

RACHEL'S FRIENDS

BREAST CANCER COALITION

Rachel's Friends goes to Salem . . .

Rachel's Friends and our coalition successfully advocated for Oregon legislation that will lead the way to safer cosmetics, personal care products, and baby toys.

Senate Joint Memorial 8 (SJM 8) passed unanimously in the Oregon House and Senate, thanks to support from Senator Margaret Carter, Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Representative Ron Maurer, and Representative Carolyn Tomei.

SJM 8 asks Congress to require manufacturers of cosmetics and personal care

products to label all ingredients. It urges Congress to require the FDA to test, review, and approve ingredients used in cosmetics, personal care products, and children's toys before they are sold.

www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sjm1.dir/sjm0008.en.pdf

Most manufacturers add chemicals called phthalates to make plastics flexible and bind fragrances to cosmetics. Research shows links between phthalates and birth defects, infertility, and cancer.

Thanks to everyone who asked their state legislators to support SJM 8. Oregon and California are the only states to pass legislation that demands action on toxic ingredients in common consumer products.

Next, our coalition will meet with Oregon's Congressional delegation about taking action on SJM 8. Coalition members include OR Environmental Council; OR Center for Environmental Health; OR Medical Association; OR Nurses Association; Oregon Toxics Alliance; and Physicians for Social Responsibility in Oregon.

. . . and to Washington, DC

Two Rachel's Friends' board members, Karen Gritzka and Joanne Skirving, joined 19 other Oregonians at the [National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund's annual advocacy training conference](#) April 28 – May 1 in Washington, DC.

The Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act (BCERA) was a top lobbying priority.

The Oregonians met with Oregon's senators and representatives and/or their healthcare aides. We either thanked them for cosponsoring BCERA or explained why they should sign on as a co-sponsor.

This important bill would fund a national network of research centers that would collaborate to study environmental factors suspected of causing

breast cancer. People with breast cancer would participate in the review process.

Among Oregon's two senators and five representatives, only Sen. Ron Wyden (D) and Rep. Greg Walden (R) refuse to co-sponsor this long overdue research that could bring us closer to preventing breast cancer and ending the epidemic.

Expanded Skin Deep Database Reveals Toxic Ingredients and Safety Ratings for 25,000 Personal Care Products

Most people think that the ingredients in personal care and cosmetic products are safety tested before they are sold. But federal law does not require testing.

To help consumers make informed decisions, Environmental Working Group (EWG) expanded their [Skin Deep web site](http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com), the only online source for assessing and comparing safety ratings of personal care products. Launched three years ago, Skin Deep, upgraded the database in number of products assessed and information in the safety reviews. Skin Deep 3.0 evaluates the safety of nearly one-fourth of all personal care products on the market. It is the largest public product-safety database in existence. www.cosmeticsdatabase.com

Skin Deep fills information gaps left by an industry that markets thousands of products with ingredients that have not been tested for safety by industry or government health experts. By law, the government cannot mandate safety studies of cosmet-

ics products or their ingredients. **Only 13% of the 10,500 ingredients in personal care products have been re-viewed for safety** by the cosmetic industry's own review panel. Safety decisions are guided by an industry-funded panel, without peer-review or independent pre-market safety testing.

"Under federal law, companies can put virtually anything they wish into personal care products, and many of them do. Mercury, lead, and placenta extract — all of these and many other hazardous materials are in products that millions of Americans, including children, use every day," said Jane Houlihan, Vice President of Research at EWG.

"Mothers shouldn't have to worry about what is in the baby lotion they use, and now they don't have to. The Skin Deep database provides information on nearly 25,000 personal care products so people can find out for themselves which products are the best choices."

Rachel's Friends Breast Cancer Coalition is a non-profit Oregon advocacy organization dedicated to lowering the incidence of breast and other cancers by reducing our exposure to environmental carcinogens. We do this through education, legislative action, and organizing for change on behalf of Oregonians.

We honor Rachel Carson, a biologist and writer who died of breast cancer. Her 1962 book *Silent Spring* exposed the dangers of pesticides.

We support the **Precautionary Principle (better safe than sorry)**. We should act **now** to reduce our exposure to known and suspected carcinogens even if cause and effect relationships are not firmly established.

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Study links common chemicals to breast cancer

Free Searchable Mammary Carcinogens Review Database

The Silent Spring Institute and Susan G. Komen for the Cure jointly published *Environmental Factors in Breast Cancer*, the most comprehensive review to date of scientific research on environmental factors that may increase breast cancer risk. The study appeared in the May 14, 2007, issue of the journal *Cancer*.

The review conducted by the Silent Spring Institute, with researchers from Harvard University, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and the University of Southern California, evaluated published scientific reports on potential links between specific environmental factors and breast cancer.

The researchers identified 216 chemicals that cause breast tumors in animals and created a free searchable database. Visit the database at http://sciencereview.silentspring.org/mamm_about.cfm.

This information can help public policy and funding organizations decide where to most effectively target research grant monies.

The database includes 900 studies; 460 of them are human breast cancer studies. The studies measure breast cancer risk related to body size,

Researchers identified 216 chemicals that cause breast tumors in animals.

physical activity, environmental pollutants, and studies of diet. Each study includes a critical assessment of the strength of the evidence.

The database reveals that among the 216 compounds that cause breast tumors in animals:

- 73 are in consumer products or are contaminants in food.
- 35 are air pollutants.
- 25 are linked to occupational exposures affecting more than 5,000 women a year.
- 29 are produced in the United States in large amounts, often exceeding 1 million pounds per year.

“While it is disturbing to learn that there are so many chemicals that may be linked to breast cancer, there is also a great opportunity to save thousands of lives by identifying those links, limiting exposure, and finding safer alternatives. It is critical that we integrate this information into policies that govern chemical exposures,” said Julia G. Brody, PhD, executive director of the Silent Spring Institute.

The study examined lifestyle influences on breast cancer. **Study results emphasize the importance of regular, life-long physical activity to lower a woman’s risk of developing breast cancer.**

The study concluded that more research is needed to determine relationships between diet and breast cancer risk.

Save the date: Saturday, October 13

This event will focus on safe cosmetics, personal care products, and baby toys. Makers of non-toxic personal products and toys will answer questions and demonstrate products.

Stacy Malkan, a founding member of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, will speak. Malkan’s book, *Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry*, will be published October 11. We seek volunteers for a one-time planning committee. Please contact Diane Lund-Muzikant at 503-869-7225 or muzikant@aol.com about volunteer opportunities.

**Rachel's Friends
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Meet Joan Little

Rachel's Friends welcomes Joan Little as our part-time administrative assistant. Joan's experience includes administrative work such as legislative assistant and legal secretary.

She managed Shirley Gold's campaign for the

Oregon Senate and Kate Brown's first campaign for the Oregon House of Representatives.

Joan has an organizing business called "Women Who Get Things Done." We're happy to have her on board.

Prevention is the cure!

Rachel's Friends receives grant

We appreciate Meyer Memorial Trust's generosity in awarding us a grant of \$4800 for capacity building.

Did you know?

The European Union has banned more than 1,100 chemicals from cosmetics.

The United States has banned just nine.