day, or providing some baking or chili before hand.

### President's Message

This issue focuses on education, and we know that the information inside will help you understand the functioning and complementing of the different groups within prolife.

I like to give you a challenge. What have YOU done this past year to educate and share the message of life? Shared with like-minded people? Maybe even dared to talk with someone who believes in the culture of death? How many minutes/hours have you given to the most pervasive anti human rights issue of this and the previous century?

Only massive grassroots movements are agents of change through peaceful demonstrations.

The greater Edmonton area has over 1 million people. I DARE you give ONE HOUR of your time this year to participate in the Life chain, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2-3pm. If you have never stood at a street corner, witnessing to passers by, commit yourself to attending this year. Be courageous and feel the power of conviction and the peace of the Lord when you witness to the truth. As long as we have the freedom to witness and speak out, we should do so. The time may come it will be taken from us, how will we regret than that we did not use our abilities and freedoms

Hang the enclosed poster anywhere you can (church, shopping mall, community centre), and come with family, friends, neighbors, rain or shine. "What you do for the least of one of these, you do unto me"

Corry

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## Upcoming Events



- **September 15 - 17, 2006 - Rachel Vineyard Retreat – Post Abortion Healing**  
An Inter-denominational Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreat for spiritual and emotional healing after abortion, miscarriage or stillbirth, will be held in Edmonton and Rural Area, September 15, 16, 17, 2006. The retreat is a confidential and emotionally safe environment for those struggling after abortion, stillbirth, or miscarriage. Contact Marlene at [MAJButterflies@aol.com](mailto:MAJButterflies@aol.com) Carla at 780-963-4048 or visit [www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org). A Rachel's Vineyard weekend with a Catholic mass and reconciliation will be held October 27, 28, 29, 2006 call 1-877-597-3223. One on one counseling is available anytime by appointment, please call 424-4538 to make an appointment
- **September 16, 2006 - Walkathon**  
As a non-profit society, we rely on donations from supportive pro-life people to continue doing our work. The Walk for Life is our biggest fund-raiser of the year and it is an event that the whole family can enjoy. The next Walk for Life is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, 2006. Registration starts at 8:30 am at Rundell Park Family Centre. Walkers recruit sponsors to donate funds to our projects and continuing pro-life work. A pledge sheet has been included with this newsletter; additional pledge sheets are available from the office. For more information call 425-1637.
- **September 22, 2006 – The Right to Wear White**  
This is a weekend designed to discover the beautiful gifts God has given to women and some of the secrets of sexual purity until marriage. This is a nondenominational retreat focusing on; Mothers and Daughters 12 to 20 years. This event will be held at the Westridge Park Lodge and Golf Resort in Devon, Alberta. Call Dawn at 497-02581 for more information.
- **October 1, 2006 – Life Chain**  
This event is sponsored by our Society and held in co-operation with local Christian churches, not only in Edmonton but in many communities and cities across the nation. Participants in the Life Chain are witnessing, in a peaceful and prayerful way, to the truth about the effect of abortion on women and unborn children. The Life Chain takes place from 2 to 3 pm on Sunday, October 1, 2006. We invite those in church leadership to make a commitment to personal involvement and then to urge the members of their congregation to participate as well. We provide posters and bulletin inserts to advertise the Life Chain prior to the event. For more information, call our office at 425-1637
- **October 28, 2006 – ASLAN Youth Conference**  
It is time for a REBEL-UTION, we need our youth to help us Conquer the Culture. Plan to attend the provincial prolife youth conference in Edmonton, more info on page 7. To register call the office at 425-1637.
- **November 16 to 18, 2006, – National Prolife Conference, Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel in Richmond, BC**  
This year's national pro life conference "Healing the Culture: A New Beginning" will be hosted by Pro Life Society of BC, LifeCanada and others. A host of top-notch speakers will be presenting on a wide range of topics and there will be workshops available. All who attend will be encouraged in their pro life work and will enjoy getting to know others from across Canada. For more information, call Edmonton Prolife at 425-1637.
- **Join others in an hour of peaceful, prayerful activism against the daily slaughter of innocent babies. Morgentaler Abortion Clinic: 12490, 109 A Ave.**  
Every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 11:00 AM  
The third Sunday of every month. Candle light Rosary at 7:30 pm. Contact Maryellen at 476-4026

For information on any of the above events, call the Edmonton Prolife office at **425-1637** or email us at [edmpl@interbaun.com](mailto:edmpl@interbaun.com)

In Defence of Life: Edmonton Prolife's Newsletter is published four times a year by Edmonton Prolife Association, #212, 11125-107 Ave. Edmonton, AB T5H 0X9. Ph. (780) 425-1637, Fax. (780) 425-1320, email: [edmpl@interbaun.com](mailto:edmpl@interbaun.com), website: [www.edmontonprolife.org](http://www.edmontonprolife.org)

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EPL Board: President: Corry Morcos, Treasurer: Glenn Woolger, Recording Secretary: Anne Wansink, Directors: Judy Koopmans. Michael Cooper and John MacDonald

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New board members welcomed. Meetings held bimonthly first Tuesday, 5:30 pm, at EPL office. All EPL members welcome to attend

# Who's Who

Do you ever get confused by the number various prolife organizations in Edmonton, Alberta and Canada? What exactly does each of these groups do? Who do they represent? What makes one different from the other? Sometimes it may seem like with all these organizations there couldn't possibly be anyone unaware of the prolife issues. This fall we would like to explain the role of some of these organizations and how we all work together to build a culture of life.

## Edmonton Prolife (EPL)

Edmonton Prolife was founded in 1981. We are the local prolife organization for Edmonton and surrounding area. We rely on the individuals in Edmonton to support our ongoing educational programs. We offer a lending library, a unique, extensive website with listings and links for all type of prolife educational material, WE work to make a prolife presence visible in Edmonton by sponsoring billboards, organizing marches, Life Chain, etc. Our mandate is to educate the community with regards to the life issues. We work with individuals and other groups and churches to provide this information in a variety of ways.

## Alberta Prolife (APL)

Alberta Prolife was formed in 1985 to be an umbrella organization for the various prolife groups throughout the province. A portion of your membership goes to APL, making you a member of the provincial organization as well as the local group.

## LifeCanada

LifeCanada is the national prolife organization responding to national issues with one voice representing the provincial groups and by association the local prolife group. LifeCanada wishes to complement, rather than duplicate, the educational work carried out by other pro- life groups. A portion of your pro life membership goes to LifeCanada, making you an associate member of the national organization.

## Campaign Life Coalition- Alberta

Campaign Life is the official political advocacy arm of the prolife movement in the province. Recently re established, the Alberta Campaign life office is in the process of organizing constituency reps and will be polling candidates in upcoming provincial elections. They keep tabs on our provincial politics and prepare briefing documents for our MLA's regarding the prolife issues.

## Campaign Life

Campaign Life is the national prolife political advocacy group. They work on the same projects as the

provincial group but work on issues related to the federal government.

## Pregnancy Care Centre

"All Pregnancy Care Centre services are free and confidential. We care about you and the situation you face. Give us a call—we want to help! Are you pregnant?"

Did you make the decision to abort? Are you now experiencing mixed feelings of grief, anger, confusion, or guilt? You are not alone and we deeply care about you. We can help you find closure and healing to this experience."

## Pregnancy Crisis Centre

"Free Pregnancy Test, Confidential Information, Help and Guidance .Our services are available to all, regardless of age, marital status, race, religion, legal residence, or economic status."

## Birthright

Offers women facing a distressing pregnancy alternatives to an abortion. Provides pro-life, non-judgmental support in helping her carry baby to term.

## Alberta Life Issues Educational Society (ALIES)

It is a provincial group that recently began the "back porch" project across the street from the Morgentaler abortion clinic.

## Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition was established to prepare a well-informed, broadly based, network of groups and individuals who support measures that will create an effective social barrier to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

<http://www.epcc.ca/>

## Many Other Groups

We are aware of many other organizations working to build a culture a life. Here are a few that you may like to learn more about.

**CMDS (Christian medical & Dental Society):** If you know of any medical or dental doctors and students, you can let them know about CMDS

[www.cmds-emas.ca](http://www.cmds-emas.ca)

**Canadian Physicians for Life**

[www.physiciansforlife.ca](http://www.physiciansforlife.ca)

**Nurses For Life**

1-613-728-8125

**Pharmacists for Life**

<http://www.geocities.com/pflic/news.html>

Also check out

<http://users.webhart.net/vandee/prolife.shtml>

For an extensive Canadian Prolife Index Listing.

# Words, Words, Words.

(To read the article in its entirety go to <http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/fctwww.htm>) by Rita L. Marker and Wesley J. Smith

## **"If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought." George Orwell 1**

"Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me" was a children's rhyme that was very common not many years ago. It was also totally wrong. The deep emotional pain inflicted by words can often hurt far more and for much longer than the physical pain of a broken bone.

Today, as the debate over what has become known as the "right to die" is taking place another type of harm can result from words. That harm can be deadly. Words that sound familiar -- like treatment, compassion, comfort care, and terminal -- now may mean something far different than they did only a few years ago. Those words, as they are currently used, may do more than hurt. They may kill.

Take, for example, the seemingly clear statement -- "If I'm terminally ill, the only medical treatment I want is comfort care." A person who has a life expectancy of months or even years could now interpret that statement as a request for a deadly drug overdose.

Regardless of one's views about assisted suicide and euthanasia, an understanding of the words used when they are discussed is vitally important. One lesson proliferators have heeded is that verbal engineering precedes all social engineering. If words or their meaning can be changed, the quest to change hearts and minds will be achieved.

Today when mercy killing is discussed, it is couched in euphemisms -- words of gentleness or the language of rights. Titles of euthanasia advocacy groups contain words like "compassion," "choice," and "dignity" Like a constantly changing kaleidoscope, meanings shift ever so slightly, forming new patterns of thinking. Slowly, quietly -- but inexorably -- the previously appalling is transformed into the presently appealing. The manner in which words are defined is key to achieving this transformation.

It should be noted, however, that euthanasia by any other name is still euthanasia. Or, better stated: Killing is killing is killing.

While the very terms "euthanasia" and "assisted suicide" have been often replaced by euphemisms such as "gentle landing" and "deliverance," there are a number of words that are so universal to any and all so-called right-to-die proposals and policies that they cannot be replaced. Instead, their interpretations and definitions have blurred as well as multiplied so that, in

any one discussion, the same word can have as many meanings as there are speakers and listeners. Among these words are "terminal," "imminent," "treatment" and "care." Such a breadth of interpretation can place caregivers and patients in a position where they are speaking separate languages -- one in which the listener interprets a word in a far different way than the speaker intended.

Well meaning though they may be, individuals who believe that assisted suicide and euthanasia can be limited to those who are in a "terminal" condition is naïve. Their illusory safeguards will not protect those in the ever-expanding group of candidates for the "treatment" of death. Just as the word, "terminal," has become as hard to pin down as jello to the wall, so too has the word "treatment" been pulled and stretched out of shape. Euthanasia advocates have seized upon this in furtherance of their political and social goals.

As with the word, "terminal," the average person maintains a belief that the word, "treatment," is simply and easily interpreted, referring to medical interventions intended to cure or ameliorate a condition. But, as with the understanding of terminal illness, the public perception of what is meant by medical treatment is stalled -- stranded in a time when a desire to forego life-sustaining treatment meant only that one did not want to be tethered to machines, monitors, buzzers, bells and whistles during the final days of life.

Quite simply, the debate about treatment has traveled so far beyond the original meaning of the word that it almost begs for redefinition in Webster's. The tracks have been switched -- moving no longer in the direction of natural death but, instead, careening toward killing in the name of compassion.

## **Conclusion**

The success or failure of political or social revolutions often depends on the terms used in the debate. If the movement is in accord with accepted values as expressed by language, success is often the result. But what if the existing lexicon and traditional understanding of words and phrases hurt the cause and bog down the movement? The answer is simple: If the people don't want to follow where you want to take them, make the destination appear more attractive. This is precisely what proponents of the "right to die" have done. By using fuzzy euphemisms, by blurring vital distinctions, by using imprecise phraseology, and by redefining well-understood concepts and ethical principles, they created an Alice Through the Looking Glass World, where previously understood concepts no longer apply. It's as if "up" were now "down" and "hot" were now "cold." Words only mean what the speaker intends them to mean, regardless of the understanding of the listener.

Terms like "killing" and "suicide" which have precise definitions but negative connotations have become outcasts, replaced by subjective, feel-good, meaningless phrases such as "gentle landing," "deliverance," "chosen death," or the ubiquitous "death with dignity." Thus the ongoing revolution in ethics and values was preceded by a radical shift in the use of language, all intended to beckon us to embark on a journey to radical social change.

That direction may or may not be where we, as a society, will want to go. But one thing is certain. We need to use clear definitions and accurate terminology if we are to truly understand what awaits us at the end of that road.

## You Say Choice, I Say Murder

**Before prolife arguments can reach the undecided person, we have got to look at the language we use.**

We will never succeed in changing our nation's abortion policies and practice until we change the language of the debate. Rhetoric is the stuff that our private and public lives are made of. The words we use, the way we talk, the stories we tell will ultimately determine what we believe and what we do.

Proponents of abortion have succeeded in selling their version of the moral context for the debate. In voicing their positions, they have repeatedly used moral terms such as compassion, freedom, and choice.

It is time for prolife advocates to understand the power of words and to go on the offensive. We have got to make our appeal for life, not just to the courts and legislatures, but to the hearts and minds of the average person. We have got to reach that 60 percent in the middle, those who are either uninformed, misinformed, unmoved, or undecided.

We are taking part in a great historic battle—a cultural battle—a social war to define what our country is and what human life is. And this battle is being fought not just with legislation and legal argumentation, but with words flowing to and from the public at large.

### Reclaiming an ancient art

Understanding the power of words is nothing new. In the fifth century B.C., the Greek philosopher Democritus taught that "word is a shadow of deed." Plato said the same thing, only negatively, "False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil." The biblical letter of James tells us that those who can master their tongues can master anything. Nazi leaders certainly understood the pernicious power of words when they called their facility for carrying victims to the killing centers "The Charitable Transport Company for the Sick," or when

they defined the genocide of Jews as "the final solution."

While the goal of rhetoric is to persuade, this is not the only criterion for judging success. If we want to direct the flow of social meaning, we must be sure that our words and stories are in fact connected to the real experiences of people. Our communication has to do with our sense of belonging to a community. Our communion, so to speak, comes through our private and public dialogue about shared hopes and concerns. We must prove, not just say, that we have everybody's interests in mind.

Our task is to use words and stories to create a vision of a prolife world where the least among us is protected and cared for. But we need to capture the public imagination to do so.

### A history of abortion rhetoric

Before we talk about how to create that vision, we need to review the evolution of language in the abortion debate during the last 30 years.

From 1965 to the present, pro-abortion communicators have also worked at integrating the right to abortion with the aspirations of the women's movement. Again, they have worked at soliciting public support by using the most inclusive public vocabulary possible. Equal rights and discrimination now pepper the discussion. The newly created concept of "women's reproductive rights" has quickly gained popularity and usurped the fetus's right to life.

The idea of equality with men and personal reproductive freedom came together in the word choice. That is, women, like men, should be free to walk away from sexual encounters without fear of being stuck with the reproductive consequences.

Few realize the sharp contradiction between the push to link abortion with women's rights and the claims of historical feminism. Susan B. Anthony, a leader for the women's suffrage movement in the late nineteenth century, referred to abortion as "the horrible crime of child murder." Alice Paul, who drafted the original version of the Equal Rights Amendment, called abortion "the ultimate exploitation of women." Through decades, the women's movement consistently used a rhetoric that focused on equal rights and social reforms that would benefit women without disadvantaging children. It is only within the last 30 years that feminism began using the vocabulary of "choice" as the public cry for equality.

### Reversing images

Prolife advocates have failed to capture public imagination as we make our plea on behalf of the unborn. Abortion-clinic bombings and abortionists being shot show why. Their impact on public memory, as exploited by the rhetoric of abortion advocates, has lasted to this day. The actions of a few projected a public image of extremism and violence.

Some of the more strident activists of the prolife movement have yet to understand that they discourage

rather than encourage a prolife consensus in the public mind. Such law-breaking activities serve the opposition's stereotyping of proliferers as religious zealots, a gang of fanatics led by bullying white males indifferent to the needs and concerns of women.

Such images have proven so powerful that the public, according to a recent Gallup poll, more typically sees those trying to protect unborn children as more violent than those who promote abortion.

### **So how do we go about reshaping public sentiment and policy?**

To overcome the inertia of the pro-abortion rhetoric, leaders of the prolife movement need to tell what they are for, rather than what they are against. Pro-abortion leaders say they are for compassion, helping the oppressed, "a fundamental right to choose," equality for women, and a right to privacy. At the same time proliferers appear to be angry and uncaring, against abortion, against women, and even against the democratic process if it yields policies that conflict with religious beliefs.

Instead, public voices must say in reasonable and compassionate terms that the prolife movement is for a public good that benefits everyone. Leaders must use language and stories that build a public vision of caring, which embraces women and children, before and after birth.

We must show that we are caring, sensitive, and inclusive. We must affirm all human life. That includes women burdened by unwanted pregnancy. It includes feminists. We must use prolife language that resonates with all of these groups if we are to be successful. Prolifers need to talk about women and their unborn children as being victimized by abortion. Abortion policy and practice have liberated men to have sex without the potential obligation of providing for the woman or her child. "Decency" merely requires that he pay for her to get rid of "her" problem.

We must communicate that it is prolife advocates who are actually the ones providing choices to women undergoing crisis pregnancies. Abortion advocates are not offering choices; they are offering abortion—period. All too often there is pressure from a pregnant woman's family, friends, employer, or an abortion counselor to use her "right" to abortion to solve her problem. She gets the message that she owes it to herself, to everyone else involved, and even to the unwanted child that can be "prevented." In fact, such pressures have caused three out of ten pregnant women to "choose" abortion. "Choice" advocates have yet to provide the support necessary for women to make any other choice than abortion. They have even resisted the passage of informed consent laws that would ensure women have all the relevant information they need to make an informed choice to abort. This would include information about the stage of development of an unborn child, risks associated with

abortion, the potential of fetal pain, and the readily available alternatives to abortion.

### **Alternatives to abortion.**

The prolife movement needs to talk compassionately about the legitimate needs of women who are faced with crisis pregnancy, especially since proliferers are the ones actually involved in responding to such needs. There are more crisis pregnancy centers in the Canada than there are abortion clinics. It is the prolife advocates who are providing support for unwed mothers, adoption services, and even counseling for women suffering from post abortion syndrome. As evidenced by leaders of Women Exploited by Abortion, the victims of the abortion system may prove the most effective in voicing the "caring vision."

Prolife influencers must learn to utilize the power of the media better to promote their vision. Historically, abortion advocates have done a better job in the care and feeding of journalists. At the same time, prolife advocates have distrusted them, and have assumed the media will align with the opposition. Yet most editors and reporters, regardless of their personal views, wish to adhere to professional standards, including objectivity. Therefore, most will respond favorably to prolife advocates who respectfully point out inaccuracies or biases in their coverage and provide alternative sources and stories.

### **Telling stories**

Convincing rhetoric also calls for personifying unborn children through stories about real people. "For example, the story in the previous "In Defense of Life" where a local young lady shared her personal story of a crisis pregnancy. "

Winning the battle for public opinion and policy will depend on winning the battle for linguistics. We cannot make up for our past failure to shape public discourse and conviction by going directly to the legislatures. Lincoln once said, "In a government like ours, **public sentiment is everything**, in determining what laws and decisions can and cannot be enforced."

Our goal should be to shape public discourse and build a ground swell of public conviction. With public conviction goes judicial conviction. And it is only then that we will be able to achieve our legislative goals for providing a comprehensive legal shelter for the unborn. One day all people will understand that caring for a mother with an unwanted pregnancy—unconditionally protecting and caring for her unborn child before and after birth—is the ultimate in compassion, is inclusive, is intelligent—is the right way. That is what our national freedom is all about.

### **But the onus falls on US to create that kind of vision in our use of language and stories.**

This article originally appeared in the June 24, 1991 issue of Christianity Today.

## Capital Ex booth

Edmonton ProLife was again a presence this past year at the Capital Ex fair. Tens of thousands of people passed by, nearly all showing their pleasure and gratefulness for the message of life through fetal models, posters and pamphlets. A big Thank You to all the volunteers manning the booth.

The Edmonton Journal printed one letter written by a couple who did not think the prolife message belonged at such an event under the heading:

### No place for controversy.

We would like to voice our concern regarding one of the exhibits at the Capital Ex.

We believe that the prolife organization should not have been allowed to display at the trade show. We would feel the same way had it been a pro-choice display; however our position on the issue is irrelevant.

We believe that the EX is not the place for politically or morally controversial issues to be debated. If you allow one group to set up a display, where will it end? According to Northland's website "The shop Zone features more than 300 exhibits with unique products and services. You are sure to find something to satisfy your needs."

The pro-life display does not fit this description. It is neither a product nor a service. Particularly galling was a section of their display which contained graphic images. There is a time and place for promoting awareness of this issue, but this was not it.

**Vince and Amber Leonty, Edmonton**

A response was printed.

### Display was effective.

Re: "No place for controversy," by Vince and Amber Leonty, Letters, Aug.7.

The educational materials at the pro-life exhibit at the Capital-Ex trade show illustrate the positive side and joys of a life-giving choice. Models of little pre-born babies are the delight of all parents and children.

The picture drawing most awe and inspiration is the one of baby Samuel's successful fetal surgery at 21 weeks gestation to repair the unborn baby's spine in utero. It is no more graphic than the daily television images of new medical breakthroughs and certainly these treatments are worth reporting. Ninety-nine percent of passers-by at the Sportex exhibit seemed to agree".

**Corry Morcos, Edmonton**

Edmonton Prolife Display Booth Capital EX 2006



Edmonton Prolife has been a regular participant in the former Klondike days and at this years Capital EX because we pay a rental fee like all other businesses and services that wish to display at Capital EX. We are grateful to be able to provide this educational service to all those who wish to stop by our booth. We hope we can count on your continued financial support and volunteer manpower to make this opportunity available for years to come.

**ASLAN** - Register online at [apl@apl.com](mailto:apl@apl.com) or request a brochure at [edmpl@interbaun.com](mailto:edmpl@interbaun.com) or call 425-1637.

*I'll Take Your Hand... Follow me.*

Early Registration only **\$10!**

**ASLAN.**

**2006 PRO-LIFE YOUTH CONFERENCE**

Hosted by Edmonton Pro-Life with **Saturday, Oct. 28**

8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
St. Alphonsus Church Hall  
11828 85 St., Edm.

Very Special Speakers with **Tony and Colleen LaBranga**

For more info or to register:  
[edmpl@interbaun.com](mailto:edmpl@interbaun.com) or (780) 425-1637  
[apl@albertaprolife.com](mailto:apl@albertaprolife.com)

