



the dignity report

a publication of the Death with Dignity National Center • Fall 2008

Oregon Death with Dignity Political Action Fund leads efforts to raise \$1M to ensure passage of Washington Death with Dignity initiative in November

We are entering the most critical time for the Washington campaign and are working on the final push to raise enough money to purchase television commercials to counter our opponents' lies in the media. In every past Death with Dignity campaign, our opponents, including the Catholic Church, have funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars in last-minute donations into efforts to defeat us on Election Day. They have used this money to spread scare tactics and lies. In order to win, we have to successfully counter these ads with the truth about I-1000 and our experience with Oregon's Death with Dignity law.

So far, the campaign has experienced phenomenal success. Every piece of the campaign has fallen into place, and we are on the brink of victory on November 4. The number of signatures gathered exceeded the amount required to be included on the ballot by 100,000. Three former Washington governors are endorsing the Death with Dignity initiative. We have endorsements from ten different editorial boards, including the biggest newspaper in the state. **We can see a win!** *(Story continued on page 3.)*



We are excited to unveil our new and improved website!

As part of our commitment to offering the most up-to-date information about end-of-life options and the Oregon Death with Dignity Act, we have recently revamped our website. The site features easier navigation to information for health care providers, patients and families, students, and others interested in this important issue. At our website, you will find statistical reports regarding past use of the Death with Dignity Act, advance directive forms, news articles, and a host of other resources.

Our new website is also an exciting tool that will help us stay in better touch with our supporters. Visitors to our website are encouraged to share their own stories with us and to sign up for our e-mail newsletter. You can also make safe and secure on-line donations that will allow us to continue working for dignity and personal choice.

We invite you to visit our new and improved website at www.deathwithdignity.org and see for yourself. ■

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Death with Dignity National Center

Respect the will of the people.

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Washington Initiative Receives Unprecedented Number of Newspaper Endorsements

The Washington Death with Dignity initiative (Yes on I-1000) has been endorsed by eleven different editorial boards. This is in stark contrast to repeated negative editorial opinions from the 1994 and 1997 campaigns in Oregon. Starting in January, 2008, these local boards reviewed the 10 years of actual experience in Oregon. The *Oregonian* captures the core spirit of these sentiments, stating "Opponents, including us, warned that the law could steamroller vulnerable patients into suicide, target the disabled and become a destination for terminally ill people seeking to die with doctor-prescribed drugs. In a decade of experience with the law, though, no such abuses have shown up."

Yes on I-1000 has been endorsed by *The Seattle Times*, *The Everett Herald*, *The Olympian*, *The Vancouver Columbian*, *The Issaquah Press*, *The Lewiston Tribune*, *The Sammamish Review*, *SnoValley Star*, *The Tri-City Herald*, *The Wenatchee World*, and *Newcastle News*. You can find links to these endorsements at our website, www.deathwithdignity.org. ■



My mother, Florence, died a painful and devastating death on November 6, 2007. She was a firm supporter of Death with Dignity and would have perfectly fit the guidelines. My promise to her was that I would work to get a law similar to Oregon's passed in Washington state.

Thank you for existing.

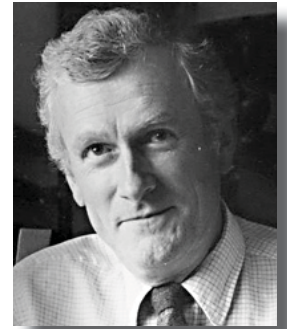
~ Gail, Bjorn, & Kristina
of Issaquah, WA



News from our Action Fund

Sidney Wanzer Elected to ODWDPAF Board

The Oregon Death with Dignity Political Action Fund (ODWDPAF), the sister organization to the National Center, recently elected Sidney Wanzer, MD, to its board of directors for a three year term. Dr. Wanzer is a recognized leader in the death with dignity movement.



Dr. Sidney H. Wanzer

He was the lead author of the seminal medical journal articles that advocated for improvements in palliative care and challenged physicians to consider that it could be ethical under certain circumstances to assist an intolerably suffering patient in ending his or her life (*New England Journal of Medicine*, 1984 and 1989).

Wanzer's expertise in death and dying was developed over 40 years of practice in family medicine.

Dr. Wanzer co-authored the book [To Die Well: Your Right to Comfort, Calm, and Choice in the Last Days of Life](#). The book explores practical ways to achieve a peaceful dying process in the context of today's treatment-intensive medical environment. The book is important for terminally ill patients and their family members, providing a clear explanation of all legal options available to a person facing death.

The Oregon Death with Dignity Political Action Fund sends out a warm welcome to Dr. Wanzer. We are honored to have his leadership and guidance at this important time in the Death with Dignity movement. ■



Washington Campaign

(Continued from cover story.)

The Oregon Death with Dignity Political Action Fund has agreed to empty our coffers and incur a substantial financial loss in order to assure the success of this campaign. This campaign is so important to our organization that we are willing to go broke trying to win it!

We originally donated \$315,000 in seed money to the campaign. And we are now prepared to contribute an additional \$500,000 in matching funds for every donation received by the campaign to reach the \$1M goal. Your gift will have double the impact!

The election is less than 4 weeks away. **We have very little time.** Please show your support today by making a secure, on-line donation directly to the Yes on I-1000 campaign at www.yeson1000.org. **The time is now to catapult the Death with Dignity movement forward. The power is yours to make this happen.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

All of us at the Oregon Death with Dignity Political Action Fund



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Share Your Story

We would love to hear from you. We know that many of you have been impacted in very personal and meaningful ways by this issue. We are inviting you to share your story with us. We will post a selection of them on our new website. You can send your story and photos by one of several ways. You can mail them, email them to us at info@deathwithdignity.org, or visit our website at www.deathwithdignity.org and click on "Share Your Story." Thank you. We look forward to hearing about why this issue is important to you. ■



If you are a Washington state resident, we urge you to register to vote, encourage friends and family to register, and go out on November 4 and vote Yes on I-1000!