



National Youth Rights Association

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2006-2007 Annual Report

Submitted by Alex Koroknay-Palicz

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For too long NYRA has been like a tiny, toy boat in a mighty river - buffeted around by forces beyond our control. Having little plan or direction of our own. Sometimes we'd move forward, sometimes we'd move backward, but we lacked the resources and organization to push ahead on our own. In 2006-2007 NYRA took its first big stride into the wider world of professional non-profits by attempting to fix this problem.

This year we received our first major grant. We moved into the first office that is truly ours. We began hiring interns. We employed a full time staff member (who actually worked full time). These are huge developments for the health and long term stability of this organization.

We have a clear vision not just of the world we want to one day see, but a clear vision of the role NYRA will play in getting us there. NYRA's long-term success depends on the success of local chapters, local members, and the power of grassroots organizing. It is the strategy best suited for our issue and our organization. A strong base of chapters will bring us money, publicity, members, and actual legislative change.

It may seem frustrating to many to hear that chapters are our strategy when the last two years have been so difficult for the organization in the area of chapter formation, growth, and action. By any metric, our grassroots base is less developed than 2005 and all the outward signs of success that go along with that seem to have declined since 2005 as well. That doesn't tell the whole story however.

With one staff member the demands of running all aspects of an organization are simply too much to bear. A full time effort could be invested into the critical area of chapter development, but that would be trading away our future for some short term success. NYRA needs additional staff to manage chapters and their campaigns and needs the resources to support that. So the choice this year has been to focus on establishing long term health, professionalism, and vision that will sustain this organization for years to come.

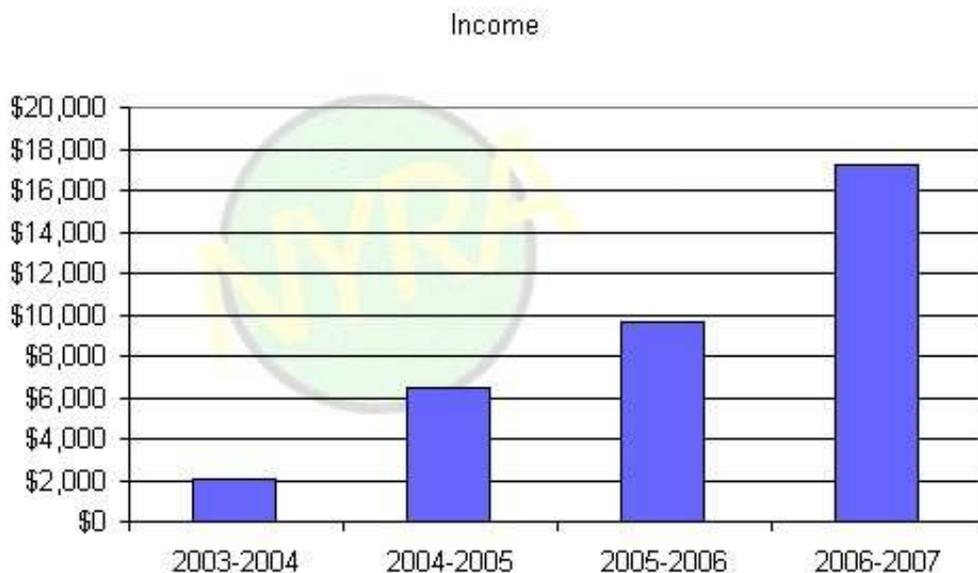
NYRA is and will forever be a grassroots organization, but hoping for the grassroots to organize itself is like hoping the various, random currents in a river will guide our toy boat to our destination safely. Recent history has proven this to be folly. For as long as we have relied on volunteers to be in charge of our chapter formation work we have met with setbacks and failure. This year we

One change that helped spur this growth was the introduction of life membership and multi-year membership. In the past, no matter how much a person donated their membership dues were only paid for one year. Early this year we introduced life membership for \$150 and allowed individuals to pay for up to 5 years of membership in advance. In total 11 NYRA members stepped up to become Life Members. These 11 individuals not only supported the cause greatly with their \$150 life membership dues, but contributed well in excess of that mark this year. In total, the donations made by our 11 Life Members equaled \$3,159 and were a large part of our fundraising success this year.

While it is too early for the multi-year membership to have an affect on our membership numbers it is expected this change will go a long way toward keeping our numbers high and growing. This is a common sense change that NYRA should have adopted long ago. As of now, NYRA membership totals 108 this is a 22% increase over last year.

After nine years of existence, NYRA is reaching an important point of maturation as an organization that will have a positive effect on our fundraising for years to come. Members who first joined the organization in high school are now out of college and starting their careers. This pool of members has far more money available to invest in the organization than most of our membership base who do not work fulltime (or at all). Of our 11 life members, all but two are in their mid-twenties or older. As more of our long term, loyal members age and their incomes increase, donations are expected to increase as well.

Altogether, NYRA raised \$17,207 this year. This represents the third straight year of steady growth for the organization since we first started soliciting regular donations and keeping detailed records in 2003. This progress is slow but encouraging. NYRA is most definitely on the right track.



In addition to money raised from the Babson Grant and donations, NYRA received \$2,000 from online advertising, merchandise sales, selling publishing rights, and chapter fundraisers. Advertising, merchandise sales and chapter fundraisers all experienced significant declines this year. Ad and merch revenue were cut in half and chapter fundraisers were reduced to a third of last year's total. Lack of chapter activity contributed to the decline in merchandise sales and chapter fundraisers. The drop in advertising revenue is not unexpected as we were unnaturally fortunate last year in attracting a large and generous advertiser for a period of several months. So we didn't step backwards this year, we just returned to a more standard expectation of ad revenue.

Grants

The grant from the Susan A. & Donald P. Babson Foundation was the first ray of sunshine in a long and often frustrating grant writing process. Allies of ours with more experience seeking grants have said that the first grant is always the hardest, and being awarded this grant will help us attract more funding in the future. In addition to attracting new sources of grants, there is a good chance of establishing an ongoing relationship with the Babson Foundation that would result in additional grants every year.

While only a short two months after receiving the first grant, we started the process for applying for a second grant from Babson in February. Instead of writing a full application like last year, they required an update of our progress this year. So they could see that we used their money effectively and how we said we would. This grant came to us as part of our Grassroots Campaign to Lower the Voting Age. Our goal was to establish new local chapters to work on lowering the voting age in state and local elections.

As this was the only grant we received we lacked sufficient funds to hire a full time outreach director to lead our chapter formation efforts. The backup plan was to fund the office and hire interns to focus on the project. Unfortunately that plan fell through (see chapter section) and interns were hard to come by. We did our best however and after some great efforts made by staff and volunteers in June we are on track to meet the chapter formation goals we set for ourselves this year. Hopefully Babson will appreciate our scrappy ability to stretch a dollar and award us a grant for the following year. We will find out in November.

Also as part of our voting age campaign we applied to the Surdna Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation. Surdna turned us down and we are waiting to hear back from Carnegie. General operating funds we applied for from the Resist Foundation were rejected because, in their opinion, we are not diverse enough or have enough of a leftist agenda. This is our second attempt applying to Resist and it looks like it will be our last. An inquiry for a new project was sent to the Knight Foundation but we were told it was unlikely they would fund us.

Finally, we applied for funds from the Drug Policy Alliance (DPA). DPA is an organization with which NYRA has extensive ties. Our close ally, Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) is closely aligned with DPA and receives substantial funding from them. DPA's executive director, Ethan Nadelmann, has long expressed a personal interest in the idea of lowering the drinking age. He sees many connections between that issue and the broader drug policy reform movement. Last year he invited NYRA's executive director, Alex Koroknay-Palicz, out to Long Beach, California to speak about lowering the drinking age. He is also aware of the drinking age campaign NYRA began in Vermont in 2005. Together with the emergence of the new organization, Choose Responsibility, the timing couldn't be better to begin a focused campaign to lower the drinking age and get the Drug Policy Alliance's support to do so.

With the help of former and current SSDP staff members, NYRA applied to DPA for funding for a grassroots campaign to lower the drinking age. Like our voting age campaign, this will involve the creation of new local chapters who will work on the issue in their state. We hope to target this campaign to three states: Vermont, Louisiana, and New York. We will find out about the grant in September, but there is considerable reason for optimism. Often the key to getting grants – like anything else in life – is developing personal relationships. For all the foundations we have applied to we have lacked any connection whatsoever with them. DPA is different and getting this grant would be the start of an important new phase for our organization. Through DPA, SSDP and other allies in the drug policy reform movement we could finally develop connections with other funders and have a more secure base of funding for the future.

Applied to foundations:

Resist
Susan A. & Donald P. Babson Foundation
Drug Policy Alliance
Surdna Foundation
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Carnegie Foundation

Promotion - - - - - .

As with last year, media coverage was hurt due to a decrease in campaigns this year. Without campaigns, and without the chapters to carry out those campaigns, media coverage will never reach our 2005 level. That said, even an off year is not without its share of NYRA publicity and promotion. We had a few important media successes this year and had a few key speaking appearances as well.

Media

As usual, attempts to attract media coverage proactively came up short this year. Our first test came with Jesse Hunter's act of civil disobedience this fall when he registered and voted in the primary while only being 17. The press ignored our release and the only coverage we received was a nice audio interview posted on Indymedia.

Later that fall we got one of our biggest media hits this year when BBC radio contacted us about a five-part series called Generation Next about the life of teens around the world. They were interviewing teens in Britain, America, Africa, India and elsewhere and comparing the different rights, expectations and customs associated with each. NYRA was contacted both to give some expert commentary about teens but also to find some young people to speak with about their lives. In October the BBC reporter came to DC and interviewed the teens and NYRA's President, Scott Davidson, and Executive Director, Alex Koroknay-Palicz. All interviews went extremely well. The two hour interview with Koroknay-Palicz was very eye-opening for the reporter and he was extremely impressed with our perspective on the issue. Despite the positive feedback, NYRA's presence in the final product was only one short quote. The BBC story still skewed against youth. This was a disappointment, but the program was still a large media hit for us.

It has been an increasingly common trend for reporters to contact NYRA when looking for teens to interview about a story. We are happy to help and our members have gotten many great quotes in papers. The downside is that the papers have not done a good job of identifying the teens as NYRA members or giving us any recognition in the stories. More effort needs to be made in the future to ensure NYRA members are identified as NYRA members.

A small, but noteworthy media hit came out on Election Day. The Lawrence Journal World & News in Kansas featured a political poll directed to young people unable to vote, just as a general test of their political knowledge. Question 12 was: "What does the National Youth Rights Assn. hope to do?". The correct answer was D. "Lower the voting age".

The spring featured the biggest media blitz of the year around the "Bong Hits 4 Jesus" case that made its way to the Supreme Court on March 19. NYRA participated in an SSDP-led rally in front of the Supreme Court calling attention to the need for "Free Speech 4 Students". We held a banner with that slogan that mimicked the original banner at issue in this case. It was a



Internet

NYRA continued to promote the cause using social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook this year. Our presence on both sites has increased greatly over the last year.

Last year NYRA's MySpace profile had 381 friends, and currently stands at 1,621. In December special graphics were designed to be left as comments for new friends and to wish friends a happy birthday that would serve as advertisements for NYRA. They were eye-catching and featured links to join, donate, and add NYRA as a friend for visitors to the page. This was employed to good effect for a number of months until MySpace began restricting HTML code in comments. A small attempt was made at using third-party programs like BadderAdder to promote the MySpace profile more aggressively. This proved to be a successful strategy, but with limited staff and intern hours it just wasn't a high enough priority. This is still a viable strategy for the future if more volunteers and/or interns can be found to work on it.

In May, Facebook introduced a new application called Causes. NYRA was first introduced to it while it was still in production at a training event earlier this spring, and were one of the first adopters when it went public. The Causes application allows us to recruit people to the cause and provides tracking information to encourage others to recruit as well. Plus it provides a direct mechanism for individuals to donate money to the organization through Facebook. Since it went live NYRA has raised \$120 on Facebook. Our drinking age cause, with 2,489 members, is also one of the most popular causes on Facebook.

Lower the Drinking Age!
2,489 members - \$40 donated

- You have recruited **27 people**
- You have donated **\$10**
- You have raised **\$10**

Lower the Voting Age!
105 members - \$0 donated

- You have recruited **25 people**
- You have donated **\$0**
- You have raised **\$0**

National Youth Rights Association
138 members - \$50 donated

- You have recruited **31 people**
- You have donated **\$0**
- You have raised **\$0**

Anti-Curfew Laws
271 members - \$0 donated

- You have recruited **13 people**
- You have donated **\$0**
- You have raised **\$0**

Student Rights
953 members - \$20 donated

- You have recruited **15 people**
- You have donated **\$20**
- You have raised **\$20**

Speaking Appearances & Recruiting Events

In October, NYRA's Executive Director attended the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators in New Orleans. Adam Chafetz, the President of TIPS (an organization that trains alcohol servers on how to reduce the harm of alcohol), and a NYRA member recommended that NYRA be invited to the

To demonstrate the effect this new script has had on NYRA's news aggregation service, in 2005-2006 YouthRights.org featured links to 51 youth rights news articles, this year by comparison we had 511 news stories on the site. Not only has the site seen more news articles posted, there is a place to comment (via the forum), and the article text is saved and categorized on the site making it easy to view all voting age articles or student rights articles. Saving the articles on our website prevents the articles from being lost when an online newspaper changes the location of an article.

The news script is a dramatic success story this year and an example of the power of Web 2.0, grassroots driven technology. Currently two sites syndicate our news feed, but we intend to promote it more heavily in the next year.

Two new projects began this year are nearing completion. The first, a need this organization has had for several years, is a script that sends automatic renewal notices to members whose dues are expiring. Thanks to the work of Rich Jahn and Aaron Opela this much needed script is nearly done. This script is important for ensuring our members renew their dues on time and will go a long way to keeping our membership numbers up.

The other new script, designed by Opela, is called the "NYRA Receptionist". It is an AIM bot designed to answer basic questions from people about NYRA and about youth rights. Also, the bot will be designed to invite members to our bi-monthly online chats automatically when asked. As NYRA can't afford to hire a real receptionist, we hope some creative use of technology will give us a stand-in.

In January NYRA experienced a significant crash of our server. The server was down for a day and all files for the previous week were wiped out and lost. This crash affected posts on the forum, e-mails, new members sign-ups, and changes to the website. This was the worst server crash NYRA has yet experienced. The data loss was especially harmful.

In response, Rich Jahn developed a system of automatic, daily backups that downloads the database for our blog, forum, internal sandbox, and membership database onto a computer in the office to prevent loss like this in the future. E-mail however is still vulnerable.

When the server was restored an additional problem was created. All the e-mail stored on the server was duplicated. Inboxes with 100 MB of e-mail suddenly became 200 MB. Our hard drive allotment quickly filled to near its maximum and space became a critical issue. It took some time, but files and e-mails were cleared out to give us some breathing room on the server.

This extra space is needed for our newest tech project to be successful. In late May a download section was created on the website that will allow members to

upload and download files. The download section has seven categories: papers, flyers, activist toolkit, audio, videos, promotional items, and web promotional items. Integrated with the forums, it is hoped this new script will have the same impact the news wire script had by dramatically increasing the ease and usability of content on the NYRA website. The script keeps track of the popularity and the ratings of various files and categorizes them for easy use. NYRA members are creative and contribute a lot to the movement but without a central place to store these files and without an easy way of adding them these contributions are often lost or never seen. The section hasn't gone public yet, but we are hoping for an appropriate amount of promotion for when it does finally roll out.

Projects - - - - -

Youth Rights Network

This year witnessed a great deal of progress with the Youth Rights Network, we have also brought in a new official partner for the project, CommonAction. Long time NYRA advisor, Adam Fletcher, began a substantial effort this year to create well researched, well organized, content on Wikipedia about youth rights. He produced many high quality articles, however he grew frustrated with the constant battle with the bias of Wikipedia editors. He started moving over all his articles to the Youth Rights Network in fear that anti-youth editors would twist the articles he wrote on Wikipedia and knew YRN would be a safe place to house them. Fletcher improved the organization and structure of the page in addition to adding a lot of new content. With Fletcher's increased involvement his organization, CommonAction, was soon welcomed as a full partner of YRN.



Additional progress was made this year with the ongoing project of creating an online archive of past and present youth rights publications. YRN's collection of ASFAR's Youth Truth, NCRA's Freedom Voice, and NYRA Freedom was expanded this year and far better organized.

Much progress was made this year on the Youth Rights Law Library as well. March 15, a volunteer, Andrew, who was recruited at the National Conference on Organized Resistance, started coming into the office occasionally to help work on the law library. On June 5, Minal Acharya started interning at the NYRA office and working on the law library. She works full time in the office and will leave August 3. Progress has been slow, but she has made substantial progress.

Student Rights Section

On April 23, Rowan Post, an active member of NYRA's Vermont Commons chapter, began his month-long internship at the NYRA office. His project was to start work on a student rights section for NYRA's website akin to the popular

voting age, curfew and drinking age sections YouthRights.org currently has. With assistance from other NYRA members, especially Adam Zarnowski, Post began to write original content for the new section. The project didn't finish by the time he left, but it shouldn't take much to finish up the work and create this long sought after new section for the website. It is hoped this will be finished next year.

Fight against All-Ages Music Ban & Curfew Proposal in DC

NYRA has stepped into DC politics in a big way this year. Our most significant legislative accomplishments were in Washington, DC this spring. Everything began in late February when NYRA got a call from a DC mother upset over the curfew law and hoping to take action. She operated a small Go-Go venue for high school students to come and play music and hang out and were constantly harassed by the police due to the curfew law. She organized a press conference to speak out against the curfew. NYRA co-sponsored the event and began seeking partners to join an anti-curfew coalition in the city.

One group NYRA contacted was the local ACLU branch who was busy working on the proposed all-ages ban in DC that would have prevented all individuals under 21 from entering clubs and music venues in the city. After the initial outcry against it, the bill's sponsor, Councilmember Jim Graham began holding weekly workgroup meetings with community leaders, club owners, and government officials to try and write a draft of the bill that everyone could accept. The bill was introduced after a 17-year-old girl was caught in the crossfire at a club. Somehow it was her fault for being at the club rather than the fault of the man who pulled the trigger. NYRA supported efforts to increase security at all clubs instead of impose restrictions on young people that do nothing to make clubs safer. NYRA participated in several of these meetings and introduced several important compromises. NYRA also made many important connections in city politics.

The bill came up for a committee hearing on April 18. Despite suggesting some key compromises, the bill would still have a strongly negative effect on the District's youth. NYRA still opposed the bill and testified against it at the hearing. Councilmember Graham made every effort to hinder NYRA's testimony, but it was important that someone represent the views of youth at the hearing.

The bill passed out of committee and went before the full city council where it was surprisingly voted down with strong opposition. One provision of the bill called for making underage drinking a criminal offense in the District (a provision the ACLU and NYRA both opposed), and the council overwhelmingly opposed this and removed it from the bill. Without this provision the Restaurant Association successfully pushed for the bill to be killed. This was a huge victory for youth rights in Washington, DC and NYRA was directly involved.

Not long after the bill was rejected Councilmember Graham attempted a new approach and introduced emergency legislation to lower the curfew time to 10 p.m. this summer and raise the age to 17. Graham surprised everyone with this bill – even his own staff – and NYRA had less than 24 hours to respond to it before the emergency council hearing on June 21. Thanks to our work over the last few months NYRA developed connections with many important interests in the city and was successfully able to mobilize many opponents to the curfew which spawned a massive, last minute letter writing campaign against the proposed curfew.



Graham attempted to circumvent the opposition by introducing such a last minute bill but thanks to NYRA’s efforts the emergency curfew bill was defeated. Councilmember Mendelson quoted from a letter NYRA wrote while speaking against the bill. NYRA members attended the council meeting and were interviewed by the Washington Post and the local TV news.

The battle isn’t over. Councilmember Wells introduced a bill that would attempt to enact a curfew law using different means – by charging parents with negligence through the Child and Family Services Agency if their son or daughter is outside after 10 p.m. More punitive – potentially – than a curfew law, but this new bill only targeted individuals under 14 instead of under 17 as the curfew law does (or under 18 as the proposed curfew amendment did). NYRA testified against the bill by arguing against the premise that kids needed to be under 24-hour-surveillance. A premise that both sides of the debate at the hearing seemed to support. No news yet on the status of this bill, but several members of the council will stop at nothing to get some additional restrictions on youth passed.

Chapters — — — — —

We have seen a modest increase in chapter formation this year after the dismal year we had last year. Last year four new chapters formed, and this year we saw the creation of six new NYRA chapters. Despite the increase we are still well below where we need to be as an organization. Chapters are the single most important part of NYRA. NYRA’s structure as a grassroots organization depends on having active chapters. Chapters drive fundraising, media, lobbying, public education, and everything else. All progress NYRA makes is dependent on having a strong and active chapter base.

Building that active chapter base takes time and it takes effort. Finding appropriate staff, volunteers and interns to handle this has been an on going challenge for the organization. Since June 2001 when Christopher Coes founded the Chapter Formation and Recruiting Committee, NYRA's chapter formation efforts have been led by volunteers. Despite some great progress made with our extremely limited budget, it has proven impossible to rely on volunteers for something as critical as chapter formation and outreach. Volunteers have not had the time, dedication or training that a full time staff member or intern could have. Thus our number one goal as an organization is finding more stable and skilled staff to direct chapter formation.

The grants we apply for all have hiring an outreach or field director as the chief goal. The \$8,000 grant from Babson was not enough to hire someone, but it was enough to afford office space and thus be able to accept interns for the position. Finding interns however proved difficult this year. Instead of the full time intern we needed, we only had two part time interns this spring who were only in the office once or twice a week and were unable to accomplish much. This summer the intern selected for chapter formation quit after a week on the job and we were left without a replacement.

Chapter formation suffered this year as a result of these setbacks, and will continue to suffer until this staffing issue can be addressed. Until then our new chapter formation volunteers, Adam Zarnowski and Katrina Moncure, together with existing chapter formation volunteers have to do their best. Thanks to their work this year, NYRA saw the formation of six new chapters.

2006-2007 saw a significant jump in NYRA members signing up to start local chapters. In all more than 202 individuals signed up to start chapters. This is a 44% increase from last year.

While new chapter intents spanned the country (and even included a few outside the USA), there were clear regional trends. Of the 202 intents examined for this report, the largest number 63 (or 31%) were in the Northeast region. 45 (22%) were in the Midwest region; 37 (18%) in the west region; 28 (14%) were in the south region, 26 (13%) in the central region and 4 (2%) outside of the country altogether (in Asia and Africa). These are almost exactly the same regional proportions as last year, so it shows a clear consistency from year to year and it shows that the increase in interest was uniform across the country and demonstrates the increased profile of NYRA.

Despite another record year for chapter intents, only six chapters were officially formed this year. Vermont Commons in Vermont; Watkins Glen in New York; Pensacola Brigade in Florida; Oakland County in Michigan; Orlando in Florida; Twin Cities in Minnesota;

The most active of these new chapters was based in Watkins Glen, New York and led by Ben Stamp. The chapter formed in December and has been NYRA's most active chapter this year. The chapter has organized debates at the high school, written letters to the newspaper and to lawmakers, and spoke to civic associations like the Rotary Club. Their president, Benjamin Stamp has given multiple presentations in the city and created a good amount of buzz. These presentations have attracted some positive media coverage, and the chapter was featured in two news articles this spring. According to Stamp, as a result of his efforts this year there has been a significant switch in the attitudes of adults in his community toward young people. A solid victory against the closed minds of ageism. His work has also led to more political connections in the state he hopes to continue to build next year when he hopes to form a NYRA chapter at Cornell University. The Watkins Glen chapter will continue next year under the leadership of Ben's sister.

Earlier this year, in September, we were joined officially by NYRA-Vermont Commons. The chapter, based at Vermont Commons High School in Burlington, VT had been active and running for several months, and organized the Know Your Rights Day event in the spring of 2006, but hadn't filed officially to become a chapter. This was taken care of in September, but the chapter unfortunately did little this school year. One member from the chapter however, Rowan Post, interned at the national office in April & May. Several of the principal leaders graduated this year, but Rowan is confident the chapter will continue under new leadership next year.

In February, Travis Cummings founded The NYRA-Pensacola Brigade in Pensacola, Florida. The chapter got off to a promising start but then faded as the year continued. There is no word on the current status of the chapter.

Of the other new chapters founded this summer, NYRA-Twin Cities looks especially promising. Only a month old, the chapter has already had three meetings and a website under development. As there is currently a bill in Minnesota that would lower the voting age, the chapter intends to throw themselves behind it. They are off to a great start and have made plans to recruit at some upcoming events, get the word out on a local radio show they have contacts with, and work with other youth organizations they are connected to.

Of our pre-existing chapters, only NYRA-Orange County remained active this year. The chapter spoke in favor of for resolutions in support of eliminating mandatory school attendance laws and in support of equal rights before the California Democratic Party Resolutions Committee. Both Natasha and Alex Hull-Richter I attempted to vote last year. They have found an attorney who is interested in taking the voting rights case. They continued their successful effort to win the support of various members of Congress, the California State Senate,

and the California State Assembly and California's Secretary of State for lowering the voting age.

This progress by NYRA-OC is encouraging, but the fact that all other chapters are currently dormant is a serious cause for concern. Communication between chapters and national has suffered in the last year. Chapters have also suffered from a lack of guidance and training from national. These failings have contributed to a severe decline in chapter activity and progress. It is absolutely essential that proper staff – either interns or full-time staff members – be found to invest proper time into chapters. Volunteers are simply incapable of doing a proper job. This is the single biggest need the organization has right now and absolutely must be addressed in the next year.

Looking Ahead to 2008 – – – – –

NYRA has been one of the most radically innovative non-profits out there. One of the great assets we have on our side is the creativity of youth. We see problems in new ways and create new ways of solving them. New members will join and will suggest new ideas and new projects and new tactics we can use to further the cause. This is our great power, but it also reflects our great weakness.

An idea posted on an online forum changes nothing if no one is there to implement it. A creative new tactic accomplishes nothing without the resources and people power to make it happen. Our impulse to innovate sometimes causes us to neglect the old ideas and concepts that have been critical for the success of every movement that came before us.

We need concepts like hard work and follow through. Without the right people putting in the necessary hard work and dedication to put our ideas into action there will be no movement and no youth rights.

That is the goal that stares us in the face for this next year. It is the goal we have worked towards all year. The progress may seem slow, but it is happening. A lot of the progress is behind the scenes so it may not be as exciting or noticeable as big campaigns or media spots, but it is happening and we will one day, hopefully soon, we will see the pay off.

We have much to learn from the Chinese bamboo tree. Once planted, the seed will appear to be dormant for many months. No shoots, no big leaves, no stalk. Just a patch of dirt. The seed isn't dormant though, it is just growing underground. It puts down a network of roots soaking up the water and fertilizer given to it. Only then after months and perhaps years of seeming inactivity does the plant suddenly start to grow. Its stalk grows explosively and can reach 90 feet in a matter of weeks.

NYRA may not seem as active as we could be, but we are busy putting down roots. Preparing the way for a greater day ahead, when that day comes NYRA will explode onto the national stage. Until that day comes however, hard work and careful preparation are needed to see us through. NYRA needs fertilizer and lots and lots of water to grow.

Water like a bounty of rain that fills the sky and turns into mighty rivers, then great lakes, and finally a massive ocean. There we will be, afloat in that vast ocean, but stronger, wiser, more determined, and more numerous than ever before. Far better prepared to continue our swim to freedom.

National Youth Rights Association Cash Flow Report 2006-2007

Income

	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	TOTAL
Chapter Fees		30.00			30.00		30.00						90.00
Chapter Fundraisers		15.27	33.50	24.01					83.00	170.79		30.00	356.57
In-Kind						720.00							720.00
Corporate Grants													0.00
Foundation Grants					8,000.00								8,000.00
Advertising	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	58.59	50.00	50.00	70.00	70.00	120.00	90.00	90.00	798.59
Publishing Rights						200.00			150.00				350.00
Merchandise Sales	10.87	23.18		60.10		30.00	179.75	144.15	21.70	23.60	30.00	42.00	565.35
Dues/Donations	256.00	100.00	135.00	101.00	1,405.00	300.00	430.00	270.00	470.00	1,340.00	1,320.00	200.00	6,327.00
TOTAL	316.87	218.45	218.50	235.11	9,493.59	1,300.00	689.75	484.15	794.70	1,654.39	1,440.00	362.00	17,207.51

Operational Costs

Executive Director Salary	120.00	925.00			925.00	925.00	925.00		925.00	925.00	925.00	925.00	7,520.00
Paypal & Account Fees	7.64	2.93	5.26	6.42	17.46								39.71
Postage	8.62				15.42			26.39			23.58		74.01
Tech		94.50				37.00				30.00			161.50
Rent						500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	3,500.00
Computers						720.00							720.00
Food								114.72				134.41	249.13
Merchandise					60.10								60.10
Conference/Tabling Fees							70.00						70.00
Copies	26.27					4.34		0.42			3.77		34.80
Misc	75.50					58.86				13.94			148.30
Office Supplies									10.66				10.66
TOTAL	238.03	1,022.43	5.26	6.42	1,017.98	2,245.20	1,495.00	641.53	1,435.66	1,468.94	1,452.35	1,559.41	12,588.21

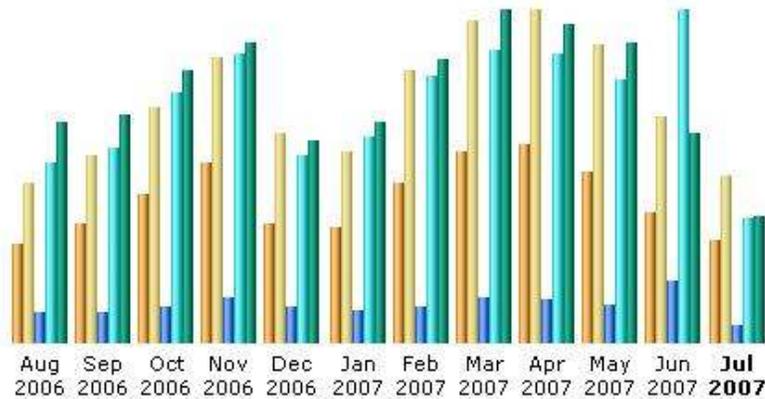
Operating Income **78.84** **-803.98** **213.24** **228.69** **8,475.61** **-945.20** **-805.25** **-157.38** **-640.96** **185.45** **-12.35** **1,197.41** **-**

Cash Balance **3,235.35** **2,431.37** **2,644.61** **2,873.30** **11,348.91** **10,403.71** **9,598.46** **9,441.08** **8,800.12** **8,985.57** **8,973.22** **7,775.81**

Web Statistics Report

This is the first year in quite some time that we did not change servers or change web stats programs or make any other changes that would affect direct comparisons to web traffic the year before. So this may be the most accurate web stats report (as far as comparisons to the previous year) we have yet had. On the other hand, due to the scheduling of this year's annual meeting, this year's report does not include the last week of July.

Raw data from 2006-2007:



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Aug 2006	20892	33603	227082	1343563	16.24 GB
Sep 2006	24925	39574	229312	1455479	16.75 GB
Oct 2006	31245	49636	267000	1858085	20.06 GB
Nov 2006	37756	59914	339194	2148480	22.12 GB
Dec 2006	24958	44044	267508	1401356	14.90 GB
Jan 2007	16992	28161	154640	966432	10.42 GB
Feb 2007	23679	40360	172196	1252824	13.37 GB
Mar 2007	28382	47636	210733	1377378	15.63 GB
Apr 2007	29473	49211	204961	1355359	14.94 GB
May 2007	25309	44232	179693	1237398	14.12 GB
Jun 2007	19222	33546	286863	1560672	9.83 GB
Jul 2007	15102	24714	83329	584215	5.93 GB

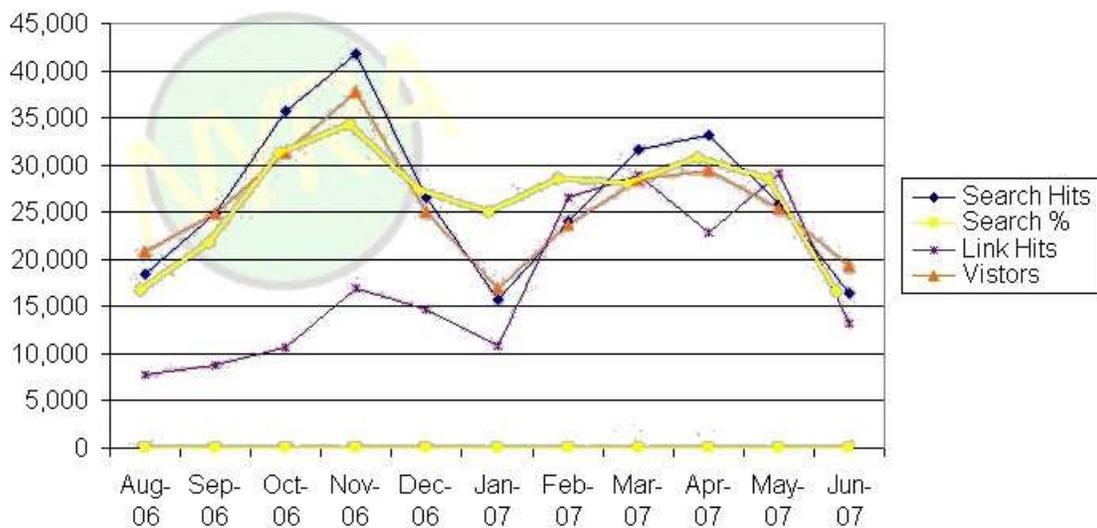
Unfortunately we experienced a sharp decline in web traffic this year from last year. In 2005-2006 YouthRights.org averaged 33,320 visitors a month, and 1,790,163 hits a month. This year however, we averaged only 24,828 visitors a month (a 25% decline) and only 1,378,521 hits (a 23% decline). This is the first year the NYRA website has registered a decline in traffic. This is unfortunate, but with the lack of significant media coverage or chapter activity, it is not surprising. With some higher profile campaigns it is likely to rebound significantly.

User Origin

We have information broken down into how users find their way to the NYRA website. Origin locations break down into three categories, either they are directed from a search engine, follow a link on another website, or arrive directly from a bookmark or by typing our URL into their browser.

The bulk of NYRA's traffic comes from regular users who follow a bookmark to arrive here. Much of that, it can be assumed, is from active members and forum users. Compared to last year, this source of users has declined. Bookmark users averaged 75% of our total hits (a breakdown of visitors is unavailable) last year, and were down to 65% this year. Hits generated from search engines and links from other websites both increased this year: from 17.2% to 20.5% for search engines, and from 4.4% to 13.4% for links.

This information points to the possibility that a big reason for our decline in traffic this year was due to a decline in forum usage by regular members rather than a decline in bringing new people to the page.



NYRA's busiest months are always in the spring and fall, months when school is in session and students are more likely to be online doing homework (or avoiding homework). Over the last year, during these months the percentage of hits originating from search engines has gone up noticeably. The graph shows hits originating from search engines, the percentage of those hits as compared to bookmark & linked sources, and total visitors to the website.

This simply emphasizes that during the spring and fall not only do more users visit the NYRA website, but most of that increase is due to new visitors. Attracting

new visitors is of course essential to bringing in new blood to the organization and growth of both donations and membership.

Search Engine Placement

We have an idea of when most new members visit the NYRA website from the last section, but more important is how they find us. We can track what search terms visitors enter into search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and MSN. The top 5 search terms for August 06 through July 07 are enclosed in this report.

Top 5 Search Terms Used to Find YouthRights.org per Month

August 2006

- 1 Emily Browning
- 2 retard
- 3 NYRA
- 4 youth rights
- 5 voting age

September 2006

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 Emily Browning
- 3 voting age
- 4 retard
- 5 NYRA

October 2006

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 Emily Browning
- 3 voting age
- 4 NYRA
- 5 lower the drinking age

November 2006

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 NYRA
- 3 voting age
- 4 lowering drinking age
- 5 lower the drinking age

December 2006

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 NYRA
- 3 lowering drinking age
- 4 Emily Browning
- 5 lower the drinking age

January 2007

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 Emily Browning
- 3 NYRA
- 4 voting age
- 5 lower the drinking age

February 2007

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 NYRA
- 3 Emily Browning
- 4 lower the drinking age
- 5 youth rights

March 2007

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 NYRA
- 3 lower the drinking age
- 4 Emily Browning
- 5 curfew laws

April 2007

- 1 lowering the drinking age
- 2 lower the drinking age
- 3 Emily Browning
- 4 NYRA
- 5 youth rights

May 2007

- 1 Nassau@yahoo.com
- 2 lowering the drinking age
- 3 youth rights forum
- 4 NYRA
- 5 Emily Browning

June 2007

- 1 NYRA
- 2 youth rights forum
- 3 lowering the drinking age
- 4 youth rights
- 5 curfew laws

July 2006

- 1 NYRA
- 2 curfew laws
- 3 youth rights
- 4 lowering the drinking age
- 5 California drinking age

In the 2006 web stats report Google, the most popular search engine, was used to see where NYRA ranked when certain search terms were entered. Here is an updated report with a comparison to the 2006 report:

Search	Ranking in 2007	Ranking in 2006
youth rights	1 st	1 st
Voting age	2 nd	1 st and 2 nd
Lowering the voting age	1 st and 2 nd	1 st and 2 nd
Gulag school	5 th and 6 th	7 th and 8 th
Drinking age in Hawaii	6 th	5 th
Lowering the drinking age	3 rd	1 st and 2 nd
In re Gault	4 th	4 th
Drinking age	22 nd	14 th
Youth Liberation	14 th	Not in top 150

Youth curfew	1 st	3 rd
Youth emancipation	48 th & 49 th	Not in top 150
Adulthood	8 th	5 th
Ageism	142 nd	Not in top 150
Curfew	28 th	11 th
Lower driving age	5 th	14 th and 15 th
Student rights	Not in top 150	Not in top 150
Youth empowerment	Not in top 150	Not in top 150
Youth activism	Not in top 150	Not in top 150
Zero tolerance	Not in top 150	Not in top 150
Drinking age Colorado	1 st	1 st