

2007

Network for REPRODUCTIVE Options

Board of Coordinators

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*Empowering communities with
abortion access,
grassroots health education
and reproductive options*

Supreme Court Threatens Reproductive Freedom

The Supreme Court's recent ruling upholding the ban on intact dilation and extraction (termed "partial birth" by the opposition) presents the most serious threat to reproductive freedom in decades. The decision sets a dangerous precedent that invites politicians to enact legislation imposing further restrictions upon abortion access, threatening the health and safety of women everywhere in the United States.

Five conservative Supreme Court Justices have allied themselves with the campaign to restrict reproductive rights. The Court's ruling prohibits only a small percentage of abortion procedures, chosen by a woman and her physician in some instances as the safest medical procedure available. The decision has larger significance, however: in effect mandating the substitution of more dangerous techniques and allows for no exception to protect the health of the woman. For the first time since *Roe v. Wade's* enactment, the judiciary's ruling moves dangerously toward elevating protection of the fetus above welfare and safety of the woman. It also sets the stage for an intensification of the state by state battle to erode reproductive freedom, emboldening antichoice legislators to continue sponsoring bills that restrict abortion access.

Last November voters in South Dakota fortunately rejected an extreme bill passed by legislators and signed by the governor that would have banned all abortions except those deemed necessary to preserve a woman's life. In other states the

attempt to compromise reproductive rights continues. In South Carolina the House has passed a bill requiring women to view an ultrasound of the fetus before obtaining an abortion. At this date, it appears that the Senate will approve the measure and the Governor has stated that he will sign the bill into law. A number of other states currently require parental notification and waiting periods, strategies designed to discourage women from obtaining abortions. This year in Texas, Georgia, and in at least 10 other states it seems likely that legislatures will attempt to outlaw the majority of abortions.

Ironically, The Supreme Court's attempts to cripple *Roe v. Wade* may ultimately backfire, reinvigorating the pro-choice community to unite in order to protect reproductive freedom. In talking to supporters all over Oregon, we have learned that there is an upsurge of anger against the paternalistic maneuver of the Supreme Court to "protect women against decisions they may later re-

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NRO Board members join a protest rally in Eugene following the April 18 Supreme Court decision. Photo by Kim Sprague

Grassroots Health Education Update

It has been a tremendous year for our Grassroots Health Education Programs. In January 2006 we purchased a laptop, projector and scanning equipment to help us upgrade our presentations and develop new ones. We updated our slideshow with new images and information, including current birth control methods, safer sex practices and prevention of STI transmission, and broader information about the reproductive rights movement, both current and historical. Our new equipment also facilitated the adaptation of our traditional slideshow into two modified versions for different audiences. In addition, we developed dynamic visual presentations for our workshops on fertility awareness and self-exam. With the help of part-time staff and two volunteer interns we also updated our birth control fact sheets and developed a reproductive health curriculum, focused on menstruation for young women (aged 12-17).

We were particularly glad that a group of women who saw our slide show was so inspired that they began doing research and planning their own national roadshow on abortion and women's health.

"The amount of new things I've learned from this presentation really showed me how the patriarchy has managed to pathologize the female body."

- participant comment after NRO's Reproductive and Sexual Health Slide Show May 2007

These women used our library extensively for their research and consulted regularly with our Education Coordinator. Currently they are touring the country offering presentations on women's health and reproductive options.

Thanks to the continued support of the Anna Lalor Burdick Program and a new grant from the McKenzie River Gathering, our Grassroots Health Education Programs are continuing to grow this year.

We've re-formed the Education Committee to do outreach in the community and train volunteers to do presentations. Our resource library continues to grow with new materials

on reproductive justice, healthy sexuality, and a wide range of topics on reproductive health, including pregnancy, menopause, nutrition and more.

We've already offered several presentations and workshops in 2007 and are looking forward to doing many more.

We are always looking for new volunteers, particularly Spanish-speaking volunteers, so contact the office if you are interested!

Getting to Know NRO: House Parties and Other Fundraising Opportunities

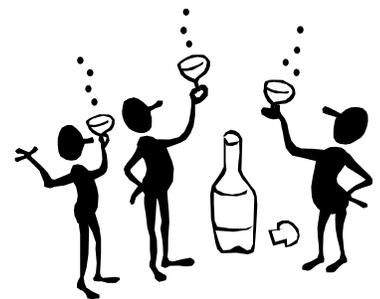
Thanks to some wonderful supporters who took the initiative, NRO has made a lot of progress in diversifying fundraising over the last year or so. In the process, we made some great new friends and got practice speaking about NRO's services and showing our educational videos to small groups.

Writer and activist Judith Arcana coordinated a series of fundraising house parties in the Portland area, speaking about her involvement in the early reproductive rights movement and reading from her most recent book of poetry. Last November Mara Schlacter and Karla Forsythe co-hosted a fabulous house party in Portland. Two NRO Coordinators attended to enjoy hors d'oeuvres, give a brief overview of our services, show a video from our library, and share personal stories related to abortion. Everyone brought their checkbooks and generously donated to keep our Women in Need (WIN) Fund and other programs going. In January Gretchen Miller and Sarah Hendrickson recommended that NRO receive the monthly offering at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, inviting us to speak to the congregation about our role in facilitating abortion access in Oregon and in providing feminist

grassroots reproductive health education programs. The Oregon Country Fair

Board of Directors allows us to attend meetings annually to request donations used for expansion of NRO's Community Resource Library.

One of our major goals this year is developing more fundraising and networking possibilities with supporters around the state. In addition to helping us build a more healthy financial foundation for our work, creating friendships and alliances with the greater pro-choice community in Oregon builds the unity and strong relationships necessary to survive in the current politically hostile climate. If you have an organization or a group of private individuals interested in hearing more about the work we do for the women of Oregon and are able to open your checkbooks to make contributions, we are willing to visit and give you more information about NRO's work and to join with you in discussing ways we can become more effective in promoting reproductive justice.



Hotline Stories: Immigrant Women face Additional Barriers

Over the past four years that I've been taking shifts on the NRO Hotline, I've noticed a disturbing trend. All of the women who call our hotline deal with incredibly difficult financial and emotional situations, and each case is unique, but I've become increasingly aware that immigrant women and poor women in Oregon face ever-greater challenges in accessing abortion services, and other reproductive healthcare services. It was never easy for immigrant or poor women to find funding and providers for abortion services, but I believe it has become even more difficult as the Oregon Health Plan has begun to comply with federal proof-of-citizenship requirements in its application process. These requirements affect not only immigrant women who must prove they are in the country legally in order to apply for OHP, but also delay the application process for any woman who does not have a certified copy of her birth certificate in-hand, or who cannot afford to purchase one. The resulting delays in processing OHP applications sometimes mean that a pregnant woman must decide whether to pay out-of-pocket for an earlier abortion, knowing that if she waited another few weeks her OHP card would cover a later procedure. In some cases, women have had to pay a much higher cash price for a later procedure, because their OHP applications were taking so long to process that they could not wait any longer without being too far along to even get an abortion. Low-

income women who may qualify for an OHP medical card (most pregnant women who earn less than \$30,000.00/year should be eligible, depending on other factors such as family size and who they live with) are still in a better position than undocumented immigrant women, who usually have no resources to help pay for an abortion, and fear harassment or even deportation if they go to public health clinics seeking help.

NRO's hotline policies include prioritizing funding for both undocumented and immigrant women, because we are aware of the special challenges they face. In several cases, I've talked to immigrant women who were in domestic violence situations and were afraid to bring another child into a violent situation, but felt they could not go to the authorities for help because of their documentation status. I've spoken with refugees, pregnant as a result of rape, who were not eligible for any publicly-funded healthcare. I've spoken with many Spanish-speaking women with no access to healthcare, including birth control services, who were pregnant and concerned about how they would care for the children they already have if they were forced to have any more. I've spoken to women who were afraid they'd not only be fired, but reported to the INS and deported if they had to miss a day of work to go their abortion appointments. All of the immigrant women who call the NRO

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2006 Women In Need Statistics

Hotline Totals

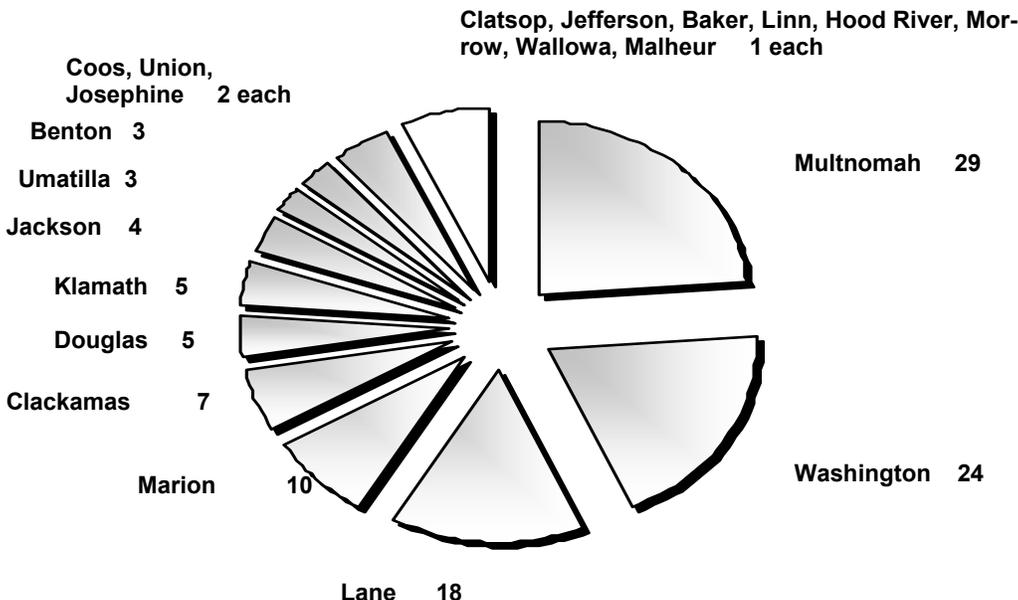
Total Hotline Calls	443
Total Info/Referral Calls	280
Total WIN recipients	163

Women whose primary language is not English	28
Spanish speaking	23

Average gift per woman	\$311
Total amount given for 2006	\$50,725

Among those reporting Ethnic Identity:

African American	2
Asian American	3
Latina	27
Mixed	4
Other	6
White	61



By Age

15-19	37
20-25	67
26-30	21
31-40	17
Over 40	8

Creating a Reproductive Justice Agenda

NRO is collaborating over the next two years with the Pro-choice Public Education Project (see www.protectchoice.org) in their Movement Building Technical Assistance Project (which we affectionately refer to as PEP TAP). This project is designed to build connections between organizations working on reproductive rights and organizations working for social justice, particularly with young women and women of color, in the Northwest. NRO staff, board members and volunteers will be participating in trainings, workshops, conference calls and conferences with other participating organizations throughout the Northwest.

This is an exciting time for the movement to defend and promote the reproductive and sexual rights of women and girls in the United States. The burgeoning reproductive justice movement is the culmination of years of work on the part of grassroots organizations to promote a full range of reproductive rights, including that right to abortion, the right to have children, the right to contraceptives, and the right to accurate and comprehensive information about contraceptives, safer sex practices and healthy relationships.

As the largest abortion fund in Oregon, we already see our work through a social justice lens: lack of access to abortion can be traced directly to the economic and social injustices of poverty and

We know from direct experience that the color of a woman's skin, her level of education, the income she has, all impact on the reproductive options available to her

racism. Participation in this project brings us closer to advancing a reproductive justice agenda by broadening both our base of support and our vision for ensuring reproductive options are available to all women. Because we work directly with so many women through our hotline we are already aware that a woman's reproduction takes place in a social and economic context of tremendous complexity. We know from direct experience that the color of a woman's skin, her level of education, the income she has, all impact on the reproductive options available to her.

All of us at NRO are proud to participate in this process and to be part of the growing movement to acknowledge the experiences of racism, classism and homophobia all have an impact on a woman's reproduction. We are especially excited to be part of the growing national discussion to create a comprehensive strategy for ensuring that all reproductive choices are available to all women.

Hotline Stories: from page 3

hotline face the same challenges: language barriers, having to rely on interpreters and other staff at medical facilities who may or may not give them all the information they need, the risk of not getting the follow-up care they need because not all the providers have enough bilingual staff to respond to calls about complications, and the very real possibility of encountering judgmental, anti-immigrant attitudes. Thankfully, many NRO clients, including low-income women and immigrants, have told us about the fantastic, supportive care they've received at most of the clinics we refer to.

Part of what may make the difference between the kind of care a woman deserves, and the kind she may end up receiving, is the financial support she has when deciding which provider to go to, how long she has to wait to get on the schedule at a clinic, or how far she has to travel to get there. **This is why our donors are so crucial – every dollar donated to the Women In Need Fund makes a difference!**



When we have enough funding available for all the women who call us, including immigrant women, we can ensure that all women are able to get an appointment, and the clinics we refer women to can trust that NRO is advocating for each client and paying attention to how she is treated. As far as we know, NRO is the only abortion fund in Oregon that prioritizes funding immigrant women. Please support the Women In Need Fund, to help us provide all women with the support they need and deserve when facing a difficult decision!

Oregon Legislative Update

Defeating Measure 43 the Parental Notification Act

Great work Oregonians! You have let the world know that it is intolerable to place our teenage daughters, sisters and friends at risk. In the line-up of anti-choice legislative tools, there are few more polarizing than parental notification for teenagers seeking abortions, and in the election this past November, the issue was defeated by a margin of almost 10 percent.

Although the ineffectiveness of legislating good family communication seems like common sense, parental notification laws are prevalent throughout the United States. Family communication needs to start early, long before a young woman is faced with an unintended pregnancy. It is always important to keep in mind that not all families are the same, and some teens can't talk to their parents without the threat of verbal and/or physical violence. Young women need the support of trusted adults with both personal and professional relationships, and consent laws place these relationships at risk. Privacy is paramount when any women is making the intensely personal decision to terminate a pregnancy regardless of her age, and consent laws have been shown to not have any effect on pregnancy and abortion rates among young women and teens.

Even though parental notification was defeated by Oregon voters, there is a new bill proposed in the legislature. Remind your representative that you are paying attention and that restricting access to abortion for the most vulnerable women in our population is not an acceptable solution to supporting young women and their families.

Thank you to the No On 43 Campaign for all the hard work!

Insurance Coverage for Contraceptives and Access to Emergency Contraception for Sexual Assault and Rape Survivors

On May 16, 2007, the Oregon Senate passed HB2700 which was sent to the Governors office and signed into law on May 30, 2007! This legislation prohibits insurance companies who provide a prescription drug benefit from excluding the provision of birth control, and it will require all hospital emergency rooms in Oregon to offer emergency contraception (EC) to survivors of rape or sexual assault.

This is a concept that pro-choice advocates across Oregon have been working on for 14 years, and is a huge victory for the women and their families. Unintended pregnancy is an enormous issue emotionally, physically and economically for women no matter what their relationship status or if they are survivors of assault and rape. We are one step closer in the quest to assisting women to make the most respectful, dignified and healthy choices for themselves. Breaking down the barriers to healthcare access keeps us on the path to reproductive and economic justice.

Reproductive Healthcare Related Legislation in Oregon - 2007

Every year both pro-choice and anti-choice bills are presented to the legislature. The Oregon legislature's regular session runs from January 8, 2007 to August 20, 2007. Bills that have not been enacted by the end of this session will not be carried over to next year.

Anti-Choice Legislation

BIASED COUNSELING AND MANDATORY DELAY

Bill number: OR H3415

Summary: Requires women receive state-mandated lecture prior to obtaining abortion services and prohibits abortion unless women wait an additional 24 hours after receiving lecture.

Sponsor: Thatcher (R)

Introduced: 3/12/07

Last Action: Introduced

RESTRICTIONS ON YOUNG WOMEN'S ACCESS TO ABORTION – PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Bill Number: OR H 3234

Summary: Mandates parental notice prior to a young woman obtaining an abortion.

Sponsor: Nelson (R)

Introduced: 3/8/07

Last Action: Introduced

SEPARATE LEGAL STATUS FOR EMBRYOS AND FETUSES

Bill Number: OR H3272, OR H2802, OR H3240

Summary: Amends definition of human being in sections of criminal code to include "unborn child."

Sponsor: Minnis (R), Nelson (R), Nelson (R)

Introduced: 3/12/07, 2/26/07, 3/12/07

Last Action: Introduced

TARGETED REGULATION OF ABORTION PROVIDERS (TRAP)

Bill Number: OR H3281

Summary: Requires abortion providers comply with extensive, costly, medically unnecessary physical plant and administrative requirements.

Sponsor: Maurer (R)

Introduced: 3/12/07

Last Action: Introduced

Pro-Choice Legislation

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION AND INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CONTRACEPTION

Bill Number: OR H2807

Summary: Not relevant as introduced. Amended in March 2007 to require the Department of Justice to pay for medical assessments for sexual assault victims where the assessment shall include the provision of emergency contraception, and if the victim is under 18, a prescription for emergency contraception.

Introduced: 1/8/07

Sponsor: Minnis (R)

Last Action: Passed Senate, signed by Governor

FERTILITY SERVICES

Bill Number: OR S486

Summary: Improves health insurance coverage for infertility treatment

Introduced 2/5/07

Sponsor: Business, Transportation and Workforce Cmt.

Last Action: Introduced

REGULATING ANTI-CHOICE CLINICS

Bill Number: OR S776

Summary: Requires data to be collected of policies and procedures of Crisis Pregnancy centers

Introduced: 2/28/07

Sponsor: Devlin (D)

Last Action: Introduced

All information about Oregon legislation is from NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon www.prochoiceoregon.org and NARAL Pro-Choice America www.prochoiceamerica.org. You too can use these great resources to stay current on the reproductive issues that are so important to us all.

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS!

Over the last few years NRO's Community Resource Library has steadily grown, primarily due to generous donations from the Oregon Country Fair Board of Directors and the Evergreen Hill Education Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation. In order to build a truly comprehensive reference library, we still need books and videos related to a wide variety of subjects related to women's health and reproductive justice.

We would welcome donations of (current or classically important) films and books in good condition on any of the following subjects:

- Reproductive Justice and freedom, including History of Reproductive Rights
- Women's Health (What the heck? It is a community library, so Men's Health, too, especially related to sexuality, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, etc)
- Midwifery and Prenatal Care
- Herbal, Chinese, and other Alternative Medicine
- Contraception and Abortion Literature
- Healthy Sexuality
- Lesbian, Gay, Transgender Health Issues
- Feminist Fiction
- Books in Spanish on any of the above topics

Book Review: Harmful to Minors by Judith Levine

And Judith Levine really does mean the perils of protecting children from sex, not just from sex education. The premise of the book is that "sexual expression is a healthy and happy part of growing up." Levine feels that this basic biological fact ought to be the starting point for how adults approach sexual issues with children, as we prepare them to take their place in society.

She divides her discussion in a number of ways, partly by distinguishing between childhood and adolescence, and with chapters on public issues such as censorship, abstinence education, child sexual molesters (I was especially shocked to learn that children can be locked up for "sex crimes."), abortion, touching, and sexual pleasure. Any discussion of childhood sexuality must deal with the question of what is 'childhood'? "Though we locate them in a separate political category, a medical and psychological specialty, a social subculture, and a market niche, children in the twenty-first century may be more like adults than they have been since the seventeenth century," she says. This is a perennial issue that early societies dealt with by the practice of carefully-guided initiation procedures, some of which took as much as a year or more to complete. We have no such rites of passage in place any more, so our sex education practices are basically chaotic, and controlled by a variety of conflicting sources.

What is refreshing about this book is its devotion to honestly trying to figure out what is the best way to teach our children about sex. Levine has interviewed psychologists, sex education specialists, social workers to seek their experiences and opinions about the sexuality of adolescents and children. There is little information about these matters because the present conservative social climate totally forbids seeking it directly from the young people themselves, and because in the U.S. "A link between sex and babies, uninterrupted by contraception and abortion, is now assumed by policymakers

at every level." The fact that "sex" is a much larger complex of activities, involving more than mere intercourse (she has a section on "outercourse") and that it also happens to give pleasure is regarded as "an inconvenient truth." We deal with this larger truth by suppressing and distorting information rather than by providing healthy channels by which children and parents can learn basic facts about their bodies.

Levine is especially concerned that in recent times, in the U.S., "a strategy of censorship has arrived disguised as counsel to parents to speak more, to embrace their role as children's primary sexual teachers." This might seem quite reasonable in a village with a strong sense of common values, but in modern mass culture, information and values about sex and reproduction privately held by individual parents varies all over the map, and is thus not reliable or even useful to prepare kids to negotiate all the aspects of this important issue. "We are a culture that demands but does not teach sexual virtuosity," she comments wryly. On the one hand, Dr. Jocelyn Elders is fired as Surgeon General because she mentioned that children ought to be taught how to masturbate as a healthy part of learning about their sexuality. On the other hand we have beauty contests for young girls, and "fourteen thousand sexual references and innuendos on television annually. . . not to mention in advertising, in films, and on the internet, in ways that are not considered "pornographic" by the general public. We have a double standard and yet we do not adequately prepare our kids to deal with it.

Levine had difficulty finding a publisher for this brave, sensible and sensitive book. After publication, predictably, she has taken a lot of heat for her attempt to deal straightforwardly with one of our society's "flash-point" issues. This book is not just a liberal rant, it is a fine piece of journalism (her documentation occupies 48 pages).

Book Review: Peace After Abortion by Ava Torre-Bueno, MSW



Ava Torre-Bueno, psychotherapist in San Diego, has written a superb book for anyone dealing with their own or a loved one's difficult issues following abortion. Titled *Peace After Abortion*, the book carefully lays out the terrain that anyone with guilt, grief, shame, depression, or anger needs to traverse in order to find the peace they seek. While only a small percentage of women (the author suggests between 1%-17%, depending on the type of difficulty) experience physical, mental, or spiritual problems as a result of abortion, for those afflicted the results can be debilitating. The book is written in easily readable terms, devoid of technical jargon, and with each condition clearly defined as to what it is and isn't, and describes how to recognize the symptoms.

As a counselor, the author frequently finds that emotional difficulties after abortion are intimately connected with unresolved events earlier in one's life. Consequently the mental exercises she prescribes often ask the reader to go back in time and work through these earlier issues as well.

Since the media rarely covers how women feel after an abortion, and since research on this usually doesn't reach most people, women, and even their male partners, may not expect to feel anything but relief around abortion. Yet, we know that not everyone experiences smooth sailing, and the author offers large doses of reassurance to anyone in distress.

Peace After Abortion is not just a book to be read. It is also a book to experience, in that the author details eight guided imagery exercises, each addressing certain negative states of mind.

If any one theme emerges above others in this book, it is that by learning the practice of forgiveness towards self and others, the road to healing and mental health is possible even for those most in distress.

Supreme Court, from page 1

gret". Whether legal restrictions placed on woman's right to choose abortion will permanently stand depends to some extent upon our ability to harness our outrage against the politicians and the judiciary who dare to continue interfering with what should be our personal reproductive health decisions. We can reverse defeat if we work together to resist the anti choice opposition.

Success in restoring reproductive freedom demands that we get actively involved to insure the election of progressive legislators on the state and national level who will vigorously promote reproductive justice. Everyone can contribute something: Volunteer to help a pro-choice candidate get into office; Contribute to organizations that work to keep abortion safe and legal or to groups like NRO that provide financial assistance for

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abortions to women who could not otherwise afford to obtain services. Join our Board of Coordinators or promote reproductive justice by volunteering to help with our Feminist Grassroots Health Education Programs. For more information and ideas about how you can work for reproductive justice refer to www.saveroe.com.

The Terminal Machine

Back in 2003 NRO's copy machine was already a good old girl when donated by one of our co-founders. For a time she plugged along fairly reliably, but last year she began exhibiting multiple symptoms indicating serious pathology. Her ancient creaky joints moaned, groaned, and sometimes shrieked in protest if called upon to duplicate more than a few sheets of paper. Some days she simply refused to perform. Now, sadly, we have received the ominous diagnosis: Recurrent Drumroller Syndrome. The prognosis is grim, already necessitating major internal surgery on more than one occasion. In all likelihood, she will succumb to this fatal malady within the next year. She deserves to retire with dignity to the copy machine recycling graveyard. If you can help by making a contribution designated for the purchase of a new machine, please contact the NRO office or call Marti Black at 541-485-4621.



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*Empowering communities with
abortion access, grassroots health
education and reproductive options.*

Thank you for supporting reproductive justice!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

As Network For Reproductive Options completes its fifth year of operations, we gratefully acknowledge that our work providing abortion access to women in Oregon would not be possible without all of you who generously support our programs!

NRO also extends appreciation to the following foundations for grants awarded in 2006- 2007:

The Jarvey-McCord Foundation
The Brenner Foundation
Hundreth Monkey
Rockwood Trust
McKenzie River Gathering Foundation
The Oregon Country Fair Board of Directors
The Anna Lalor Burdick Program of the Lalor Foundation
The Holzman Foundation
The North Star Foundation
The PGE Foundation
The McGeady Family Foundation
The Isis Foundation

We were sad to learn that Margaret Lumpkin, a great supporter of reproductive justice in Oregon, died last year. We discovered her death in the most bittersweet way: Margaret blessed our work by leaving a bequest to NRO. While we will miss our wonderful friend, her gift illustrates that careful estate planning can ensure that women continue to have access to abortion services for the future.