

OCA IOU

Lon and Bonnie Mabon await judge's final ruling by Jonathan Kipp

The duo at the center of the Oregon Citizens Alliance, Lon and Bonnie Mabon, both were called to a Multnomah County Court to answer allegations of wrongdoing Oct. 16. The couple gave sworn testimony in front of Judge Marshall Amiton.

At issue is a restraining order placed on the OCA Educational Foundation bank account. Catherine Stauffer, who has an 8-year-old judgment against the foundation, asked her attorneys for the order, which essentially froze the account Sept. 13.

Bonnie Mabon wrote a check to her company, BMJ Technical Support, for \$200 from the account that same afternoon. She also has returned about \$840 in checks donated to the educational foundation since the order was delivered.

Stauffer's attorneys claim that those actions are in violation of the restraining order and that the Mabons should be held in contempt of court. The attorneys asked Amiton to hold the couple in contempt and to instruct them to pay the money owed, penalties and appropriate legal fees.

Bonnie Mabon testified that she wasn't aware of the restraining order Sept. 13 because she didn't read it when it was delivered. She also said she didn't think it was right that donors' gifts be used to satisfy Stauffer's judgment without their knowledge.

Bonnie Mabon said she didn't think that returning the checks was in violation of the

order. She said she thought it was her "fiduciary duty" to donors to do so.

Stauffer's lawyers think Bonnie Mabon returned the checks with intent for the donors to rewrite the checks to the Yes on 9 committee—leaving the funds out of Stauffer's reach. The checks were returned to donors in Yes on 9 envelopes and with a note written on Yes on 9 letterhead.

Bonnie Mabon denies the allegation. Although Amiton dismissed two of Stauffer's contempt-of-court claims against the couple, he will not give a final ruling for several days.

The judgment was awarded to Stauffer after she accused Scott Lively, then the OCA's communications director, of assaulting her in 1991. The educational foundation also was found to be liable for the assault. Stauffer is a photographer and periodic contributor to *Just Out*.

Lively paid Stauffer \$10,000 of the outstanding balance last December. Bonnie Mabon testified that she thought he personally was handling the remainder of the outstanding debt. More than \$36,000 now is owed to Stauffer because of mounting interest.

Regardless of the judge's pending ruling, the Mabons' legal difficulties might just be starting. Stauffer's attorneys filed a 30-page lawsuit Oct. 16 against the couple and several of the entities they control, including their personal business, accusing them of fraud.

The lawsuit claims the Mabons illegally transferred money between accounts to avoid paying

her outstanding judgment. It seeks \$36,000 as well as punitive damages.

But Stauffer is running short of money. Just the general expenses of the lawsuit, including the taking of depositions and filing fees, are adding up.

Stauffer hopes people in the community will donate money to the cause. She has said that she isn't interested in keeping the OCA's money but that she looks forward to giving most of it to the opposition.

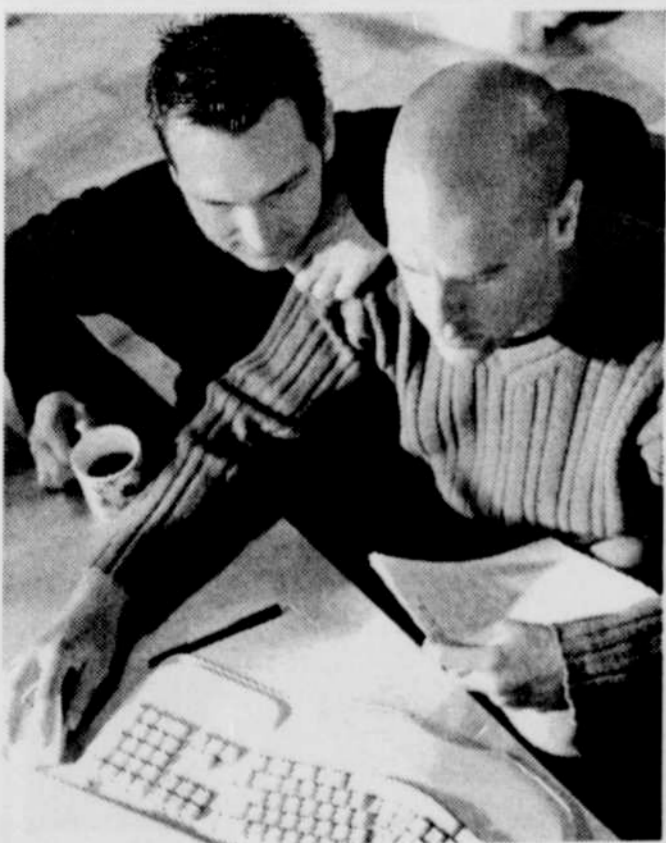
Stauffer's attorneys claim more than \$1 million has been funneled through the OCA's organizations—most run by the Mabons—since a jury handed down the original \$32,000 judgment against Lively and the educational foundation in 1992. The couple say the organization has been broke and remains unable to pay the debt. The Yes on 9 organization, they maintain, is a separate entity not connected to the foundation and thus is not liable for the judgment. **JN**

To donate money for Stauffer's legal fund, send checks made out to "Tienson in trust for Catherine Stauffer" to Thane Tienson, Wells Fargo Tower, Suite 3500, 1300 S.W. Fifth Ave., Portland, OR 97201.



Catherine Stauffer

PHOTO BY ANN CHEN



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